

TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE TRADITIONAL BALLET PHYSIQUE INTEGRAL TO
ACHIEVING ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE?

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ABSTRACT

Traditionally professional ballet is associated with a specific physique and aesthetic: extremely petite, bordering on emaciated. There is an assumption that there is a correlation between the dancer's size and their quality of movement. This research aims to establish whether such a correlation exists or whether it is purely a societal preference in keeping with representations of women across the board. I explore the mental and physical health consequences of the expectation to be thin for dancers, given the pressure to conform to extreme physical ideals. I will be studying the physics of the movements, what is truly essential and physically required for a ballet dancer to perform to a professional standard and whether it is possible to achieve it with a greater body mass. I will look at past attempts to address the issue of extreme weight expectations and talk with dancers about their own experiences. My personal experience was the initial driving force for this research and only through research have I discovered how many people have experienced similar attitudes through their training and careers. The issue is hereby researched through empirical evidence, literature critiques, surveys, interviews and scientific research. Ultimately finding there is no justifiable benefit in the continuation of this ideal.

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INTRODUCTION

My abilities as a dancer have been constantly questioned because of my size, and only after years of working on myself can I say aloud, “I am a dancer”. This research examines the traditional ballet physique, researching the hypothesis that being thin is not integral to executing ballet dance to a professional degree of artistic and technical excellence. First, through identifying the ‘ideal’ ballet physique and then experimenting and deciphering the impact alternative physiques have on movement quality, technique and artistry, this research aims to answer whether this physique is a product of necessity, preference or tradition. Moreover, it intends to consider whether it is necessary and, more importantly, healthy to continue this ideal. By demonstrating the answers to these questions, I hope the findings of this research will inspire change and, as a result, pave a broader path for aspiring dancers and encourage companies to make dance more accessible.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Challenging the traditional ballet physique and the dangers of perpetuating this aesthetic

Dancers, more specifically ballet dancers, are largely expected to be thin to achieve professional status, with the ideal physique for a female classical dancer to be “slim, with a long neck, a shortish to medium length torso, long legs with complimentary long arms and high insteps” (Nolan, 2016). Likewise, Vaganova Ballet states, “ideally a ballerina will have a small head, long neck, long arms, long legs, slender figure” (King, 2016) and that a dancer “must be elegant and lean” (Rolz, 2018). As we can see, this physique appears to be widely accepted. However, these narrow physical requirements not only govern the body fat and slenderness of a dancer, but the size of their head and neck, length and proportion of limbs; and composition of the feet. The majority of these criteria are anatomically fixed, meaning it is near impossible to achieve these momentous expectations aside from being born with a physique predisposed to these requirements. Previous chief dance critic for the New York Times, Alastair Macaulay (2010), in a review of Balanchine’s nutcracker, wrote, “Jenifer Ringer, as the Sugar Plum Fairy, looked as if she’d eaten one sugar plum too many; and Jared Angle, as the Cavalier, seems to have been sampling half the Sweet.” What is, arguably, most striking about these comments is that the commentary was reserved only to the appearance of the dancers and not the quality of the dancing itself; it was an observation solely based on aesthetics and not even how that

aesthetic affected the dancing. This supports the idea that the ideal is a preference and not founded on necessity; for example, he did not say, “Jennifer Ringer, as the Sugar Plum Fairy, looked as if she’d eaten one sugar plum too many ... which affected the height of her jumps and negatively impacted the storytelling and artistry”.

Famously, choreographer and "father of American Ballet" George Balanchine, Mr. B, (Clarke and Crisp, 1973, p. 192) is ‘blamed by many for being the main skinny-enforcing catalyst’ (Dancing Times, 2012). One of the most harrowing accounts of this is given by prima ballerina Gelsey Kirkland in her book *Dancing on My Grave*. Kirkland, a former student of Balanchine, shares how, whilst running his finger down her sternum, Balanchine remarked he “must see bones” (Kirkland, 1986, p. 55). As a result, Kirkland, who weighed only 45kg at the time, soon began a battle with anorexia nervosa encouraged by Balanchine telling her not to “eat less” but to “eat nothing”. This demonstrates how the pressure to achieve the impossible is one of the reasons eating disorders are so prevalent in the ballet community, with half of dancers suffering from an eating disorder (Rolz, 2018). For many, these issues begin to develop in the studio. Usually, the room has a wall covered with mirrors, where individuals often analyse their bodies, which are typically required to be clad in form-fitting clothing such as leotard and tights (Mitchel, 2014). Kirkland summarises Balanchine’s influence on the ballet world and the emphasis on body weight over artistic beauty, saying: “Mr. B did not seem to consider beauty a quality that must develop from within the artist; rather, he was concerned with outward signs such as body weight. His emphasis was responsible in part for setting the style that led to some of the current extremes of American ballet”.

