

# A Study between Body Image, Self-Efficacy and Perceived Stress Among Dancers in India

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**Abstract:-**The study's main aim was to find the gender differences between male and female dancers in self-efficacy body image and perceived stress. It aims to also indicate significant differences, if any, among the different kinds of gender. Additionally, it studies the impact of self-efficacy, perceived stress and body image issues amongst young adults. The study was conducted, and an online survey was used to collect responses from 60 adults. Body Image Avoidance Questionnaire (BIAQ), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and General Self Efficacy scales were used to gather the data. Normality test was done and it was found that the data for perceived stress and self-efficacy wasn't normally distributed and that body image data was normally distributed. So accordingly correlation, Mann Whitney's test and t test were used to analyze the data.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Dance is defined as the rhythmic movement of the body, generally to the accompaniment of music, in a specific area, with the objective of expressing an idea or emotion or just enjoying the moves.

Dancing is a skill or talent, but the art of dance enables dancers to use it as a means of profound self-expression leaving a deep impact on onlookers who don't feel the urge to dance themselves. The two most significant threads to be considered, are the two notions of the art of dance: dancing as an act borne out of freedom, unconstrained and dance as a skillfully choreographed performance which is more restricted. The two ideas seem to overlap closely in dance and neither is possible without the other.

Although the above broad definition encompasses all forms of the art, philosophers and critics have come up with diverse definitions of dance throughout history, that are essentially descriptions of the particular type of dance that each writer was most familiar with. Therefore, the crucial role that dance played in classical Greek theatre, where the chorus making use of dance movements enacted the dramatic themes during lyric interludes, is referenced when Aristotle states in *The Poetics* that dance is rhythmic movement whose purpose is "to represent men's characters as well as what they do and suffer." Mackrell, J. R. (2023, March 31)

With their dance performances, dancers tell tales and communicate ideas. Dancers can move to a variety of musical styles, including modern, ballet, and musical theatre, and they frequently perform as a group. Dancers can appear in ballets, dance performances, TV shows, and movies.

Dancers receive a wide range of education and instruction, although they often complete many years of professional training. The majority of dancers start their training while they are very young by enrolling in private dancing lessons or training courses. By the age of 18, many dancers are already attending auditions and looking for work.

Leading professional dance companies may choose applicants for entry to their full-time training programs while also offering intensive summer training programs. Many dance genres like jazz, ballet, modern, and hip-hop are covered in the programs. Although a college degree is not required, many dancers do pursue one because it gives them the chance to explore new genres and participate in performances.

In order to be hired by a dance company, a dancer would actively participate in as many auditions as possible. They would spend a lot of time practising each day to learn the intricate dance moves that their audience would like. To refine their routines, they practise new dances and collaborate closely with coaches, choreographers, and other dancers.

He or she may participate in photo shoots and attend production-related promotional events. In addition to the customary live performances, some dancers also appear on the internet, in movies, on television, in amusement parks, on cruise ships, and in other venues including casinos. When dancers age, they could decide to segue into teaching dance in high schools or universities, or they might decide to pursue careers as directors or choreographers.

To stay in shape for their dance programs, dancers need to maintain their strength and engage in regular exercise. They frequently perform throughout the day in addition to practising, so they don't have set working hours. Some dancers spend months at a time away while performing in other cities. Due to the competitive nature of the job market, many dancers reside in larger cities. Powers, S. (2016, July 28)

## II. BODY IMAGE

Your thoughts and feelings about your body constitute our body image. Positive and negative experiences related to one's body image are common, and a person may experience positive, negative, or mixed feelings based on that. Both internal (such as personality) and external (such as social environment) elements have an impact on body image.

➤ *Mainly there are four aspects of body image which are as follows:*

- Your perceptual body image is how you perceive your physical self. This is generally not an accurate reflection of how you are perceived by others.
- Your emotional body image is the way you feel about your physical appearance. Emotions can range from pride to self-loathing, but that mostly sums up how satisfied or unsatisfied you are with your appearance, weight, and specific body parts.
- Your cognitive body image is how you perceive your physical appearance. This may cause an obsession with weight and body image.
- Your behavioral body image refers to your actions resulting from your body image. When a person is dissatisfied with their looks, they may isolate themselves or engage in unhealthy habits to improve it.

