THE DANCE AND THE AGING: BENEFITS DESCRIBED IN THE LITERATURE

Kelly Maciel Silva*
Rosane Gonçalves Nitschke**
Silvia Maria Azevedo dos Santos***

ABSTRACT

This study aims to meet the benefits presented by scientific publications about dance in the third age. It is an integrative review of literature, with search, held in the months of January and February 2017, of articles published between the years of 2004 and 2016, in databases Scientific Electronic Library Online (SciELO), Latin American literature and the Caribbean Health Sciences (LILACS), databases in nursing (BDBENF), Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), PubMed, SCOPUS, Web of Science. The 74 articles selected were submitted to thematic analysis, emerging from the following categories: benefits of dance for the body; Dance and social interaction; Dance in the communication and cultural expression; Dance as therapy. The dance appears as a physical activity positively associated with improved health and quality of life of the elderly. Different localities and methodology studies showed the benefits of dance for the elderly in physical, social and emotional aspects.

Keywords: Dancing, Health of the elderly, Geriatric nursing, Activities of daily living, Health promotion.

INTRODUCTION

Changes in demographic and epidemiological patterns that have been taking place in recent decades point to the need to rethink the actions of health promotion for the elderly population, with the goal to active and healthy aging, as well as the maintenance of independence and autonomy as much as possible.

For people to have quality of life to grow old, we need service offerings that meet the demands of this segment of the population. In this context, the dance emerges as an activity of health promotion for the elderly population because their benefits can promote physical, emotional and social aspects.

The dance has always been part of human existence, being one of the first playful and expressive manifestations, being present in the daily life of diverse cultures with gestures and very specific aspects. In this way, the dance can be considered a given its multifaceted phenomenon, with various social settings, as spectacle, communication, non-ritualized fashion, therapy, lifestyle and exercise.

Since ancient times mankind uses dance as a form of body language. Throughout history, dance has always been of great importance in societies, being a manifestation of culture passed orally from generation to generation. In this way, the dance can be considered as one of the ways the communities recognize.

The benefits of dance for the body and mind, are widely described in the literature. With regard to specific aspects of dance in the third age, strengthens the concern to know: what are the benefits of dance for the elderly described in literature?

Taking into consideration that the knowledge about the benefits of dance for the elderly can serve as a subsidy in the choice of strategies of health promotion for this population segment, the interest in this integrative review of literature. Front of the exposed, this review aimed to meet the benefits presented by scientific publications about dance in the third age, published in the period of 2004 to 2016.

METHOD

The present study it is an integrative review of literature, descriptive character, in productions that have themes: the dance and the aging. The methodological steps for the completion of that review included: demarcation of the research question; purpose of the review; criteria and search strategies (choice of descriptors and data bases, cutting time for selection of articles, criteria for inclusion and exclusion of same); selection and evaluation of studies; collection, analysis and synthesis of the data.

A survey of articles about dance and aging published between 2004 and 2016. The search occurred in the months of January and February, 2017, in the following databases: Scientific Electronic
Library Online (SciELO), Latin American literature and Caribbean Health Sciences (LILACS), databases in nursing (BDENF), Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), PubMed, SCOPUS, Web of Science.

For tracking of publications were used in combinations Portuguese, English and Spanish languages, three search terms from the health sciences descriptors-DeCS/MeSH: "dance", "old man" and "aging", using of operators Boolean (and and or), according to the characteristic of each database.

After the survey of the scientific literature on selected bases, applied the following criteria for inclusion of studies: articles that cover the topic dance and elderly, published in Portuguese, English or Spanish, available in full on journals indexed in the databases selected, from January 2004 to December 2016. While the exclusion criteria were: books, book chapters, editorials, book reviews, letters, conference proceedings, dissertations and theses.

Articles were selected primarily through reading of title and abstracts, in case of doubt the article was read in its entirety for verification of the criteria mentioned. For removal of duplicate studies, summaries were imported into the software EndNoteX4. Finally, selected articles were cataloged through an alphanumeric code, read in full and organized in a table with the following information: year of publication, place of study, authors, objective, methodology and design major results. This documentary body underwent an analytical reading and the results were organized as the theme; from this were presented in descriptive way and analyzed from the thematic analysis.