Similarly, size 8 Olivia Campbell was on her way to a career as a professional ballerina when she visited the Joffrey Ballet School for an audition at age 16. When she overheard the instructor say, “She’s good, but she’s big,” it left her crushed and baffled that a “potentially less-talented dancer would get “my” spot at the school” (Campbell, 2018). Shortly after she descended into a pattern of disordered eating. Although she is now in recovery, she has not stepped in a dance studio in eleven years and the thought of it “spurs a rush of inadequacy and failure”. This not only shows how central size can be in a professional audition setting but is a clear example of the serious ramifications of continuing this toxic perpetuation. As a result, not only did Campbell stop dancing and endure emotional trauma through her eating disorder, but eleven years later cannot even think about entering a dance studio.

On top of the competitive nature of dance (auditions etc), “individuals with eating disorders are often perfectionists and there is an element of competition among them. Anorexia sufferers want to be the ‘best’ anorexic, the anorexic who can eat the least and get down to the lowest weight. In essence, she (or he) strives to be the best at starving herself” (Grunebaum, 2011). The combination of strong degrees of competitiveness and perfectionism with the need and desire to be the thinnest may lead to unhealthy and addictive attitudes, potentially escalating to anorexia and other eating disorders. Looking at this, in addition to the competitive environment of ballet, it is clear how eating disorders in ballet have come to be as prevalent as they are. These cases were used to guide the direction of the primary research to discover the questions to focus on and by no means do they provide an exhaustive list of experiences. Unfortunately, there are many, many more instances of direct and indirect abuse motivated by weight. With this in mind, we need to question whether these attitudes and practices are in pursuit of physical excellence and improved quality of dancing or whether they serve no purpose other than to satisfy the aesthetic expectations of audiences and creatives.

Defying stereotypes

In 2014 a show called Big Ballet was televised on Channel 4 with amateur ballet dancers larger than the traditional ‘ballet body’. During this, dancer Wayne Sleep set to prove that anyone can and should be given access to perform in a ballet regardless of their size (Pidd, 2014). Some referred to the show as having an ‘ultimately uplifting message’, providing ‘a frank and refreshing glimpse into a rarefied world obsessed with size’ (Smith, 2014). Others saw it as an attempt ‘to get us to sympathise with the clinically obese through the medium of dance’ (The Sunday Post, 2014). However, as Rowley (2014) stated, many critics and viewers thought, ‘it was easy to assume that the producers were hoping for the rotund ballerinas to be humiliated’. It could be seen that Big Ballet, among other reality shows, is nothing more than ritual humiliation. With audiences laughing while shows such as The X Factor ‘exploit people with mental health problems’ (Boyle, 2014), it poses the question: Is psychological sadism really what is needed to increase their ratings? (AndreaK, 2013). Furthermore, was this the case with Big Ballet, or was it, as advertised, a way to overcome stereotypes and inspire dancers and non-dancers to return to or take up ballet.

Notably, former artistic director of English National Ballet, Derek Deane, was quoted saying, “you know, fat, cellulite, bums and large breasts... I’m sorry, but it doesn’t lend itself to the pure

form of classical ballet" (Jones, 2014). He also implied that the Big Ballet performance of Swan Lake was absurd and that the individuals could not perform with the same quality as other professional and slim ballet dancers (Williams, 2014). This judgement is arguably an unfair one, as participants did not have the same quantity and quality of training as working professionals that, on average, dance between five and ten hours a day. While the show did not appear to have a massive effect on practically changing perceptions, particularly in the professional community, it ultimately began creating awareness and challenging the traditional and potentially damaging size requirements of ballet dancers on a mainstream platform.

Despite the slow rate of change, and with so many committed to traditional ideals, we are seeing more pioneers for change. One example is plus-size teen ballerina Lizzy Howell, diagnosed with pseudotumor cerebri (Friedman, 2004). In 2017, Howell 'went viral' with a video of her 'nailing a series of fouetté turns' (Tempesta, 2017). Consequently, she is now an ambassador for Dancing for You, the disability awareness campaign (Mcnamara, 2017). Likewise, professional dancer and member of the contemporary dance company Long2, a company rooted in social activism and a significant voice against body shaming within dance, Colleen Werner started the #BoPoBallerina movement 'to support and promote body-positive dancers' (Denza, 2018).

These examples demonstrate how people are gradually beginning to raise awareness by sharing their stories and, in turn, making a start in diversifying ballet. Hopefully, diversification will help to minimise the prevalence of eating disorders in ballet dancers and the various pressures that fitting into *any* rigid ideal come with.

The question is: what advantage, if any, in terms of ability does the traditional ballet physique give? To answer this, we must examine what is scientifically required to execute various balletic movements.

