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DANCE

UNIVERSITY OF WALES INSTITUTE, CARDIFF

A STUDY TO DISCOVER WHETHER STUDENTS FOLLOWING DANCE COURSES IN THE PUBLIC AND/OR PRIVATE SECTOR ARE INFORMED OR GIVEN EFFECTIVE CAREERS ADVISE ABOUT DANCE CAREERS.

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I would like to thank Geraldine Hurl for her all support and help throughout the duration of the study. Thank you also to the students and teachers that participated in the study.

Abstract

Students should be informed of the increasing and changing opportunities for employment in dance with access to information about routes into further and higher education and professional training (NDTA, 2004).

Dance can be seen to exist within the public and private sectors, with GCSE dance in schools offering students an education in dance which constitutes elements of performance, composition and appreciation (Smith-Autard, 2002). In comparison dance in the private sector provides training for students to master technique and refine their performance abilities (McCutchen, 2006).

The process of dance in education reflects concepts of education appealing to cognitive and corporeal theories with emphasis upon both the process of learning and product derived (Matheson, 2008). In comparison dance in the private sector provides vocational training which alleges to prepare and equip students with the necessary skills for employment (Skillbeck *et al*, 1994), producing highly skilled and theatrically defined products for presentation to audiences (Smith-Autard, 2002).

The study aimed to discover whether students following dance courses in the public and/or private sector are informed or given effective careers advice about dance career possibilities. The study used participants aged 14-16 as Key Stage 4 is the first opportunity students in the public sector are given to study GCSE dance. Four different schools were used in the study, School A & B were comprehensive schools and Schools C & D were private dance schools. The study intended to compare the dance career routes of students following dance in the two different sectors.

The results suggested that the student's ability to make informed choices was heavily reliant upon their teacher's knowledge and experience. The study discovered that there is no national focal point where students can go for direction or information about careers in dance.

CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Young people often have a very narrow vision of the career opportunities in dance, frequently focusing on simply performance and choreography (Jobbins, 2003). In reality, the career possibilities are endless and increasingly interesting (Jobbins, 2003). It is estimated that a total number of 30,000 people are employed in the dance sector, made up of 2,500 performers, 22,500 teachers and 5,000 engaged in 'supporting' dance through management, choreology, notation, therapy (Cross, 2009). Whittock (1996) lists a diversity of dance related career opportunities including teaching in either the private or public sectors, work as dance researchers and scholars, dance amateurs and community dance workers, arts managers, dance education and public relation officers and newspaper critics. The varied nature of such careers means that a strong education and training in dance is essential (Jobbins, 2003).

Dance is a very attractive and fashionable activity for young people. They engage with dance for different reasons – to socialise and have fun, to get fit, to learn and become more skilled in dance and to train for a dance career. The participation in dance takes place in a vast range of ways through private sector dance schools, dance within the education of secondary schools, youth services and local authority managed provision, dance agencies and centres”

Burns, 2008, p.5.

This study will focus upon the provision of dance within private sector dance schools and dance within secondary schools (the public sector). Dance in the public sector offers an education which is a practical, theoretical and contextual study of dance as an art form, contributing to a pupil's artistic, physical, aesthetic, cultural and social development (NDTA, 2004). In comparison, the private sector provides opportunities for the development of technical skills and the improvement of performance abilities (Smith-Autard, 2002). A teacher in the public sector can be found to view dance as a significant resource for forming and developing minds and bodies, whilst a teacher in the private sector is concerned with forming minds and bodies for a vocation which demonstrates the distinction between the two (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1980).

Dance in the public sector can be found to provide an education in dance, with its equal emphasis upon both the process of learning and the development of a product. In comparison the private sector offers dance training in the view to provide students with the necessary skills for employment. A high quality dance education or training experience equips pupils to make informed choices about further study, employment, leisure, life style and lifelong learning (NDTA, 2004).

The study aims to investigate the ability of young dance students from both the private and public sectors, to make informed choices towards a career in dance. Gough (1999) suggests that many dance students from the public sector will not end up being dancers or continue to perform. The study aims to discover if this is inevitable and GCSE dance students are inclined to a career outside of dance or performance. Or if desired, do these students tend to follow a more traditional academic route leading to a single or combined honours degree similarly focusing on dance as an art. Yates (2002) suggests that a career as a dance performer needs to be completely focused from an early age, a career therefore perhaps suited to students training in the private sector, where training is offered from a young age. Do these vocationally trained students have a tendency to follow a performance/technical route into their dance career, or are they simply not informed of any other option?

Freakley (1995) suggests there are two main options for students following dance courses after the age of 16. They must then make the choice between staying on at school to further their academic education involving courses such as A Level Dance (if indeed is available) or enrol on the nearest Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) performing arts (dance) course. Another option for student's post 16 wanting to further their dance career is vocational training at professional dance training institute 'dancers, stage managers and theatre technicians need professional skills and most will have had up to three years of professional vocational training to acquire the skills needed to do their jobs' (CDET, 2003). Career guidance and advice is essential when opting for a career in dance to ensure students follow the appropriate training/educational route (www.young-dancers.org).

Careers education and guidance offered at schools tend to pose the question 'what do you want to do when you leave here' (Watts *et al*, 1996). However, dance and careers teachers are often not up to date with the latest developments in dance careers and often rely upon their own personal experience to recommend particular courses and institutions (Jobbins, 2003). Technology has continued to transform the method of receiving careers guidance (Watts *et al*, 1996). Therefore the world of careers information and lifelong learning opportunities can be explored via the internet which offers limitless sources of information (Nickell, 2002). This study will focus upon the desired 'destinations' of dance students, which is the term used by careers staff to describe what students go onto do, job wise (Cross, 2009).

The study accesses a small sample from two secondary schools and two private dance schools from Dorset. The study aims to compare the 'destinations' and career choices made by students from the public and private sector of dance and their ability to make informed choices.

CHAPTER II – LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER III – METHODOLOGY

3.0 Methodology

The purpose of this study is to compare how students (aged 14-16) following dance courses in comprehensive secondary schools and/or private dance schools are informed and given effective careers advice about the career possibilities in dance. The sample size was purposive and small and the subjects were selected due to their virtue of experience within the field of study (Cohen *et al*, 2007). A mixed paradigm of quantitative and qualitative primary data was collected to enable triangulation which 'provides more comprehensive evidence for studying a research problem than one research paradigm alone' (Creswell & Clark, 2007, p.9).

