

Life Satisfaction in Dance Practitioners: An Exploratory Study

Zoi Karamichou

Department of Physical Education and Sport Science

University of Thessaly, Trikala, 42100, Greece

E-mail: zoikaramichou0504@gmail.com

Ioannis Trigonis

Department of Physical Education and Sport Science

Democritus University of Thrace, 69100, Komotini, Greece

E-mail: itrigon@phyed.duth.gr

Ioannis Tsartsapakis

Department of Physical Education and Sport Science

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 62100, Serres, Greece

E-mail: ioantsar@phed-sr.auth.gr

Aglaia Zafeiroudi (Corresponding author)

Department of Physical Education and Sport Science

University of Thessaly, Trikala, 42100, Greece

Tel.: 30-243-104-7004 E-mail: aglaiazaf@hotmail.com

Received: November 3, 2024 Accepted: December 4, 2024 Published: December 5, 2024

doi:10.5296/jet.v12i1.22445

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5296/jet.v12i1.22445>

Abstract

The present study aimed to i) assess life satisfaction among leisure time dance practitioners and ii) investigate differences in life satisfaction between people who dance for enjoyment and those who dance for exercise. Five hundred and sixty-seven adults (89 men and 478 women) completed the Karakasidou et al. (2016) Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS), which consists of five items on a 7-point Likert scale. Results showed that 423 dancers participated for enjoyment and 144 for exercise purposes. Regarding the first aim of the study, the dancers scored high on the five items of the scale confirming that participation in dance has a potential positive impact on life satisfaction. According the second aim, the t-test analysis revealed statistically significant differences in four Satisfaction with Life Scale items, with individuals who participated in dance for exercise scoring higher than those who participated for enjoyment. In conclusion, those who participated in dance showed high satisfaction with life, and enjoyment appeared as the most important reason for participating in dance practices during leisure time. The findings shed light on the role of dance in promoting life satisfaction and provide insight into the motivations behind dance participation. Leisure activities, including dancing, could induce positive emotions that promote wellbeing.

Keywords: physical exercise, creative activities, recreation, community, leisure, health, positive psychology

1. Introduction

1.1 Leisure Activities, Dance and Life Satisfaction

Recreation can take many forms, each with its own unique characteristics and benefits (Tapps & Wells, 2024). One of the most common forms of recreation is physical activity, such as movement, sports, and exercise. Physical activity has been shown to have many health benefits, including improving cardiovascular health, reducing the risk of chronic disease, and enhancing mental well-being (Brazendale et al., 2017; Kapoor et al., 2022; Li & Liang, 2024). Another form of leisure is engaging in artistic and creative activities, such as painting, writing, music, drama, and dance (Kouthouris et al., 2022; Stevenson, 2006). Creative activities have been found to improve mood, reduce stress, and promote self-expression and personal growth (Coulton et al., 2019). Further forms of leisure include socializing with friends and family, traveling, and participating in cultural events and festivals (Becchetti et al., 2012).

The relationship between leisure and life satisfaction has been the subject of considerable research. Many studies have found that participation in leisure activities is positively associated with psychological health and life satisfaction (Argan et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2021; Koch et al., 2019; Tsartsapakis et al., 2023; Zafeiroudi & Kouthouris, 2022). A study of Chinese adults by Wang et al. (2021) showed that participation in various forms of leisure, such as sports, cultural activities, and social events, is positively related to life satisfaction.

Similarly, a study by Dingle et al. (2015) found that participation in group walking was associated with higher levels of subjective well-being, social connectedness, and meaning in life. In addition, leisure time motor activities, such as yoga and pilates, affect life satisfaction and contribute to factors that shape life satisfaction, such as mindfulness, self-awareness, and

connection with the environment and the surrounding world (Zafeiroudi et al, 2022a, 2022b; Zafeiroudi, 2023a).

As a factor affecting mental state and general well-being, life satisfaction is closely related to leisure activities (Lapa, 2013; McGuinn & Mosher-Ashley, 2001; Rodríguez et al., 2008). The mechanisms by which leisure can affect life satisfaction are complex and multifaceted. Recreation can promote positive emotions such as joy and pleasure, which can contribute to higher levels of life satisfaction (Iso-Ahola, 2017). Recreation can also promote social connectedness and provide opportunities for meaningful social interactions, which can contribute to a sense of belonging and social support (Coulton et al., 2019). Finally, recreation can promote personal growth and development by providing opportunities for learning, creativity, and self-expression (Haggard & Williams, 1992; Kouthouris et al., 2022; Theriault & Stone, 2023; Zafeiroudi, 2021a; Zafeiroudi & Kouthouris, 2021).