Physics: *Jumps*

For the purposes of this project, the focus will be on one vital facet of dance, jumps. Dancers 'all dream about doing a super high grand jeté and having the audience be in awe of the moment they appear to be floating in the air' (Ronai-Horvath, 2020). 'One implication of the relationship between time and height for a jump is that dancers of different sizes must jump the same absolute height off the floor in order to perform similar movements to the same tempo'

(Laws, 2002, p. 167). On top of this, the more time a dancer has in the air, the easier it becomes to create specific shapes and greater numbers of ‘beats’ (BalletHub, 2021). A vertical jump is where the body spends ‘some’ time in the air, with no contact with the ground, before returning to the surface close to the departure (Laws, 2002, p. 43). The basic principles include Newton’s (1999) second law, where the amount of force is equal to the mass of the body multiplied by the acceleration due to gravity. This law, in terms of momentum, states that the net of the external force is equal to the change in momentum divided by the time in which the momentum changes. The height of a jump relies on ‘the downward vertical force exerted against the floor and on the length of time or vertical distance through which that force is exerted’ (Laws, 2002, p. 44). In a vertical jump, the centre of gravity is not constant, so to calculate the height of the jump, we must first identify the three moments of the action in terms of the centre of gravity. For example, for a sauté in first:

During the lowest point of plié, the centre of gravity is at the height of h_1 , h_2 is where the feet leave the floor and h_3 is the maximum height of the jump.

Kenneth Laws (2002), ‘ambassador of dance from the world of science’, concludes, ‘there is no way of avoiding these forces if dancers are to display the full range of movement expected of them’, e.g. moving through the positions in h_1 , h_2 and h_3 .

METHODOLOGY

Sociocultural research aims to understand the relationship between human interaction and historical, cultural, and institutional settings (Wertsch, 1995). Qualitative and quantitative data were collected and triangulated using a mixed methods approach in the form of sociocultural research to maximise ecological validity (Creswell, Plano Clark, et al., 2003). Qualitative data was appropriate for this research as it allowed the discovery of individuals’ feelings and opinions on the ballet physique and how this affected their experiences, more than could be generated from something with fixed responses (Opdenakker, 2006). Qualitative data can be considered subjective, so using quantitative data in conjunction helps increase the overall validity of the research (Creswell, 2003). To minimise bias, questions were kept open-ended and never leading. However, due to this research being qualitative heavy, there is a danger of results being unreliable due to the subjectivity of personal experiences causing bias (Chenail, 2011). To combat this, the people interviewed were from a range of backgrounds and countries.

Furthermore, ‘the respondent’s answers can be affected by his reaction to the interviewer’s race, class, age or physical appearance’ and ‘can be time-consuming’ (Alsaawi, 2014). However, interviews mean the ‘interviewer can judge the non-verbal behaviour of the respondent’ and provide a rapid response rate (Alsaawi, 2014). Additionally, interviews allow a rapport to build between interviewer and interviewee, thereby increasing the detail and frankness of any disclosure. The surveys used non-probability sampling, more specifically, convenience sampling. Non-probability sampling presents the risk of volunteer bias; to minimise this, the survey responses were anonymous (a fact known to the participants).

A survey was shared with my peers at The Institute of Contemporary Theatre Training studying on the performing arts course. The primary advantage of this sample was that all participants had some connection or experience with ballet. Conversely, the sample also risks low reliability, as only one university was sampled. As a result of means, a sample size greater than 100 participants was not possible, potentially making the research difficult to generalise (Polit, 2010). To improve reliability, different samples were used for the interviews and participants for the experiments were selected at random from a third pool of dancers. Finally, mathematical and scientific research was used. The experiment looked to uncover a potential correlation between physique and quality of movement. By examining the idea ‘that if someone has reduced mass and generates the same amount of force, this will increase initial velocity’ (The Hoops Geek, 2019) and whether, in practice, people with reduced mass will be able to generate the same amount of force as someone with a greater mass. Using Newton’s laws and some equations of motion (Nafria et al., 2013), a sample of dancers with various physiques were measured and analysed while executing core ballet movements. The primary data produced from this came from looking at the theoretical while considering other factors often unaccounted for by ballet critics.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Upholding ethics is essential to protecting participants and researchers (Gregory, 2003). A consent form was given to all participants before the interviews, outlining the research, how their data will be used and giving the right to withdraw up to two weeks after the interview (see Appendix 1).

PROJECT ACTIVITY

Three research methods were used: scientific theory and experimentation, online surveys, and semi-structured interviews. Varied methods were used to reach a well-rounded conclusion that would be low in bias and high in ecological validity.

Interviews

There were twenty interviewees: eighteen females and two males; aged between eighteen and seventy-eight; experience ranging between two and sixty years; participants were situated in the UK, USA, Australia, and Japan. Sixty percent of participants were either pre-professionals, professionals or retired professionals. All participants were briefed regarding the general purpose of the research and sent a rough guide of questions to discuss in the interview:

*“How has the perpetuation of the typical ballet physique impacted your career?
Positive/negative - expand...”*

Have you or anyone you know been told they don't have the right body to be a ballet dancer?, Are there any other factors that have influenced your career?