3.1 Overview to research

'Research is a systematic process of discovery and advancement of human knowledge' (Gratton & Jones, 2004, p.4). Research sets out with specific purposes from a particular position, and aims to persuade readers of the significance of its claims (Clough & Nutbrown, 2002). Primary research refers to research that has involved the collection of original data (Gratton & Jones, 2004).

3.2 Quantitative and Qualitative Data

Quantitative approaches refer to the use of numerical measurement and analysis that involve measurable qualities (Gratton & Jones, 2004). In comparison, qualitative research aims to capture qualities that are not quantifiable and uses non-numerical data and analysis to describe and understand such concepts (Gratton & Jones, 2004). Whilst quantitative data includes closed ended information with analysis consisting of analysing scores and statistics collected on instruments, qualitative data provides open-ended information with analysis typically involving arranging key words into categories of information (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

Creswell & Clark (2007) suggest that by combining the two paradigms, mixed methods research provides strengths that offset the weaknesses of both quantitative and qualitative research.

Nau (cited in Gratton & Jones, 2004, p.25) suggests how 'blending qualitative and quantitative methods of research can produce a final product which can highlight the significant contributions of both'. Saunders *et al* (1997) believe an advantage of using mixed methods is that it allows triangulation to take place. A triangulation design allows the researcher to obtain different but complementary data on the same topic (Creswell & Clark, 2007). However, despite the values of both these approaches, conducting mixed method research is not easy, it can take time and resources to collect and analyse both paradigms of data and one form of evidence may contradict the other (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

3.3 Participants

The study used a non-probability purposive sampling style which cannot and does not pretend to generalise the population (Gratton & Jones, 2004). This sampling strategy allowed the researcher to handpick typical or interesting cases deliberately for the study (Blaxter *et al*, 2001). Though the responses may not be representative of a national picture, this is not the primary concern, the concern is to acquire in depth information from those who are in a position to give it (Cohen *et al*, 2007).

The data was collected from two secondary schools and two private dance schools from Dorset, England. A purposively selected sample due to access of information and the researchers contact with the schools.

- School A is a mixed comprehensive school with specialist technology status offering GCSE Dance within the curriculum.
- School B is a mixed comprehensive school with specialist sports status offering GCSE Dance within the curriculum.
- School C is a private dance school following vocational graded examinations designed and accredited by the British Theatre Dance Association (BTDA) and the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD).
- School D is a private dance school following graded examinations designed and accredited by the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) and the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD).

The study collected information from sixty students and four teachers.

3.4 Design

The study used a semi-structured classification questionnaire which allowed a range of open and pre defined questions to provide a profile of the participants (Hague, 1993). The questionnaires mainly consisted of closed ended questions including multiple choice and scaled response as patterns can be easily observed and quantified into statistics (Berg & Latin, 2004). These questions consisted of personal information and knowledge of the dance courses. Open questions were also used leaving the respondent free to give any answer (Hague, 1993). These questions consisted of gathering information about the pupil's career choices.

A semi-structured interview was also conducted which used a standard set of questions but allowed the researcher a flexible approach to probe for more information if necessary (Gratton & Jones, 2004). This enabled the research to gain clarification on certain issues (Saunders *et al*, 1997).

3.5 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to refine the questionnaire and interview questions, so that the subjects would have no difficulties in answering and allow the researcher to predict any problems with recording data (Saunders *et al*, 1997). The study was carried out in conditions as close to the main testing and sample group as possible (Gratton & Jones, 2004). The pilot study took place with GCSE dance students and GCSE dance teacher at a secondary school in Cardiff, Wales. The GCSE dance syllabus followed by students in Wales is identical to the syllabus in the English curriculum. The pilot study highlighted issues with the quality of the layout and logical sequence of questions which are vital for understanding and a successful response rate (Berg & Latin, 2004). The pilot interview did not foresee any issues and seemed successful in its aims.

3.6 Administration and Procedure

Initial contact was made with the school via electronic mail (Appendix B & C) which was followed by a telephone call. Questionnaires were delivered by the researcher to the schools, to be completed during lesson time. The researcher was not present during data collection. This can be seen as a limitation as questionnaires can be problematic with how far participants tell the truth or understand the questions (Holliday, 2002). However, the removal of the researcher avoided subject bias, in which subjects may have felt they had to give responses the researcher wants or the 'correct' answers (Gratton & Jones, 2004). There was one questionnaire for all pupils.

Informed consent was sought from all participants. This allowed the participants to choose whether to participate having been informed of the facts of what the study would involve (Cohen *et al*, 2007). Due to the participant's age, parental/guardian informed consent sought permission from the adults responsible for the prospective students. This was only necessary for the private dance schools, as the secondary school guidelines allowed the teacher to act in 'loco parentis' delegating the responsibility for providing informed consent from the parents/guardians (Cohen *et al*, 2007).

The interviews took place privately with teaching staff in the school environment so they felt comfortable in the answering questions and there was no bias from the presence of others (Gratton & Jones, 2004). The interviews were recorded by tape-recording and transcribing which allowed for more accurate data collection (Berg & Latin, 2004). However, despite the flexible nature of the interview, they have the limitation of being expensive in time and can be inconvenient for participants (Cohen *et al*, 2007). Due to inconvenience of time, the interview with dance teacher from School B was conducted via an open ended questionnaire.

3.7 Reliability and Validity

For research to be deemed as successful, it must be reliable and valid. Reliability measures the consistency or repeatability of test scores or data (Berg & Latin, 2004). A test is believed to be reliable if it was able to produce similar results if undertaken again (Shaughnessy & Zechmeister, 1997). Reliability was achieved in this study through the use of alternative data collection which measured the same issues (Cohen *et al*, 2007).

Validity indicates whether the research demonstrates what was originally intended (Haslam & McGarty, 2003). Face validity was addressed in the research through the pilot study which assessed the appropriateness of the items the study purports to cover (Cohen *et al*, 2007).

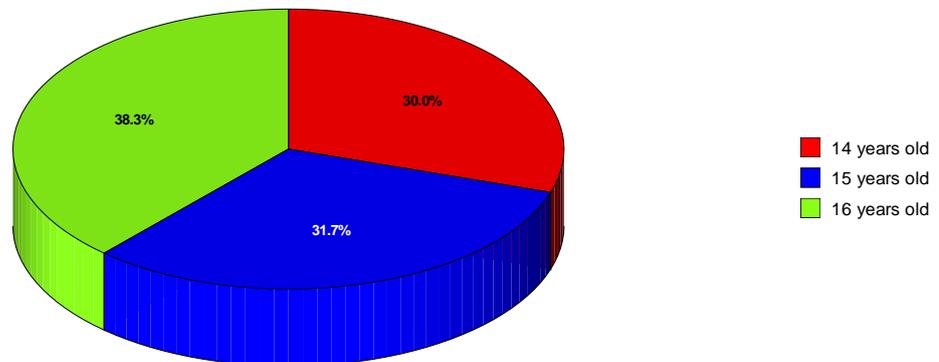
CHAPTER IV – RESULTS

4.0 Results

4.1 Quantitative Data

The questionnaires were designed and analysed using the software programme SNAP. The closed questions from the questionnaire were quantifiable into statistics in which through graphs showed correlation and relationships. For analysis purposes open questions from the questionnaire have been processed as closed, using the key words and phrases provided by the subjects.

