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Study of a Social Dance Project Within a Theatrical Context for Third and Fourth Age Persons

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Abstract

This article adheres to UN guidelines concerning the Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030) which aim to improve the lives of the older population. The objective of this study is to show how social dance with artistic-scenic purposes for a socially vulnerable group of older adults (third and fourth age) contributes to active ageing from social and health perspectives. The sample comes from a social group for the over-60s years and forms part of an artistic-community project in which participant observation has been carried out for five years. To obtain more data from the sample group, an *ad hoc* measurement instrument is developed based on a specific literature review on the topic. The results show that dance, group, and stage performance are a vital driver for members. The analysis shows that individual

perspectives are higher than group perspectives. The research provides evidence that social dance groups improve motor expressiveness, stimulate the ability to think, memorize and create, among other aspects.

Introduction

Illustrating the term dance in a single definition is complex because there are multiple meanings associated with it, thus making it difficult to adopt a single meaning that accurately describes the entirety of the term (Nicolás et al., 2010). In this work, dance is considered as *a discipline that has gradually evolved and expanded its field of action*. While traditionally dance was only considered an end in itself, these days it is understood to be so much more and thus employed for specific purposes and objectives (Cañabate et al., 2016; Iranzo-Domingo et al., 2022; 2016; 2022; Amado, 2022).

The term dance has multiple definitions. Already at the beginning of the 20th century Charbonnel (1901) defined the practice of group dance as a language represented by combinations of gestures and attitudes that revealed to the researcher the characteristics and customs of the people who practiced it. At the beginning of the 21st century (Engdahl et al., 2022, p. 2) they define it as that practice that helps people to "expand their emotional, physical and cognitive capacities through collaborative creative processes to obtain new movement experiences". These two definitions, a hundred years apart, indicate that observing people when they dance reveals clues about their psychophysical state, while the group influences their movement actions. Like Bleger (1982), we understand the group as being a set of individuals who share norms and interact with each other. Monsegur (2008) points out that the purpose of dance in social groups can have several facets given the ideology with which they were conceived. Among these facets are care and therapy, for example, using dance movement therapy (DMT) (Villena, 2008); playfulness, with its goal of enjoyment and recreative dance; learning through dance technique (Padilla and Coterón, 2013); artistry through practice for the stage (Galán and Iranzo-Domingo, 2022); and integration and cohesiveness to build knowledge and foster inclusion (Palo-Bengtsson and Ekman, 2002).

Thus, and as indicated by Pérez and Gardey (2021), the social group is born from inequality increasing the risk of discrimination between different social groups. To belong to a social group (Fernández, 2000) a series of characteristics must be given: reciprocal interaction, shared values, stability and duration, group consciousness and, external recognition. If these characteristics are not met, the group is not social, it can be any other type of collective, such as work group, academic group, statistical group, etc.

As for dance, being an expressive tool of body language, is a means of working on inclusion with vulnerable groups both socially and generationally (ECAS, 2016). It should be borne in mind that any person can pass for vulnerable groups (Àrea d'Acció Social i Ciutadania, 2010). From this perspective and according to various authors (Schott-Billmann, 2015; Iranzo-Domingo et al., 2022), dance becomes a social instrument. In this way, when we participate with dance in social groups, these are called social dance groups. Specifically, social dance identifies interventions through dance in social groups. Thus, the phrase social dance becomes an entity. Dance, therefore, can be a purpose, a tool, a bridge, and a resource.

The present study focuses the research on a group of healthy people in their third¹ and fourth² ages (TermCat, 1st March, 2023; TermCat, 2014). This social group is identified as a vulnerable social group compared to the rest of the adult, young, adolescent or child population (Smith, 2000).

The sample is part of a community art project framed within a theatrical context in Barcelona. As a characteristic of the group, it is an open group, people can come and go, but the group is closed when rehearsals of concluding performance begin.

The intervention group was created in response to a request for care from the Ciutat Vella district because of the number of older people living alone and without social networks. This request follows a social and community action focus, as indicated by the Barcelona City Council's Area of Action and Citizenship initiative (2010). In Barcelona, one fifth of the population is over 64 and 40% of people over 85 live alone (Drets Socials, Cultura, Educació i Cicles de Vida, 2023). From the social observatory of the Barcelona City Council, an instrument of knowledge of social reality, a guide of good habits is generated to connect with the active aging of the WHO where it is advised to dance as a physical activity to improve the state of health. The Antic Teatre assumes the mission of working with the group, offering the participants a space for wellbeing, health, relationships and social cohesion, personal growth, creativity, etc., (Galán and Iranzo-Domingo, 2022).

¹ 3rd Age -*tercera edat*-. Translate in English definition TermCat.: The period of a person's life characterized by the cessation of professional activity, generally coincides with the age of 65 (...) to delimit this age range, the 3rd age is usually up to 80 years, after which the 4th age begins. Equivalent in Spanish: Tercera edad y ancianidad. French: Troisième âge. English: Third age.

² 4th Age -*quarta edat*-. Translate in English definition TermCat: The period of a person's life characterized by pathologies associated with ageing, the loss of physical and psychological factors, the increase in dependence and the need for attention; generally, from the age of 80, i.e., a person over 80 years old is of the 4th age. Equivalent in Spanish: Cuarta edad. French: Quatrième âge o gran vieillard. English: Fourth age, old-elderly, old-old, super-ager, or super-elderly.

The current study values three aspects: a) the conceptualization of the term social group in the 3rd and 4th ages, b) the contribution of evidence that social dance is an entity in itself, and c) the importance of social dance in the 3rd and 4th age from an artistic-scenic perspective.

To visualize these three aspects, a participant observation was carried out as well as an *ad hoc* measurement instrument was developed that the sample group responded to, said instrument was based on a previous bibliographic review.

Regarding the first aspect a), *in relation to the term social group*, according to Cartwright and Zander (1989) the group is a social entity and joint experience where social interaction and the dynamic of co-responsibility of members means that it is decided whether to belong to the group.

According to Smith (2000), and considering the object of our study, biological evolution in the social group of the 3rd and 4th age is important as this is a critical stage of life where mainly a loss of overall wellbeing is experienced.

