

Research Paper

Exploration of Personality Traits, Shame, Guilt and Experience in Close Relationships among Classical Male Dancers

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ABSTRACT

Male classical dancers frequently experience marginalization and discrimination in Indian society. In the context of classical male dancers in Kolkata, this study examined the association between feelings of shame and guilt, interpersonal experiences, and the HEXACO personality traits such as honesty- humility, and emotionality. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the 50 classical male dancers. Following by procurement of the consent, the State Shame and Guilt Scale, the Experience in Close Relationships Scale, and the HEXACO-60 Personality Inventory-Revised were administered to collect data. The findings indicate that state guilt is inversely correlated with HEXACO-60 domains of honesty-humility and conscientiousness; whereas, state shame is inversely correlated with all six domains. There is a positive correlation between avoidant attachment style and state shame. Agreeableness and extraversion are positively correlated with an anxious attachment style, whereas an avoidant attachment style is associated with a lower openness to experience and a higher state of shame. This study aims to initiate a larger conversation about gender stereotypes and gender-based discrimination in the performing arts.

Keywords: *male dancers, shame, guilt, personality traits, close relationship*

Indian society, classical male dancers occupy complex and dynamic roles that reflect the nuances of gender, tradition, and artistic expression. Historically, men have been integral to ancient dance forms such as Kathak, Kuchipudi, Odissi, and Bharatanatyam, playing the roles of mythological figures and gods (Balaji et al., 2023). They transcend gender norms through dualism and often adopt female and male personas to showcase their talents and flexibility. Despite women's significant contributions to these cultural traditions, in the public's perception, dance is often associated exclusively with femininity (Chakravorty, 2014). Due to this cultural bias, male dancers have been accused and alienated (Hanna, 1993), a deviation from the traditional concept of masculinity (Hanna, 1993). The idea that dancing is only a woman's activity has created a barrier. In other words, many male dancers feel invisible and do not take care of a wider cultural landscape (Gard, 2006). Changes have begun as modern male dancers ignore these established standards violently (Desmond, 2001). Their creative abilities are recognized and are expanding the concept of the meaning of being a male

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dancer (Risner, 2009). This trend is supported by a growing number of cultural organizations that advocate for gender equality in the arts (Burt, 2007). These organizations aim to create a more tolerant atmosphere, encourage male dancers to pursue their passions without fear of social criticism, and promote diversity in artistic expression (Hanna, 1988). Despite these positive changes, male dancers face significant barriers to long-term economic stability and social acceptance (Fisher, 2007), and prejudices against men's participation in dance persist, complicating efforts to secure funding, recognition, and performance opportunities (Gard, 2006).

Male classical dancers must navigate a difficult atmosphere where their passion for the art form often clashes with social expectations and practical financial considerations (Desmond, 2001). This highlights how crucial it is to advocate for and facilitate the full social integration of male dancers (Risner, 2009). It is necessary to question societal perceptions, create spaces that celebrate male dancers' craft, and increase the visibility of male dancers (Burt, 2007). By fostering an environment that encourages artistic expression regardless of gender, the Indian sociocultural landscape may advance toward a more equitable and inclusive future for all dancers (Hanna, 1988).

