



Review Article

Therapeutic Dancing for Parkinson's Disease[☆]Lorena Priscia Carvalho Aguiar^{*}, Priscila Alves da Rocha, Meg Morris

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 6 August 2015

Received in revised form

6 January 2016

Accepted 17 February 2016

Available online 22 June 2016

Keywords:

dance therapy,
feasibility studies,
quality of life,
Parkinson's disease

SUMMARY

Therapeutic dancing has been advocated as an effective adjunct to conventional physical therapies for people living with Parkinson's disease (PD). This systematic review evaluates studies on the outcomes of different dance genres on mobility and quality of life in PD. We searched databases including CINAHL (1982–2015), Medline (1922–2015), Scopus (1996–2015), Web of Science (2002–2015), Embase (2007–2015), PEDro (1999–2015) and the Cochrane Library (1996–2015). The key words were: *Parkinson's disease*, *Parkinson**, *Parkinsonism*, *dance*, *dance therapy*, *dance genres*, *safety*, *feasibility*, and *quality of life*. Two independent investigators reviewed the texts. Only randomized controlled trials, quasirandomized controlled trials, and case series studies were included. There was emerging evidence that therapeutic dance can be safe and feasible for people with mild to moderately severe PD, with beneficial effects on walking, freezing of gait, and health related quality of life.

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1. Introduction

This systematic review critiques recent studies on the effects of different dance genres on mobility, gait, balance, and quality of life in people living with idiopathic Parkinson's disease (PD). We also evaluated participant satisfaction with therapeutic dancing classes as well as the feasibility and safety of dancing as a form of therapy.

People with PD experience movement disorders such as bradykinesia, tremor, rigidity, and postural instability, which vary over time and between individuals¹. Nonmotor symptoms such as cognitive impairment, autonomic dysfunction, and anxiety are also features. PD can sometimes be associated with depression and withdrawal from participation in social activities¹.

Several studies have shown conventional physiotherapy to have short-term benefits for gait, postural stability, mobility, and quality of life in some individuals with PD^{2–5}. Nevertheless, compliance and adherence with physiotherapy and routine exercises can be challenging over the long term^{4,6}. Other forms of physical activity such as cycling, walking, hydrotherapy, and martial arts could be helpful adjuncts to traditional therapy^{2,5,7–10}. Evidence is emerging that dancing can be a beneficial form of exercise for people with

mild to moderately severe PD^{6,11,12}. As well as being a highly social and engaging physical activity, it has the potential to increase body awareness, wellbeing, and movement control through the use of cueing, cognitive strategies, creativity, and music^{13–15}.

Although dancing for PD is becoming popular, the optimal elements of dance to enhance therapy outcomes remain unclear. There is a need to examine the extent to which outcomes are influenced by factors such as external cues, music, partners, and motivation imparted from a dancing teacher¹¹. The long-term effects of therapeutic dancing have not been confirmed¹⁶.

A recent PD review by Shanahan et al¹¹ showed that the dosage, genre, frequency, and intensity of dancing classes are associated with changes in mobility, balance, and motor impairment. The current study updates and extends that line of enquiry to quantify the safety and feasibility of PD dance classes. It also includes outcome variables such as freezing of gait, walking performance, quality of life, and wellbeing.

2. Methods

2.1. Data sources and searches

Articles had to be published in English, evaluate the effects of dance therapy, describe outcome measurements, and provide data on the feasibility, safety and the efficacy of dancing for PD. Books, theses, and conference abstracts were excluded. Only randomized controlled trials (RCTs), quasi-RCTs (QRCs), and case series were included. Participants needed to be older than 18 years, male or

