

Research Paper

Differences in perfectionism and happiness among classical and freestyle dancers

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ABSTRACT

Dance is an art form that is practised and performed all around the world by a great mass of artists. A variety of dance forms also prevail over long decades of time. Happiness and perfectionism are certain common and important influential factors among the dancers. Perfectionism remains a personality trait and happiness is an important aspect of well-being in an individual. The present study tries to investigate the relation between these factors and analyse the differences in them among the people who perform classical and freestyle dances. A total of 100 dancers including both classical and freestyle dancers in equal size were considered for the present study. The Subjective Happiness Scale (1999) and Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (1990) were the tools used to analyse the extent of happiness and perfectionism among the population and the results were statistically analysed using Pearson's correlation, independent sample t-test and simple linear regression. The study concluded that happiness and perfectionism are unrelated and that happiness level shows no much difference among the differing styles of dance. Perfectionism is revealed to differ within the different dance styles with a higher level in the classical dancers and hence the style of dance is a predictor of a dancer's perfectionism.

Keywords: *Perfectionism, Happiness, Classical dancers, Freestyle dancers.*

Dance can be considered as a powerful impulse and the art of dance as the expressive channeling of the impulse by skillful artists through controlled and synchronized body movements in accordance to a music that pleases both the artists and the spectators. A variety of dance styles are practiced in different parts of the world over very long periods of time. Indian dance forms have remained to be of remarkable interest for the audience and is dominated by the Classical dance forms which includes Bharatnatyam, Kathak, Kuchipudi, Manipuri, Satriya, Mohiniyattam, Kathakali and Odissi. Apart from the classical dance forms, many more other varieties of dance forms have come into practice from the recent past with the more preferred one being freestyle. It's a variety of dance which isn't bound to rules or a fixed choreography; rather it involves the spontaneous movement of the body as

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Received: May 5, 2020; Revision Received: June 8, 2020; Accepted: June 25, 2020

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they wish to. Dance is the expression of the soul and hence it provides the dancers with satisfaction, happiness and pleasure. Beyond the factor of personal satisfaction, perfectionism has been an important factor that has been stressed upon by the performers. The strive for perfectionism has become something that makes an elite artist and also a factor that pulls off the stress level of artists. Many studies have revealed that perfectionism is instructed and influenced by the masters of the artists which compels them to work harder to get in line.

Perfectionism is an individual personality trait and is multidimensional. It's considered to include the tendency to make overly critical self-evaluations about one's acts and to maintain extremely high standards of performance. They mostly strive for a proper plan, structure and organisation of tasks. This can result in better results of performances and at the same time affect a person adversely. It could develop a feeling within oneself that one's performances are never good enough and fall into rumination and worry about making mistakes. Psychologist Harriet B. Braiker explained that striving for excellence would motivate an individual, but striving for perfection would be demoralising. The study results by Nordin Bates and Jennifer Cumming (2011) have revealed that perfectionist dancers were comparatively more prone to lower self-confidence, debilitating imagery and anxiety levels than other dancers. Fitting into a predetermined mould is perfectionism and the ability to explore the inner talent in unique ways is excellence. Striving for excellence than perfectionism can thus be considered more important for personal growth and development. A 2019 study by Thomas Curran and Andrew Hill reported that perfectionism is leading in a higher pace in the present than the future and suggested that it increases depression, anorexia, bulimia, anxiety and suicide. The renowned dancer Bhavana Reddy has explained about those untiring and hard efforts on the verge of giving up which makes one a perfectionistic Kuchipudi dancer. The statement is one among those many similar explanations by famous dancers who support the same concept of extraordinary zeal and pressure behind perfectionism which may or may not be tolerant to individuals.

Art forms are related to pleasure, enthusiasm and happiness to the artists and the audience. Intrinsic motivation is the strong component that drives every artist to perform better, rather than any other external determinants. It remains the major force that compels themselves to work harder and face the various obstacles within their path and keep them going in their artwork with passion and commitment. The extent of happiness, satisfaction and motivation would vary from one individual to the other, but remains the basic rejuvenating energy of every artist. Happiness and perfectionism can be considered as two influential factors in the life of dancers. To know the extent to which these factors vary among dancers of different dance forms would be beneficial. The present study aims to find the differences in the perfectionism and happiness among classical dancers and freestyle dancers along with knowing if the style of dance predicts perfectionism in an artist.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Previous literature shows a variety of studies relating perfectionism and overall well-being of individuals. Bhaskar Chakraborty and Samirranjan Adhikari in 2014 explained in their study that perfectionism is a personality trait and a change in such traits are extremely difficult. Stoeber J.(2011) clearly explains through his study the well and ill effects of perfectionism. It says that a concern for perfectionism would be maladaptive but a striving for perfectionism would form a healthy striving for excellence. This concept was also supported by Kelly J. D. (2015) by clarifying that creativity, happiness, inspiration and productivity get stunted when perfectionism becomes the only option and that successful