If you were able to change the ballet world, what would you change (if anything)?”

Surveys

The survey consisted of similar questions, with the option to add additional comments (see Appendix 2).

Scientific theory and experimentation

Examining the scientific theory included three different body types, quantified by mass only, and inserting them into the same set of equations. This then highlighted the actual difference in how high bodies of different masses are able to jump.

PROJECT ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Interviews

The vast majority of participants recalled being berated due to their size and/or shape. Many were scrutinised over what they ate, being told to “eat less”, with one participant recalling how, as a small child, they were told, “ballerinas shouldn’t be eating ice cream”.

One participant, again in childhood, was told that she had put on weight and “was only allowed to eat vegetables from now on”; consequently, she developed an eating disorder and ate only vegetables for ten years.

Notably, one amateur male dancer said that he sees the ‘ideal’ physique as a “great role model” and views his pursuit of this “as a journey”, allowing him to “set positive and focused goals”.

Another participant, at 13, was told she was a great dancer, but they didn’t know what to do with her because her “hips were bigger than the other girls”; she continued, and at 16, she was “dancing six days a week for a junior company” where she recalls being “lean, healthy and strong”. One day her teacher said, “you’ll never be a ballerina; why are you even here”? She replied, “that she loved to dance”, but her “confidence was derailed” and she “stopped pursuing ballet seriously”.

Participant K started dancing as an adult and spoke of embarrassment when she “couldn’t fit in a large leotard” and how “some friends were asked to lose weight for performances and exams”.

Liz Miles, EdD with sixty years of ballet experience and head of several professional and regional companies, said, “I came up at a time where I couldn’t have a career” She exclaimed, “they wanted me to be white, skinny and long – and I was none of those things”. She commented on how “extreme weight expectations are” and hopes for “an open vision of what makes a successful dancer” and suggests that “if they have the ability to integrate them into companies, then the vision will change”.

Participant C grew up studying Balanchine and then began to study Vaganova. She had “muscular legs and a bust”; it wasn’t until she was older “that the judgement began”.

Looking back from court ballets to Margot Fonteyn, the ballet dancer's physique was quite different; although dancers were mostly lean, they weren’t typically underweight (Homans, 2013). C suggests this is somewhat down to “the huge sample they now have to choose from”. Though she recognised the importance of “completing lines”, she suggests that decreasing the

pressure to be thin “needs to start with the terminology used in classes and then the role models within ballet”.

Asher Taylor-Dawson, Sonia Plumb Dance Company, said that “the commentary around physique is different and less direct for men”. He shared that he believes that “the beauty is in the quality of the movement itself” and that “art does not have to be pretty”.

Another issue that arose was that of elastic ballet waist belts; it is said that their use is to help teachers to see when dancers’ hips are out of alignment; however, most people seem to believe they do not fulfil this purpose and have no use at all (Speck & Cisneros, 2019). One participant, however, recalls them being used as a weight motivation tool where the class was told to “fit into this by the end of the summer programme”.

Overall, many participants spoke of feelings of “self-consciousness”, “being on a quest for the perfect lines, facility and proportions”, and how “preferential treatment was often used to reward weight loss and thinness”.

Additionally, they spoke of how this discouraged them from continuing to dance, left them with a low sense of self-worth and in some cases eating disorders and complex PTSD (Herman, 2012).

Surveys

The survey results found that 72% of people felt they had been impacted by the perpetuation of the traditional ballet physique, with 56% reporting that the effect had been negative. Nearly 50% of participants had been told directly that ‘they had the wrong body for ballet and 81% held the opinion that their body had, in fact, limited their ability as a dancer. However, over 60% of these limitations were attributed to injury and lack of flexibility rather than weight. One reported that ‘rolls on my back have stopped me from kicking high to the back’; this could be seen as a reason for the need for lean physiques in ballet.

Physics

As mentioned, Newton's Second Law tells us that the acceleration of an object (a ballet dancer in this case) depends on the net force acting upon the dancer and the mass of the dancer.

This is expressed as $\sum F=ma^1$.

$\sum F$ = The sum of forces exerted on the dancer (measured in Newtons)

m = Mass (measured in kg)

a = Acceleration due to gravity (which is a constant at 9.81m/s^2)

Notably, 'One newton is the force needed to accelerate one kilogram of mass at the rate of one metre per second squared in the direction of the applied force' (Nordin, 2020).

BODY A – 40kg

$$\sum = 40 \times 9.81 = 392.4\text{N}$$

BODY B – 60kg

$$\sum = 60 \times 9.81 = 588.6\text{N}$$

BODY C – 110kg

$$\sum = 110 \times 9.81 = 1079.1\text{N}$$

The force calculated above is the body's weight, defined as 'the force that acts on a mass due to gravity' (Gönen, 2008). This means that, for example, A must exert greater than 392.4N to leave the ground, whereby the force exerted is directly proportional to the height of the jump. As shown above, as a direct and sole result of the dancer's mass, B must exert 1.5 times the force that A needs to leave the ground, C must exert 1.8 times the force of B and 2.75 times that of A.