Regarding the second aspect b), *ratify social dance*. In other words, implementing a dance or movement program to improve self-esteem and the desire to live (Salazar, 1995). Iranzo-Domingo (2017) and Iranzo-Domingo et al. (2022) define dance with a social impact as, projects for people or groups in situations of social risk (i.e., understanding *social risk* to be a vulnerability that makes it difficult to fit into society) that contribute to stimulating creativity and promoting social aptitudes through education, learning, and the benefits of dance and movement. This concept is also supported by other authors for other types of social groups (López, 2016; Cárdenas-Rodríguez et al., 2017). Heiberger et al. (2011), showed the socializing effects in dance sessions, corroborating that any intervention with dance has different objectives depending on the social group in which it is being used. According to Mavrovouniotis et al. (2010), dance improves the mood of older people, contributes to the creation of a special state of consciousness that is related to a state of enthusiasm and, through rhythm, connects the individual with the environment.

The third aspect c), *the value of dance for the development of active ageing*. Dance for older people is much more than a recreational activity, it provides multiple benefits by enhancing the conservation and maintenance of mental, emotional, relational, and physical health (Teixeira-Machado et al., 2018; Axelerad et al., 2022). In this way, dance becomes an, "activator of a process of active, healthy, and successful ageing" (Hurtado and Lopera, 2019, 138). In their 2020 definition of active ageing, the WHO states that, maintaining autonomy and independence as you get older it's a primary goal (<https://www.who.int/es/home>).

The research presented in this article aligns with United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030) guidelines, in which it aims to reduce health inequalities and improve the lives of older people, their families, and communities through collective action. Furthermore, the WHO states that healthy ageing is, "the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age" (WHO, 2020, p. xiii).

Maintaining regular physical activity contributes to improve physical and mental capacity and delay the need for assistance (Salazar, 1995; Petts and Urmston, 2022). "In an artistic activity aesthetic and emotional components are present that can promote the expression and regulation of emotions and also the reduction from stress" (Guardiola and Baños, 2020). When older people interact with environments where dance is the focus, motor and social activity directly and positively affects them towards healthy aging (Popović et al., 2017; Kshtriya et al., 2015; Axelerad et al., 2022). This article posits social dance for artistic purposes, verifying the relationship between intervention with movement and dance in a social group (Arboleda et al., 2018; Iranzo-Domingo et al., 2022).

The Research Questions

The aim of this research is to show through direct participant observation over five years and the analysis of the data of the (Kshtriya et al., 2015; Axelerad et al., 2022) research instrument, how from a social and health perspective, dance social with an artistic purpose can bring important benefits for health and active aging to a group of socially vulnerable elderly people who belong to the community artistic group of the Antic Teatre of Barcelona, a group created in 2012.

The research questions posed are:

- How does dance affect socially vulnerable groups?
- When working with social dance for artistic purposes in vulnerable groups, how is scenic excellence concrete?
- Can changes be observed at a psychophysical level when working on social dance with a group of 3rd and 4th-year-olds for artistic scenic purposes? If yes, list them.

Data and Methods

In this section, the research methodology is presented in relation to the research objective and the theoretical starting points. The methodology, the context and the sample and the phases of the research are described.

Investigation Methodology and Phases

In order to respond to the objective, this study uses a qualitative method with mixed focus known as sequential exploratory design (DEXPLOS) with derivative modality, “the process combines the collection, coding, and descriptive analysis of qualitative data with quantitative data, obtained based on the former” (Ortega-Sánchez, 2021, p. 248). This method is suitable from a participative epistemology point of view, since the qualitative process generates an instrument of its own that applies to a specific group. According to (Hernández-Sampieri and Mendoza, 2018) the researcher follows a design guide to make it his own.

The research has been structured in three phases that form a whole:

- The first phase has two parts. The first part focuses on the primary research into a group of older people (in their 3rd and 4th ages) undertaken with direct participant observation over a period of five years, while the second part focuses on a comprehensive review of the literature.
- The second phase focuses on the construction of a measurement instrument based on the data obtained from the first phase. This instrument provides us information about the improvements or not of the implementation of a work through social dance.
- The third phase consists of the application of the instrument developed in the second phase.

Participants and Context of the Study

The project team is formed by a playwright and project director, together with a therapist and choreographer, who provides psychosocial support and dance training. Both also provide logistical support to the technical, administrative and theatre stage.

The text of this article follows the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (APA) in relation to style and language for age and gender. For instance, in terms of gender, the sample group was asked if they identified with sexual binarism, and the response was positive when identifying with feminine or masculine gender. However, was chosen to include non-binary gender in the statistics of this article following current policies. Therefore, throughout the article, gender is treated as masculine/feminine and not as male/female.

The investigation took place between 2018 and 2022 with 14 participants taking part over that time frame. Five left the group during that period because of the following reasons: one death; one aggravation of illness - *dementia without diagnosis (possible Alzheimer's)*; one for personal problems - *related to mental fragility*; and two due to a change of residence and city. At the time of writing, there are ten in the group: eight gender feminine-identified and two masculine-identified, according to the study sample $n = 10$. This led to an initial

categorization of the group as heterogeneous according to binary gender (APA); to geographical origin (participants were born in different regions and countries), as well as according to age, (65 to 88 years), with an average of 72 years. We are therefore talking about group diversity. Secondly, the group was categorized in relation to temporality, as it is a permanent and stable group that began in 2012.

Session attendance is weekly from 15th September to 15th July, and then daily from 16th July to 1st August, with at least one performance per year. These creations are debated and discussed between the management team and the group members in a consensual manner (see Table 1).

Table 1

Performances in the Antic Teatre (2018 to 2023) from the 3rd and 4th age community artistic project group

Title of the performance and parallel actions	Theatre venue for premiere/presentation	Season
Souvenirs	Antic Teatre	2018-2019
Souvenirs. Vol II. Els aterrits, els revoltats	Virtual	2019-2020
Forasters Vindran... (collaboration)	Teatre Lliure	2020-2021
Les Vedettes (work in progress)	Antic Teatre	2021-2022
Deixar de prendre 4 pastilles. 10 anys del projecte artístic-comunitari de l'Antic Teatre (book)	Antic Teatre	2022-2023
Les Vedettes (premiere)	Antic Teatre	2022-2023

In the performances of *Souvenirs*, *Les Vedettes - work in progress and premiere* - and the *book*, the members of the group were active participants in the construction of the piece where they contributed textual and choreographic ideas in addition to their life testimony. Some members of the group participated in *Forasters Vindran* with their personal textual testimony. In *Souvenirs. Volume II*, a video was made based on the life testimony of each participant.