A person is said to have a good body image when they are able to accept, value, and respect their physique. This needs to be distinguished from body satisfaction since you might be unhappy with some features of your body yet be able to embrace it with all its flaws. A person is less likely to develop an eating disorder if they have a positive body image, which is one of the protective factors.

➤ *A Positive Body Image is Associated with:*

Higher self-esteem, which determine how one thinks about oneself, can have an impact on various aspects of life and enhance happiness and wellbeing.

Self-acceptance helps a person to feel at ease and be content with the way they seem and this makes them less susceptible to being influenced by unrealistic media images and social expectations that one needs to look a certain way.

When someone repeatedly has negative thoughts and feelings about their body, it can lead to body dissatisfaction. Though it is an internal emotional and cognitive process, body dissatisfaction stems from outside forces like pressure to conform to an ideal. Those who are unhappy may take recourse to improper weight-control methods, including disordered eating. Consequently they are more likely to develop an eating disorder. Lawler & MD, 2022

## III. SELF EFFICACY

Self-efficacy is the confidence to carry out an activity or accomplish a goal. It indicates one's self-assurance in managing their conduct, having an impact on their surroundings, and staying motivated in the pursuit of their

objective. Self-efficacy is a trait that people exhibit in a variety of contexts and domains, including relationships, employment, and other crucial areas.

Do you believe you can overcome challenges and achieve your objective, or do you give up in the face of failure? Do you have self-doubt or are you like the tiny train engine from the beloved children's book, who exclaimed, "I think I can, I think I can!" when faced with challenges? You probably have a high level of self-efficacy if you typically persevere when faced with adversities.

Self-efficacy is crucial since it determines how you perceive yourself and whether or not you succeed in reaching your life's objectives. Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory, which emphasizes the function of observational learning, social experience, and reciprocal determinism in personality formation, is centred on the idea of self-efficacy.

Self-efficacy, in Bandura's view, is a component of the self-system, which also includes one's attitudes, capacities, and cognitive talents. This system has a significant impact on how we perceive and react to various events. A crucial component of this self-system is self-efficacy.

Albert Bandura defined self-efficacy as "the confidence in one's capacity to organise and carry out the courses of action necessary to control potential events." Self-efficacy is the conviction that one can succeed in a specific circumstance. These ideas influence how individuals think, act, and feel.

The topic has become one of the most researched in psychology since Bandura's groundbreaking 1977 paper, "Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change," was released. Why has psychologists and educators' interest in self-efficacy grown so much?

Self-efficacy can affect everything from psychological states to behaviour to motivation, as Bandura and other researchers have shown.

What objectives we pursue, how we carry them out, and how we assess our own performance are all influenced by self-efficacy.

How we think, act, and feel about our place in the world are all influenced by our self-belief in our capacity to succeed. Cherry, K. (2023)

## IV. PERCEIVED STRESS

An individual's perception of their level of stress at a certain point in time or over an extended period when expressed in feelings or thoughts is known as perceived stress.

Feelings about how unpredictable and uncontrollable life situations are, how frequently one needs to deal with problems, how much change is taking place in one's life, and

confidence in one's ability to handle challenges are all factors in perceived stress. It measures how a person feels about life situations and their capacity to handle stress, rather than the sort or frequency of such events that have occurred.

People may experience similar traumatic situations, but they may judge their impact or severity differently depending on their personality, coping mechanisms, and social support. Hence, perceived stress affects how a person interacts with the environment—which is perceived as threatening or overwhelming—in a way that will impact their wellbeing (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Through the use of a questionnaire like the Perceived Stress Scale, perceived stress is frequently assessed as the frequency of these feelings (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983).