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people are found less likely to be perfectionists. On the contrary, study by Hill AP, Stoeber J., Brown A., and Appleton PR. (2014) revealed that imposing perfectionism upon individuals increases their task performance. A study upon the Indian classical dancers were conducted by Swaha Bhattacharya and Shubha Lihala in 2015 and concluded that self-esteem, perfectionism and intrinsic motivation were high among Indian classical dancers. Management of perfectionism was revealed to be related to the enhancement of different types of creativity through a study conducted by Janet Karin GradCert and Sanna M. Nordin Bates in 2019 which supports perfectionism and better performance even by dancers. A significant study focussing upon happiness by Vinichak and Dolgava (2016) explains with evidence that individuals with higher levels of creativity consider happiness as an emotion and those with low creativity consider material need satisfaction as happiness. This could relate to the dancers who are creative people to consider happiness as an emotion. Psychological well-being and psychological distress were found to be related to positive and negative perfectionism respectively through the conclusions by Gerenmayepous and Besharat (2010). Self-oriented perfectionism, socially prescribed perfectionism, and low personal control was revealed to be related to induce performance anxiety, somatic anxiety, and less goal satisfaction according to the reports of the study by Mor S and Day H.I(1995). A study upon the physical education teachers by Nandy S., Ghosh M. C, and Adhikari S. (2012) helped to reveal that physical education teaching programme which includes body movements had a positive impact in the management of perfectionism among the teachers. The physical education training can be related to dance and thus be expected to bring similar changes in dancers. All these together bring the concern to know if the different dance styles produce differences in the perfectionism and happiness of individuals and if dance style could be considered as a predictor for perfectionism. This has led to the present study.

Aim:

- To know if there is a relation between happiness and perfectionism among dancers and to analyse the difference in these factors among freestyle and classical dancers.

Need and significance of the study

The present study is a revelation study which clarifies that classical dancers are likely to be much more perfectionistic in their life than the freestyle dancers. Thus, dance style can be considered as a predictor to the perfectionistic personality trait of an individual. This could also suggest that performing classical dance could develop perfectionism in individuals and a highly perfectionistic person could choose to learn and perform freestyle dancing, which may bring a loosening result. The study also confirms that dancing elicits happiness among artists, no matter what style they choose. Dance can thus be considered as a very good method to remain happy in life and the choice of the style of dance could be crucial in the development of perfectionism, which has both good and ill effects. The extent of difference in perfectionism among artists practising different classical dance forms could also be analysed through further research to reach better conclusions.

Hypotheses

- There is no significant relationship between perfectionism and happiness among dancers.
- There is no significant difference in perfectionism among classical and freestyle dancers.
- There is no significant difference in happiness among classical and freestyle dancers.
- Dance style is not a predictor of perfectionism.

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Sample

A total of 100 dancers were considered in the study which included 50 freestyle and 50 classical dancers above the age 20. The classical dancers belonged to Kerala Kalamandalam and the freestyle dancers from different dance studios.

Instruments

Two measures were used in this study,

- 1. The Subjective Happiness Scale:** The Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS) was developed by Sonja Lyubomirsky and Heidi Lepper (1999) to measure the level of happiness of individuals and has a reliability of $\alpha=.77$ with good validity. Prior research has demonstrated that the SHS has strong internal consistency (0.80–0.88), test-retest reliability (0.79), and convergent and discriminant validity across different languages, countries, and cultures.
- 2. The Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale:** The Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale is a 35 item 5-point likert scale developed by Frost in 1990 and is one of the best measures of perfectionism. The tool has 6 sub-scales they are Organization, Doubts About Actions, Parental Criticism, Parental Expectations, Personal Standards and Concern Over Mistakes. It has a good reliability of $\alpha=.90$ and that of the subscales ranging from .77 to .93. The scale also has a good concurrent validity with sufficient internal consistency.

Procedure

Questionnaires consisting of both the Subjective Happiness Scale and Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale were distributed along with a personal data sheet among classical dancers and freestyle dancers. The collected data was scored manually and analysed statistically using t test, correlation and simple linear regression.

The objective of the present investigation was to understand the difference in perfectionism and happiness among dancers performing different styles of dances and to understand the predictive nature of style of dance on the dancer's perfectionism. Pearson's correlation was employed to determine the relation between perfectionism and happiness, independent sample t-test to understand the difference of perfectionism and happiness among classical dancers and freestyle dancers and to understand the predictive nature of style of dance on the perfectionism, simple linear regression was performed.