Figure 1. Souvenirs. Antic Teatre.(Image credit: Antic Teatre).

Intervention Methodology

The methodology has been used through artistic and cultural practice Galán and Iranzo-Domingo (2022) on the archaeology of the everyday and has been accompanied by the elements of creative dance and body awareness (see Table 2), is a methodology that provides mechanisms for equal opportunities and collective empowerment (Juanico, 2017).

Table 2

Elements of Dance

Creative Dance	Body Conscientious
Spatial relationship and directions within space, orientation in space, the velocities accommodated to graphic time and to rhythmic tempos, body weight in dance, the flow of movement implicit in each movement. The spatial levels and planes of movement, the body amplitude reaching the maximum fullness. of the executed movement and the search for a specific aesthetic with a specific movement... (Iranzo-Domingo & Palet, 2023).	Recognition of one's own movement as one's own, evolving to allow oneself to investigate other types of movement, many of them antagonistic. Your own movements and the movements acquired throughout your life are reinforced. Learning a more concrete and marked way of moving has been a challenge due to the difficulty of body control. (Iranzo-Domingo, 2020).

The body schema and body image developed by Bernard (1980) and the mnemonic trace developed by Freud (1923) are fundamental conceptual ideas of how the therapist and choreographer approaches work with dance. Regarding the body mnemonic trace, they have identified them in relation to the quality of the corporal response to the experiences. It is the perception that comes from what has already been executed, where there is constantly psycho-physical reconnection and a constant neural change. The body is the transmitter of experience, to Teixeira-Machado et al., (2018, p. 232). “Based on the evidence, dance practice integrates brain areas to improve neuroplasticity.”

Regarding the body schema and body image, each member of the group comes with baggage and, therefore, the learning and experiences through the scene, the body, and the dance are different Castañeda and Gallo (2018). Referring to Schilder (1987), it is rescued that the understanding of the processes of bodily domain is the product of an active process, not a passive attitude. The practice of dance is an enhancer of active ageing, it is unique, incomparable experiences with an emotional and conscious charge Hurtado and Lopera (2019). With this type of practice, bodily memory, group listening, breathing, and learning one's own movement in relation to common movement are worked on.

The three concepts, body schema, body image and mnemonic trace, encompass the bodily work through dance and the narrative work of rescuing memory. Because, when persons work on the physical aspect on a scene, progress is made towards respecting one's own body, one's own movement, and balancing the psychic and physical state that evokes that action (Àvila, 2011; Lehman, 2013; Luque, 2021). Through dance, they reconnection with bodily memory, transmitting pure action, clean movement, natural dance, leaving aside the emotion related to the memory that accompanies it. “It is a kinetic activity (...) use the properties of the brain in order to connect, through the rhythm of conception, the interior and the external, this is the individual and the world (...)” (Mavrovouniotis et al., 2010, p. 216).

The stage piece acquires value through the process of research and creation in relation to post-dramatic theatre. From Cornago (2006) it is extracted that this theatre is a reflection on the theatre itself that can only be captured by the process itself, not as a process. In the process of working with the group of 3rd and 4th ages, a dramaturgical line is finally generated from the specific expressive language obtained in the corporal and textual sessions where the two types of sessions are aligned. There is no fiction or history; dramatic literature has no priority, it is born from the scene itself and from the performers themselves, all the elements are on the same level. The actor is physical, he is a presence, he is a transmission of text, he is an image. There is no situation or fiction, there is no space beyond the representation.

In the group intervention design, a weekly two-hour session was held from September to July both months included Table 3. The session was divided into physical training, discursive training and closing the session (Galán and Iranzo-Domingo, 2022).

Table 3

Phases of the yearly group with number of sessions (September-July)

Phases of the group throughout the year	Frequency of meetings in days	Amount of activity hours
Weekly training sessions	40	80
Rehearsals for the yearly play	11	55
Performance of the yearly play	2	8
Total days and hours	53	143

Weekly sessions with the group began with a psycho-corporal warm-up (Iranzo et al., 2022) before moving on to developing and extracting dance material. Active participation of all members of the group is important. Physical training focuses on the communicative aspect of dance and movement, where the body is the axis of transmission of the experience. Dance provides more activity and enjoyment in the last stage of life for older adults (Salazar, 1995). Therefore, the body is working from a dynamic structure that constantly changes. The review by Kshtriya et al. (2015) on dance and ageing indicates that dance interventions, in healthy older adults compared to a neurologically impaired population, have positive cognitive and sensorimotor benefits. On the other hand, Sheppard and Broughton (2020) carries out a review focused on how various social groups if they participate in dance or music activities are positively affected in their social and health aspects. “The results of this review suggest that actively participating in music and dance is an effective means through which individuals and populations can maintain and promote wellbeing and health across the life course.” (Sheppard and Broughton, 2020, p. 16).



Figure 2. Psycho-Corporal Warm-Up. Dansalut, Dance and Movement Space.
(Image credit: Montserrat Iranzo-Domingo).

The morphology of the pieces (see Table 1) is composed of a hybrid scenic language where diverse material is combined from the different disciplines used:

- From audio-visuals: recorded videos and off-screen voices.
- From sound space: live music and songs, recorded music, and songs.
- From textual theatre starting from the methodology of the archaeology of the everyday, created by Galán, cited in Galán and Iranzo-Domingo (2022): Dramatized reading in third person, dramaturgical pirouette in first person, and memorized text.
- From dance: the methodology used by the group starts from elements of creative dance, elements of body awareness, and own dance elements to fulfil the creative and artistic goal.

The generated narrative is articulated from the story that originates the elements that emerge in the sessions following the guidelines given by the playwright and the choreographer. In this way, a narrative thread is created that intertwines the different sequences of creative actions with a product consistent with what was proposed and thought in advance to reach the culmination in stage format. The generated narrative is specific to a stage capsule. This stage capsule becomes a scene or part (of the piece) with the objective that each scene or part, by itself, already tells something about the whole that will become the finished piece. “The

creation in a collective sense to intimate with the spectator and the work carried out both from the body of the actor and from the body of the word” (Cornago, 2006).