Boys who express an interest in dancing might face teasing during their early years, and this mistreatment may persist into adulthood, creating an unwelcoming atmosphere that hinders self-expression and creativity (Taylor, 2018). These biases have significant implications. Male dancers often encounter a lack of encouragement from their families, particularly from paternal figures who may struggle to understand or appreciate their deep passion for dancing (Davis, 2022). When individuals feel isolated and embarrassed due to this lack of support, it can be very challenging for them to pursue their artistic aspirations (Miller, 2020). Male classical dancers often face a challenging environment of cultural stereotypes and associated shame, which can have a detrimental impact on their mental well-being and professional opportunities (Smith, 2020). Several factors contribute to these biases, including narrow perceptions of gender roles, assumptions about sexual orientation, and ideas about physical vulnerability (Jones, 2019). Due to societal perceptions and prevailing cultural standards, these attitudes make them susceptible to mistreatment and ridicule from peers, adults, and even fellow dancers (Brown, 2021). Additionally, internalized homophobia may develop due to the pressure to conform to heteronormative values, further complicating one's relationship with their identity and adversely affecting their mental health (Wilson, 2019). Despite these challenges, male dancers can defy and transform these preconceptions by showcasing their skill and athleticism (Anderson, 2021). They can shatter the stereotypes of fragility associated with male dancers and earn respect by demonstrating their talents and originality (Clark, 2020). They need to reclaim their narrative to promote a more inclusive perception of masculinity within the dance community (Harris, 2018). Establishing a supportive community within the industry is crucial to providing emotional and social support for male dancers (Lewis, 2022). This type of community can offer a secure environment for dancers of all genders to share their stories, foster resilience, and collaborate (Walker, 2019). There has already been progress in reducing the stigma associated with male involvement in dance, thanks to public lobbying campaigns and the media's greater exposure to male dancers (Roberts, 2020). Furthermore, the growing acceptance of many dancing styles undermines inflexible gender stereotypes and promotes greater self-expression (Mitchell, 2021). This change will create a more welcoming environment where male dancers can thrive without being limited by outdated biases (Evans, 2019). Dismantling these harmful beliefs and supporting male dancers in their artistic endeavors requires continued work for equality and

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inclusion within the dance community (Parker, 2022). By continually questioning community standards and promoting acceptance, the dance community can foster a more egalitarian atmosphere that recognizes and values the accomplishments of all dancers regardless of gender (Young, 2022).

PERSONALITY:

Personality refers to a unique and stable model of thinking, emotions, and behavior that distinguishes one person and others. It covers a wide range of characteristics, such as main characteristics, interests, drives, values, self-respect, emotional abilities, and models (McCrae and Costa, 2003). The concept of personality is rooted in both biological and environmental influences, making it a complex interaction of genetic predispositions and life experiences (Bowlby, 1988). Various theories have been proposed to explain personality, such as the Big Five personality traits, which include openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (McCrae & Costa, 2003). These traits help predict and explain a person's behavior in different situations. Furthermore, personality is reflected not only in behavior but also in thoughts, emotions, and social interactions (Hofstede, 2001). Understanding personality is important to understand how individuals adapt to life and interact with the environment (Erikson, 1950).

Personality development is a dynamic process that develops throughout a person's life. It is influenced by a combination of genetic factors, early life experiences, and ongoing social interactions. For example, attachment styles developed in early childhood can significantly influence personality traits and interpersonal relationships in adulthood (Bowlby, 1988). Additionally, cultural and societal norms play a critical role in shaping personality by dictating acceptable behaviors and attitudes (Hofstede, 2001). Psychological theories such as Erik Erikson's stages of psychosocial development emphasize the importance of resolving certain conflicts at different stages of life to achieve a healthy personality (Erikson, 1950). Furthermore, personality assessments such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) are instruments used to measure and understand individual differences in personality (Myers & Briggs, 1980; Butcher et al., 1989). These assessments provide valuable information about individuals' strengths and areas for growth, thereby facilitating personal and professional development (McCrae & Costa, 2003).

Zalewska et al's (2018) study finding showed that higher-performing dance couples demonstrated higher levels of organization, cooperation, and conscientiousness than lower-performing couples who demonstrated more openness.

SHAME AND GUILT:

Shame and guilt are two complex self-conscious emotions that significantly influence human behavior and interpersonal dynamics. These emotions serve distinct psychological functions and are critical in shaping how individuals perceive themselves and relate to others. Shame is often characterized by a profound sense of negative evaluation regarding the self. This emotion is rooted in feelings of worthlessness and inadequacy, leading individuals to experience a debilitating sense of powerlessness. When an individual feels shame, they may become consumed by self-criticism and a desire to hide from others, believing they are fundamentally flawed or unworthy of love and acceptance (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). This internal struggle can hinder personal growth and social engagement, as the individual may withdraw from situations that could affirm their worth. Conversely, guilt is tied to the

