

MENTAL EFFECT OF DANCE AMONG THE PERFORMING ARTS STUDENTS OF CITY COLLEGE OF ANGELES

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Abstract

This descriptive quantitative study describes Dance's effect and its different forms on mental health. The respondents of this study are students taking Bachelor of Performing Arts at City College of Angeles. The MEDQ (22-item) was utilized to gather data from the respondents through an online survey. The said questionnaire has undergone pilot testing for non-BPA students (N=50) with ($\alpha=.975$ and $.946$), which confirms that the said instrument can be used for the conduct of the study. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to describe the effects of Dance and its different forms on mental health. After data were gathered from 83 BPA students, the results showed that Dance positively affects their mental health (e.g., eliminates worries, boosts confidence, satisfaction, develops self-image, and stress reliever). Results found that most of the BPA students answered that Dance has a good impact and is beneficial to them, especially to their mental aspect. From the results obtained, it is highly recommended to provide different seminars and exposures for the students to gain knowledge about the benefits of Dance based on different dance forms to students' mental health. These findings provide new information to students and professionals interested in conducting research studies relating to Dance and mental health. Further investigation is also recommended to support this research study.

Keywords: *Mental Effect of Dance, Dance Genre, Mental Health, Performing Arts*

INTRODUCTION

The coronavirus has already spread globally; it brings everything out of order wherein it includes different countries go into economic collapse, lot of people became jobless, and even killed millions of people in a short period. This situation is already enough to make people depressed and think that the world will become chaotic. Amid pandemic caused by this virus, COVID-19, many things have been changed, including the mental health of people that may affect their daily lives. Mental health is one of the important aspects of humans; it involves emotions, thinking capability and behaviour.

During pandemic, more people feel stressed and hopeless that the situation might not go back to normal, especially on what it used to be. Self-isolation and quarantine can also negatively impact an individual's mental health (Wang et al., 2021), especially when it involves loss of freedom, other people get easily bored, separation of important people, and confusion that can cause deterioration in an individual's mental health status. This study aims to know on how people can still be mentally good, stable, and healthy through dancing and how it affects and help them to be mentally fit even in the middle of pandemic. In this research study, many things can be discovered and applied to people's lives, especially on how to overcome this kind of situation that everyone is struggling with.

As mentioned by Meo et al. (2020), pandemic is a phenomenon, individuals and the society are affected by it; it causes stress, disruption and anxiety. The individual's behavior as a society member will also be affected by this pandemic. Because of the transmission of the COVID-19, it causes lockdowns in every place, social distancing, isolation, and closure of educational institutes and workplaces (Javed et al., 2020). This is in response to this global health crisis implemented by international and government health organizations (Al Dhaheri et al., 2021). In this case, the mental health of an individual is surely affected. During this pandemic, we can see the impact of economic disruption on professional and health-related stress. The impacts of the virus on mental health are unprecedented in present times due to these kinds of situations, and as healthcare professionals, they must be aware of how COVID has impacted the lives of their patients. This is not only alarming to patients and health professionals, but as well to those who are in the academe, especially students. Of the 195 students, 138 (71%) indicated increased stress and anxiety due to the COVID-19 outbreak (Son et al., 2020). Identified stressors which contributed to the increased level of stress, anxiety and depressive thoughts among students, added by Son et al. (2020). These includes worry about their own health and loved ones, difficulty in concentrating, sleeping pattern disruptions, and increased concern in academic performance.

This research study aims to determine how Bachelor of Performing Arts (BPeA) students in City College of Angeles can mentally overcome the present situation, which is the cause of this pandemic, through Dance as therapy. Dance is beneficial for mental health; it can be used for stress reduction, anxiety and depression. It may help students to be motivated enough to perform and involve dancing as their main therapy that can heal and improve their mental health. In dancing, it will help students connect to others and make them happier and engage more in this kind of physical activity. Dance can be used as a way of socializing to others in person and it doesn't matter if it is done virtually, considering the situation that social distancing should still be practiced every time. Being connected to others is better than being alone; it gives them more time to think about wonderful things together, on what kind of Dance they will perform, rather than thinking alone about what this pandemic did to the world and people.