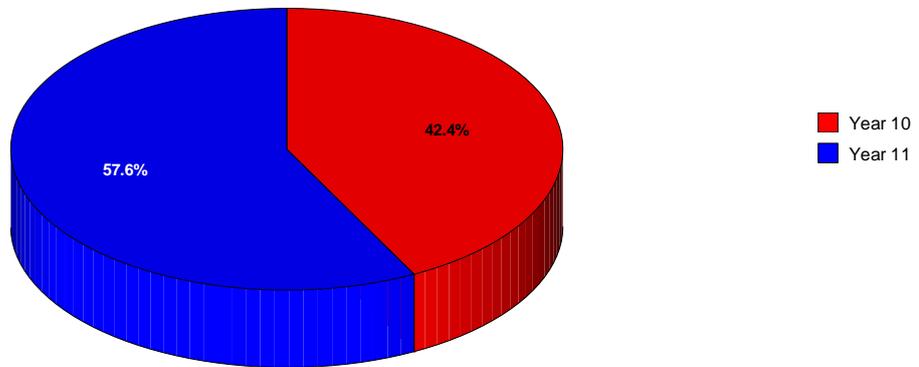
Figure 1.



A graph to show the ages of the participants in the study

The study used participants aged 14-16 from the public and private sector of dance as Key Stage 4 is the first opportunity in which students can opt to study GCSE dance.

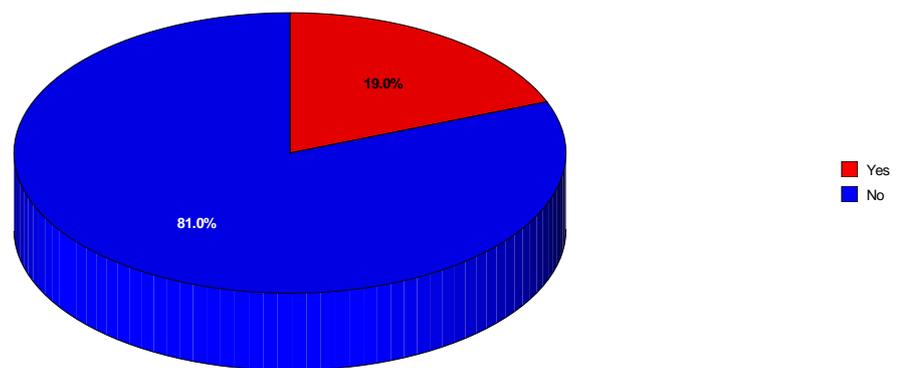
Figure 2.



A graph to show the percentage of year 10 and year 11 participants who took part in the study

Figure 2 illustrates the difference in the return rate between the two year groups.

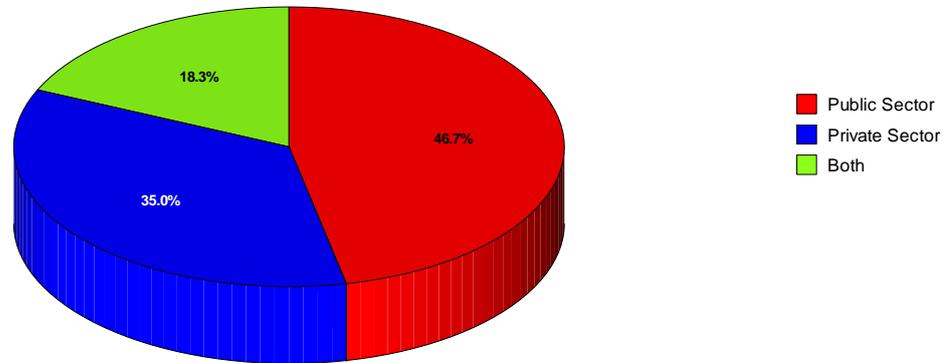
Figure 3.



A graph to show the percentage of participants from the private sector who are not offered GCSE dance at school

The graph illustrates that 81% of students from the private sector are unable to study GCSE dance as it is not offered within the curriculum of their secondary school

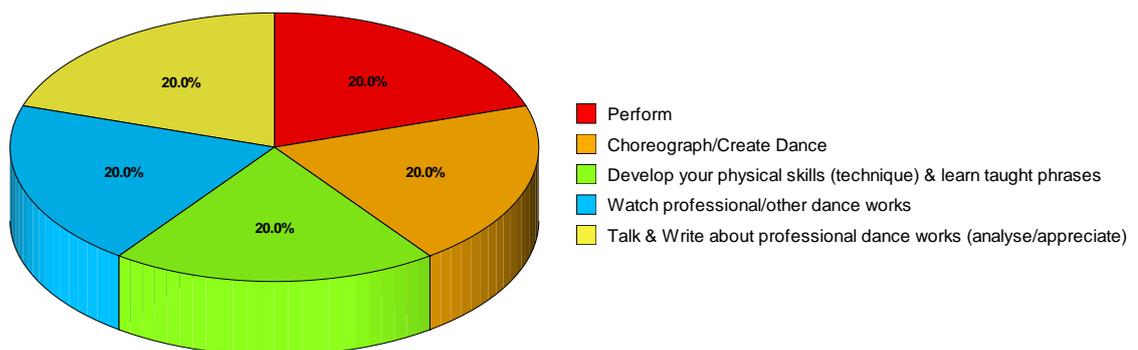
Figure 4.



A graph to show the context in which the participants study dance

Figure 4 displays that a majority of the GCSE dance students, solely study dance within school (46.7%). 35% of participants only study dance in the private sector, and 18.3% studied both.