Methodology and Instruments

The instruments of this research, to respond to the object of study, are intimately related on the one hand to the sample and on the other to the review of other studies in relation to the theoretical foundation.

In relation to sample, during in the first part of the first phase, from 2018 to 2022, direct participant observation was carried out (Salazar, 1995; Latorre, 2007; Sierra-Bravo, 2001), collecting data through field diaries with anecdotal records Sierra-Bravo (2001), as well as in visual format through photographs and/or video (Flick, 2012, p. 31). In the second phase, in 2022, an interrogation research instrument was constructed.

In relation to the review of other studies in relation to the theoretical foundation, along in the second part of the first phase, a search is made for specific documentation in relation to the study to base the questions of the measurement instrument.

In the third phase the questionnaire instrument *ad hoc* is applied to the sample. The questionnaire instrument measures the value of the group, the meaning of the sessions both in terms of frequency and content, and in the content everything that refers to dance in relation to physical activity, the psycho-emotional world and stage action.

1st phase, 1st part. Direct Participant Observation: Field Diaries and Video-Photo Collection

Monitoring ran during all the weekly and annual sessions (following the Catalan academic year from September/October to July) Table 4.

Table 4

Phases of the group. Total number of sessions and hours of participant observation with the group

Phases group 2018-2022	Frequency of meetings in days	Amount of activity hours
Weekly training sessions	174	348
Rehearsals for the yearly play	44	220
Performance of the yearly play	8	32
Total days and hours	226	600

The observation was recorded with anecdotal notes written in the field diaries: the relationship between the interventions of the director and the participants and the comments they generated; the comments of the participants in the dance and movement activities developed; the annotation of information on the psychophysical state of the participants, it is collected through the field diary notes made by the researcher during participant observation, in the sessions and the annotations at the moments when any change is detected in them; and finally the personal impressions of what happened during a session. Data were also obtained from the recordings that were made with the camera fixed and placed in a corner of the rehearsal room. This information following DEXPLOS method was classified into five Categories (Cat.) by coding inductively, as explained by Ortega-Sánchez (2021). Below are named and briefly explained Cat., relating them to the values or aspects of this research: *a) the conceptualization of the term social group in the 3rd and 4th age, b) the contribution of evidence that social dance is an entity in itself, and c) the importance of social dance in the 3rd and 4th age from an artistic-scenic perspective:*

- Cat.1 *Group*: Defines the social relationship of the individual with the rest of the group members. Aspect a) and b).
- Cat 2 *Weekly training, and dance training. Weekly sessions*: Physicality. Evaluation of the dance activity. Aspect a) and c).
- Cat 3 *Physical content, and psychic content. Psycho-physical content*: Somato-emotional relationship of the individual when practicing dance. Aspect c).
- Cat.4 *Dance in the current moment of your life. Dance now*: Active ageing. Aspect c).
- Cat.5 *Scenic presentation*: The importance of performing in a theatre with an audience. Aspect c).



Figure 3. Dance Rehearsal. Antic Teatre.
(Image credit: Montserrat Iranzo-Domingo).

1st phase, 2nd part. Review of Other Studies in Relation to the Theoretical Foundation

A search was carried out to identify and review other studies and instruments used with the research object. The review identified the nature and scope of the information requested and demonstrated the difficulty of finding theory that would evaluate the psycho-physical benefits of dance at a specific level or the practice of performing arts in general, even though regular dance practice is widespread in the 3rd and 4th age groups. The gerontological view of ageing and the benefits of dance practice is still missing in academic processes according to Hurtado and Lopera (2019).

The search criteria were used, following the words used and using the Boolean "&":

“dance & aging” and “dance & ageing”, “tests performing arts & mental health of older people”, and “tests dance & mental health of older people.”

“aging & dance” and “ageing and dance”, “tests performing arts & mental health of older people”, “tests dance & mental health of older people.”

The research team also considers the decade of active ageing decreed by the WHO, where a search was carried out on its website with the result = 0. In addition, it's explored in the following search engines, obtaining the consecutive results: Cinhal- Ebsco = 0, Eric = 1, Scopus = 32 - 20 - 0, fecyt.es = 0, Google Scholar = 48 - 0 and 36 = 1 and Scielo = 0. In the last instance, the advice of the illustrious Official College of Psychologists of Catalonia (COPC) was also sought which provides us with a series of documents (Docs.COPC). The first informal contact was made via telephone. Subsequently, a formal request for collaboration was made via email. The professionals at the COPC Library and Documentation Centre responded, informing the research team that there were no psychological tests available on our topic, but they did provide articles and work related to various investigations. Firstly, the documents were labelled with alphanumeric references such as *Doc.X.COPC* Table 5. Secondly, the information was extracted from each Doc.COPC associating it with the *ad hoc* questionnaire questions, thus forming the contrasted theory for each of them. Next, a review was made of the Docs.COPC to detect measurement instruments: questionnaires, validated texts, rubrics, scales, or others Table 5.

Table 5

List and summary of studies provided by COPC and measurement instruments: validated tests or measurement scales