The additional force required for the heavier dancer is not inconceivable, particularly when factoring in the variable muscular strength of individuals and the muscular dystrophy that often comes with being severely underweight (Golubnitschaja et al., 2021). Furthermore, the

¹ While $\sum F=ma$, in its pure form, does not factor in more complex variables (e.g. the effects of jumping in different positions and changes in the centre of gravity), it is adequate for the purpose of *comparing* the force required for dancers of different masses to complete a jump.

difference in the body mass of these three participants is far more significant than the difference between what is considered overweight for a dancer and the ideal mass for a dancer.

The findings of my secondary research share an uncanny resemblance with the findings of my primary research.

This tells me that not only is the traditional ballet physique not integral, but it is also immensely harmful to the mental and physical health of dancers.²

CONCLUSION

Overall, it seems clear that the perpetuation of the ideal ballet physique has caused far more harm than any of the potential ‘advantages’. The number of people that have been ostracised and broken by the insistence of this ideal is chilling. In terms of my own professional development, I have found myself in the depths of despair and have carried an internal script of self-hatred. The words ‘too fat’ have taken me to darker places than I could have ever imagined. It is only now, after this project, that I feel somewhat freed by the experiences of my peers that I never knew existed. This only emphasises the importance of change, sharing experiences, and exposing the shame that comes with them. I believe the quality and quantity of the data collected in this project to be of a high standard; I feel potential bias was avoided as far as was possible, with validity and reliability remaining at the forefront. If I were to continue this project, I would explore the physics behind a wide selection of movements, including possible effects on pas de deux, and put theoretical physics to the test and look at possible impacts of storytelling, artistry, and freedom of expression. Though the sample was broad and believed to be representative of the study, it is recognised that having a larger sample could further increase reliability. To conclude, I believe the ballet body ideal to be one of preference and societal production, as opposed to one of necessity. While fitness is clearly important, being underweight is not necessary to achieve good fitness or artistic and technical excellence.

² It must be noted that, for practicality and feasibility, jumps were the sole focus of the scientific theory and experimentation. This was to demonstrate the effect, or lack, of a dancer’s mass and is not meant to suggest that the quality and ability of a dancer is solely enshrined in how high they can jump.

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APPENDICES – Appendix 1

TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE TRADITIONAL BALLET PHYSIQUE INTEGRAL TO ACHIEVING TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY AND ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE?

Consent to take part in research

- I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Name:

Date of birth:

Gender:

Time doing ballet:

Professional/Amateur Company (if relevant):

• I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.

- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.

- I understand that participation involves answering questions concerning my experiences relating to ballet and personal image.

- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.

- I agree to my interview being recorded.

- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.

- I understand that extracts from my interview may be quoted in the project assessment, conference presentation, published papers and articles.

- I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.

- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained on a secure harddrive, where only the researcher has access.

- I understand that a transcript of my interview will be retained until necessary.

- I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

- I agree that I can be referred to by name within the project:

Yes

No - I wish to remain anonymous

Signature of research participant

----- Signature of participant Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