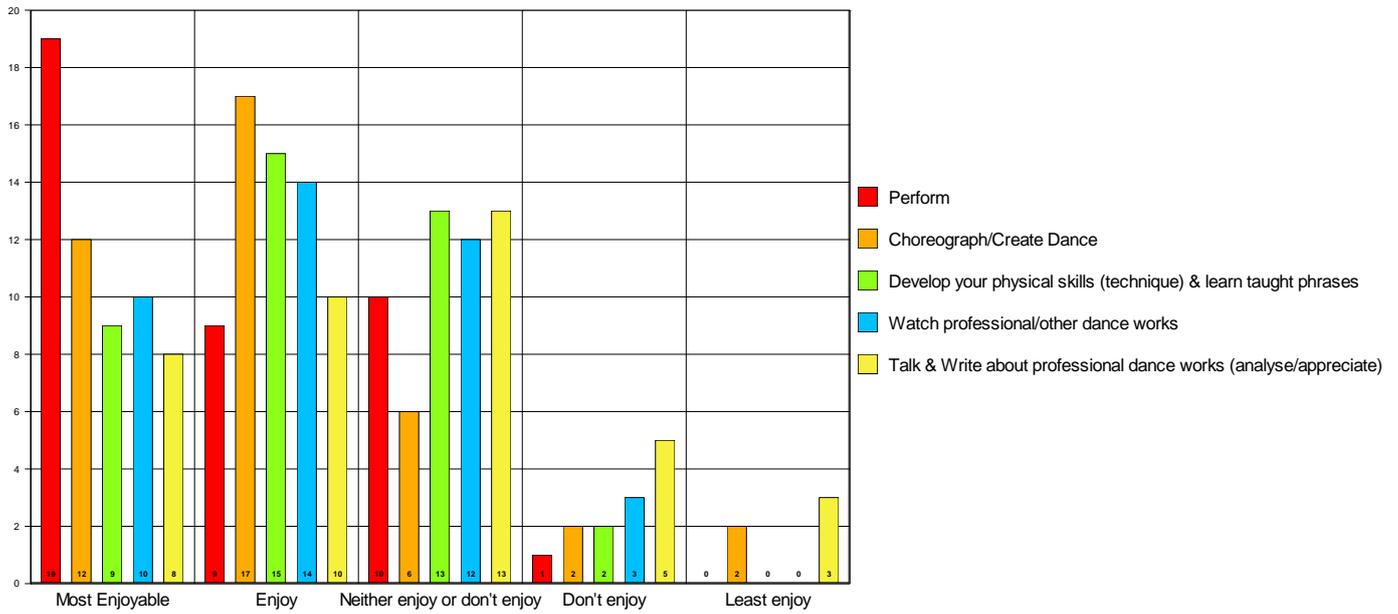
Figure 5.



A graph to show the participants from the public sector's opinion of whether they are given the opportunity to do the following in GCSE dance

Figure 5 illustrates that all GCSE Dance students felt they were given the opportunity to perform, choreograph and appreciate.

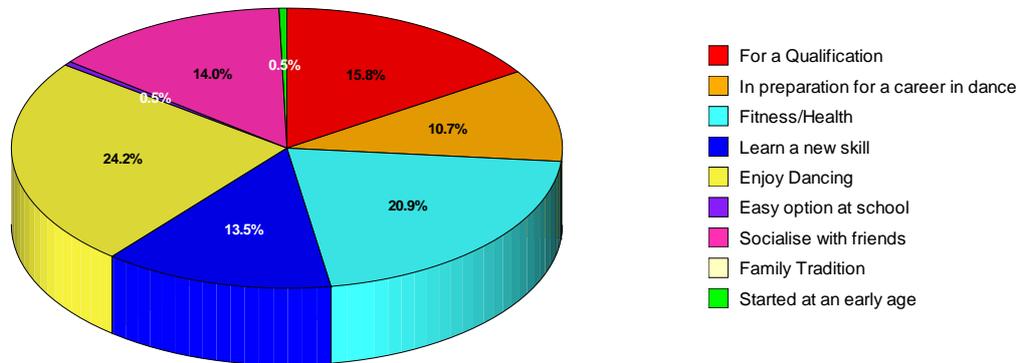
Figure 6.



A graph to show participants most and least enjoyable elements of GCSE dance

Figure 6 illustrates that a despite a majority of students enjoying the performance element of the GCSE, a range of opinions are offered.

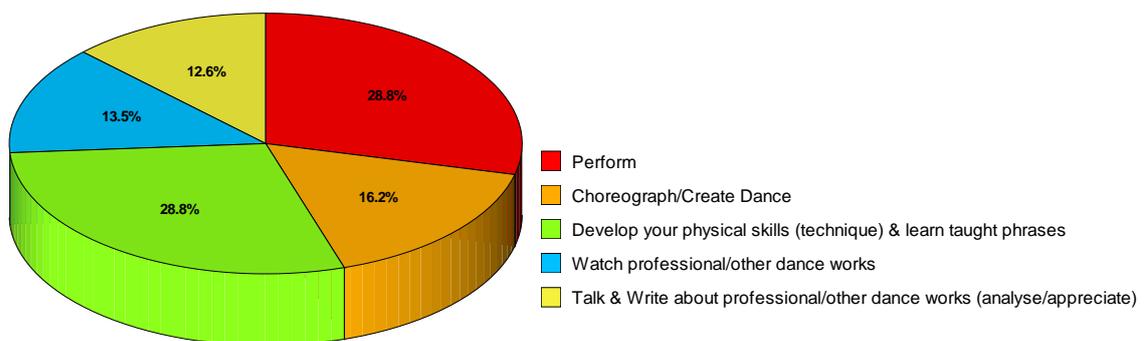
Figure 7.



A graph to show the reasons why participants from the public sector study dance

Figure 7 illustrates the most popular reason for studying dance in the public sector was for fitness/health (27.4%) followed by they simply enjoy dancing (25.0%).