Table No. 1 Pearson's Correlation Between Perfectionism and Happiness

	Mean	SD	1	2
1, Perfectionism	114.68	12.85	-	
2, Happiness	5.07	.86	.167	-

N=100

To assess the relationship between perfectionism and happiness Pearson correlation was performed. The hypothesis was to test whether there exists a relation between perfectionism (Mean = 114.68, SD = 12.85) and happiness (Mean = 5.07, SD = 086) among dancers. Table 1 has concluded that there exists no relation between perfectionism and happiness in dancers ($r(100) = .167, p = .202$). A dancer attains happiness and satisfaction through the performance of their art form and may or may not be a perfectionist. It can't be considered that a perfectionist remains happy or perfectionism and happiness is related in any manner.

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Table No. 2 Descriptive Statistics and Independent Sample t-test of Perfectionism among Classical dancers and Freestyle dancers

Style of dance	N	M	SD	t-value	Sig.
Classical style dancers	50	119.37	12.59	3.009	0.01
Freestyle dancers	50	110	11.5		

The table 2 shows the mean value of perfectionism among classical dancers (N= 50, M= 119.37, SD= 12.59) and freestyle dancers (N= 50, M= 110, SD= 11.5). To test the hypothesis that the style of dance brings up no significant change in the mean of the dancer's perfectionism, an independent sample t-test was performed. 'The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test' (Levene, 1960) ($F(98) = .292, p = .591$). The variation among the style of dance on individuals' perfectionism was tested and found to be statistically significant, $t(98) = 3.009, p = .01$. It's clear from the data that style of dance plays a major role in perfectionism as classical dancers show a higher perfectionism than freestyle dancers. Classical dances are strictly bound to the impeccable rules that are followed by all the artists with utmost importance. This following of such rules from the very early stages of learning the art form instils into the life of the individuals to seek for perfection and remain perfectionistic in their nature. Even the tutors of classical art forms stick on for perfection in their students which remains absent in the case of freestyle dancers. Freestyle dancers try to move with the flow rather than with any rules and boundaries. This would be the major reason for the difference in perfectionism among the classical and freestyle dancers. Swaha Bhattacharya and Shubha Lihala (2015) have concluded in their studies supporting the present result that perfectionism is higher among classical dancers.

Table No. 3 Descriptive Statistics and Independent Sample t-test of Happiness Among Classical Dancers and Freestyle Dancers

Style of dance	N	M	SD	t-value	Sig.
Classical dancers	50	5.26	0.8	1.678	0.99
Freestyle dancers	50	4.89	0.89		

Table 3 shows the mean value of happiness among classical dancers (N= 98, M= 5.26, SD= 0.8) and freestyle dancers (N= 98, M= 4.89, SD= 0.89). To test the hypothesis that the style of dance brings up no significant change in the mean of the dancer's happiness, an independent sample t-test was executed. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test (Levene, 1960) ($F(98) = .057, p = .812$). The disparity among the style of dance on individuals' happiness was tested for statistical significance, $t(98) = 1.678, p = .99$. It's clear from the data that style of dance doesn't play a role in the happiness of the dancers. Dance as such is an expression of the inner impulses within the individual that spreads happiness in the artist and its audience. It thus doesn't matter which form of dance is being performed, but the performance as such to create happiness within the artists. Vinichak and Dolgava (2016) explained that creative people consider happiness as an emotion of satisfaction among which includes the entire population of dancers irrespective of their style of performance.

Table No. 4 Simple Linear Regression upon Perfectionism with Style of dance

Variables	R	R ²	Change R ²	β	F value	Sig.
X = Perfectionism	0.367	0.135	0.12	-0.367	9.056	0.01
Y = Style of dance						

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To determine the ability to predict individuals' perfectionism based on their style of dance, simple linear regression was conducted. A substantial regression equation was discovered ($F(1,99) = 9.056, p=.01$), with an R^2 of 0.135 between dancer's perfectionism and style of dance. Dancers predicted perfectionism is equal to $128.733 - 9.367$ where style of dance is coded as 1 = Classical dancers, 2 = Freestyle dancers. Freestyle dancers' perfectionism is 9.367 units lower than classical dancers. The analysis has concluded that style of dance can predict perfectionism up to 13% accurately. A freestyle dancer would be a lesser perfectionist in their life when compared with the classical dancers. This could help us to predict perfectionism better in accordance to the dance-style one is trained in.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that perfectionism and happiness are unrelated among dancers with not much difference in the level of happiness among the freestyle and classical dancers. It also concludes that perfectionism is higher among classical dancers than freestyle dancers making dance style a predictor of perfectionism.

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Acknowledgements

The author appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: M R Basheer, J Ninitha & P Betty (2020). Differences in perfectionism and happiness among classical and freestyle dancers. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 8(2), 638-644. DIP:18.01.074/20200802, DOI:10.25215/0802.074