Detailing the process of selection of studies is described in the following flowchart.

**Figure 1.** Flow chart of the steps of the Integrative Review—Florianópolis/SC, 2016.
**RESULTS**

The database who rescued the largest number of publications was the CINAHL, 41.90% (31), followed by the LILACS with 20.28% (15), and SCOPUS, with 17.56% (13). In relation to language, the predominance of English-language publications, with 77.02% (57), followed by the Portuguese language, with 22.98% (17).

The year that showed the highest number of publications was 2014, 16.21% (12), followed by 2011, 14.86% (11), 2016, 10.81 (8), 2008 and 2010, 9.45% each (7), 2009, 2012, and 2013, 8.10% each (6), 2015, 5.40% (4), 2004, 2006 and 2007, 2.70% each (2) and 2005, 1.35% (1). There is an extensive amount of quantitative nature studies, 68.92% (51), followed by qualitative studies, 25.68% (19), and quantiqualitativos, 5.40% (4).

As to the origin of the publications, we note that in virtually all continents the dance theme and aging has been searched. The largest number of publications is in America, 51.35% (38), with emphasis on Brazil with 27.02% (20), followed by Europe, 37.85% (28), Asia with 9.45% (7) and Africa, 1.35% (1).

Already, in relation to the type of dance research, noted a wide variation, and ballroom dancing prevalent in 27.0% (20) of the research. It is worth noting that, at 25.7% (19), the type of dance is not specified. Below, I present an overview of the studies selected with regard to the type of dance used in investigations, in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dance type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salon</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek Traditional</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>5.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tango</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contemporary</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latina</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance therapy</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>5.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bio dance</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circular</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkish Folk</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuanji-Dance</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastorinhhas folk and Kings</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean Traditional</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hula (Hawaiian)</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to organize the presentation of the results of research, four thematic categories were defined, as the similarity of the themes addressed by the study: benefits of dance for the body and for the mind; Dance and social interaction; The dance and the most varied forms of expression; Dance as a therapeutic resource. These categories will be presented below.

**Benefits of dance for body and mind**

Are part of this category 45 works that showed the mental and physical benefits of dance in aging. As results of twenty-four surveys, participate in a dance program improves balance and gait of the elderly, therefore, the practice of dance was shown as an alternative to preventing falls for this population.

When comparing a dance program with a program of walking in elderly people with risk of falls, one of the studies, conducted in Canada, analyzed concluded that, although both interventions are effective activities for increased strength and walking speed, the dance group has improved more than the hiking group the skills of balance and walking speed. These data were evidenced by applying physical performance test in the pre-test, post-test and a month after the intervention\(^4\). Similarly, a case study with six seniors, with median age of 82 years, concluded that, even if the elderly presents any pathology which interferes in the gait and balance, a dance program can assist in preventing falls. The results of this study, measured with the scale of
Tinetti, point indications that a dance program for seniors with pathologies can assist in the maintenance of the March and the balance.

Even in this category, 15 studies the practice of dance as beneficial in maintaining physical fitness and functional capacity of the elderly. One of the articles analyzed attributed this to the fact that the dance be a mode that increases aerobic power, muscular endurance, strength, flexibility and speed. This study showed that elderly practitioners of dance presented a higher inspiratory muscle strength and functional capacity, when compared with elderly submaximal practitioners of water aerobics. For the practice of physical activity used the International Physical Activist Questionnaire, application of the six-minute walk test and measurement of inspiratory and expiratory pressure of participants.

Other relevant data is pointed to in the study that compared the effects of traditional Greek dance, with traditional training exercises in a rehabilitation program for seniors with chronic heart failure. This is because, although the favorable results in the functional capacity of the participants of dance were similar to the traditional program participants, showed a higher level of support and motivation in participating in the dance.