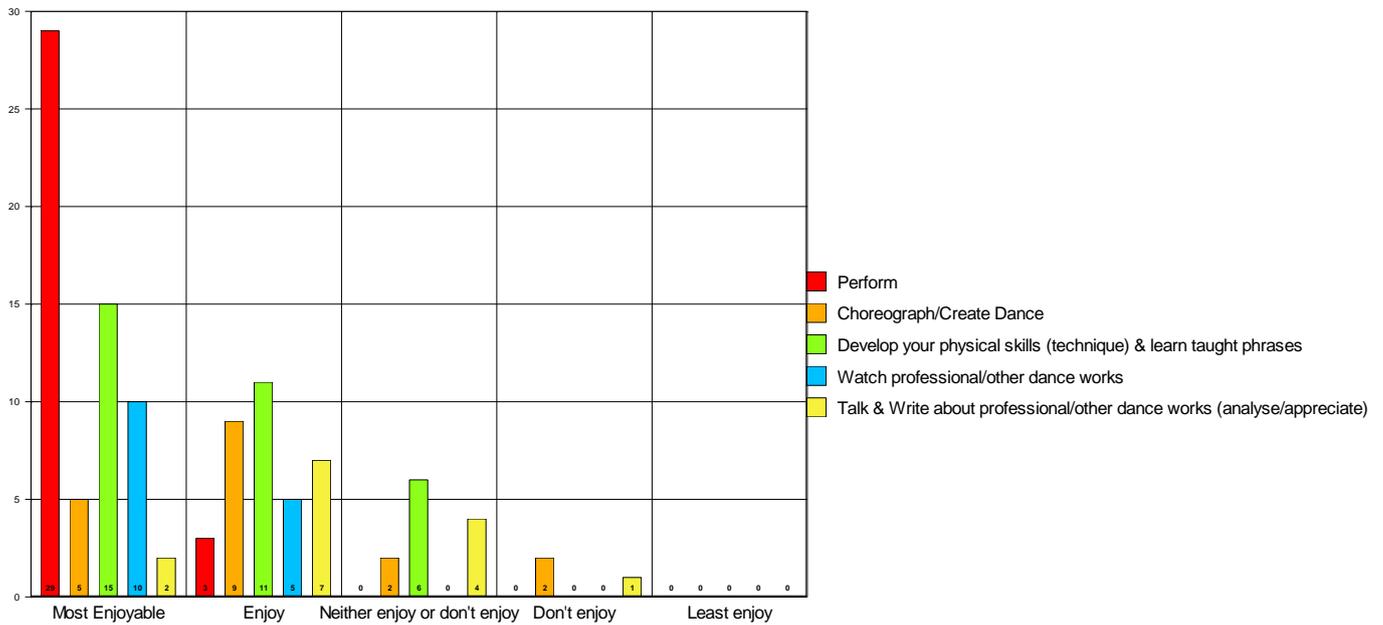
Figure 8.



A graph to show the participants from the private sector's opinion of whether they are given the opportunity to do the following in their private dance schools

Figure 8 displays that a majority of students felt they were given the opportunity to perform (28.8%) and develop their physical skills (28.8%) in private dance schools.

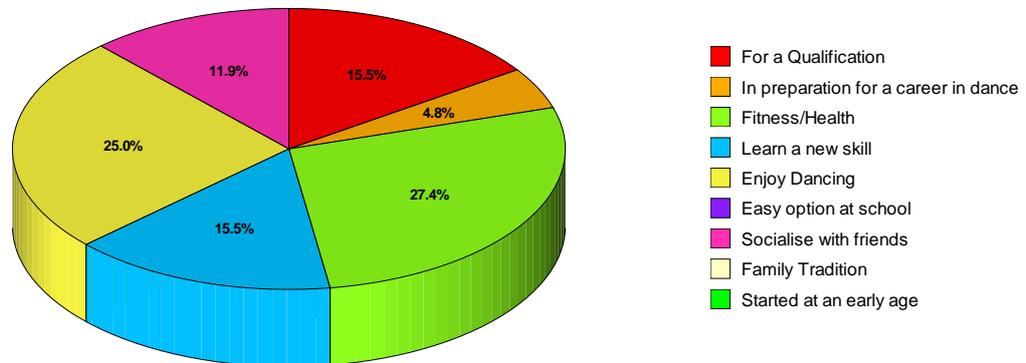
Figure 9.



A graph to show participants most and least enjoyable elements of dance at their private dance school

Figure 9 illustrates the strong preference of performance amongst the private sector dance students.

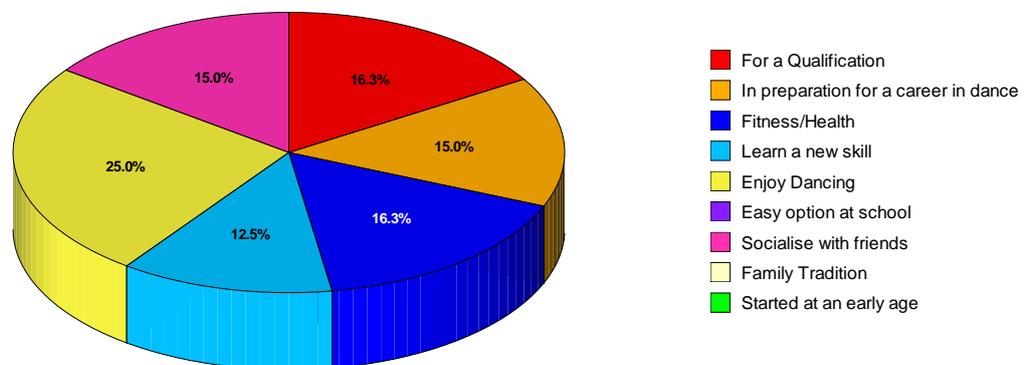
Figure 10.



A graph to show the reasons why participants studying dance in the public sector chose to dance

Figure 10 illustrates the most popular answer for studying dance in the public sector was for fitness/health (27.4%) and the students enjoy dancing (25.0%).

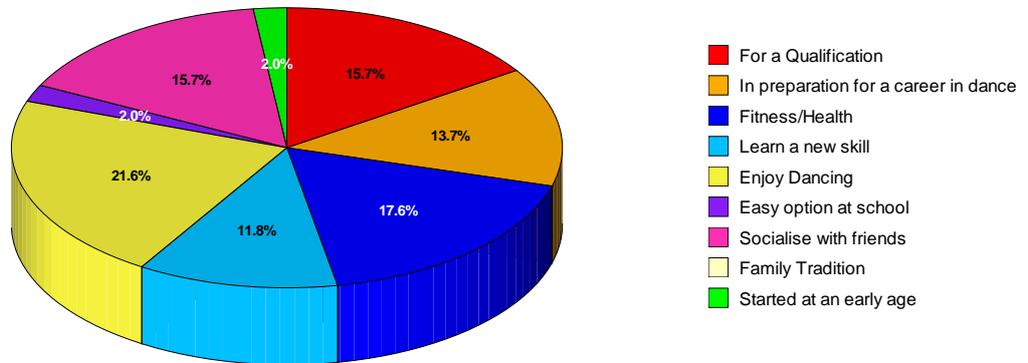
Figure 11.



A graph to show the reasons why participants studying dance in the private sector chose to dance

Figure 11 illustrates the most popular reason for studying dance in the private sector was simply the students enjoy dancing (25%). This was followed equally by for fitness/health (16.3%) and to gain a qualification (16.3%).

