

**118 - ANXIETY AND STRESS LEVELS OF FITNESS AND SEDENTARY DANCE PRACTICING WOMEN**

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#### Introduction

Many people choose to practice dance as an alternative activity for a healthier and more active life. Most of them realize the improvement in everyday life about reducing anxiety and stress.

According to Barbanti (1994, p. 18), anxiety: "It is an emotional state of fear, of apprehension, a sense of impending disaster, without any rational explanation."

Anxiety originates from stressful conditions that the individual goes through at times of his life, can be broken down into "trait anxiety that is characterized by specific aspects. And state anxiety depends on objective conditions (person - task - environment) and influenced by personal factors" (SAMULSKI, 2002, p. 93).

Stafford-Clark et al. (1990, p.3 apud SHEEHAN, 2000, p.11) stated that when the individual has a state of anxiety and continuous and unreasonable apprehension, a panic fear may be triggered, accompanied by symptoms of autonomous disturbance and having adverse effects. secondary to other mental functions such as concentration, attention, memory and reasoning, they may suffer from an anxiety disorder.

Individuals with high levels of trait anxiety tend to have responses with increases in anxiety-state intensity in various dangerous situations or that pose some threat to self-esteem.

Stress is defined by Nieman (1999, p. 246) as "any action or situation (stressor) that subjects a person to special physical or psychological demands. In other words, anything that unbalances it". Although not considered a disease, stress and its effects on the physical and mental health of people began to have space in studies.

Since the beginning of time many people have believed in the "brain satisfaction" of exercise. The Greeks claimed that exercise made their minds clear. Aristotle created his "Peripatetic School" in 335 a. C. The school was named after the fact that Aristotle had a habit of walking up and down (paripaton) along the Athens Lyceum path while reflecting or teaching students who walked (NIEMAN, 1999, p. 250).

Based on what people believed, in recent times a lot of research relating stress and exercise has started to emerge reporting that exercise can positively influence mental health.

After the Renaissance period the cultural scene changed a lot, with modernity came many scientific, artistic, political advances, among others. "More than in previous times, the changes in the scenario of society are so great that they disconcert not only the oldest but also the young" (ZIMPEL, 2005, p. 40). Since then, these changes in the social landscape have been happening faster and faster, causing people to experience a significant increase in stress.

It is noteworthy that anxiety and stress today have become one of the main problems caused by excessive daily tasks, it is common for the individual to go through stressful situations causing him to have emotional and behavioral reactions. Therefore, it is important to find alternatives to relieve these symptoms caused by stress.

According to Zimpel (2005, p.19), "an excess response to stress causes anxiety, increased blood pressure and immunosuppression, which will cause hypertension, atherosclerosis, obesity. A diminished response will cause poor attention and motivation, underperforming".

In addition to the stress symptoms mentioned above, many of them can trigger other problems, but these effects can be fully reversed if there is no contraction of more serious illnesses. It is so important to find alternative ways to combat stress, which does not originate only at work or because of a heavy routine, that is, not only because of professional problems, but also because of social, spiritual and personal issues.

For Zimpel (2005, p. 72):

When under threat, the body prepares for fight or flight. It's the "fight or flight" reaction: 1) heart rate speeds up because muscles need oxygen; 2) the brain increases its electrical activity to have a higher degree of alertness; 3) pupils dilate to see better; 4) about blood sugar as it is the fuel for muscles; 5) Cholesterol about, because, besides fat, it is also food.

However, it can be said that the body was prepared so that this excess energy was spent through movement. Aerobic exercise may be the most effective for stress as it increases heart rate and respiration, benefiting the heart and circulation. According to Dr. Cooper (1999, apud ZIMPEL, 2005, p. 75), "Aerobic exercise is the most powerful modern antidote to these accumulations of destructive stress." Therefore, it is critical that people abandon sedentary lifestyle to improve stress levels.

According to Verderi (1998), "dance is the art of movement and, from it, man can demonstrate social roles and play relationships within a society whatever". Thus, dance is an art of expression that can also be an exercise or physical activity, a fun, a social leisure, a work and much more. For each one an importance.