This research study's importance is to show the students that Dance can also make a change into a person's life, specifically to their mental health. It can heal people's way of thinking and make them think more about the positive side of the situation. Dance can also be the best medicine for students who suffer from anxiety and depression. It makes their mind more relaxed and they can express their emotions because in Dance, the body is the one that speaks and give meaning that the mouth cannot show. Therefore, the researchers would like to conduct this study to prove that Dance as therapy is veritably effective in healing one's mental health.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Dance movement therapy (DMT) and Dance are effective, especially for decreasing clinical symptoms like depression and anxiety, on the other hand DMT and Dance are good and effective for increasing life's quality. Positive impacts were also found to improve and increase of subjective well-being, body image, affect and positive mood. As stated by Ravelin et al. (2009) dance implies body movements, interactions, expressions, and steps. It is a human resource learned from the culture. The outcomes of it are most likely functional. It includes the person's

physical and emotional health, well-being, and the capability to cooperate to other people in daily life. Based on this concept, Dance can be used as a nursing intervention.

Dance has shown to have psychological and physical benefits. Dance may offer a different way, especially to enhance mood, specifically to those exercising at home. Mental health experts can also consider the Dance as a mental health intervention in addition to more traditional therapeutic approaches and as a social prescription intervention (McKenzie et al., 2021). During the pandemic, dance works that choreographers have produced was performed through digital media (Yanuartuti & Handayani, 2020). Also, dancers relied on media movements with limited space in the environment around the house. Media is a new medium to support performance or Dance. This paper discusses the effect of creating Dance during pandemic. Kiepe et al. (2012) had tested the impact of dance movements. Ballroom dance is considered as a therapeutic medium for the people with cancer, heart failure, type 2 diabetes, dementia, Parkinson syndrome, fibromyalgia and depression. This study showed that dance therapy has good effect on patients with breast cancer, improving quality of life and relieving depression. Added by Kiepe, et. al., that Dance has physical and psychological impact.

Dance movement therapy illustrated the relationship between the client's improvement of life's quality, reduction of stress, coping, and psychodynamic-oriented DMT. A person that performed dance improvisation, spatial synchrony and those who received focused treatment sessions exhibited improved daily life and decreased anxiety and depression. This only shows that the results indicate that dance movement therapy is really associated in improving well-being and the other DMT should undergo further study and investigation to see and demonstrates its effectiveness (Bräuninger, 2014).

Life itself was considered as a dance. Some people are talented in terms of dancing. However, regardless of dealing with life, dance therapy is one thing that can have some benefits. Dance therapy is very popular, it can cure some of the problems. It can help people with physical, cognitive, social and other problems in life. Physically, dancing can help by releasing natural painkillers in one's brain. The more the person moves, there are high possibilities to lose weight. It can improve heart health and in dancing and exercising, it can make a person physically fit. Mentally, exercise can help a person to reduce depression and anxiety, it also provides distraction in a good way. Dance being a hobby can help people overcome their trauma (Editorial Team, 2022).

In the study of Sivvas et al. (2015) conducted research to know what any form of Dance that an asset for improving human health can be. "Health" is used to describe each individual's mental, physical, and social well-being. With the help of a review of literature of the last decade used as a method of gathering data collection, some studies were already found. These are studies that deal with all kinds of Dance and their effects on a dancer's health. In this research, health and people who suffer various diseases are involved. These diseases included breast cancer, obesity, osteoporosis, hearing loss and depression. From the results of the studies, it was concluded that Dance helps in many ways to improve and preserve human health, it maintains the physical state in good level, it also concerns about mental health by minimizing depression and stress.

Study of Millman et al. (2021) stated that Dance movement therapy (DMT) has been recognized and used as a treatment and it focuses on physical and psychological well-being in individuals

with physical, medical or neurological illnesses. It was concluded that by placing DMT within the context of contemporary cognitive neuroscience research and discussing potential mechanisms by which DMT can reduce psychiatric symptoms. DMT has clear potential as a treatment for that symptom. Thus, further research on this topic is warranted.

In line with this, there were numerous studies which all have been conducted internationally to different set of sectors and population. In this, the researchers would like to determine if Dance can serve as a therapy for students experiencing mental health issues in a local city college setting. Thus, further investigation should be conducted.

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative-descriptive study aims to describe the mental effect of dance and its different forms to students' mental health to students taking Bachelor of Performing Arts (BPeA) at City College of Angeles.

The sampling technique used for this study is purposive sampling. Inclusion and exclusion criteria have been set to ensure the validity of data used in the study. All participants should be: (1) students taking Bachelor of Performing Arts, (2) 1st-4th year level, (3) shall be within the age range of 18-50 years old, and (4) either male or female. Participants who have not satisfied the criteria set by the researchers will automatically be ineligible to partake in the study. *Raosoft Sample Size Calculator* was used to determine the target sample size of respondents with a high level of accuracy. The total population of students taking Bachelor of Performing Arts is 111, and the target sample size is 83 with a 5% margin of error and 94% confidence level.