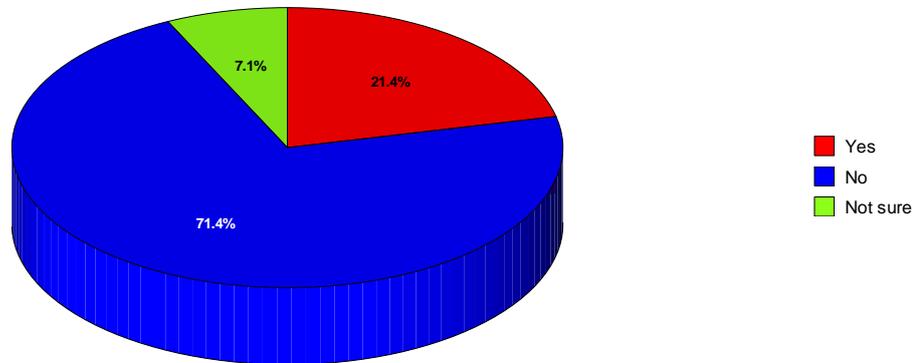
Figure 12.



A graph to show the reasons why participants studying dance in both the public and private sector chose to dance.

Figure 12 displays the most popular reason for studying dance in the public and private sector was that the students enjoy dancing (21.6%).

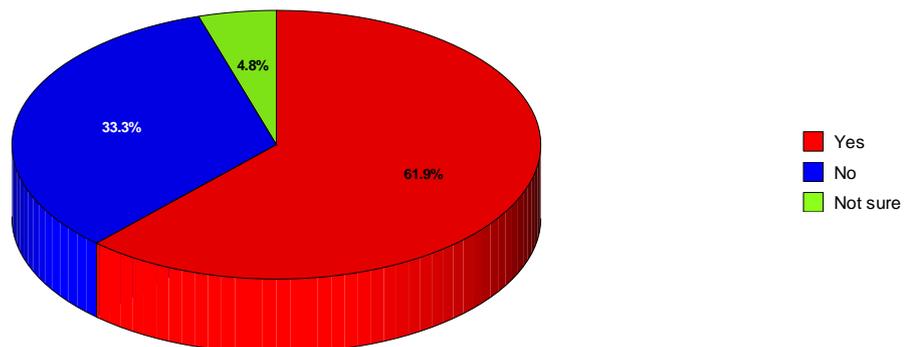
Figure 13.



A graph to show the percentage of participants studying dance in the public sector who wish to pursue a career in dance

Figure 13 presents that 71.4% of students from the public sector do not wish to pursue a career in dance, with 7.1% still unsure. Just 22.2% of the students wish to have a career in dance.

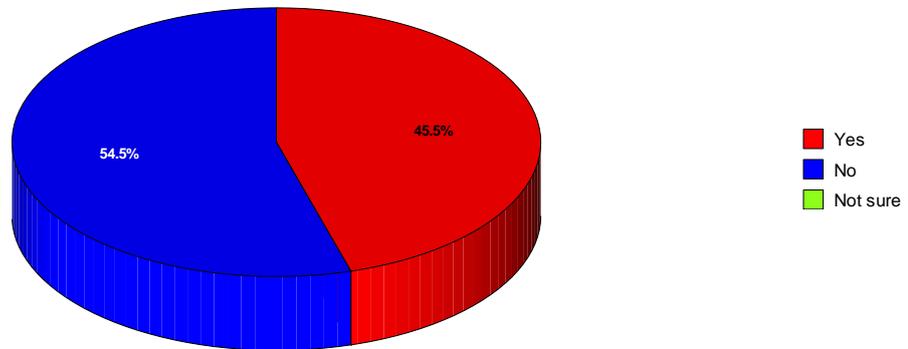
Figure 14.



A graph to show the percentage of participants studying dance in the private sector who wish to pursue a career in dance

Figure 14 illustrates that 61.9% of students from the private sector wish to pursue a career in dance, with 33.3% who don't and just 4.9% who are unsure.

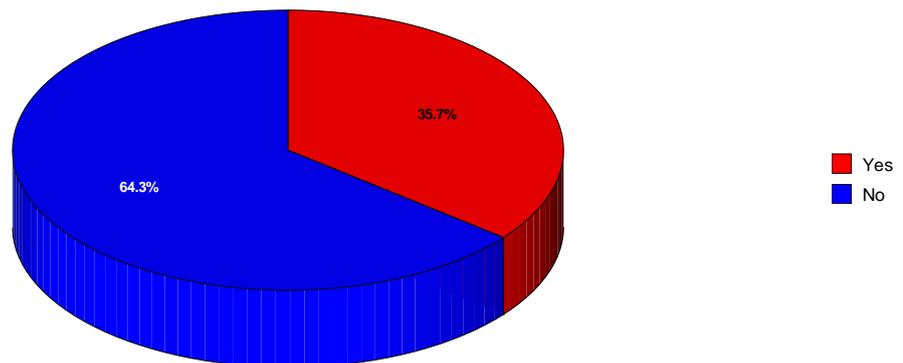
Figure 15.



A graph to show the percentage of participants studying dance in the public and private sector who wish to pursue a career in dance

Figure 15 displays 54.4% of students studying dance in the both the public and private sectors do not wish to pursue a career in dance, whilst 45.5% indicated that they do.

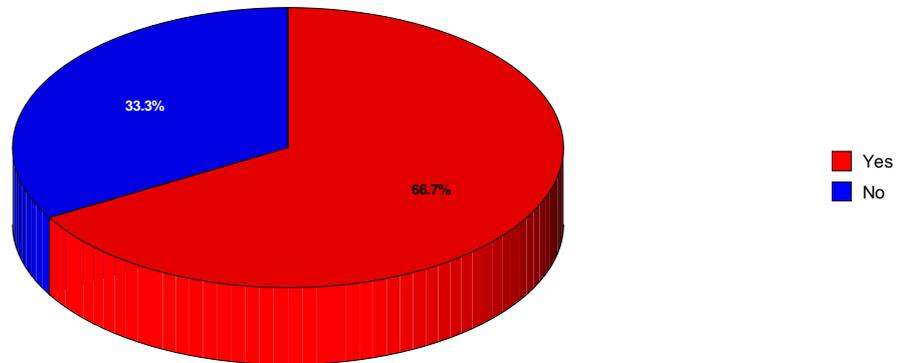
Figure 16.



A graph to show whether participants studying dance in the public sector feel informed about dance careers

Figure 16 illustrates that 64.3% of students studying in the public sector do not feel informed, whilst 35.7% felt that they do.