For Faro (2011, p.8), "each era understood the importance of the human body, or that at least had the sensory notion of its structure, its requirements, its limitations and the combination of genius and sensitivity that are to it. inherent cultivated, worshiped the dance".

It is not known exactly when the man began to dance but can be said to occur since he began to express, that is, from

prehistory there are already reports of men dancing like scattered figures and designed for such.

Dance, like all the arts, is the need that man must express, as well as several other needs, the dance came in order to express different feelings, be they religious, related to happiness, sadness or others.

Since the Portuguese customs, beliefs and education were imposed on the colonized in Brazil, we can see the importance of dance as art, which was already expressing itself in palaces and other places of celebrations and ceremonies.

Over time, dancing started to be practiced also in the gym, divided in some modalities with objectives related to health and quality of life.

Of all the arts, dance is the only one that dispenses materials and tools, depending only on the body. That is why they say the oldest, the one that the human being has carried within himself since time immemorial. Before polishing the stone, building shelter, producing utensils, instruments, and weapons, man tapped his hands and feet rhythmically to warm and communicate. Thus, from caves to the computer age, dance has made and continues to make history (PORTINARI, 1989, p.11).

Being an art that depends only on the body and fully expressive, dance has become one of the alternative ways in gyms to lose weight and prevent / mitigate diseases that may occur due to obesity and physical inactivity. Nowadays dance has become one of the top choices for people looking to exercise their body and mind, causing most gyms to adopt dance-related modalities.

In gyms, dance is one of the aerobic training alternatives that help with fitness and weight loss, for example. The reasons why people seek dance are not only physical, some mental health issues can also cause people to look for something to escape routine and soothe the mind.

Stress is completely linked to this factor, as most people's routine today is very busy and heavy, causing stress symptoms to begin to take over.

Dance is also considered an aerobic exercise, as already commented, and is one of the recommendations to combat stress. According to Rojas (1997), "dance is a means of minimizing the effects of stress on people". Stress appears through various signs such as muscle tension, irritability, anxiety, among others. According to Lipp (1999, p. 14), "If nothing is done to relieve tension, then the organism, already without energy to cope with the problem, weakens and a series of diseases begins to appear."

Therefore, the practice of dance can help in this tension caused by stress and bring numerous benefits to the practitioner, as suggested by the authors Samulski and Lustosa (1996, p. 60):

Reduction of anxiety, stress and depression levels; mood swings; increased physical and psychological well-being; better overall organic functioning; higher income at work; Increased physical and mental disposition and others are pointed to as beneficial results of correct and scheduled exercise.

Gym dance (aerobic dance or fitness) can help with stress levels by decreasing or even eliminating stress symptoms caused by everyday routine and accelerated modernity. The main purpose of any physical activity is health, or at least it should be. Health is not only related to the absence of illness but to physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being.

Mental health specialists use prescription measures such as physical activity, meditation, acupuncture and art therapy. Called integrative or complementary medicine, is very common today and has shown a great result.

According to psychiatrist Serson (2016, p. 158); "We value the idea of an integrative medicine that combines treatment efforts and can prevent problems, reducing the possibility of repeating disorders in the future." Thus, dance (as an alternative physical activity) can and is also indicated by mental health specialists to reduce and prevent anxiety and stress.

Therefore, the present study aims to determine the stress and anxiety levels of sedentary and fitness dance women by comparing the levels between the groups. The study can also be a way of encouraging people to alternative practice for the prevention, rehabilitation or even cure of physical and psychological illness.

#### Materials and Methods

This study was conducted from a literature review using the descriptors: stress level, anxiety, dance fitness and physical inactivity for the subjects. A field survey was also used using the IDATE questionnaire - State-Trait Anxiety Inventory formulated by Spielberg et. al. (1970), translated and validated by Biaggio and Natalício (1979) for the Brazilian population.

The sample consisted of 60 women, 30 fitness dance practitioners and 30 sedentary women. The average age of the participants was 34.5 years, with a minimum age of 18 years and a maximum of 52 years. Women practitioners are enrolled in a gym in the Joinville / SC region, where there are two types of fitness dance, while sedentary women were randomly selected in the Joinville too.