[☆] Conflicts of interest: All contributing authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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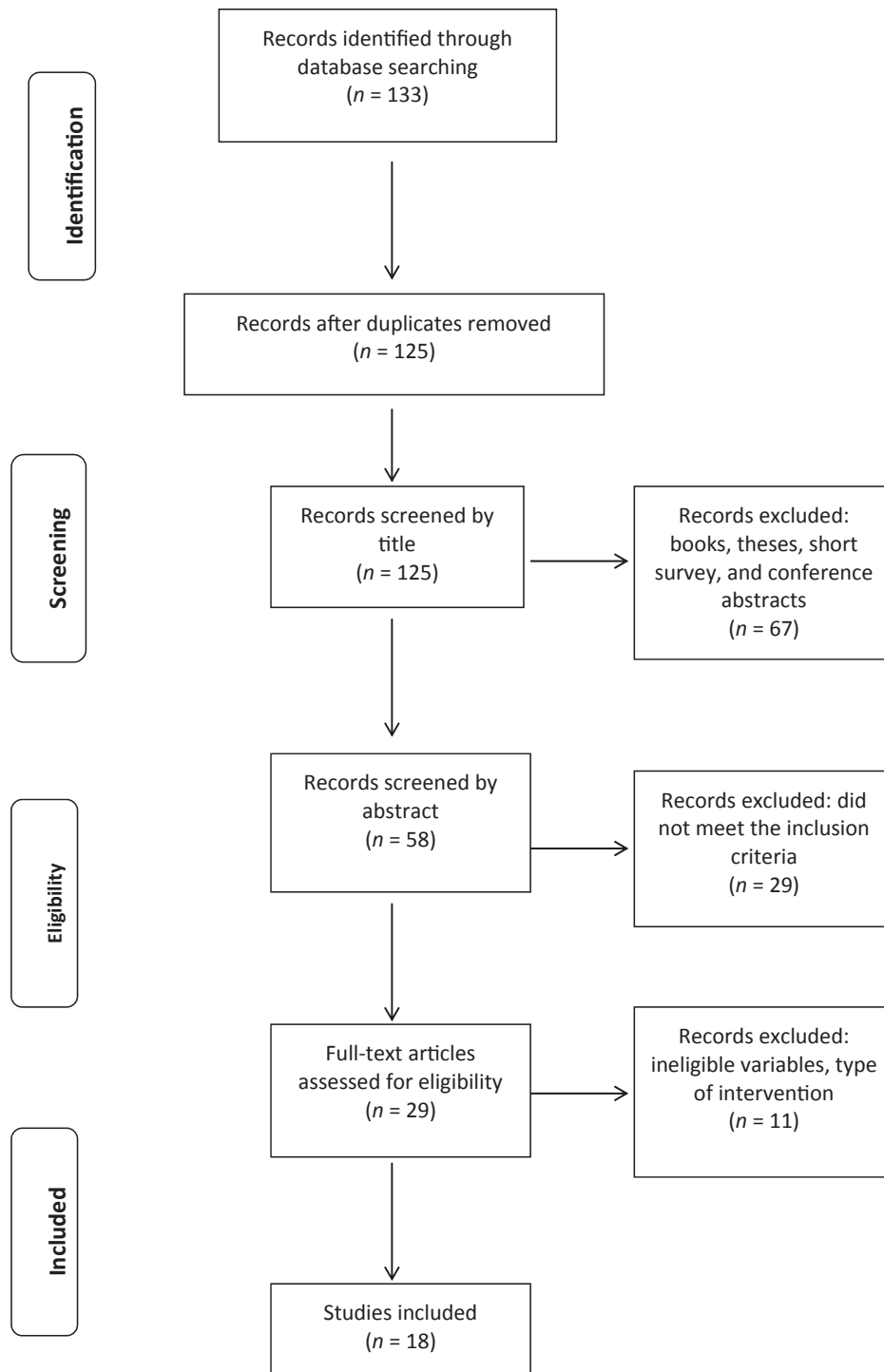


Figure 1. Search strategy based on PRISMA flow diagram.

female, clinically diagnosed with idiopathic PD, and Stage 1–4 of the Modified Hoehn and Yahr scale¹⁷.

2.2. Study selection

Studies selected for this systematic review were identified through a detailed search of online databases related to physiotherapy, health and rehabilitation such as CINHAL (1982–2014), Medline (1922–2015), Scopus (1996–2015), Web of Science (2002–2015), Embase (2007–2015), PEDro (1999–2015), and The

Cochrane Library (1996–2015). The search was conducted in September 2015 using the following key words: *Parkinson's disease*, *Parkinson**, *Parkinsonism*, *dance*, *dance therapy*, *dance genres*, *safety*, *feasibility*, and *quality of life*.

2.3. Data extraction and quality assessment

Duplicates were removed and titles and abstracts were assessed by the main reviewer. Two independent investigators (L.P.A. and P.A.d.R.) completed full text assessments by filling out a detailed

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