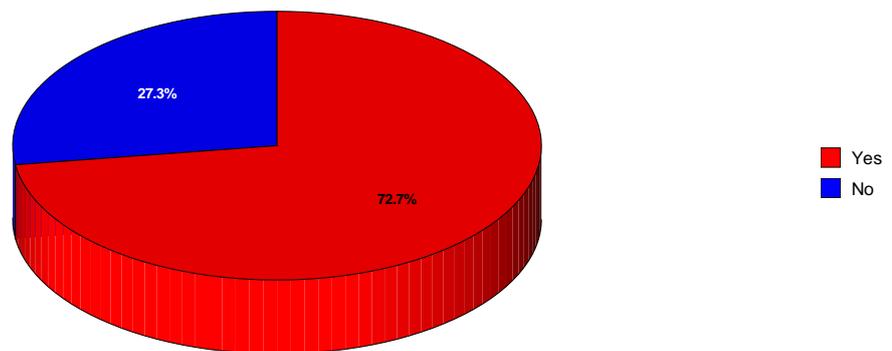
Figure 17.



A graph to show whether participants studying dance in the private sector feel informed about dance careers

Figure 17 illustrates that 66.7% of students studying in the private sector felt they are informed about careers in dance whilst 33.3% felt they were not informed.

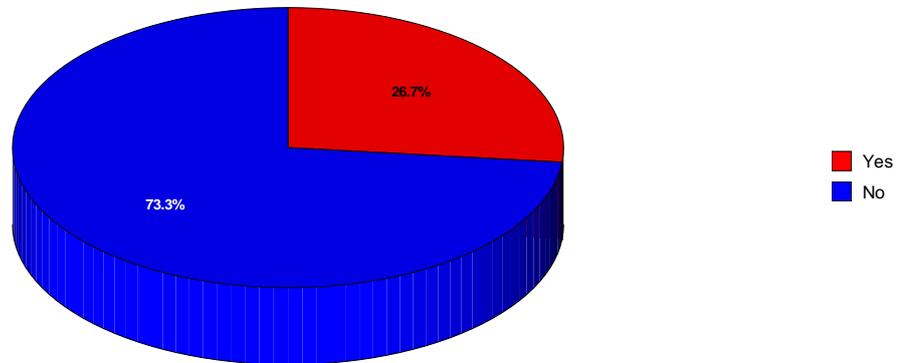
Figure 18.



A graph to show whether participants studying dance in both the public and private sector feel informed about dance careers

Figure 18 presents that 72.7% of students studying both in the public and private sector feel informed about dance careers, whilst only 27.3% felt they were not informed.

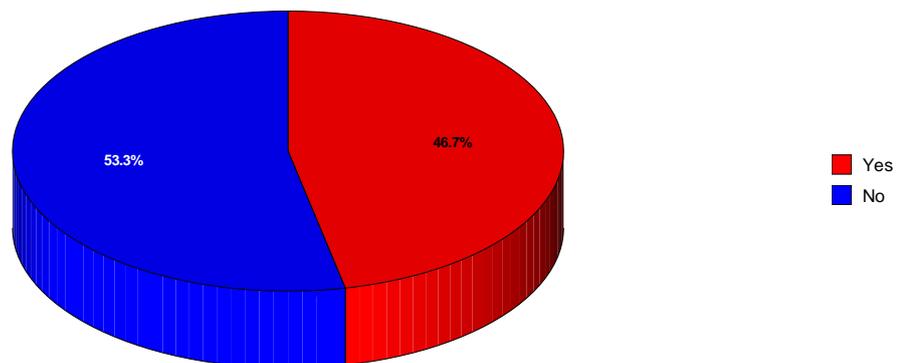
Figure 19.



A graph to show whether participants from school A feel informed about dance careers

Figure 19 illustrates that 73.3% of students from school A do not feel informed about careers in dance and only 26.7% confident that they do.

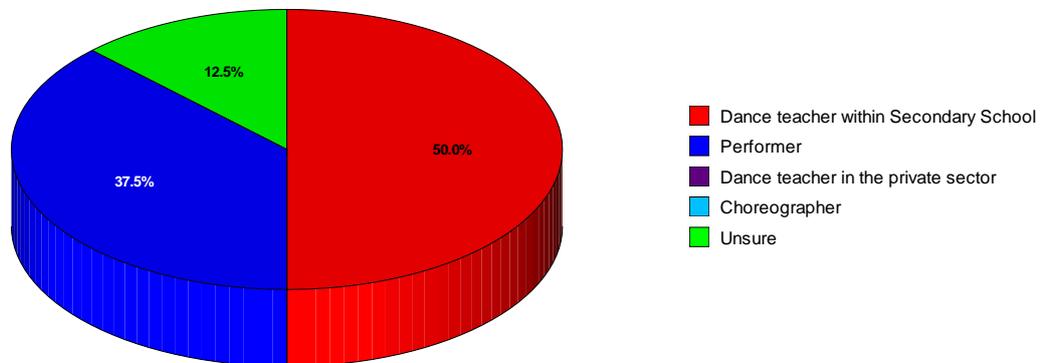
Figure 20.



A graph to show whether participants from school B feel informed about dance careers

Figure 20 illustrates that in comparison, at school B 53.3% of students feel they were not informed whilst 46.7% feel they are informed about careers in dance.

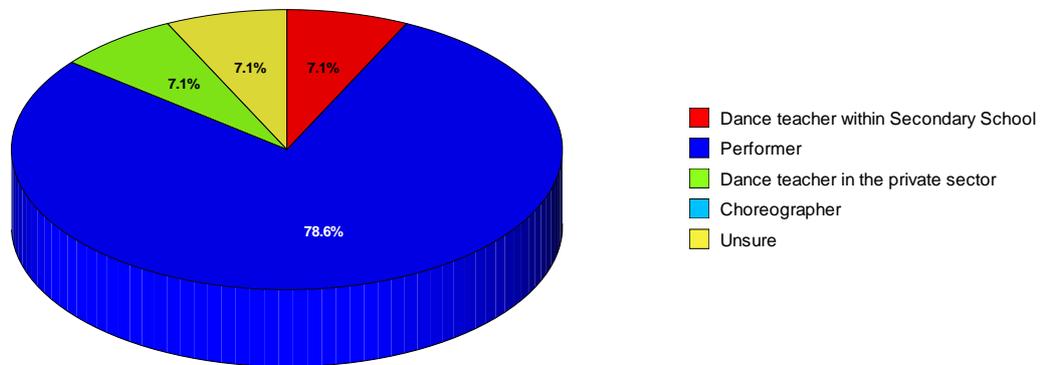
Figure 21.