Initially, the head of the academy was contacted to perform the data collection of women who practice fitness dance. Sedentary women were also counted so that collection could be performed at their homes. The inventory has forty statements, twenty of which are to describe the state-anxiety level (positioning according to the option that best describes the individual's emotional state now) and twenty other statements regarding trait anxiety (positioning as individual usually feels). It has an estimated time of 10-15 minutes to be answered.

Each statement has a score (1 to 4 points), where the score corresponding to the answer of everyone is assigned, but for the positive questions the score is reversed (example, if the respondent scored 4, score 1).

The degree of anxiety is measured as follows: by adding the points of each self-report (state and trait) it is possible to obtain results between 20 and 80 points, and the scores may indicate a low degree of anxiety (0-30), a moderate anxiety (31-49) and a high degree of anxiety (greater than or equal to 50), the lower the scores, the lower the degree of anxiety.

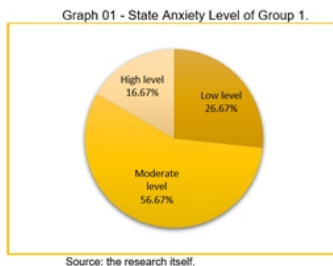
The participants answered the questionnaire and then the score was counted separately. Soon after, the data were entered an Excel spreadsheet where they were analyzed and then compared by the Student's t test to obtain the results. The study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee under number 2,883,470 and all participants who answered the questionnaire signed the informed consent form.

#### Presentation and Discussion of Results

The research protocol consisted of two self-report scales that evaluate state anxiety and trait anxiety, each of which has twenty items with scores from one to four. The score ranges from twenty to eighty.

From the data analysis it was possible to obtain the following results:

a) In Graph 01, of the 30 women practicing dance fitness (Group 1), 26.67% have low anxiety-state level, 56.67% have moderate level and 16.67% have high level.



According to Serson (2016, p. 141) "Some daily stresses and circumstances may be reviewed and changed, while others, chronic and repetitive, derive from a harmful lifestyle." In Graph 01, most practitioners have levels of Moderate and low anxiety-state, including physical activity in any individual's routine can help you lower these levels when it comes to anxiety / stress by circumstances.

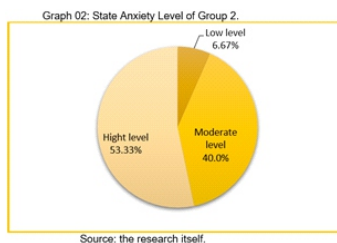
Another factor that can lower stress and anxiety levels is the hormonal release that occurs when an individual engages in some physical activity. Many experts indicate alternative physical activities for treating anxiety and stress.

For Serson (2016, p.22):

In cases of anxiety and depression, psychological and lifestyle change can have the effect of medicines as it acts in other ways on the production of neurotransmitters and neurohormones (such as adrenaline, cortisol, endorphins, mela tonine, oxytocin). and many others), which ultimately finely modulate the physical and mental state of the individual.

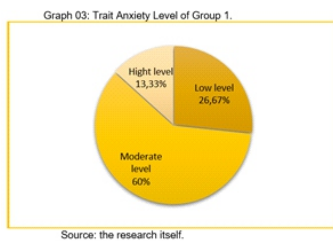
Therefore, in addition to the use of medicines for treatment, dance and other alternative physical activities help to reduce anxiety and stress.

b) As shown in graph 02, of the 30 sedentary women (Group 2), 6.67% have low anxiety-state level, 40% moderate level and 53.33% have high level.



In Graph 02, more than 50% of the sedentary women who answered the inventory have a high level of anxiety-state, while practicing women (illustrated in Graph 1) only 16.67% have a high level. It can be said that sedentary women go through daily stressful situations and have no "escape point" to relieve and diminish this state anxiety, whereas practicing women can turn this state of anxiety into relief and fun.

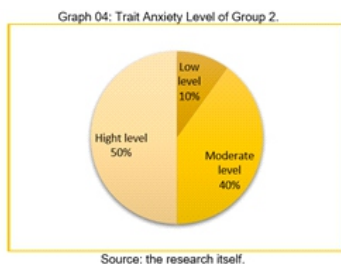
c) Of the 30 practicing women (Group 1), 26.67% have low trait anxiety level, 60% moderate level and 13.33% have high level (Graph 03).