----- Signature of researcher Date

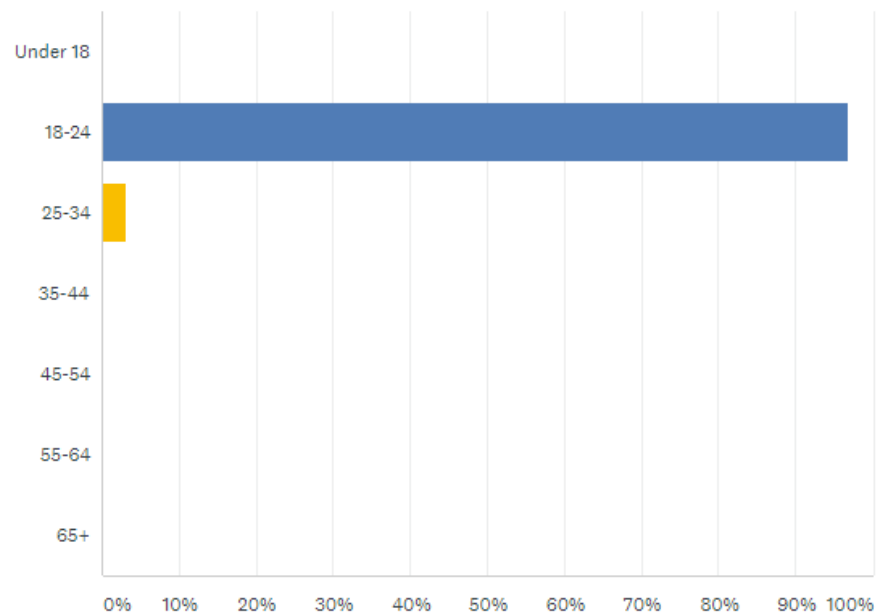
HOLLY AUSTIN

holly.ann.austin@gmail.com

Appendix 2

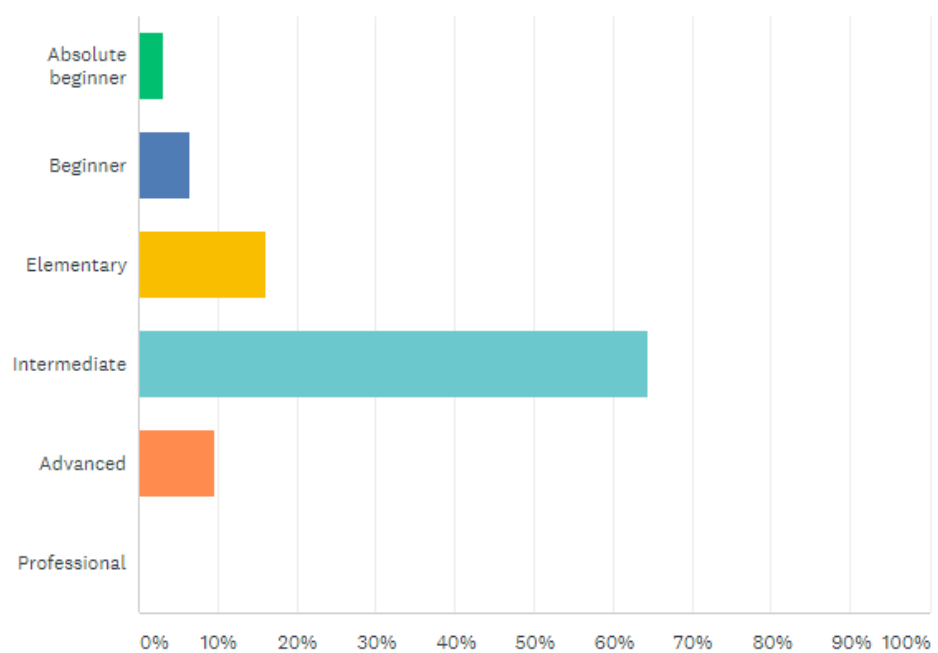
How old are you?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0

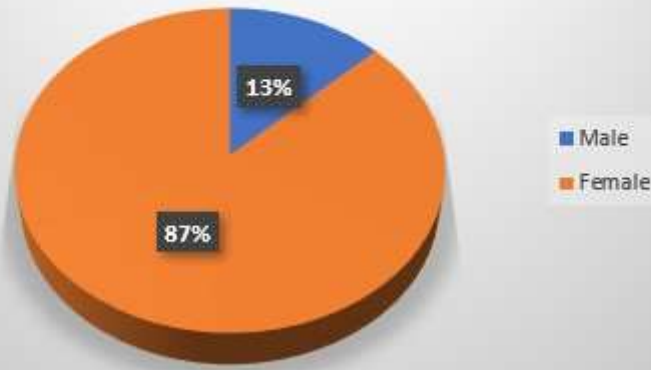


What level would you consider ballet ability?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0



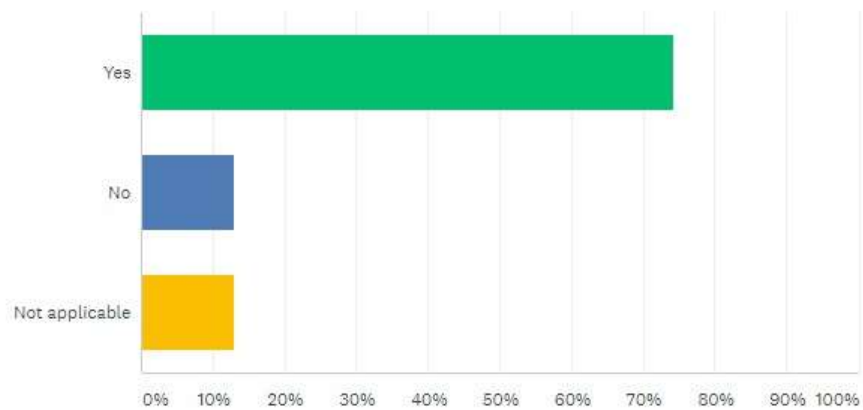
What is your gender?