The relationship between stress and various ailments, such as mental disorders, cancer, cardiovascular disease, drug abuse, chronic diseases, etc. makes it a key reference point in health studies. Understanding stress across diverse sociodemographic, cultural, and socioeconomic groups could help in preventing major health concerns stemming from stress. The incidence of mental illnesses in Europe demonstrates the significance of taking stress factors into account.

Understanding how people perceive stress and manage with it requires a grasp of cultural elements, particularly the societal structure. This distinction demonstrates how the impact of stress varies among European nations, including the UK, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Spain, and Belgium (Cao et al., 2016). In order to quantify psychological stress in health and disease globally, it is crucial to assess how people experience stressful circumstances in their life. This research is particularly important for comprehending, preventing, and treating numerous health issues that transcend national boundaries. Vallejo, M. A., Vallejo-Slocker, L., Fernández-Abascal, E. G., & Mañanes, G. (2018).

## V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The previous studies included conducting a cross-sectional study between 90 ballet schools with 156 controls to see how students perceive their body and whether or not they are satisfied with it. Studies showed that most adolescent female dancers scored way higher than the controls for their age, 11 and 12 year old females on the other hand showed undesirability towards their body image. In the overall study a significant difference was seen where females scored way higher than males in the aspect of Sensitivity to Personality.

Since the study only used a cross sectional method to study the participants, further studies could have been studied to find more content about the topic. Bettie, N., Bettie, O., Neumärker, U., & Neumärker, K.-J. (2001)

Another study which saw the relationship between the personality and stress among artists revealed that the stress was mainly induced due to the constant need to survive in the competitive world of art. The limitations of this study were that it was conducted on a control group of artists consisting of not just dancers but also actors, musicians and singers.

According to a study conducted in the University of Quebec at Montreal, which conducted the study on the topic of Relationship between Passion and Injury on 81 students found that students with harmonious passion were more careful about their injury and they waited for their injuries to heal before they start dancing again and people with Obsessive passion are more prone to not be careful about their injuries which may result in prolonged injury or even worse. This study did not talk anything about the gender differences, perceived stress, self efficacy and body image. Which gave more scope to go ahead with the current chosen topic. Rip, B., Fortin, S., & Vallerand, R. J. (2006).

## VI. METHOD

### ➤ Research Design

The study followed a correlational design to assess the relationship between self efficacy, body image and perceived stress among male and female dancers. The study mainly focused on analyzing the gender differences among the three variables and how it played a vital role in their lives as professional dancers. The three variables were chosen to see whether body image came as a barrier for dancers while performing, whether dance was used as a mechanism to overcome stress inducing factors and to find whether or not self efficacy helped dancers to attain their dance goals. (Tools used for analysis of the data).

### ➤ Statement of the Problem

The present study was undertaken to understand the relationship between body image, self efficacy and perceived stress among male and female dancers.

### ➤ Objectives

- To study if there is a relationship existing between body image, self efficacy and perceived stress among male and female dancers.
- To determine if there are any differences in self-efficacy based on gender.
- To determine if there are any differences in body image based on gender.
- To determine if there are any differences in perceived stress based on gender.

### ➤ Hypotheses

- *H01* : There is no relationship existing between body image, self efficacy and perceived stress among male and female dancers.
- *H02* : There is no significant differences in self-efficacy based on gender of individual

- *H03* : There is no significant differences in body image based on gender of individual
- *H04* : There is no significant differences in perceived stress based on gender of individual

#### ➤ *Operational Definition*

The major variables in the study are Body Image, Perceived Stress and Self Efficacy. Following are definitions of these terms within the context of the study:

- *Self Efficacy:*

Self-efficacy is described as a personal belief in one's capacity to attain their desired life results.

- *Body Image:*

Body image is a person's perception of their physical self and the thoughts and feelings, positive, negative or both.

- *Perceived Stress:*

The degree to which events in a person's life are assessed as stressful, unpredictable and uncontrollable.