Several theoretical frameworks have been proposed to explain the relationship between dance and life satisfaction. Two prominent frameworks are self-determination theory (SDT) and positive psychology. SDT posits that individuals have three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Autonomy refers to the need to feel in control of one's behavior, competence refers to the need to feel capable of achieving desired outcomes, and relatedness refers to the need to feel connected to others. When these needs are met, individuals experience a greater sense of well-being and life satisfaction. Research has shown that dance can satisfy all three basic psychological needs, leading to increased life satisfaction (Quested & Duda, 2011). It can provide a sense of autonomy and control over one's movements, a sense of competence when mastering new dance steps, and foster social connections and a sense of kinship with others, leading to greater feelings of happiness and life satisfaction (Gökyürek, 2016).

Positive psychology, on the other hand, emphasizes the importance of positive emotions, strengths, and virtues in promoting well-being and life satisfaction (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Positive emotions such as joy, pride, and love have been shown to increase well-being and life satisfaction. Dance can be a source of positive emotions, as it is often associated with feelings of joy and excitement (Zafeiroudi, 2021). In addition, it can help individuals cultivate strengths such as persistence, self-discipline, and creativity, all of which are associated with greater life satisfaction (Meadows, 2016; Vormwald, 2020). In conclusion, theoretical frameworks such as SDT and positive psychology provide insight into the potential mechanisms underlying the relationship between dance and life satisfaction. Dance can satisfy basic psychological needs and cultivate positive emotions, strengths, and social connections, leading to greater life satisfaction.

In conclusion, research indicates that participation in leisure activities, including dance, is associated with higher levels of life satisfaction. The mechanisms by which enjoyment affects life satisfaction are complex and multifaceted, including the promotion of positive emotions, social connection, and personal development. These findings have important implications for promoting well-being and quality of life through the provision of recreational opportunities through movement, including dance.

Dancing is a beneficial recreational activity that can improve both physical and mental health outcomes. Despite the numerous benefits of dance, many adults do not participate in regular dance activities. According to the National Health Interview Survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), only 7.5% of adults aged 18 and older met the recommended guidelines for physical activity through dance in 2019 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021). Therefore, it is important to investigate the factors influencing dance participation among adults in order to encourage more people to engage in this enjoyable and health-promoting activity.

1.2 Why People Dance?

Dance serves as a form of self-expression, helping individuals communicate emotions and connect with others in meaningful ways. Rokka et al. (2015) suggest that people often dance to foster social bonding and to experience joy and pleasure. Specifically, they found that teenagers are drawn to traditional dance both as a way to stay active, to connect with their cultural heritage and to socialize with peers, thus fostering strong community bonds and physical well-being.

Maraz et al. (2015) highlight the role of dance in enhancing physical health and psychological well-being, as it combines both exercise and creativity. They identified that people participate in social and latin dance for mood enhancement. In that study, dance served as an outlet for individuals to disconnect from daily stresses, express their personalities, and foster meaningful social connections within the dance community.

Other researchers have concluded that fun and social contact are the most important reasons for participating in dance. At the same time, physical condition, exercise, and challenge play important but lesser roles. The findings of the above research suggest that dancing mainly attracts people who are looking for pleasant and social activities, with improving physical condition coming as a secondary reason (Filippou et al., 2016). Li & Liang (2024) argue that people choose dance as it facilitates cultural expression, allowing individuals to feel connected to their heritage and traditions. While Svobodova (2017) points out that the communal aspect of dance can contribute to a sense of belonging and community.

Conclusively, existing research provides a comprehensive overview, drawing from a variety of demographic and cultural perspectives, of the psychological, social, and physical reasons driving people to participate in recreational dance activities. Previous studies highlighted reasons such as socialization, cultural engagement, physical fitness, emotional well-being, and skill development. Across various demographics, reason participating in dance appear to be influenced by factors such as age, gender, lifestyle, and life stage, with outcomes ranging from enhanced mental health to community building and physical fitness.

The current study explores the relationship of participation in dance with life satisfaction and the reasons for participating in dance. This information is useful in formulating dance programs that will best meet the needs and preferences of participants.