The questionnaire that will be used in the study has been formulated and created by the researchers. The instrument aims to know the different views of respondents to the mental effects of Dance. It was named as "Mental Effect of Dance Questionnaires (MEDQ)," which is 22-item questionnaire subdivided into two (2) categories: Mental Effects of Dance and Effects of Different Genres. Responses are then recorded by 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 4 (Always). The formulated questionnaire underwent Pilot testing on non-BPeA students (N=50), where Cronbach's Alpha for Mental effects of Dance is (.975) with mean of (51.68) and Effects of different genre is (.946) with mean of (16.58). Internal consistencies of all categories are both Excellent (>0.9) and (>0.9). Therefore, the tool can be used for conduct of study.

Mean (M), Standard Deviation (SD) and Percentage (%) will be used to know the two categories: Mental effects of Dance and Effects of Different Genre from MEDQ. After analyzing all data, implication and recommendation for the study will be provided. In order to facilitate the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained, the researcher will follow the point scale interpretation to describe per item response for the effects of Dance and its different forms to mental health of the students shown in Table 1:

Table 1. DESCRIPTIVE EQUIVALENT

Range of Weighted Mean Values	Description/Interpretation
3.26 – 4.00	Very High
2.51 – 3.25	Moderately High
1.76 – 2.50	Low

1.00 – 1.75	Very Low
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RESULTS

In order to analyze the results from the data obtained, IBM SPSS 26 has been used. The MEDQ were answered by 378 students taking BPeA at City College of Angeles, Pampanga, Philippines.

Table 2. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF STUDENTS

Profile	N	%
Year Level		
1 st Year	34	41.0 %
2 nd Year	32	38.6 %
3 rd Year	17	20.5 %
Gender		
Male	41	49.4 %
Female	42	50.6 %

The table shows the demographic distribution of the respondents as to gender and year. There eighty-three (83) Performing Arts Students (respondents) involved in this study from 1st year to 4th year. From 1st year to 4th year, there are 49.4% are male (n= 41) and 50.6% female (n= 42). There are 1st year respondents (n= 34) which is equivalent to 41.0% followed by the 2nd year (n= 32) students which is equivalent to 38.6%. Lastly, for the 4th year students (n= 17), which is equivalent to 20.5%.

Table 3. MENTAL EFFECT OF DANCE

Statements	Mean	SD	Interpretation
<i>I feel calm</i>	3.07	0.8232	Moderately High
<i>I feel peaceful</i>	3.06	0.8017	Moderately High
<i>I become energetic</i>	3.12	0.8024	Moderately High
<i>I become an optimistic person</i>	2.93	0.8082	Moderately High
<i>I feel alive</i>	3.19	0.8619	Moderately High
<i>I feel enthusiastic</i>	3.00	0.8115	Moderately High
<i>I feel more focused</i>	3.06	0.8017	Moderately High
<i>Dancing can help me to be mentally stable</i>	3.08	0.8999	Moderately High
<i>Dancing helps me find meaning on the connection between movement and emotions. (Spirit, Body and Soul)</i>	3.18	0.8575	Moderately High
<i>Dancing eliminates my worries</i>	3.02	0.8407	Moderately High
<i>Dance boosts my confidence</i>	3.18	0.9258	Moderately High
<i>I feel satisfied</i>	3.11	0.8556	Moderately High
<i>It enhances my memory</i>	3.14	0.8573	Moderately High
<i>It boosts my self-esteem</i>	3.16	0.8480	Moderately High
<i>It helps develop my self-image</i>	3.17	0.8088	Moderately High
<i>It improves my alertness</i>	3.17	0.7622	Moderately High
Total	3.10	0.7154	Moderately High

This table illustrates that most of the students responded that they feel alive in Dance (M=3.19, SD=.86), and it can boost their confidence (M=3.18, SD=.93) which both correspond to

“Moderately High Range.” Furthermore, dancing develops their self-image ($M=3.16$, $SD=.85$) and improves their alertness ($M=3.17$, $SD=.76$) which both corresponds to “Moderately High Range.” Few of them say it eliminates Worries ($M=3.02$, $SD=.84$) which corresponds to “Moderately High Range.” Overall, the general weighted mean on the mental effects of Dance was found to be “Moderately High Range” ($M= 3.10$, $SD=.71$).