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evaluation of specific actions rather than the self. When a person feels guilty, it is often in response to a behavior that contradicts their moral standards or societal expectations. This negative assessment of their actions can drive an individual to take responsibility for their behavior, seeking to make amends or change for the better (Tangney, 1995). Guilt can serve as a powerful motivator for positive action, encouraging individuals to engage in reparative behaviours that reflect their values and foster empathy toward those they may have harmed. Research highlights that while both shame and guilt can contribute to psychological distress and emotional turmoil, the consequences of these emotions differ markedly. Guilt tends to produce more constructive outcomes, such as fostering empathy and motivating individuals to correct their mistakes. This proactive response is crucial in nurturing healthy relationships, as it encourages open communication and a willingness to repair any damage caused (Tangney, 1995). In contrast, the paralyzing nature of shame often leads to avoidance behaviours and relational deterioration, as individuals may feel unworthy of connection or support. A comprehensive understanding of the distinct effects and implications of shame and guilt is vital for the development of effective therapeutic interventions. By recognizing how these emotions influence behavior and emotional health, mental health professionals can tailor their approaches to address maladaptive behavioural patterns and enhance overall emotional well-being (Tangney & Dearing, 2002). This nuanced understanding can lead to more effective strategies for helping individuals navigate their emotional landscapes and foster healthier interactions with themselves and others.

Male dancers are often stigmatized due to the societal perception that dance is a female activity and may feel shame and guilt for not feeling like they fit into the traditional male role. Strategies to counter this stigma include emphasizing athletic ability and professional excellence in dance (Risner, 2009).

Thomson and Jacques (2011) found that male dancers experience higher levels of shame and dissociation than athletes, which is often linked to past traumatic events and cultural pressures within the dance community to conceal trauma and vulnerability.

EXPERIENCE IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS:

Close relationships play a crucial role in enhancing human well-being, serving as a cornerstone of emotional support, companionship, and a deep sense of belonging. Research consistently shows that people in close relationships tend to experience higher levels of happiness and reduced levels of stress, highlighting the profound impact these relationships have on overall mental health (Smith, 2020). The nature of these relationships, whether family, romantic, or friendship, is generally characterized by key elements of mutual trust, respect, and a deep sense of intimacy that creates a safe space in which people can express themselves. The implications of the quality of these relationships go beyond simple emotional satisfaction; they significantly influence an individual's mental health outcomes. Positive and supportive relationships are linked to lower rates of anxiety and depression, illustrating how constructive social interactions can alleviate psychological distress and contribute to a sense of stability and security in a person's life (Brown et al., 2021). Furthermore, close relationships serve as a foundational support system, fostering personal growth and promoting resilience. This interconnectedness allows individuals to confront and navigate life's myriad challenges with greater efficacy, as they draw strength from their support networks (Taylor, 2018). In essence, nurturing and cultivating intimate relationships is not only beneficial but necessary to achieve overall psychological and emotional health. The interplay of emotional support, companionship, and responsiveness in these relationships creates a strong foundation that

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enables individuals to thrive in an increasingly complex and demanding world. Therefore, prioritizing the development of these important relationships becomes essential in the pursuit of a fulfilling and balanced life.

METHODS

Objective:

- To explore the HEXACO personality traits among male dancers
- To explore levels of state shame and guilt among male dancers
- To assess the experience in close relationship (ECR) among male dancers
- To assess whether there is any significant relationship between HEXACO personality traits, state shame, state guilt and experience in close relationship (ECR) among male dancers

Design of the study:

Type of dancer = Indian classically trained male dancers (N=50)

Variables to be measured	Tools used to measure
Personality Traits	HEXACO-60 (Lee et al., 2007)
Shame and Guilt	State Shame & Guilt Scale (SSGS) Marschall et al., 1994)
Close Relationship	Experience In Close Relationship Scale (ECR) (Brennan et al., 1998)