As already commented, the level of trait anxiety is determined from statements of how the individual generally feels (basal). In Graph 03, the highest percentage of practitioners regarding the level of trait anxiety was moderate and low, so it can be stated that throughout physical activity, in this case dancing, stress and anxiety levels tend to decrease.

For Samulski and Lustosa (1996) "Aerobic exercise, through its positive effects on stress, mood and self-concept, has been shown to be an efficient means to achieve psychological well-being." Consequently, when an individual becomes psychologically well-off, he or she can reduce anxiety and stress levels.

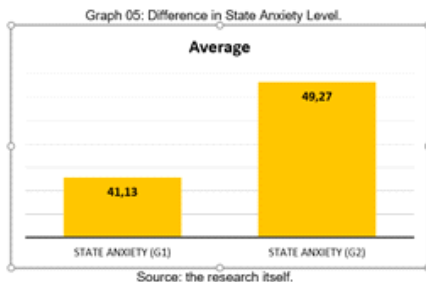
d) Of the 30 sedentary women (Group 2), 10% have low trait anxiety level, 40% have moderate level and 50% have high level (Graph 04).



From the results shown in graph 04, it can be said that 50% of sedentary women have very high level of trait anxiety compared to the level of practicing women (graph 03) which is only 13.33%. It is noteworthy that with the practice of fitness dance,

the level of trait anxiety can decrease, as when physical activity becomes routine, reports of less stressful days begin.

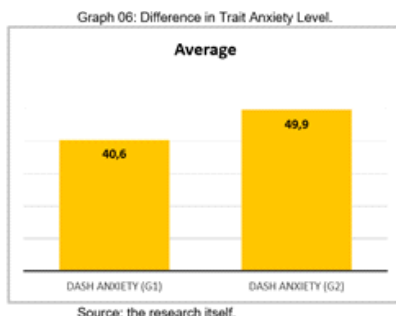
e) In Graph 05, the level of anxiety-state of sedentary women is 8.1 (19.8%) higher than the women practicing dance fitness ( $p = 0.0008$ ).



Studies have found results associated with decreased anxiety with aerobic exercise. Raglin; Turner; Eksten (1993) conducted a study to assess state-anxiety and blood pressure variations as a function of strength and endurance exercise in an ergometer cycle, resulting in decreased anxiety and blood pressure with acute aerobic exercise (ergometer cycle), but not with strength exercises.

It is possible to state from the results obtained in this and other studies that the individual feels less anxious when performing aerobic exercises. In graph 05, it is noteworthy that sedentary women (G2) have higher anxiety-state levels than practitioners.

f) As shown in graph 06, the level of trait anxiety in sedentary women is 9.3 (22.9%) higher for fitness dance practitioners ( $p = 0.001$ ).

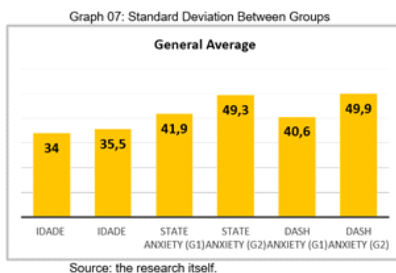


Lion (1978) investigated the effects of running on anxiety and found that individuals in the running group had lower anxiety levels than the control group in relation to trait anxiety, assessed by the same inventory used in this study. He therefore concluded that running, followed by periods of relaxation, reduces anxiety and decreases levels of cognitive and somatic tension.

Graph 06 shows that the levels of trait anxiety are lower in the group practicing dance fitness (aerobic activity) related to the sedentary group (as the control group in the study by Lion).

Analyzing graphs 05 and 06, it is noted that both trait and state anxiety are influenced by aerobic activity, anxiety levels are lower in female practitioners.

g) In Graph 07, the standard deviation analysis showed that Group 1 (practitioners) is more homogeneous compared to Group 2 (sedentary).



For Hetem and Graeff (2004, p. 435) "It turns out that regular practice of aerobic exercise can produce antidepressant and anxiolytic effects and protect the body from the harmful effects of stress on physical and mental health." According to the authors, the anxiety and stress levels of women who practice fitness dance are lower, as they all perform regular dance modalities at the gym.