- *Sampling:*

The sample of the present study was collected via purposive sampling. The sample consisted of 60 trained dancers who are all young adults belonging to the age group of 18- 25 years. It consists of 30 females and 30 males. Additionally these participants lived in different states of India and were either classical or western trained dancers. The data from the participant was collected via an online survey using Google Forms.

#### ➤ *Tools used for the Study:*

General Self-Efficacy Scale

This scale was created by Jerusalem and Schwarzer (1979) as a way to gauge one's overall sense of self-efficacy. It is a Likert scale that can only be used on people who are fall under the age of 12 and above. The test is self-administered and has shown to be particularly useful in predicting how well people will cope with day-to-day problems and adjust to stressful life events. The aggregate of the responses to all ten questions results in a final composite score that ranges from 10 to 40. A combined score between 10 and 40 reflects varied self-efficacy levels.

- *Reliability.*

This scale is unidimensional. The GSE's reliability is based on samples from twenty-three countries, with the majority using Cronbach's alpha. The values varied from .76 to .90, with a mean in the high .80s.

- *Validity.*

The Self-efficacy of 50 greek asthma patients was assessed using GSE. Construct validity was tested through differences between groups and Cross-sectional validity through the correlation of the GSE score with pulmonary function (FEV1), asthma control (ACT), and QoL (SF36v2). Cross-sectional validity testing showed positive correlations of the GSE score with FEV1 ( $r = 0.67, p < 0.001$ ), ACT ( $r = 0.69, p < 0.001$ ), ETCO2 ( $r = 0.56, p < 0.001$ ), PC of the

SF-36 ( $r = 0.67, p < 0.001$ ) and MC of the SF-36 ( $r = 0.69, p < 0.001$ ) as well as negative correlations with Nijmegen Questionnaire ( $r = -0.51, p < 0.001$ ).

#### ➤ *Perceived Stress Scale*

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is a widely used psychological tool that measures the degree to which individuals feel that situations in their life are stressful. It was developed by Sheldon Cohen, a psychologist at Carnegie Mellon University, and is designed to measure the degree to which a person experiences stress in their life.

The PSS is a self-report questionnaire that consists of 10 questions, each of which is answered on a five-point scale ranging from "never" to "very often." The questions are designed to measure the degree to which the respondent feels that situations in their life are unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloaded. The scores are then added up to create a total score, with higher scores indicating greater perceived stress.

- *Reliability:*

Internal consistency refers to the extent to which the items of a measure are interrelated, or in other words, measure the same construct. Cronbach's alpha is a commonly used statistic to assess internal consistency, with values ranging from 0 to 1. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or higher is generally considered acceptable for research purposes. Studies have reported Cronbach's alpha values for the PSS ranging from 0.70 to 0.91, indicating good to excellent internal consistency. numerical validity of the PSS lies in its ability to differentiate individuals with different levels of perceived stress within a given population, rather than in providing an absolute measure of perceived stress.

- *Validity:*

The psychometric properties of the PSS-10 were originally evaluated in a large national sample of 2,387 American adults. Cohen and Williamson (1988) reported that scores on the PSS-10 demonstrated adequate internal consistency reliability ( $\alpha = .78$ ); moderate concurrent criterion validity with the amount of stress experienced during an average week ( $r = .39, p < .001$ ) and the frequency of stressful life events within the past year ( $r = .32, p < .001$ ); and adequate convergent validity as evidenced by expected negative associations with perceived health status ( $r = -.22, p < .001$ ) and positive associations with psychosomatic symptoms ( $r_s = .28$  to  $.34, p < .001$ ) and health service utilization ( $r = .22, p < .001$ ). Since then, other studies have similarly reported that the PSS-10 has good internal consistency reliability (e.g., Barbosa-Leiker et al., 2013; Golden-Kreutz et al., 2004; Reis et al., 2010), and adequate convergent validity based on associations with measures of physical and mental health (e.g., Mitchell et al., 2008; Roberti et al., 2006; Wu and Amtmann, 2013).