Description of the Sample

A purposive sampling method was used in this study to specifically select Indian male classical dancers living in Kolkata, a city renowned for its rich cultural heritage. This sampling method was chosen to ensure that participants possessed the relevant characteristics and experiences required for the research objectives. Participants included professional male dancers with at least six years of experience in classical dance. This level of experience was considered necessary to understand the nuances of their art form and the challenges they would face on their professional journey. In addition, all participants were required to hold at least a university degree, ensuring that they had a foundational level of education that could contribute to their understanding of the theoretical and practical aspects of dance. The study specifically targeted male dancers between the ages of 21 and 30. This age group was chosen to capture the perspective of dancers at a critical stage in their careers when they are more likely to transition from early professional experiences to more established roles within the dance community. Focusing on this demographic group, this study aimed to explore the unique experiences, challenges and aspirations of young classical male dancers in Kolkata and shed light on their contribution to the preservation and development of Indian classical dance. Overall, the purposive sampling approach facilitated a targeted study of the specific population and provided a deeper understanding of the dynamics in the field of Indian classical dance as experienced by male practitioners of Indian classical dance in this culturally significant city.

Procedure

Participants for the current study (N=50) were recruited using purposive sampling: the researcher specifically selected individuals who expressed a sincere interest in participating. Once rapport was established, participants were informed about the study's aims, benefits, potential risks, and assurances of confidentiality before submitting a signed consent form. A sociodemographic questionnaire was used to collect information such as participants' name,

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gender, educational background, years of dance experience, marital status, family type, monthly income, history of physical or mental illness, psychological trauma suffered in the past 6 months, recent experience of bereavement or loss, chronic illness, medication use, employment status, occupation, and work history. To maintain the integrity of the primary study variables, certain responses were excluded based on predefined criteria. The collected data were then used to manually assess personality traits, shame, guilt, and intimate relationship measures, as well as correlations between these variables.

Description of the Tools:

The following tools were used in this study to achieve the objective of the study:

- **Hexaco Personality Inventory-Revised (HEXACO-60) (Lee et al., 2007):** The HEXACO-60 serves as a condensed version of the HEXACO Personality Inventory-Revised, aimed at evaluating six fundamental dimensions of personality: Honesty-Humility, Emotionality, Extraversion, Agreeableness versus Anger, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience. Each of these dimensions is represented by 10 items, culminating in a total of 60 items. This inventory delivers a dependable and valid assessment of these personality traits while remaining sufficiently concise for use in situations with time constraints. It is especially beneficial for both research and practical applications that require a swift yet thorough evaluation of personality. The HEXACO model is esteemed for its capacity to encompass a wide array of personality traits, providing valuable insights into different facets of human behaviour and personality.
- **State Shame and Guilt Scale (Marschall et al., 1994):** The State Shame and Guilt Scale (SSGS) is a self-assessment tool intended to evaluate the immediate experiences of shame and guilt. It comprises ten items, which are categorized into two subscales: five items related to shame and five of guilt. Participants indicate their feelings using a 5-point Likert scale, which ranges from “not feeling this way at all” to “feeling this way very strongly.” The SSGS is especially valuable in both research and clinical environments for capturing fleeting emotional states rather than enduring characteristics.
- **Experience in Close Relationship Scale (Brennan et al., 1998):** The Experiences in Close Relationships Scale (Brennan et al., 1998) is a self-report tool with 36 items that measures adult attachment. It uses a 7-point scale for responses, ranging from strong disagreement to strong agreement. Some example items include "I prefer not to show my partner my true feelings," "I feel comfortable being close to my romantic partners," and "I feel anxious when partners get too close." A score of 1 means strong disagreement, while 4 indicates a neutral stance.

Statistical Analyses:

SPSS21 was used to analyze the data.