1.3 Aim of the Study

The purpose of the present was to explore life satisfaction in adults who participate in dance activities. The study aimed specifically to i) evaluate life satisfaction in adults participating in leisure time dance practices and ii) examine differences in life satisfaction between groups engaged in dance for a) recreational reasons and b) exercise reasons. The research sought to answer two questions: i) Do individuals participating in dance practices enjoy high life satisfaction? ii) Do adults who participate in dance practice for enjoyment show higher levels of life satisfaction than adults who participate in dance for exercise purposes?

2. Method

2.1 Participants

This study enrolled 567 dancers, of whom 15.7% were men and 84.3% were women. Among the participants, 423 participated in dance for enjoyment reasons and 144 for exercise reasons. The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants

	<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%		<i>n</i>	%
Gender			Age			Economic		
<i>Men</i>	89	15.7	18–29	276	48.7	<i>Low</i>	186	32.8
<i>Women</i>	478	84.3	30–39	146	25.7	<i>Mid</i>	354	62.4
Family stat			40–49	102	18	<i>High</i>	27	4.8
<i>Married</i>	182	32.1	50<	43	7.5	Experience		
<i>Single</i>	38.5	67.9	Dance type			< 1 year	71	12.5
Reason			<i>Ballet</i>	200	35.3	2–4 years	102	18
<i>Entertain</i>	423	74.6	<i>Social</i>	312	55	5–7 years	87	15.3
<i>Exercise</i>	144	25.4	<i>Aerobic</i>	55	9.7	> 8years	307	54.1

2.2 Research Instrument

Participants completed the Greek version of the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS: Karakasidou et al., 2016; Diener et al., 1985). This scale consists of five items: Item 1: “In most ways, my life is close to my ideal.”; Item 2: “The conditions of my life are excellent.”; Item 3: “I am satisfied with my life”; Item 4: “So far I have gotten the important things I want in life”; and Item 5: “If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing.” Answers were given on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Slightly Disagree, 4 = Neither Agree or Disagree, 5 = Slightly Agree, 6 = Agree, 7 = Strongly Agree). The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the SWLS was .77.

2.3 Procedure

Participants were members of studios and clubs providing different types of dance classes in Greece. They were non-randomly selected, considering a series of inclusion and exclusion

criteria. Participants had to meet the following criteria: i) aged between 18 and 65 years, ii) owned a mobile phone, and iii) was a member of a dance class. Dancers under 17 years of age and individuals currently attending professional dance classes were excluded. Data were collected from the participants at their dance studios, in the presence of their dance teacher and the researchers. In addition, permission was received from the management of the dance studios and consent was given by the dance teachers. Each questionnaire took approximately 5–6 minutes to complete and the questionnaires were anonymous. They were completed using Google Forms on the participants' mobile phones. The research was carried out in the 2023–24 academic year. The study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee of the Department of Physical Education and Sport Science, University of Thessaly (1-2/7-12-2022).

2.4 Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics were applied, with life satisfaction taken as the dependent variable and the reason of dance participation as the independent variable. The differentiation of life satisfaction according to different reasons for dancing was investigated using t-test analysis.

3. Results

3.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics showed that the dancers scored high on all five items of the life satisfaction scale. Specifically, the highest value was for the item, “I am satisfied with my life” ($M= 5.03$, $SD=1.29$), followed by the item, “So far I have gotten the important things I want in my life” ($M= 4.79$, $SD=1.31$). The third highest score was for the item, “The conditions of my life are excellent” ($M=4.50$ & $SD=1.36$), followed by the item, “In most ways my life is close to my ideal” ($M=4.52$, $SD=1.25$), while the lowest score was for the item, “If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing” ($M=4.24$, $SD=1.80$). In addition, correlation analysis between all subjects of the life satisfaction scale scores was at a high statistical level ($p<.001$) (Table 2).