Name	Type of document	Title	Entity	Authorship	Year	Measurement instruments: Tests and Scales	What they measure	Integrity
Doc.1. COPC	Bachelor's thesis	Sistematización de los beneficios integrales que trae la danza a través de la experiencia artística en adultos mayores desde la perspectiva del envejecimiento activo	Universidad Católica de Oriente. Facultad de Ciencia de la Salud. Gerontología. Riosnegro de Colombia	Hurtado Alzate, Natalia Lopera Cardona, Mónica María	2019			
Doc.2. COPC	Journal article/chapter	Beneficios de la danza o el baile terapéutico para las personas de la tercera edad	Revista Educación 19(2): 65-70, 1995	Salazar Salas, Carmen Grace	1995			
Doc.3. COPC	Article	Emotional response to social dancing and walks in persons with dementia	American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias. Volume 17, Number 3, May/June 2002	Palo-Bengats-sun, Lisa Ekman, Sirkka-Liisa	2002	Scale evaluation Gottfrides, Brane & Steen (GBS)	6 pathological aspects of behaviour	Original
Doc.4. COPC	Bachelor's thesis	El fenómeno social de la enfermedad mental: Una perspectiva de abordaje desde la pedagogía de las artes escénicas. Propuesta para un posible escenario educativo	Universidad pedagógica Nacional de Colombia	Achúrez Hoyos, Marie Alexandra Keño	2019			
Doc.5. COPC	Article	Greek traditional dances and quality of life of old people's life	Journal of Bodywork Et Movement Therapies (2010) 14, 209-218	Mavrovouniotis, Fotios H. Argiriadou, Eirini A. Papaioannou, Christina S.	2010	The Subjective Exercise Experiences Scale (SEES; McAuley & Courneya, 1994) State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (SAI; Spielberger et al., 1970) Unified Parkinson disease rating scale III (UPDRS; Fahn et al., 1987)	Psychological response to physical exercise: psychological wellbeing, lack of activation and feeling of fatigue It assesses anxiety: A state, the transient & A. trait, the fixed	Original Original Original
Doc.6. COPC	Article	Impact of a weekly dance class on the functional mobility and on the quality of life of individuals with Parkinson's disease	Frontiers in aging neuroscience. October 2011 / Volume 3 / Article 14	Heiberger, Lisa Maurer, Christoph Arntage, Florian Mönke-Balbuena, Ignacio Schulte-Mün-ling, Jürgen Hepp-Reymund, Marie-Claude Krieva, Rumyana	2011	Timed Up & Go (TUG; Podsiadło & Richardson, 1991) Semitandem test. Extract from the scale of Tinetti (Tinetti, 1986) Quality of Life Scale (QOLS; Flanagan, 1970) Modification of the modification of Quality of Life Scale (QOLS; Flanagan 1970) used by Wetheimer (2008)	Mobility and falls in the elderly Balance and mobility in a straight line (foot-foot) It relates physical health and illness	Original Adaptation Adaptation
Doc.7. COPC	Article	¿Podemos mejorar nuestra salud mental a través de la Danza?: una revisión sistemática	Revista: Nuevas Tendencias en Educación Física, Deporte y Recreación, núm.24, julio-diciembre 2013, pp 194-197	Paella Mokelo, Carmen Coerón López, Javier	2013	Wetheimer (2008) Adaptation of modification of the Questionnaire for caregivers in Appendix used for Wetheimer (2008)	Link physical Health and Parkinson's disease in relations a dance class and carers of Parkinson's patients	Adaptation
Doc.8. COPC	Article	Systematic review of the impact of arts for health activities on health, wellbeing and quality of life of older people living in care homes	Dementia 0(0) 1-25	Curtis, Amy Gibson, Lucy O'Brien, Mary Roe, Brenda	2017			
Doc.9. COPC	Article	¿Y si prescribimos arte? El papel del arte en la mejora de la salud y el bienestar	Rev. Med. Cien. 2020; 16(3), 149-153 Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca	Guardiola, Elena Batios, Josep-E	2020			

3rd phase. Questionnaire BDSP3rd-4th Years Applications

Following the DEXPLOS derivative systematic trajectory in this phase the measurement instrument created *ad hoc* is administered, where the quantitative data have been drawn up from the qualitative results (Canese, 2020). These correspond of the Categories and resulting from the direct observation of the sample group over the course of five years. The Subcategories resulting from the questionnaire *BDSP3rd-4th years* are the responses of the members of the sample group. Subsequently, the answers to the questionnaires are included into Cat. Each grouping of questions includes one open and one closed question, except for Cat.4. which only has one closed question. In the final classification elaborated all responses are grouped and frequencyd in: General Subcategory-Specific Subcategory-Concept.

- Cat.1 *Group* Table 7: Includes Question 1 - Question 2. First division into 20 *General Subcategories*. Second subdivision in 7 *Concepts*.
- Cat 2 *Weekly sessions* Table 8: Includes Question 3 - Question 6. First division into 18 *General Subcategories*. Second subdivision into 6 *Concepts*.
- Cat 3 *Psycho-physical content* Table 9a, Table 9b: Includes Question 4 - Question 5. First division into 2 *General Subcategories: Physical and Psycho*. Second division is divided into *Specific Subcategories*: 24 in *Physical* and 16 in *Psycho*. Third subdivision into *Concepts* depending on each *Specific Subcategory*, 6 in *Physical* and 5 in *Psycho*.
- Cat 4 *Dance now* Fig 4: Includes Question 7.
- Cat.5 *Scenic presentation* Table 10: Includes Question 8 - Question 9 - Question 10. First division into 23 *General Subcategories*. Second subdivision into 4 *Concepts*.

Table 7

Category 1. Group

Concept: Relational		Concept: Educational	
General Subcategories	Frequency	General Subcategories	Frequency
1. Meeting with equals	1	9. Learning	2
7. Involvement	1	10. Teaching	1
16. It is a family	1	17. Enrichment	1
Total	3	Total	4

Concept: Group		Concept: Emotional	
General Subcategories	Frequency	General Subcategories	Frequency
2. Group is a support	2	11. It got me out of the hole	1
3. Group is a welcoming space	2	15. It is a medicine	1
4. Friendly group	3	19. A lot	1
Total	7	Total	3

Concept: Free time		Concept: Sentimental	
General Subcategories	Frequency	General Subcategories	Frequency
5. Activity	1	13. Affection	2
12. Creation space	1	14. Phenomenal experience	1
18. Entertainment	1	20. We care deeply for each other	2
Total	3	Total	5

Concept: Reason for being	
General Subcategories	Frequency
6. Life	2
8. Grounding	1
Total	3

Table 8

Category 2. Sessions Weekly

Concept: Physics		Concept: Reason for being	
General Subcategories	Frequency	General Subcategories	Frequency
1. Maintenance	2	7. Life	2
10. Personal care	2	8. Grounding	1
13. I eat better	1	Total	3
Total	5		
Concept: Technique		Concept: Educational	
General Subcategories	Frequency	General Subcategories	Frequency
2. Discipline	3	6. Learning	2
3. Perfect	1	11. Mind and body memory fit	1
15. Short, I would work more days a week	1	14. Personal and personalized treatment	1
16. Work capacity	2	Total	4
Total	7		
Concept: Emotional		Concept: Sentimental	
General Subcategories	Frequency	General Subcategories	Frequency
4. Environmental fear	1	9. Emotion with colleagues	1
5. Preoccupation with self-demand	1	17. Emotion with the professionals	4
12. I feel important	1	18. Total love	1
Total	3	Total	6