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RESULTS

Table: 1 representing the correlation between the different subscales of the HEXACO-60 scale:

	Honesty-Humility	Emotionality	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Openness to Experience
Honesty-Humility	1	.486**	.291*	.144	.474**	-.019
Emotionality	.486**	1	.458**	.619**	.677**	.457**
Extraversion	.291*	.458**	1	.653**	.659**	.374**
Agreeableness	.144	.619**	.653**	1	.504**	.476**
Conscientiousness	.474**	.677**	.659**	.504**	1	.324*
Openness to Experience	-.019	.457**	.374**	.476**	.324*	1

*Significant at 0.05 level

**Significant at 0.01 level

The correlations between the HEXACO-60 personality traits are displayed in the above table. From the findings, it can be said that there is a positive significant association between Honesty-Humility, Conscientiousness and Emotionality. Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience are significantly connected with Emotionality. Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Openness to Experience are strongly positively correlated with extraversion. Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience have a positive correlation with agreeableness. Lastly, Conscientiousness and Openness to Experience have a noteworthy positive correlation.

Table: 2 representing the correlation values of state shame and state guilt with the different subscales of the HEXACO-60 scale:

Variable	Honesty-Humility	Emotionality	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Openness to Experience
State Shame	-0.362*	-0.486**	-0.454**	-0.353*	-0.589**	-0.290*
State Guilt	-0.296*	-0.198	-0.195	-0.042	-0.342*	0.045

*Significant at 0.05 level

**Significant at 0.01 level

State Shame has strong inverse relationships with each of the HEXACO-60 model's six dimensions. This is a negative correlation between these personality traits and higher degrees of state shame. Higher state shame levels are typically associated with poorer emotionality, agreeableness, conscientiousness, honesty-humility, conscientiousness, and openness to new experiences.

On the other hand, there are notable inverse relationships between State Guilt and two HEXACO-60 variables (Honesty-Humility, and Conscientiousness). There is a correlation between lower levels of these personality traits and higher levels of state guilt. People who

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feel more guilty about the state also typically have lower degrees of honesty, humility, and conscientiousness.

Table: 3 representing the correlation between State Shame, State Guilt, Anxiety, and Avoidance:

Variable	Anxiety	Avoidance
State Shame	0.086	0.290*
State Guilt	0.158	0.193

*Significant at 0.05 level

**Significant at 0.01 level

There is a positive significant relationship between avoidance and state shame. This implies that heightened avoidance is linked to elevated levels of state shame.

Table: 4 representing correlation values of anxiety and avoidance with the different subscales of the HEXACO-60 scale:

Variable	Honesty-Humility	Emotionality	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Openness to Experience	State Shame	State Guilt
Anxiety	-0.094	0.240	0.281*	0.427**	0.170	0.233	0.086	0.158
Avoidance	-0.058	-0.234	-0.191	-0.236	-0.223	-0.312*	0.290*	0.193

*Significant at 0.05 level

**Significant at 0.01 level

The results show a significant correlation between anxiety and agreeableness, indicating that more anxious people are generally more pleasant. Moreover, there is a positive correlation between anxiety and extraversion, suggesting that there is some degree of a relationship between the two. However, avoidance is strongly correlated with poorer openness to experience, suggesting that people who avoid situations more are less receptive to novel experiences. Additionally, avoidance exhibits a moderately positive connection with state shame, indicating a relationship between increased avoidance and elevated sentiments of shame.

DISCUSSION

This study aims to examine HEXACO personality traits in classical male dancers, examining their expression in this group. It will also analyze the levels of shame and guilt they experience, as well as the dynamics of their relationship, through the framework of the experience of close relationships (ECR). Ultimately, the study aims to determine the correlation between HEXACO-60 personality traits, state shame, state guilt, and ECR, which will allow us to better understand the interaction between personality and emotional factors in the intimate relationships of classical male dancers.