#### ➤ *Body Image Avoidance Questionnaire*

The Body Image Avoidance Questionnaire (BIAQ) is a self-report questionnaire that is designed to measure the degree to which individuals engage in behaviors that are intended to avoid negative thoughts or feelings about their



body. The BIAQ was developed by researchers Thomas Cash and Linda Smolak in 1991.

The BIAQ consists of 19 items, each of which describes a behavior that is intended to avoid negative thoughts or feelings about one's body. The respondent is asked to rate the frequency with which they engage in each behavior on a five-point scale ranging from "never" to "always". Examples of items on the BIAQ include "I avoid wearing tight-fitting clothes" and "I avoid looking at myself in the mirror".

- **Reliability:**

Internal consistency refers to the extent to which the items of a measure are interrelated and measure the same construct. Cronbach's alpha is a commonly used statistic to assess internal consistency, with values ranging from 0 to 1. A Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or higher is generally considered acceptable for research purposes. Studies have reported Cronbach's alpha values for the BIAQ ranging from 0.80 to 0.90, indicating good to excellent internal consistency.

- **Validity:**

Content validity refers to the extent to which a measure covers all aspects of the construct being measured. The BIAQ was designed to assess the degree to which individuals engage in behaviors to avoid looking at or thinking about their bodies. The items of the BIAQ were selected based on a comprehensive review of the body image and eating disorder literature. Studies have shown that the BIAQ has good content validity, as its items cover different types of body image avoidance behaviors.

- **Procedure**

The data for the research study was collected from young adults who were trained dancers.

The collection of data used google forms, which was created and circulated. The form contained the basic details, the questionnaires General Self-Efficacy Scale, Perceived Stress Scale and Body image avoidance questionnaires. Additional details like their age, gender and the initials of the name were also collected.

- **Statistical Techniques**

The statistical techniques used to analyse the data were the Mann-Whitney U test, the Independent sample T test and Spearman's correlation. In addition, the IBM SPSS software analysed data.

## VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- **Preliminary Analyses**

The present study investigated the relationship between self-efficacy, perceived stress and body image avoidance among male and female dancers. The study also investigated the differences between gender for the three variables as well.

According to the normalcy test of Shapiro Wilk, it was found that data for self-efficacy and body image was normally distributed while the data for perceived stress suggested vice versa.

- **Analysis and Interpretation**

Table 1 Relationship between Self-Efficacy, Perceived Stress and Body Image Avoidance

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3
SE	28.92	7.5	-	-.079	.033
PS	17.92	3.2	.079	-	.206
BIA	30.67	13.6	.033	.206	-

\*p<.05

From the above table we can infer that the correlation value between Self Efficacy (SE) and Body Image (BIA) is .033 which means that there is a positive correlation between them. However there seems to be a negative correlation between Self Efficacy (SE) and Perceived Stress (PS) as the correlation value is -.079 and finally there seems to be again a positive correlation between Perceived Stress (PS) and Body Image (BIA) as the correlation value is 0.26

Since from the above mentioned results there is no significant value between the variable Self Efficacy, Perceived stress and Body image the hypothesis H0 which stated that that there is no relationship existing between body image, self efficacy and perceived stress among male and female dancers is proven true. However, it is important to note that the differences are small, based on the effect size and that equal number of individuals were there representing the gender.

Table 2 Difference in Self-Efficacy based on Gender

	M (N=30)		F (N=30)		
Variables	M	SD	M	SD	Z
SE	29.17	7.76	29.73	5.03	-2.75

Table 2 shows the gender differences in Self Efficacy through the values of, U= 431.5, z= 2.75, r= 0.783. From the above mentioned data since the significance level is more than 0.05 the hypothesis H02 which states that there is no significant differences in self efficacy based on gender of individual is proven true. However, it is important to note that the differences are small, based on the effect size and that equal number of individuals were there representing the gender unlike Rip, B., Fortin, S., & Vallerand, R. J. (2006) where they did a study to find the relationship between passion and injury in dance students which was done for 81 participants and wanted to find how dancers with obsessive passion and dancers with harmonious passion had differences in recovering from chronic injuries.