Finalizing this category, six articles indicate the practice of dance as an activity that can provide performance improvement of the executive functions of the elderly that refer to: attention, concentration, memory, planning, self-control and flexibility cognitive. Among these studies is the article that sought to assess the relationship between the type of physical activity practiced and performance on tasks of executive functions in the elderly. The result of this study, the dance group showed better performance in terms of planning, as observed in the Tower of London, and inhibitory control, by the Stroop test, when compared to the group that practiced another physical activity. It is considered that the activity of walking requires less participation of cognitive function when compared to sequential motor activities such as dance.

Corroborating with these results, researchers analyzed, carried out in the United States and Malaysia, suggest that the maintenance of a program of dance in old age can assist in preservation of cognition and perception, as well as increase the buffer the cognitive aging.

Dance and social interaction

Seventeen studies include that category, these studies emphasized the practice of dance as an activity that strengthens the social relations of the elderly. Overall, the research showed that favors dance socialization, reduces the sense of isolation and gives seniors a sense of community.

According to the account of the elderly, in one of the polls, with the dance again happy to get out of the House, meet and talk with other people. Study with 30 elderly women in South Africa, in order to verify that the line dancing provides an increase in social activities among the participants, it was concluded that the practice of dance provided women expanding your repertoire of social activities, leading to positive reinforcement, such as greater involvement in community, charity work, inclusion in national sporting events, self-expression and personal development.

The dance and the most varied forms of expression

In this category are presented the results of nineteen research. The dance appears in these studies as a form of aesthetic expression. Suggest that the opportunity for older people to express themselves through dance holds benefits in emotional, physical and social aspects. Point connection, through dance, between the body and the mind and the ability to express feelings.

Four surveys used dance as a means of communication and expression of elderly people affected by some type of dementia, in which body movements were used to replace the speech, as well as to express thoughts, memories and emotions. In these studies, the participants reported feelings of well-being, happiness and satisfaction, and caregivers have highlighted improves the mood and decrease agitation in elderly participants dance activities.

Two studies have brought elements of dance as a form of cultural expression that can assist in health. One of those studies, conducted in Brazil, sought to know the meaning of folk dance for seven elderly as an educational and motivational mechanism useful in increasing the practice of physical activities. Concluded that the folk dances experienced motivated the participants to practice, with pleasure, physical activities. The participants reported that the dance feel very motivated, they can listen to songs that make them remember your past, culture and moral values.

The other study, developed in Hawaii, aimed to assess the impact of the Hula dance as a form of exercise for cardiac rehabilitation, compared to usual
care, in 20 individuals, in your most elderly, recently hospitalized for cardiac event or who were undergoing coronary artery bypass graft surgery. Concluded that the Hula dance, in cardiac rehabilitation, had much greater role than just physical exercise. Suggests that cultural interventions have a much larger impact on cardiac rehabilitation than traditional forms of rehabilitation. The result of this study showed that using a traditional dance in cardiac rehabilitation, and possibly for other health conditions, provides benefits beyond the physical, extending to life emotional, mental, social and spiritual of the participants

Dance as a therapeutic resource

Among the eighteen articles dealing with this issue, thirteen point the practice of dance as a therapeutic resource that assists in improving the quality of life of the elderly, the way you describe this activity as being a promoter of feeling of physical well-being, social and psychological.

Three other studies indicate that the intervention of dancing can be an effective adjunct therapy to improve depression in the elderly. Accordingly, the results of the study, carried out in the Czech Republic, in which the objective was to evaluate the effect of a dance-based therapy in depressive symptoms among institutionalized elderly 30, which showed that the practice can dance reduce the number of depressive symptoms in this population, as well as the interruption and reduction of prescriptions of antidepressants in the group that participated in the dance program greater than in the control group. In this study, this outcome was collected before then measures the intervention and included the measure of depressive symptoms, using the scale of geriatric depression

Similarly, two studies analyzed recommend dancing as a good option for the elderly, once the results of these searches reveal reduction of anxieties, fears, insecurities and anxiety with the practice of this activity.