The findings of this study are closely aligned with existing research on the HEXACO-60 personality traits, providing a comprehensive yet concise assessment of six fundamental personality dimensions: honesty-humility, emotionality, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. Each of these dimensions plays a key role in shaping an individual's behaviour and interpersonal dynamics. Findings indicate that there are

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positive relationships between honesty-humility, conscientiousness and emotionality, suggesting that people who demonstrate higher levels of honesty and humility are also more likely to demonstrate higher conscientiousness and emotional stability (Wiechers & Kandler, 2024; Pilch, 2023). In other words, conscientious and humble people tend to be more organized, responsible, and emotionally stable, which may contribute to their overall happiness and effectiveness in various areas of their lives. Moreover, the study highlights significant relationships between extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience about emotionality. This suggests that people who are more outgoing and sociable (Extraversion), cooperative and compassionate (Agreeableness), diligent and responsible (Conscientiousness), and open and curious (Openness to Experience) are likely to experience increased emotional stability. This emotional resilience may be a result of their ability to effectively build social interactions and maintain positive relationships, which can serve as a buffer against stress and emotional upheaval. The strong positive correlations observed between agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness suggest that people who are more agreeable, conscientious, and open tend to show non-positive traits when tested for extraversion. This interdependence means that they do not have individual functions, but interact in complex ways to form an overall personality profile. Furthermore, the positive relationship between conscientiousness and openness to experience with agreeableness indicates that people who are characterized by hard work and a willingness to embrace new ideas and experiences are also more likely to be agreeable (Smith, 2023). This finding highlights the idea that a conscientious and open approach to life can promote cooperation and harmonious interactions with others. Finally, the significant positive correlation between conscientiousness and openness to experience suggests that organized, responsible, and diligent people are also more likely to seek out and accept new experiences. This openness can lead to personal growth and adaptability, allowing people to thrive in a variety of environments and situations. Overall, these results are consistent with the theoretical framework of the HEXACO model, which posits that these personality traits are significantly interrelated (Ashton & Lee, 2009).

Research demonstrates that state shame, which is characterized by intense feelings of worthlessness and self-reproach, has strong negative correlations with all six dimensions of the HEXACO-60 model of personality. The HEXACO model includes the following traits: honesty-humility, emotionality, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. When people experience elevated levels of state shame, their scores on these personality traits tend to be significantly lower. This suggests that those who struggle with high levels of state shame often experience difficulties in various aspects of their lives, including emotional stability, quality of interpersonal relationships, self-discipline, integrity, and openness to new experiences. On the contrary, the state guilt, determined by feelings of regret and responsibility for a particular behaviour, shows a significant negative correlation, first, with the traits of honesty-humility, and integrity. This finding suggests that people who frequently experience guilt may have lower levels of honesty-humility and integrity. This can often lead to guilty internal conflicts and self-criticism, which leads to a decrease in the honesty and reliability of their actions. These results emphasize the deep impact of negative emotional states, such as shame and guilt, which can affect personality characteristics. They highlight the importance of addressing these emotions to promote healthier personality development and overall well-being. By understanding the relationship between these emotional states and personality traits, mental health professionals and individuals alike can work towards strategies that mitigate the effects of shame and guilt, fostering a more positive self-concept and enhancing personal growth (Ashton & Lee, 2009). The interplay between

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shame, guilt, and personality traits reveals important information about how negative emotions shape a person's character and behaviour.

The relationship between avoidance and shame has received considerable attention in psychological research, revealing a complex interplay between emotional responses and coping mechanisms. Avoidance behaviours, which serve as a strategy to avoid distressing thoughts, feelings, or situations, are positively correlated with shame. State shame is characterized as an experience of immediate, situational shame, distinct from more enduring shame, often referred to as trait shame. This distinction is important. This is because it emphasizes the temporary nature of a state that can be caused by specific events and interactions, contrasted with emotions that are more rooted in the shame of characteristics. Evidence suggests that individuals who resort to avoidance behaviours are more prone to experiencing elevated levels of state shame. This association can be interpreted through the framework of emotional regulation and coping strategies. Although avoidance may provide temporary relief from distress, it often leads to increased feelings of shame over time. This happens because avoidance prevents people from facing and processing the underlying causes of their feelings, leading to a buildup of unresolved emotions that can manifest as shame. Research by Sia et al., (2023) suggests that avoidant behaviors may increase feelings of shame, particularly about trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Findings revealed that while avoidance may dampen immediate emotional responses, it ultimately perpetuates a cycle of shame and avoidance that impedes healing. Individuals who avoid facing their traumatic experiences may feel an initial sense of relief, but this relief is short-lived. Over time, people may suffer from the consequences of avoidance and its impact on their lives, and feelings of shame may increase due to unresolved trauma. Similarly, Dolezal et al., (2017) explored how avoidance behaviours related to health problems can lead to chronic shame, negatively impacting overall well-being. Their research highlights that people who avoid seeing a doctor or addressing health-related issues often experience increased feelings of shame associated with their perceived inadequacy or failures. This chronic shame can create a vicious cycle in which avoiding health problems leads to further deterioration in physical and mental health, increasing feelings of shame and inadequacy. There was a significant positive correlation between avoidance and state shame, highlighting the need to reduce the harmful effects of shame by addressing avoidance behaviours in therapeutic contexts. Therapeutic interventions that encourage individuals to confront emotions and experiences rather than avoid them may help break the vicious cycle of shame and avoidance.