Table 9a

Category 3. Psycho-Physical Content. General Subcategories Physical

Concept/States: Improvement		Concept/States: Discovery	
Specific Subcategories. Answer with somatic content	Frequency	Specific Subcategories. Answer with somatic content	Frequency
1. Nimble	1	11. Discovery of myself	1
2. I stand straighter	1	14. Discovery of new physical sensations	1
7. Healing	4	Total	2
8. Vital	1		
9. Feeling of physical growth	1		
18. I learn to take care of myself	1		
Total	9		

Concept/States: Action		Concept/States: Recognition	
Specific Subcategories. Answer with somatic content	Frequency	Specific Subcategories. Answer with somatic content	Frequency
3. I go over the body position mentally	1	12. I thank my body	1
4. Body maintenance	3	13. I forget the pains	3
10. Expression	1	15. I am good at exercise	1
16. Repeat the activity at home	1	21. Process from less to more	1
20. Body location	1	Total	6
Total	7		

Concept/States: In the negative		Concept/States: Sentimental	
Specific Subcategories. Answer with somatic content	Frequency	Specific Subcategories. Answer with somatic content	Frequency
5. Joint pains when I move	1	22. Excitement about exercise	1
6. I force myself to dance	2	23. Excitement about dance	4
17. I can keep up with the pace of the session	2	24. Internal relationship	1
19. I am calm, like being with a doctor	1	Total	6
Total	6		

Table 9b

Category 3. Psycho-Physical Content. General Subcategories Psycho

Concept/States: Improvement		Concept/States: Recognition	
Specific Subcategories. Answer with emotional content	Frequency	Specific Subcategories. Answer with emotional content	Frequency
6. Healing	1	8. Stimulated and animated	1
10. Trust	1	9. I love myself more	1
12. When I dance, I seem to change my personality	1	11. I feel loved	1
14. Conquer	1	Total	3
16. Release	1		
Total	5		

Concept/States: In the negative		Concept/States: Sensation	
Specific Subcategories. Answer with emotional content	Frequency	Specific Subcategories. Answer with emotional content	Frequency
3. Ridiculous, but I do not care	1	1. Well	1
5. More capable than I imagined	1	2. Happy	3
15. Without complexes	2	13. I feel phenomenal	1
Total	4	Total	5

Concept/States: Discovery	
Specific Subcategories. Answer with emotional content	Frequency
4. I am myself	1
7. I feel powerful	1
Total	2

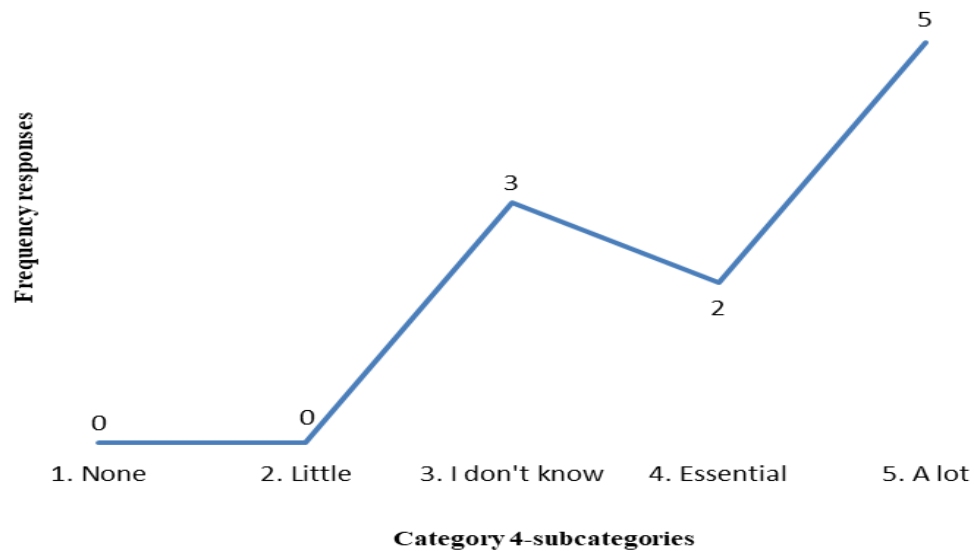


Figure 4. Category 4. Dance Now.

Table 10

Category 5. Performance

Concept: By herself		Concept: By the public	
General Subcategories	Frequency	General Subcategories	Frequency
1. It matters	3	5. Education for the public	2
4. I need it	1	9. Not initially, but now yes	1
6. You heal on the inside and express this outward	1	13. For delivery	1
7. You transform	2	17. It is to give to the other	2
10. When I go on stage, nothing hurts	1	20. Communication with the public	2
11. You do not think about anything	1	Total	8
15. I always love it	1		
18. I like the space	2		
19. Because it helps me lose my fear	2		
22. I am myself	1		
Total	15		

Concept: It is not necessary		Concept: By the group	
General Subcategories	Frequency	General Subcategories	Frequency
2. It is not essential	2	8. It is the development of the work done	2
3. For me, it is not important	1	12. Group complicity	4
16. I do not know	1	14. For a job well done	1
21. I do not like communicating with the public	1	23. Because of the group-family that we are	6
Total	5	Total	13

Ethical Considerations and Ethical Approval

Within the context of the study, the members participated voluntarily. All research processes were carried out with the prior authorization of those participating in the sample, and all were informed of the objectives and conditions of participation. In using the data, ethical principles have been used that guarantee the anonymity of the group members.

The design and implementation of the study has been approved by the ethics and biosafety committee of the University of Girona (UdG) number CEBSRUdG01.

Results

The results of this study are divided into two sections. One result is in relation to the theoretical foundation and the other are results in relation to instruments responses.

Results in Relation to the Theoretical Foundation Provided by Docs.COPC

This part of the results is intended to introduce the research analysis part of Docs.COPC. Docs.COPC are composed of studies, research, and articles. The analysis of these documents shows that none of the instrument used can evaluate the object of this research. Their analysis indicates that the instruments used are partially applicable. However, all of them are linked to the first question of this research: How does dance affect socially vulnerable groups?