Ten-years Since-aged-four
Three-and-a-half-years
Sixteen-and-a-half-years
Fifteen-years
Seventeen-years
Two-years Eight-years
Five-years
One-and-a-half-years
Twelve-years Fourteen-years
One-year Four-years
Three-years

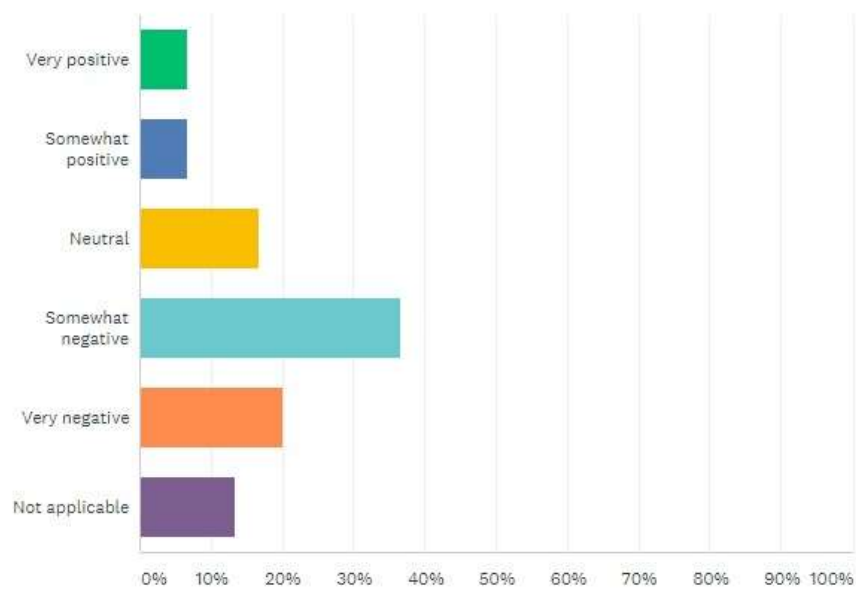
Has the perpetuation of the traditional ballet physique impacted your life/career?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0



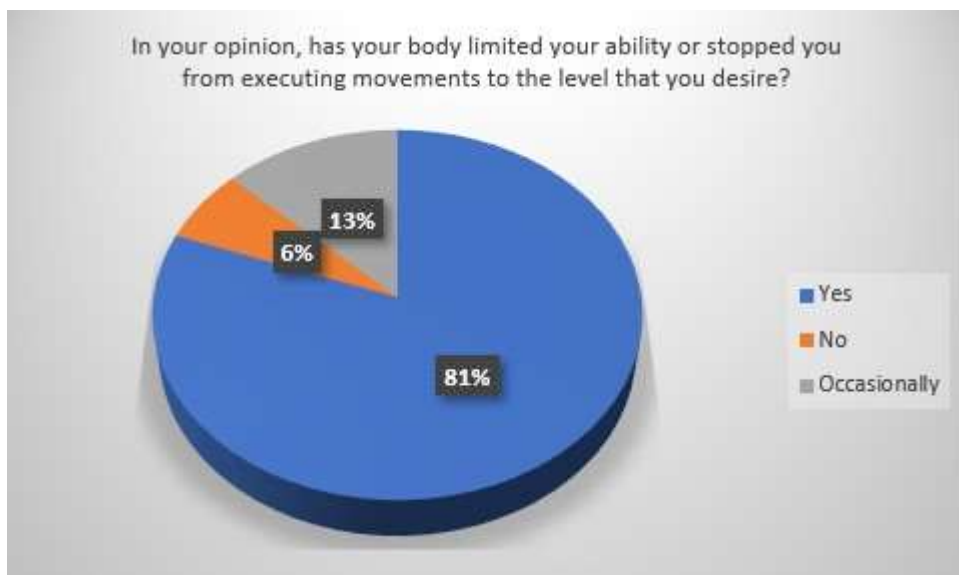
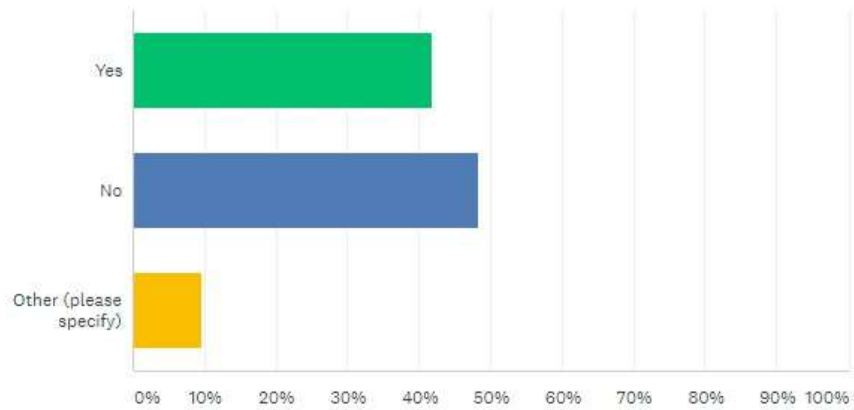
If applicable, has the impact been positive or negative?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 1



Have you ever been told that you don't have the right body for ballet?

Answered: 31 Skipped: 0





Yes as I'm a female who is has curves and big boobs which I find can hold me back from being the typical ballet dancer type. In terms of flexibility, yes!