Following the results presented in graph 07, it can be said that for this group, in general, the level of anxiety and stress is lower in dance fitness practitioners compared to sedentary women. Age did not interfere with the results obtained.

The sense of well-being that comes from the practice of physical activities is attributed to the interaction of physiological and psychological mechanisms. From a physiological point of view, the possible causes of well-being appear to be increased cerebral blood flow, oxygen release to brain tissues, changes in brain neurotransmitters (example, norepinephrine, endorphins, serotonin). muscle tension (MALINA, 1994, p. 390).

Therefore, it can be said that well-being is associated with physical activity, as these exercises can make the individual forget the problems of everyday life for a while, feeling good, reducing anxiety, reducing the stress and having various other social, psychological and social benefits.

In this study, and many others, there is a remarkable significance in reducing physical activity-related stress and anxiety. Petruzzello, et al. (1991) apud Araújo, et al. (2007) concluded that "aerobic exercise promotes beneficial effects in



reducing anxiety and that this type of exercise is superior to non-aerobic anxiety." As dance fitness is an aerobic activity, it can be said to have effects on anxiety and stress and may be beneficial for practitioners.

#### Conclusion

The aim of this study was to determine the anxiety and stress levels of sedentary and fitness dance women by comparing the two groups.

In this study it was possible to conclude that women fitness dance practitioners have lower anxiety and stress levels than sedentary women. Sedentary participants had high levels of trait anxiety (50%) and state anxiety (53.33%), compared with practitioners who had mostly moderate levels (state anxiety 56.67% and trait anxiety 60%).

Therefore, we can say that aerobic activities are extremely important for the control of anxiety and stress levels, since all individuals are pre-disposed to go through stressful situations or that cause emotional and behavioral changes.

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#### Anxiety and Stress Levels of Fitness and Sedentary Dance Practicing Women

**Abstract:** Anxiety derives from stressors making people have a chance to thrill and change behavior. A dance as a physical experience can have common stress episodes from day to day. The objective of this study was to determine the level of anxiety and stress in fitness and sedentary women practitioners from the Joinville region. The IDATE - State Trait Anxiety Inventory formulated by Spielberger et al. (1970) translated into Biaggio and Natalício (1979) for the Brazilian population, as a protocol to measure the degree of anxiety and stress. The same was applied to 60 women, a group of fitness (30) and sedentary (30), with a mean age of  $34.5 \pm 9.6$ . The result was 56.67% of the practitioners with high level of anxiety-state and 53.33% of the sedentary high level high. Concerning anxiety-trait, 60% of the practitioners are in a moderate high level and in 50% of the sedentary level high. The sedentary women are 19.8% ( $p = 0.0008$ ) higher than those of fitness dance practitioners. The anxiety-trait level of sedentary women is 22.9% ( $p = 0.001$ ) higher than those who practice it. Age does not interfere with results. Based on the collected data, it can be affirmed that, as the dance practitioners are conditioned, they have levels of anxiety and stress lower than the sedentary women.

**Keywords:** stress; anxiety; dance; women; sedentarism.

#### Niveaux d'Anxiété et de Stress Chez les Praticantes de la Condition féminine et de la Danse Sédentaire

**Résumé:** L'anxiété provient de situations stressantes entraînant des réactions émotionnelles et des changements de comportement chez l'individu. La danse en tant qu'activité physique peut atténuer les situations de stress quotidiennes. L'objectif de cette étude était de déterminer le niveau d'anxiété et de stress chez les femmes dansantes sédentaires et en condition physique de la région de Joinville. L'inventaire STAI - State-Trait Anxiety Inventory élaboré par Spielberger et al. (1970) traduit par Biaggio et Natalício (1979) pour la population brésilienne, sous la forme d'un protocole permettant de mesurer le degré d'anxiété et de stress. Cela a été appliqué à 60 femmes, à un groupe de praticiennes de la danse fitness (30) et à un sédentaire (30), d'âge moyen de  $34,5 \pm 9,6$  ans. Les résultats ont montré que 56,67% des praticiennes avaient un niveau d'anxiété modéré et que 53,33% des sédentaires avaient un niveau élevé. Concernant l'anxiété de trait, 60% des praticiennes présentaient un niveau modéré et 50% des niveaux élevés sédentaires. Le niveau d'anxiété chez les femmes sédentaires s'est révélé être 19,8% ( $p = 0,0008$ ) plus élevé que celui des praticiennes de la danse fitness. Le niveau d'anxiété associée aux traits sédentaires est de 22,9% ( $p = 0,001$ ) supérieur à celui des praticiennes. L'âge n'a pas interféré avec les résultats. Sur la base des données collectées, on peut affirmer que les praticiennes de danse fitness ont des niveaux d'anxiété et de stress inférieurs à ceux des femmes sédentaires.