Four are highlighted that specifically relate dance to 3rd and 4th year participants:

Doc.1.COPC, Doc.2.COPC, Doc.5.COPC and Doc.8.COPC. There are three: Doc.3.COPC, Doc.5.COPC and Doc.6.COPC from which measuring instruments could be extracted. The rest relate the psycho-physical-social level to the execution or not of exercise and to the practice or not of artistic experiences with people of any age, with people of mental health, people with severe dementia or with Parkinson's. From Doc.6.COPC that uses measuring instruments, the sample is of people with Parkinson's, it differs from our sample which are healthy people in their 3rd and 4th age. The study relates an original scale, the UPDRS by Fahn et al. Scala III specific to Parkinson's, and concludes that people with Parkinson's have positive changes in mobility after taking a dance class.

Another observation is that there are three systematic reviews: Doc.1.COPC, Doc.7.COPC, where a review of scientific literature on dance and mental health is carried out; at some point in the research approaching the older population. In Doc.8.COPC, the impact of the arts on the quality life of the older adults living in care homes is reviewed. The extracted data indicate that they are controlled, verified, and validated searches with research teams. None of the mentioned documents use measurement instruments.

Regarding regular participation in a dance session, Doc.6.COPC evaluates people in dance classes for eight months, and after seventeen months of research, the results are still being seen in the participants: "The aim of this study was to investigate the immediate effect after the dance class (called short-term effect) on motor control in individuals also with PDi, in particular, as various aspects of mobility they change for dance class" (Heiberger et al., 2011, p. 2). The information from Doc.9.COPC is relevant as it carries out a review from a medical perspective, that relates the role of art with health and wellbeing.

As can be seen in Table 6, the measurement instruments show physical qualities of movement, such as balance, strength, etc. However, they do not measure what dance alone brings: rhythm, beat, expression, creativity of movement, etc. Physical activity and dancing are useful for maintaining and promoting health (Mavrovouniotis et al., 2010). Doc.3.COPC evaluates the emotional response of social dance from people with dementia. They evaluate the pathological aspects of the behaviour with the GBS rating scale, using it in its original

sense. However, we cannot use this study because we work with healthy people. The search we carried out does not focus on disease or deterioration, as most of the Docs.COPC do “emotional reaction to social dancing and walks” (Palo-Bengsston et al., 2002, p. 151).

Nevertheless, the work with social dance is a reason to take the article into account so we pay attention to the comparative results related to the inductive method of reaction rather than the emotional classification; as well as the part of the social relationship which indicates that when practicing a physical exercise this increases; concluding that the patient-caregiver relationship and what physical activity transmits goes beyond the dance activity itself, it goes in line with the social relationship with the group (Palo-Bengsston et al., p. 2002).

The only study that only works with older people and dance is Doc.5.COPC. It compares a control group that watches TV and goes shopping with a group doing traditional Greek dances, evaluating the physical aspect of dance exercise with anxiety, as a psychological aspect, using the SEES measurement instruments of Mac Auley & Courulya and SAI by Spielberger et al. “The results generally indicate that these Greek traditional dances have enhancing properties the psychosomatic state of people, which is not comparable those of buying and watching the television session” (Mavrovouniotis et al., 2010, p. 214).

Results in Relation to Instrument Responses

The *General Subcategories* and *Specific Subcategories* are qualitative responses. These *Subcategories* are grouped into qualitative *Concepts*, according to the meaning of each response. These qualitative *Concepts* generate quantitative data, resulting from the frequency of responses, and facilitate the management of the data from the *General Subcategories* of *Cat. 1, 2, and 5* and the *Specific Subcategories* of *Cat. 3*. In *Cat. 1, 2, and 5*, dividing them into *Specific Subcategories* was not considered necessary since the questions do not have a double response; as is the case in *Category 3* where the responses are divided into psychological or physical content, thus generating a *Concept* directly.

In *Cat. 3*, for type of questions, there are General and *Specific Subcategories*, these latter ones are given the same value range in the *Concept* categorization as the *Concept* categorization of *Cat. 1, 2, and 5*. This helps us clarify the overall reading of the data analysis.

Groupings by Categories:

Cat. 1: Responses are related to relationships, leisure, educational point, emotional aspect, and purpose. Each *Concept* represents 11% of the overall responses. The concept of group encompasses everything related to personal support and esteem and is identified with the more psychological aspect of a relationship, along with contact with peers as social identification, representing 49% of the responses. These Subcategories have a component that is not related

to the artistic aspect, but rather to the emotional aspect from individual (esteem) to relational with the peer group.

The participants actively participate and what I have seen is that it has transformed them as people. With the participants of the project, you create a community, from here they are linked in many things that happen around them, otherwise they would stay locked in their homes. (19th January 2021- interview Elisabeth Ruiz i Fernàndez, technical manager of the Antic Teatre)

Cat. 2: The reason for the action, 23%, indicate that the weekly work meeting is valued as part of the activity within their ageing process. Next, 19% on the sentimental *Concept* that includes the relationship generated between all group members, both professionals and users, indicating the importance of feeling identified with others, of feeling part (individual) of a whole (group). Regarding attendance, 57% reflect the pleasure of effort and the weekly meeting and evaluate this positively.

Cat. 3: In relation to psycho-physical content, responses on the *Physical state* are more abundant (36 responses), than on the *Emotional state* (19 responses). The difficulty in naming certain emotional states, explaining intimacies, as opposed to the ease of talking about the physical state, ailments, and improvements is not so difficult because one can distance oneself from the personal part. We also keep in mind the group's goal, its artistic purpose, marks its idiosyncrasy. If we compare this with *Cat. 2*, it is surprising because one could deduce a not-so-close relationship, but when we observe the responses individually, we realize that despite a bias towards most responses, the *Emotional Subcategory* exceeds the *Somatic Subcategory* in percentage. *Cat. 3* is divided into two subcategories: *Somatic* and *Emotional*. To evaluate response frequencies, the same concepts have been maintained, except for the more specific concepts of the *Somatic content* or the *Emotional content*. Thus, the *Improvement Concept* is 26% in the *Emotional content Subcategory* and 25% in the *Somatic content Subcategory*. The *Negative Concept* is 21% in the *Emotional content* and 17% in the *Somatic content*. The *Discovery Personal Concept* has 11% and 6% with 2 response frequencies in each *Subcategory*, and regarding the *Recognition Concept*, this is 18% in the *Emotional content Subcategory* and 16% in the *Somatic content Subcategory*. Finally, in the *Somatic content Subcategory*, we identify the *Sentimental Concept*, which is 17% compared to the *Sensation Concept*, 18% in the *Emotional content Subcategory*. In this way, we observe that carrying out dance activities weekly, results in an improvement in both the physical and psychological state of the participants.