Table 4. EFFECTS OF DIFFERENT GENRE TO MENTAL HEALTH

Statements	Mean	SD	Interpretation
<i>Dancing Jazz helps me eliminate stress</i>	2.81	0.8331	Moderately High
<i>Dancing Hip-hop boosts my energy</i>	3.24	0.9185	Moderately High
<i>Contemporary Dance can be a great stress buster</i>	2.94	0.7863	Moderately High
<i>Contemporary Dance improves my mood</i>	2.96	0.7878	Moderately High
<i>Performing Folk Dances makes mind at ease</i>	2.84	0.8037	Moderately High
<i>Ballroom dancing can help enhance concentration</i>	2.81	0.8331	Moderately High
Total	2.93	0.6774	Moderately High

This table shows that Different Dance Genre positively affects the BPeA students. In these six (6) items/statements, most of the students can boost their energy on Hip-Hop Dance ($M= 3.24$, $SD=. 0.92$) and can improve their mood in Contemporary Dance ($M= 2.96$, $SD= 0.79$) which corresponds to “Moderately High Range.” Few of the respondent says that dancing Jazz helps them eliminate their Stress ($M=2.81$, $SD=0.83$). Overall, the general weighted mean on effects of the different genre was found to be “Moderately High Range” ($M= 2.93$, $SD= 0.68$).

DISCUSSION

The Mental Effects of Dance was presented as the goal of the study. Therefore, it was best to discuss the effects of Dance based on the collected data from the respondents. In this study, the researchers found out that almost all students were using Dance as an intervention for their mental state. In the study of Humphries & Basso (2022) regarding the effect of online dancing, the results revealed that it acutely improves mental health as measured by increased positive effect and self-esteem and decreased negative affect and depression. Dance can boost their confidence, become lively, and eliminate worries. Furthermore, because of dancing, it improves their alertness and develops their self-image. As stated by Ravelin et al. (2006) dance implies body movements, interactions, expressions, and steps. The outcomes of it are most likely functional. It includes the person’s physical and emotional health, well-being, and the capability to cooperate with other people in daily life.

In regards to the effects of different genres to the mental health of BPeA students, most of the Performing Arts students are really into Dance based on the collected data. Based on the results, most of the students boost their energy in dancing Hip-Hop, while some improve their mood in dancing Contemporary Dance. Lastly, dancing Jazz can help students to eliminate their stress. It only shows that whatever genre of Dance is preferred by respondents, it is still effective as a coping mechanism. In relation to Bräuninger (2014) study, Dance movement therapy demonstrated the relationship between the client's improvement in quality of life, reduction of stress, coping, and the use of psychodynamic-oriented dance movement therapy. Also in the study of Koch et al. (2019) results suggest that DMT decreases depression and anxiety and increases quality of life and interpersonal and cognitive skills, whereas dance interventions increase (psycho-)motor skills.

CONCLUSION

The researchers concluded that Dance is effective as one of the coping mechanisms for Performing Arts students in terms of having a Mental health problem (some became energetic, feel alive, more focused, and satisfied in dancing). Furthermore, dancing can have a better impact on the student's mental aspect that helps them overcome their problems.

In this study, researchers found out that different dance genres have different effects on BPeA students. Some of the dances can help students eliminate stress, others improve their mood, they can also enhance their concentration, and other students can boost their energy in dancing. It only means that Dance can have a great role in the lives of Performing Arts Students.

The implication of the study shows that Dance is beneficial to the mental health of the Performing Arts students, wherein Dance has a good impact on their lives (eliminates worries, boosts confidence, satisfaction, develops self-image, and stress reliever). It only shows that Dance can help students who are experiencing in terms of the mental aspect. The researchers also concluded that Dance not only focuses on physical development but also it has a good effect on the mental health of the BPA students.

RECOMMENDATION

This research study revealed the effectiveness of Dance in the Mental Health of Bachelor of Performing Arts Students (BPeA). Therefore, the following recommendations are hereby presented:

- Since the effectiveness of Dance was proven, teachers who are experts in the fields of Dance should train their students and give them more exposure to help them develop themselves and have more understanding of dancing, and how it may affect their future careers, especially as a future performer.
- Professionals and choreographers must explain more about the different genres of Dance, so that students will gain more knowledge about it. Professionals can impart their knowledge by providing an event or programs like seminars, webinars, and performances to explain how it affects the students physically and mentally.
- Lastly, a similar study must be conducted in the whole school or to a larger group of people to describe and discover if the findings were the same in other settings, especially in other schools that offer a Bachelor of Performing Arts Program. Further investigation is highly recommended.

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