Table 2. Mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficients

Items	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5
1	4.52	1.25	1				
2	4.50	1.36	.601**				
3	5.03	1.29	.623**	.671**			
4	4.79	1.31	.451**	.363**	.513**		
5	4.24	1.80	.446**	.382**	.460**	.346**	1

3.2 Differences

The independent factor t-test analysis of the dichotomous variable “reasons for participation” in dance practices (1 = enjoyment, 2 = exercise) and the dependent variables of the five items on the SWLS revealed statistically significant differences in four of the five items. Specifically, statistically significant differences were found in the first item ($t= -1.97$, $p<.05$), the third item ($t= -2.50$, $p<.05$), the fourth item ($t= -2.28$, $p<.05$), and the fifth item ($t= -2.94$,

$p < .01$). No statistically significant differences were noted in the second item. In addition, it should be noted that the highest scores in all four subjects were by dancers who stated “exercise” as their reason for participation. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. T-test analysis: Differences between life satisfaction and reasons for participating in dance practice

Satisfaction with Life	Participation reason	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Item 1	Enjoyment	423	4.46	1.27	-1.971	<.05
	Exercise	144	4.70	1.18		
Item 2	Enjoyment	423	4.47	1.35	-.770	n.s
	Exercise	144	4.57	1.39		
Item 3	Enjoyment	423	4.96	1.26	-2.504	<.05
	Exercise	144	5.27	1.34		
Item 4	Enjoyment	423	4.71	1.27	-2.280	<.05
	Exercise	144	5.00	1.39		
Item 5	Enjoyment	423	4.11	1.76	-2.946	<.01
	Exercise	144	4.62	1.86		

4. Discussion

The present study aimed to assess the life satisfaction experienced by adults who participate in dance activities and to investigate whether there were differences in life satisfaction between individuals who dance for fun and recreation versus exercise. The findings shed light on the role of dance in promoting life satisfaction and provide insight into the motivations behind dance participation.

The first aim of the research was to investigate the extent to which dance contributes to life satisfaction in adults. The results revealed that the participants, as a whole, reported high levels of satisfaction in all five dimensions measured by the "satisfaction with life" scale. This suggests that engaging in dance activities has a positive impact on individuals' overall life satisfaction. These findings align with previous research highlighting the multifaceted benefits of dance on life satisfaction, and overall physical, mental, emotional and social well-being. It appears that dance, as a leisure activity, has the potential to enhance individuals' sense of fulfillment and satisfaction with life. However, further research is required.

Moving on to the second aim of the present study, it was examined whether individuals who participated in dance for recreational purposes had greater life satisfaction compared to those who engaged in dance for exercise purposes. Contrary to the original hypothesis, participants who danced for exercise showed a higher level of life satisfaction compared to those who danced for recreation. This unexpected result suggests that dance, when pursued as a form of exercise, can have a transformative effect on individuals' well-being and overall life

satisfaction. One possible explanation for this unexpected result is that people who choose dancing for recreational purposes may experience a more ephemeral and temporary sense of satisfaction. Dance, in this context, serves as a means of entertainment and relaxation, providing temporary relief from everyday stressors. While this may contribute to short-term enjoyment and positive feelings, it may not necessarily translate into long-term life satisfaction. On the other hand, people who dance for exercise may have developed a more rooted and committed relationship with dance as a lifestyle. These individuals are likely to perceive dance as a regular practice that contributes to their overall physical health, improving mobility and strength. This association between dance and physical well-being may explain their higher levels of life satisfaction.

Leisure activities, including dance, can evoke positive emotions such as joy, pleasure and satisfaction (Iso-Ahola, 2017; Kouthouris et al., 2022). However, it is plausible that the ephemeral enjoyment derived from dancing for recreational purposes may contribute to a more transient sense of satisfaction, while dancing for exercise may provide a deeper and more lasting sense of well-being. Taking up dance as a form of exercise has the potential to become a lifestyle, incorporating fitness goals, regular practice and a sense of discipline. This dedication and commitment to dance as a lifestyle choice can foster a deeper sense of satisfaction that comes from the pursuit of personal growth, achievement and self-improvement. Conversely, those who engage in dance primarily for recreational purposes may perceive dance as a recreational activity rather than an integral part of their daily life.

Findings suggest that motivations behind dance participation play a critical role in the relationship between dance and life satisfaction. It appears that dancing for exercise provides a more holistic and lasting source of satisfaction as it aligns with individuals' long-term goals of maintaining a healthy and active lifestyle. In contrast, dancing for recreational purposes may be more focused on immediate gratification and pleasure, which may not have a lasting impact on overall life satisfaction.