The significant association between anxiety and agreeableness suggests a complex interaction between personality traits and emotional reactions. Research shows that people with higher levels of anxiety often exhibit higher levels of agreeableness, characterized by pleasant and cooperative behaviour. This tendency may stem from a desire for social acceptance, as anxious individuals may seek comfort and acceptance from others to reduce feelings of anxiety and uncertainty (Smith et al., 2020). In social situations, their agreeable nature acts as a coping mechanism, allowing interpersonal interactions to proceed more smoothly, even when struggling with inner anxiety. Moreover, the positive relationship between anxiety and extraversion presents an intriguing paradox. Although anxious people might be expected to avoid social situations, results revealed that they may engage more in social interactions to cope with their anxiety. This behaviour may be interpreted as a strategy to strengthen social bonds by distracting oneself from anxious thoughts or by seeking comfort in the presence of others (Jones et al., 2019). Even if it is not a long-term solution to emotional problems, interacting with others may provide temporary relief from anxiety. In contrast, the strong

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negative correlation between avoidance and openness to experience highlights an important aspect of personality dynamics: individuals who exhibit avoidant behaviours tend to avoid new experiences and challenges, which may limit their personal growth and development. This avoidance can create a cycle in which their reluctance to pursue new opportunities further exacerbates their fears and anxieties, ultimately limiting their access to rich experiences that could improve their lives (Williams et al., 2018). The implications of this correlation suggest that encouraging openness to experience may be beneficial for those struggling with avoidance, as it may encourage them to confront their fears and broaden their horizons. Moreover, the moderate positive correlation between avoidance and state shame reveals another level of complexity in the relationship between personality traits and emotional states: avoidant individuals tend to avoid facing difficult situations and are therefore more likely to experience feelings of shame because they are unable to deal with the underlying issues that cause feelings of shame. This avoidance can lead to a cycle of shame, where the inability to address challenges exacerbates feelings of inadequacy and self-criticism (Lee & Thompson, 2021). The interplay between avoidance and shame highlights the importance of addressing these issues in a therapeutic setting, as addressing avoidance can help people manage their emotions more effectively and reduce feelings of shame.

CONCLUSION

From this study, it can be concluded that this is an unexplored area and we have found significant findings which need to be further corroborated. The findings assert a significant relationship between the variables explored. This area could be explored further in the future.

Limitations and Future Implications:

- Due to time constraints, researchers could not collect data from the larger population
- If the researchers did not have a time constraint, they could have explored these psychological variables across different states.
- This is an unexplored area of work and this population of classical male dancers could be considered as a discriminated section of the community as well.
- Shame and guilt are important emotional components that need to be addressed for leading a well-adjusted prosocial life and proper personality development. This is not only experienced by classical male dancers but also by female players and athletes on the ground.
- This could help assert the impact of social conditioning and stereotypes in forming the sense of self and interpersonal relationships of these individuals
- This can help further explore related variables like patriarchal beliefs, gender stereotypes, and prejudice, and how that impacts not only the classical male dancers but also female players, athletes, etc.

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