Table 3 Difference in Perceived Stress based on Gender

	M (N=30)		F (N=30)		
Variables	M	SD	M	SD	Z
PS	20.70	2.43	17.83	3.60	-2.88

Table 3 shows the gender differences in Perceived Stress through the values of ,  $U = 257$ ,  $z = 2.88$ ,  $r = 0.04$ . From the above mentioned data since  $r$  value is less than 0.05 the gender differences are significant and the hypothesis H04 which states that there is no significant differences in perceived stress based on gender of individual is disproven. However, it is important to note that the differences are small, based on the effect size and that equal number of individuals were there representing the gender unlike the study conducted by Marchant- Haycox, S.E, & Wilson, G. D where they took 162 performing artists aged between 16 to 69 years and studied how the personality and the stress level of an individual were inter connected and played a factor in shaping their personality.

Table 4 Difference in Body Image Avoidance based on Gender

	M (N=30)		F (N=30)		
Variables	M	SD	M	SD	Z
BIA	28.73	11.29	32.50	15.56	-.814

Table 4 shows the gender differences in Body Image Avoidance through the values of  $F = 2.595$ ,  $z = 0.814$ ,  $r = 0.113$ . From the above mentioned data the  $r$  value is more than 0.05 the gender differences are significant and the hypothesis H03 which states that there is no significant differences in body image based on gender of individual is disproven. However, it is important to note that the differences are small, based on the effect size and that equal number of individuals were there representing the gender and took participants from ages 18 to 25 years unlike the study conducted by N Bettle, O Bettle, U Neumaker and K J Neumaker who focused on the body image issues of children belonging to the age group of 13 to 17 years who are only trained in ballet.

#### ➤ Discussion

The present study tried to study the gender differences in Self- efficacy, Body Image and Perceived Stress among male and female dancers. The study took 60 participants with 30 males and 30 females respectively who were either trained in western, classical or folk dance forms. The hypotheses were as follows: H01 : There is no relationship existing between body image, self efficacy and perceived stress among male and female dancers, H02 : There is no significant differences in self-efficacy based on gender of individual, H03 : There is no significant differences in body image based on gender of individual, H04 : There is no significant differences in perceived stress based on gender of individual. The data was collected and scored according to the manuals of all three scales. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences(SPSS) software was then used for data analysis. After performing a normality test, It was identified that the present data were not normal, leading to the use of nonparametric tests. The nonparametric tests utilized were the One way t test, Mann-Whitney test, and Spearman's correlation.

From the use of all the above mentioned tests the findings were as follows: Self Efficacy (SE) and Body Image (BIA) is .033 which means that there is a positive correlation between them, there seems to be a negative correlation between Self Efficacy (SE) and Perceived Stress (PS) as the correlation value is -0.79 and finally there seems to be again a positive correlation between Perceived Stress (PS) and Body Image (BIA) as the correlation value is 0.26.

The gender differences in Self Efficacy through the values of,  $U = 431.5$ ,  $z = 2.75$ ,  $r = 0.783$ . From the above mentioned data since the significance level is more than 0.05 the hypothesis which states that there is no significant differences in self efficacy based on gender of individual is proven true, the gender differences in Body Image Avoidance through the values of  $F = 2.595$ ,  $z = 0.814$ ,  $r = 0.113$ . From the above mentioned data the  $r$  value is more than 0.05 the gender differences are significant and the hypothesis which states there is no significant differences in perceived stress based on gender of individual is disproven and there is no significant differences in perceived stress based on gender of individual is disproven.

#### ➤ Limitations

The limitations of the study were that the study only focused on trained dancers in India belonging to the age group of 18 to 25 years, It only considered the genders of male and female and did not consider other genders, The study only took a small sample of 60 participants, the study could also find pre and post covid differences if it was done before, The study could also have used other variables for the study, More dancer specific questionnaires could have been used for the research than just general questionnaires, The study could have also focused on artists in general rather than just focusing on dancers, A more qualitative approach could have been used to get better and indepth knowledge of the participants' opinions and personal experiences.

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