These results have implications for dance programs, educators, and policy makers. Understanding the different motivations and expectations associated with dance participation can help tailor dance interventions and offerings to meet the different needs of individuals. For example, individuals seeking exercise benefits may benefit from programs that emphasize the physical aspects of dance, while those seeking recreation and recreational enjoyment may prefer programs that emphasize creativity, self-expression, and social interaction.

Despite the valuable insights this study provides, it is important to acknowledge some limitations of this study. First, the research was conducted in Greece, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts. Future studies should aim to replicate these findings in different populations to ensure the robustness and validity of the results. Additionally, the study focused on adults who participated in various dance activities, but did not differentiate between different dance styles. It would be valuable for future research to explore how specific dance styles may affect life satisfaction and identify potential variations in the relationship between dance motivation and life satisfaction across

different dance forms. In general life satisfaction is influenced by various factors where future researches could deal with it. In this research, other factors that may affect the formation of the level of satisfaction with life were not evaluated and it is also a limitation of the research.

In conclusion, this study showed that participation in dance activities is associated with high levels of life satisfaction among adults. The findings also revealed that people who dance for exercise tend to report higher life satisfaction than those who dance for fun. This unexpected result contrasts with a previous study (Filippou et al., 2016) and suggests that the ephemeral nature of entertainment-focused dance may contribute to a transient sense of satisfaction, while dancing for exercise has become a more comprehensive and essential aspect of participants' lives. These findings highlight the complex interplay between dance, motivation, and life satisfaction, highlighting the importance of considering individual goals and aspirations when promoting dance as a means of enhancing well-being.

Overall, this study contributes to the growing body of research on the psychological benefits of dance and highlights the need for further investigation of the distinct effects of different dance styles and motivations on life satisfaction. By gaining a deeper understanding of how dance affects people's life satisfaction, dance programs can be designed that optimize well-being and provide meaningful experiences for participants. However, more research is needed on life satisfaction and more generally on factors that affect human psychology. The present study contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the positive association between dance participation and life satisfaction. The findings highlight the benefits of dance as a leisure activity, including its potential to promote physical health, social connections and overall well-being. Mechanisms underlying this relationship, such as positive emotions, social connectedness, and personal growth, were also elucidated. These findings have important implications for practitioners, educators, policy makers, and individuals seeking to improve their quality of life through leisure activities. By understanding the factors that influence dance participation and its impact on life satisfaction, tailored interventions and programs can be developed to maximize the benefits of dance involvement.

Future research should further explore the long-term effects of dance participation, cultural influences, and underlying mechanisms driving the observed associations, ultimately fostering a deeper understanding of the transformative power of dance as a recreational activity. Future longitudinal studies may examine the long-term effects of dance engagement on life satisfaction. Further future research can address the influence of demographic and psychosocial factors on dance participation and life satisfaction. The findings will reinforce the importance of considering individual preferences and sociocultural factors when designing dance programs that target diverse populations.

5. Conclusion

The present study contributes to existing literature by highlighting the positive association between dance participation and life satisfaction. The findings highlight the benefits of dance as a leisure activity, including its potential to promote physical health, social connections, and overall well-being. Mechanisms underlying this relationship, such as positive emotions,

social connectedness, and personal growth, were also elucidated. These findings have important implications for practitioners, educators, policy makers, and individuals seeking to improve their quality of life through leisure activities. By understanding the factors that influence dance participation and its impact on life satisfaction, tailored interventions and programs can be developed to maximize the benefits of dance involvement.

Future research should further explore the long-term effects of dance participation, cultural influences, and underlying mechanisms driving the observed associations, with the ultimate aim of fostering a deeper understanding of the transformative power of dance as a recreational activity. Future longitudinal studies may examine the long-term effects of dance engagement on life satisfaction. Further future research can address the influence of demographic and psychosocial factors on dance participation and life satisfaction. The findings will reinforce the importance of understanding and responding to individual preferences and sociocultural factors when designing dance programs that target diverse populations.

Acknowledgments

Not applicable.

Authors contributions

Not applicable.

Funding

Not applicable.

Competing interests

Not applicable.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Macrothink Institute.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

Open access

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

References

Argan, M., Argan, M. T., & Dursun, M. T. (2018). Examining relationships among well-being, leisure satisfaction, life satisfaction, and happiness. *International Journal of Medical Research & Health Sciences*, 7(4), 49-59.