Flexibility definitely has, and some steps don't look as nice because of my body shape (in my opinion)

Sometimes regards to jumps and leaps I need to build more leg muscle to improve height

Yes. I am not flexible by nature and my legs are shorter than my upper body, that limits me with the plies and flexibility.

Lack of flexibility

Some flexibility stuff and hyperextension issues

Potentially height has restricted me from being able to reach as high a leap as I would want.

Only because I have injuries, and as previously stated sometimes really cannot concentrate due to how I feel

I am not as lean as the average ballet dancer or as flexible so am limited in my range of motion

Roles on my back have stopped me from kicking high to the back.

If you could change anything in the ballet world - what would you change?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 1

RESPONSES (30) WORD CLOUD TAGS (0)

🔒 Sentiments: OFF



Filter: by tag ▼

Search responses



Showing 30 responses

- Gender stereotypes ie girls arms in thrd boys in fifth, and the whole idea of a skinny, tall, flat chested, white female,
3/10/2021 5:33 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
- Modernism
3/10/2021 2:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
- The severity of eating disorders within the industry.
2/21/2021 1:04 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
- How all body types should be excepted
2/16/2021 6:07 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
- To make it more fun, more comedic or less serious ballets
2/11/2021 4:04 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
- The stigma towards what a ballet body should look like
2/9/2021 12:32 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
- The stereotypes of having the perfect ballet body
2/8/2021 11:54 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

-
- Stereotypes that you have to have everything perfect with your body naturally
2/8/2021 8:54 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-
- The idea that flexibility = amazing, when technically they aren't as good as their non-flexible counterparts
2/8/2021 6:23 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-
- Weight and height limitations
2/8/2021 5:20 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-
- The amount of body shame/idea that ballet dancers need to have a specific look
2/8/2021 4:03 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-
- To not be so strict
2/8/2021 3:18 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-
- More joy
2/8/2021 1:58 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-
- That to do ballet you can be whatever size and shape!
2/8/2021 12:36 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-
- Men dance too
2/7/2021 9:38 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-
- Acceptance of all body sizes. Talent based judgements not body based ones
2/7/2021 9:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-
- More mainstream training available age 18+ years old.
2/7/2021 8:54 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-
- more accessibility
2/7/2021 6:28 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-
- Racial diversity
2/7/2021 6:23 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼
-

The idea that to be successful you have to be skinny, tall, pretty and white
2/7/2021 5:14 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

Acceptance. Leotard sizes (even just 2 sizes bigger would be nice). I think ballet will always have the body type stigma, ballets meant to be dainty and aesthetic, and unfortunately, no matter how hard I try, I know I will never be able to conform to that aesthetic and I really don't see the ballet world changing to accommodate people like me
2/7/2021 3:55 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

The ideal ballet body type a ballerina requires
2/7/2021 3:43 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

Everyone having to look the same
2/7/2021 2:59 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

I don't know a lot about that world, so I feel like I can't comment on that
2/7/2021 2:42 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

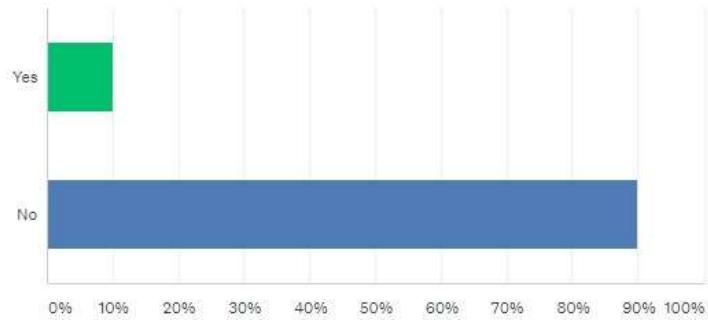
Acceptance of difference
2/7/2021 2:37 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

The need for flexibility to equal excellence.
2/7/2021 2:34 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

The stigma that you have to be stick thin to be a ballerina, and make the world realize that every body is different and it doesn't affect your ability as a dancer
2/7/2021 2:32 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#) ▼

Is there anything else you would like to add (gender roles etc)?

Answered: 30 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	10.00% 3
No	90.00% 27
TOTAL	30

Comments (5)

- Same sex duets
2/8/2021 8:54 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#)
- I don't know enough about gender roles within ballet to comment
2/7/2021 9:30 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#)
- Let men do pointe and let girls jump and maybe just change the style so that anyone can do any type of dance within it as that then removes the barriers for non binary and gender fluid people
2/7/2021 3:55 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#)
- I personally prefer to be lifted but I know some of my male friends would like for the roles to be swapped sometimes or for partner work to not have to be male and female
[View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#)
- I want to see boys on pointe. If they want to try, why aren't they allowed
2/7/2021 2:31 PM [View respondent's answers](#) [Add tags](#)