Cat. 4: In relation to dance at the current moment of their lives. Following the Likert scale with five items from least to most, if we count the scale in the classic way in which the middle

field is a positive response, 100% of the responses indicate that dance is vital. On the other hand, following criteria contrasted with the research team, we consider that the "*Do not know*" item is equivalent to not giving importance to dance at the current moment of their lives. This data represents a 30% negative against the 70% positive Likert scale value. Of this last value, 20% point to the 4th item and 50% to the highest item.

Cat. 5: In relation to stage presentation, for what it represents for oneself and the group itself, it is the reason why they make the performance, as well as to feel different and for new sensations. The *Concept for Oneself* and *for the Group* that implies the feeling of sharing with each other 37%, and the complicity generated between them 32%.

Discussion

This study demonstrates that a social dance group with people in their 3rd and 4th age goes beyond a mere physical function, generating social containment and cohesion, learning, and a boost in life as well Padilla and Coterón (2013).

The results show how dance is a good tool to use when working with social groups, allowing for in-depth work with vulnerable collectives, thus confirming studies by (Bilitza, 2021; Iranzo-Domingo et al., 2022). These dance types of interventions allows for comprehensive work with vulnerable collectives in terms of physical, emotional, relational, and psychological aspects.

Authors like Mavrovouniotis et al. (2010) indicate in their research that dance practice is one of the artistic and social expressions *par excellence* for healthy ageing. Hurtado and Lopera (2019) highlight how dance is an important tool for the development of active ageing objectives, emphasizing social dance spaces with artistic projection for the persons 65 years and older.

The findings presented here clearly show the high value of recognition and social belonging developed by the group of older people over the five years of the study. The research provides evidence that intervening through social dance improves both physical health through dance activity, and mental and social health through feelings of affiliation, relationships, and belonging to a social group, as well as the practice of dance contributing to healthy ageing by allowing people recognition and belonging to a social group Hurtado and Lopera (2019). This research reaffirms a space for learning and containment is generated, predisposing, and establishing social relationships (Cañabate et al., 2016), creating a space of safety (Arboleda et al., 2018; Iranzo-Domingo et al., 2022) throughout the sessions isolating them from the risk of social exclusion Walsh and Urbaniak (2023).

Throughout the research, it is observed that within the group, individual profit prevails over group profit and within this, the physical aspect over the psychological aspect. This last aspect indicates that new models of body behaviour are learned by observing oneself and others, and they also learn to share individual work and advances with the rest of the group (Lizardi, 2002). They value everything that directly affects their physical and social improvement more highly, leaving the psycho-emotional part in relation to new learnings, discoveries, educational aspects, fears, the gaze of others - *external recognition* - and the staging in second place.



Figure 5. Performance Les Vedettes. Antic Teatre. (Image Credit: Alessia Bombaci).

Limitations and New Lines of Research

Regarding participant observation, there is a placement of subjectivity-objectivity assuming this deviation as explained by Sierra-Bravo (2001) as a professional ethics in relation to observation. As for the validity control to extrapolate or generalize, it is a unique sample in terms of the project type due to the long-term follow-up of 51 months. However, if we only consider the number of participants, the sample can be considered small.

The biggest difficulty has been in the search for validated instruments or tests. This led us to corroborate the lack of instruments to validate social dance groups, dance in particular and performing arts in general, with practice in groups of 3rd and 4th age people. This lack is, on the other hand, a new research line that leads to revalidating the new instrument generated *BDSP* 3rd-4th years with other social groups, as well as creating new measurement scales that relate other aspects of dance practice and the older adults.

Conclusion

The conclusions respond to the research questions and the objective of this study. Regarding the long follow-up of the group has generated an intense connection, facilitating the collection of information and data. In this sense, it has contributed to the identification of what was intended to be analyzed in relation to movement and dance.

The results obtained would also be in the same line as the main idea of linking dance with older people, which is based on the positive relationship that movement has on the body (Padilla and Coterón, 2013). In this sense the results show that the physical changes evidenced by older people who practice dance regularly, directly affect their psycho-emotional state (Hurtado and Lopera, 2019). Relation to the group itself, it should be noted that it plays a supporting and empowering role, being the facilitator of the connection of some with others.

As shown by other studies (Popović et al., 2017, Kshtriya et al., 2015; Axelerad et al., 2022) it is observed that the dance, the group, and the stage performance are a vital motor for the members. Nevertheless, extracted data show as individual perspectives are above group perspectives. The result shows that dance itself provides better motor expressiveness, stimulates the capacity to think, memorize and create, allows for perception, manifestation, and development of sensitivity, imagination, and communication. The study presented emphasizes how dance, there is learning, improvement, patience, group feeling and belonging, psychological wellbeing, and physical wellbeing (Teixeira-Machado et al., 2018). As conclusions from the observations made the body is a source of communication and expression., where the movement is the means to channel emotions, to understand personal and group possibilities and limitations, to appreciate interpersonal and intrapersonal capacities, and to learn to detect personal patterns of repetition.

As a final conclusion, contrasting the experience of the participants as the sessions and years have passed, and the theory gathered, we consider that dance helps to improve the psycho-physical state of people in their 3rd and 4th age as well as to generate a socializing space. Therefore, from the results, we can infer that dance contributes to healthy and active ageing; the weekly sessions are included in patterns as a dyadic ritual and help structure the weeks, even becoming a reason for meeting with their peers in a creative group where they feel like members, as they themselves verbally expressed. Moreover, the social dance group values the social skills of the participants in the group, as evidenced by the analysed responses of the sample group. Social dance is the entity that combines this aesthetic manifestation and social nature and is significant when working with socially vulnerable groups. Finally, it is emphasized that both the intervention and the benefits obtained in this research can be extrapolated to other groups and other countries.

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon request.

Conflict of Interest No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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