DISCUSSION

This review found several benefits of dance for the third age. The dance appears as a physical activity positively associated with improved health and quality of life of the elderly.

Recent study, carried out in Portugal, which was intended to see how the popular dances may have beneficial effects for very elderly practitioners, with an average of 85 years of age, found that even the elderly benefit from this practice, both in physical aspects as psychosocial aspects

Physical aspects stand out the benefits of dance in strengthening the muscles, flexibility, improves coordination and balance, as well as the maintenance of functional capacity. Whereas the postural instability and falls are the most common health changes among the elderly, preventive measures must be put into practice. The results of the surveys analyzed show that a dance program for the elderly can contribute to reducing this further.

Study data, developed in São Paulo with 19 elderly, that aimed to evaluate the benefit of the senior dance in relation to the balance and activities of daily life in the elderly, strengthen the findings found in the review, since, from the results of this study, was possible to identify the senior dance practice brought improvement of balance and activities of daily life. Whereas the balance and the risk of falling have been assessed by the scale of Berg and independence in activities of daily life evaluated by Lawton

Regarding the psychosocial aspects, the results of this review indicate that the practice of dancing can be considered a socialized activity for the elderly, in addition to performing as a form of language that encourages the expression of emotions and the manifestation cultural elements evidenced as influencers in the health/disease process.

The dance is a form of expression of feelings through movement. The rescue of the emotions aroused by the dance makes the practice of positive changes both in the eyeshadow aspect of the body, as in emotional aspects

Case study, in order to check the contributions of a body expression and dance in socioemotional development of an autistic, found that the autistic student is able to communicate and relate to the environment, since their respected possibilities, and that dancing can be an effective medium for your educational and social inclusion

Dance as striking manifestation in popular culture implies much more than the execution of body movement, once that translates languages and meanings. The group dances and traditional communities are as fundamental in the construction and social parameters

Use dance as a therapeutic resource is not a conventional practice, already is widely used in the area of health, particularly mental health activities. In this respect, the dance appears as a complementary and
alternative body practice which provides a new understanding of the health/disease process, from a more holistic and integral character.

**FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The present study allowed a comprehensive overview of the benefits of dance for the elderly, described in national and international literature. Stresses that, regardless of style, the practice of dance as a regular activity is of great contribution to the daily life of the elderly population.

Many of its benefits have been described, but it is worth pointing out that some aspects are of utmost importance, when targeted at elderly people in your daily life, such as: improving balance, flexibility and posture; greater oxygenation of the brain and cognitive stimulation; muscle strengthening and protection of joints; combating stress and geriatric depression; stimulating social conviviality and joy of living, promoting healthier beings in your day to day.

The dance, being an activity enjoyable and motivating, can exert on the inclusion facilitator role of elderly both in the practice of physical activity, as the social conviviality, contributing to the promotion and for rehabilitation of health, since adherence to this activity, involving affective, proved to be more effective when compared to other practices.

Before the results, shows the importance of encouraging dance programs in the health system to the population more effectively. The evidence found in the analyzed studies reinforce your complementary therapeutic character in treating various health problems and prevention of diseases, as well as a new perspective on care and health promotion, walking against the hegemonic thinking, where this activity can be seen as a practice without scientific basis.

We believe that this study reveals a knowledge that can assist health professionals to exceed the limits of a positivist science, focused only on the right, and you need to integrate traditional knowledge and sensitivity, for, so, their care strategies for health promotion, breaking the stereotypical image of old age, ill and suffered, transfigured it with an image of old age with autonomy, joy and possibility to live with best quality day by day, your putting into focus the image of a healthy aging.

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Corresponding author: Kelly Maciel Silva. Rua das Árvores, 128. Picadas do Sul – São José/SC. CEP: 88106-250. E-mail: kellymacielisilva@yahoo.com.br

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Corresponding author: Kelly Maciel Silva. Rua das Árvores, 128. Picadas do Sul – São José/SC. CEP: 88106-250. E-mail: kellymacielisilva@yahoo.com.br

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