Becchetti, L., Giachin Ricca, E., & Pelloni, A. (2012). The relationship between social leisure and life satisfaction: Causality and policy implications. *Social indicators research*, 108, 453-490. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-011-9887-5>

Brazendale, K., Beets, M. W., Weaver, R. G., Pate, R. R., & Turner-McGrievy, G. M. (2017). Kicking inside: The effect of physical activity on depressive symptoms and markers of inflammation in adolescents. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 14(3), 204-213. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jpah.2016-0223>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021). *National health interview survey*. Retrieved 30 may from <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/index.htm>

Coulton, D., Hutchings, M., & Bell, J. (2019). Dancing for well-being: A scoping review and map of mental health outcomes. *Arts and Health*, 11(1), 1-30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17533015.2018.1474419>

Dingle, G. A., Stark, C., & Cruwys, T. (2015). Best foot forward: Exploring the benefits of group walking for people with multiple sclerosis. *International Journal of MS Care*, 17(2), 69-76. <https://doi.org/10.7224/1537-2073.2013-039>

Filippou, F., Rokka, S., & Mavridis, G. (2016). Examining the motives for participating in dance activities, using the “Physical Activity and Leisure Motivation Scale”(PALMS). *Sport Science*, 9(1), 42-49.

Gökyürek, B. (2016). An analysis of leisure attitudes of the individuals participating in dance activities and the relationship between leisure attitude and life satisfaction. *International Journal of Environmental and Science Education*, 11(10). <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1114650>

Haggard, L. M., & Williams, D. R. (1992). Identity affirmation through leisure activities: Leisure symbols of the self. *Journal of leisure research*, 24(1), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.1992.11969868>

Iso-Ahola, S. E. (2017). Recreation as a positive psychology intervention. In M. Csikszentmihalyi (Ed.), *Flow and the foundations of positive psychology* (pp. 387-407). Springer.

Kapoor, G., Chauhan, P., Singh, G., Malhotra, N., & Chahal, A. (2022). Physical activity for health and fitness: past, present and future. *Journal of lifestyle medicine*, 12(1), 9. <https://doi.org/10.15280/jlm.2022.12.1.9>

- Karakasidou, E., Pezirkianidis, C., Stalikas, A., & Galanakis, M. (2016). Standardization of the subjective happiness scale (SHS) in a Greek sample. *Psychology*, *7*(14), 1753-1765. <https://doi.org/10.4236/psych.2016.714164>
- Kim, J., Byon, K. K., & Kim, J. (2021). Leisure activities, happiness, life satisfaction, and health perception of older Korean adults. *Int J Mental Health Promot*, *23*, 155-166. <https://doi.org/10.32604/IJMHP.2021.015232>
- Koch, S. C., Riege, R. F. F., Tisborn, K., Biondo, J., Martin, L., & Beelmann, A. (2019). Effects of Dance Movement Therapy and Dance on Health-Related Psychological Outcomes. A Meta-Analysis Update. *Frontiers in psychology*, *10*, 1806. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01806>
- Kouthouris, C., Zafeiroudi, A., Patsiaouras, A., Bekiari, A., Zisi, V., & Dalamitros, A. (2022). *Active Leisure: Outdoor Recreation, Sports, Arts*. Kallipos, Open Academic Editions. <https://dx.doi.org/10.57713/kallipos-50>
- Lapa, T. Y. (2013). Life satisfaction, leisure satisfaction and perceived freedom of park recreation participants. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *93*, 1985-1993. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.10.153>
- Li, P., & Liang, L. (2024). Dance education and Chinese students' mental health: enhancing well-being and cognitive function. *Current Psychology*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-024-06755-2>
- Maraz, A., Király, O., Urbán, R., Griffiths, M. D., & Demetrovics, Z. (2015). Why do you dance? Development of the Dance Motivation Inventory (DMI). *PloS one*, *10*(3), e0122866. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0122866>
- McGuinn, K. K., & Mosher-Ashley, P. M. (2001). Participation in recreational activities and its effect on perception of life satisfaction in residential settings. *Activities, adaptation & aging*, *25*(1), 77-86. https://doi.org/10.1300/J016v25n01_06
- Meadows, M. (2016). *How to Build Self-Discipline to Exercise: Practical Techniques and Strategies to Develop a Lifetime Habit of Exercise* (Vol. 4). Meadows Publishing.
- Quested, E., & Duda, J. L. (2011). Exploring the social-environmental determinants of well- and ill-being in dancers: A test of basic needs theory. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, *12*(6), 590-596. <https://doi.org/10.1123/jsep.32.1.39>
- Rodríguez, A., Látková, P., & Sun, Y. Y. (2008). The relationship between leisure and life satisfaction: Application of activity and need theory. *Social Indicators Research*, *86*, 163-175. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-007-9101-y>
- Rokka, S., Mavridis, G., Mavridou, Z., Kelepouris, A., & Filippou, D. A. (2015). Traditional dance as recreational activity: Teenagers' motives participation. *Sport science*, *8*(2), 75-81.
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, *55*(1),