**Mots-clés:** Stress; Anxiété; la danse; femmes, mode de vie sédentaire.

**Niveles de Ansiedad y Estrés de las Mujeres Practicantes de Fitness Danza y Sedentaria**

Resumen: La ansiedad proviene de situaciones estresantes que hacen que el individuo tenga reacciones emocionales y cambios de comportamiento. La danza como actividad física puede aliviar situaciones de estrés cotidiano. El objetivo de este estudio fue determinar el nivel de ansiedad y estrés en mujeres sedentarias y de baile físico de la región de Joinville. El STAI - Inventario de ansiedad por rasgos de estado formulado por Spielberger et al. (1970) traducido por Biaggio y Natalício (1979) para la población brasileña, como un protocolo para medir el grado de ansiedad y estrés. Esto se aplicó a 60 mujeres, un grupo de practicantes de baile físico (30) y un sedentario (30), con una edad media de  $34.5 \pm 9.6$ . Los resultados mostraron que el 56.67% de los practicantes tienen un nivel moderado de ansiedad estatal y el 53.33% de los sedentarios tenían un nivel alto. Con respecto al rasgo de ansiedad, el 60% de los profesionales presentaron un nivel moderado y el 50% de los niveles altos sedentarios. Se encuentra que el nivel de ansiedad del estado de las mujeres sedentarias es 19.8% ( $p = 0.0008$ ) más alto que el de las practicantes de baile físico. El nivel de ansiedad del rasgo sedentario es 22.9% ( $p = 0.001$ ) más alto que los practicantes. La edad no interfirió con los resultados. Según los datos recopilados, se puede afirmar que los practicantes de danza física tienen niveles de ansiedad y estrés más bajos que las mujeres sedentarias.

Palabras llave: Estrés; Ansiedad, Danza, Mujeres, Sedentarismo.

#### Níveis de Ansiedade e Estresse de Mulheres Praticantes de Dança Fitness e Sedentárias

Resumo: A ansiedade deriva-se de situações estressoras fazendo com que o indivíduo tenha reações emocionais e alterações comportamentais. A dança como atividade física pode amenizar situações de estresse comuns do dia a dia. O objetivo deste trabalho foi determinar o nível de ansiedade e estresse em mulheres praticantes de dança fitness e sedentárias da região de Joinville. Foi utilizado o IDATE - Inventário de Ansiedade Traço-Estado formulado por Spielberger et al. (1970) traduzido por Biaggio e Natalício (1979) para a população brasileira, como protocolo para mensurar o grau de ansiedade e estresse. Isso foi aplicado em 60 mulheres, um grupo de praticantes de dança fitness (30) e outro de sedentárias (30), com idade média de  $34,5 \pm 9,6$ . Os resultados mostraram que 56,67% das praticantes têm nível moderado de ansiedade-estado e 53,33% das sedentárias apresentaram nível alto. Referente à ansiedade-traço, 60% das praticantes apresentaram nível moderado e 50% das sedentárias níveis altos. Constata-se que o nível de ansiedade-estado das mulheres sedentárias é 19,8% ( $p=0,0008$ ) maior que o das praticantes de dança fitness. O nível de ansiedade-traço das sedentárias é 22,9% ( $p=0,001$ ) maior em relação às praticantes. A idade não interferiu nos resultados. Fundamentando-se dos dados coletados, pode-se afirmar que as praticantes de dança fitness possuem níveis de ansiedade e estresse mais baixo que as mulheres sedentárias.

Palavras-chave: Estresse; ansiedade; dança; mulheres, sedentarismo.