68-78. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68>

Seligman, M. E., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). *Positive psychology: An introduction* (Vol. 55, No. 1, p. 5). American Psychological Association.

Stevenson, D. (2006). *The Arts and Enjoyment: Situating Leisure in the Creative Economy*. In: Rojek, C., Shaw, S.M., Veal, A.J. (eds) *A Handbook of Leisure Studies*. Palgrave Macmillan, London. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230625181_21

Svobodová, L. (2017, May). Dance contribution to improving physical activity and health. In *8th International Scientific Conference on Kinesiology* (pp. 307-311).

Tapps, T., & Well, M. S. (2024). *Introduction to recreation and leisure*. (Zafeiroudi, A. & Kouthouris, C.) Thessaloniki: Papazisis publications, Greece.

Theriahult, D., & Stone, G. (2023). Promoting creativity in undergraduate recreation and leisure services classrooms: An overview. *SCHOLE: A Journal of Leisure Studies and Recreation Education*, 38(1), 46-57. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1937156X.2021.1897904>

Tsartsapakis I, Chalatzoglidis G, Zafeiroudi A. (2023). Investigating Differences in Personality Traits, Self-Esteem, Eating Attitudes, and Body Image among Participants in Indoor and Outdoor Fitness Activities. *Healthcare*, 12(1), 47. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare12010047>

Vormwald, L. (2020). *Fostering resilience: integrating positive character strengths with dance making skills to help young children cope with adversity*. Master thesis, College of Performing and Visual Arts, Theatre Arts and Dance, Theatre Arts and Dance Student Work, University of Northern Colorado.

Wang, Q., Li, J., & Dong, Y. (2021). The relationship between leisure participation and life satisfaction in Chinese adults. *Journal of Dance Medicine & Science*, 25(1), 20-30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2021.1931989>

Zafeiroudi, A. & Kouthouris, C. (2021). Teaching outdoor adventure activities in preschools: A review of creativity and learning development. *International Journal of Learning and Development*, 11(2), 141-156. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijld.v11i2.18722>

Zafeiroudi, A. (2021a). Exploring outdoor play in kindergartens: A literature review of practice in modern Greece. *Journal of Studies in Education*, 11(3), 84-100. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jse.v11i3.18724>

Zafeiroudi, A. (2021b). Intersections between modern and contemporary dance and yoga practice: A critical analysis of spiritual paths through body movement and choreography. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 10(4) 1-15. <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2021-0094>

Zafeiroudi, A. (2023a). Analyzing and discussing the evolution of Arabesque movement according to dance elements and aesthetics. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 12(6), 41-54. <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis-2023-0152>

Zafeiroudi, A. (2023b). Dance and Psychological Health: Effect of Dance Participation on Social Development. *Journal of Social Science Studies*, 10(2), p90. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jsss.v10i2.21414>

Zafeiroudi, A., & Kouthouris, C. (2022). Somatic education and mind-body disciplines: Exploring the effects of the Pilates method on life satisfaction, mindfulness and self-compassion. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 12(4), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2022-0092>

Zafeiroudi, A., Chatzipanteli, A., Athanasiou, A. C., Tsartsapakis, I., Kopanou, A. & Kouthouris, C. (2022a). Exploring Self-Compassion among Recreational Dancers: Differences Between Tango and Ballet - Dance Teaching Implications Through Somatic and Embodied Disciplines. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 12(6), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr2022-0140>

Zafeiroudi, A., Yfantidou, G., Kouthouris, C., & Zanna, A. (2022b). Yoga as serious leisure activity: Socio-demographic differences in mindfulness levels among yoga retreat participants. *85 Academic journal of interdisciplinary studies*, 11(6), 8-18. <https://doi.org/10.36941/ajis2022-0144>