A graph to show the dance careers participants studying in the public sector wish to achieve

Figure 21 displays the most popular dance career for a student studying in the public sector is a dance teacher in a secondary school (50%), and 37.5% wishing to become performers.

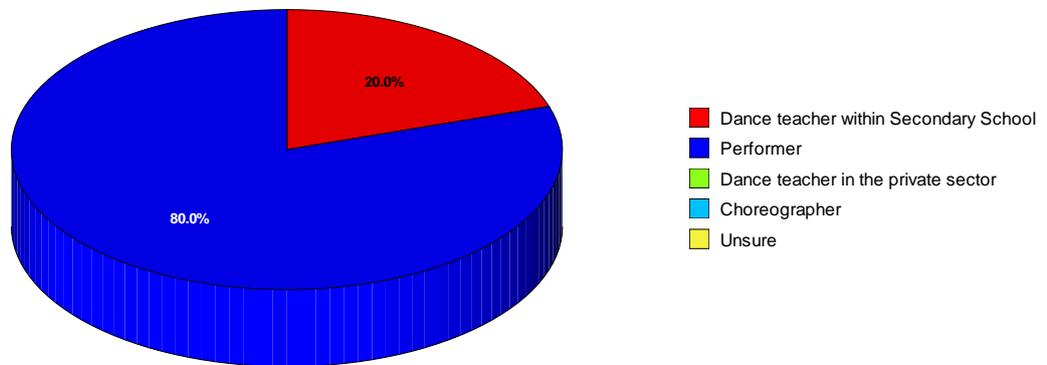
Figure 22.



A graph to show the dance careers participants studying in the private sector wish to achieve

Figure 22 illustrates the most popular dance career for a student studying in the private sector is a performer (78.6%),

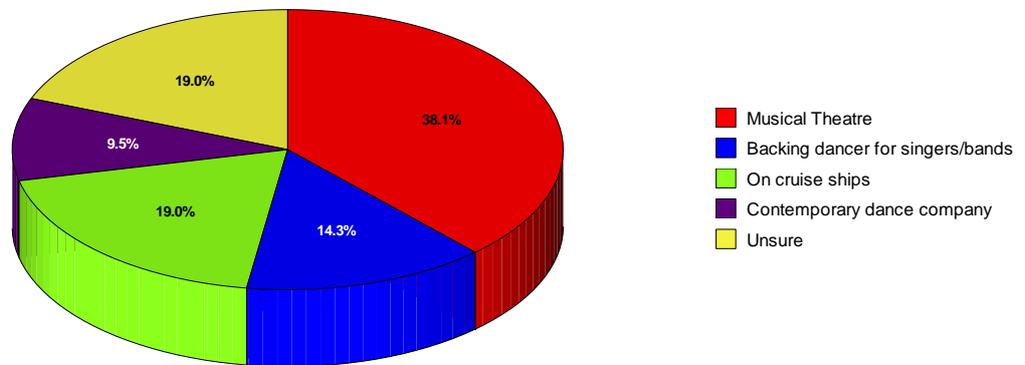
Figure 23.



A graph to show the dance careers participants studying in both the public and private sector wish to achieve

Figure 23 illustrates the most popular dance career for a student studying in both the public and private sector is a performer (80.0%).

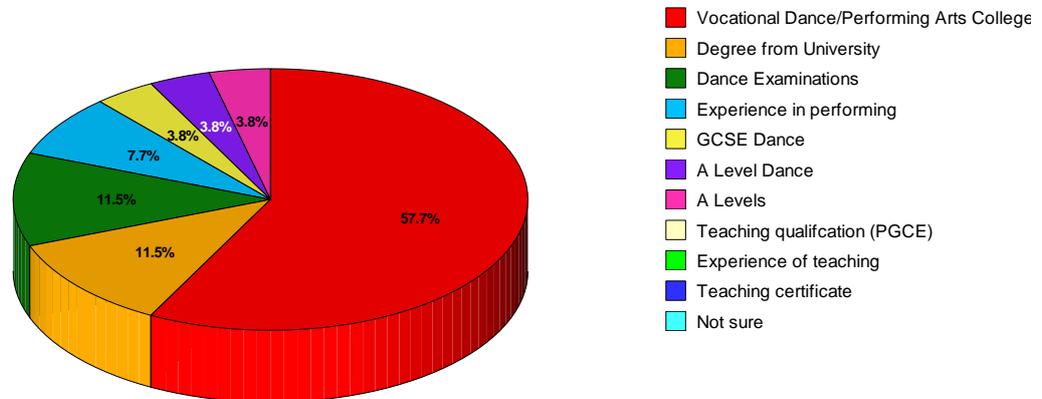
Figure 24.



A graph to show the areas participants wishing to become performers hope to perform in.

Figure 24 displays that most students from the study wishing to become performers hope for this to be within musical theatre (38.1%).

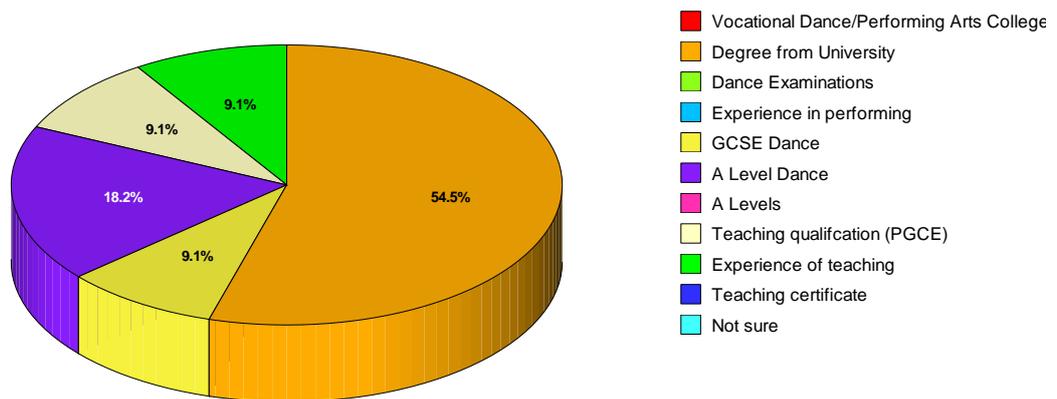
Figure 25.



A graph to show participants opinion of what training/experience they will need to become performers

Figure 25 presents that a majority of students feel they need to attend a vocational/performing arts college to pursue a career in performance (57.7%).

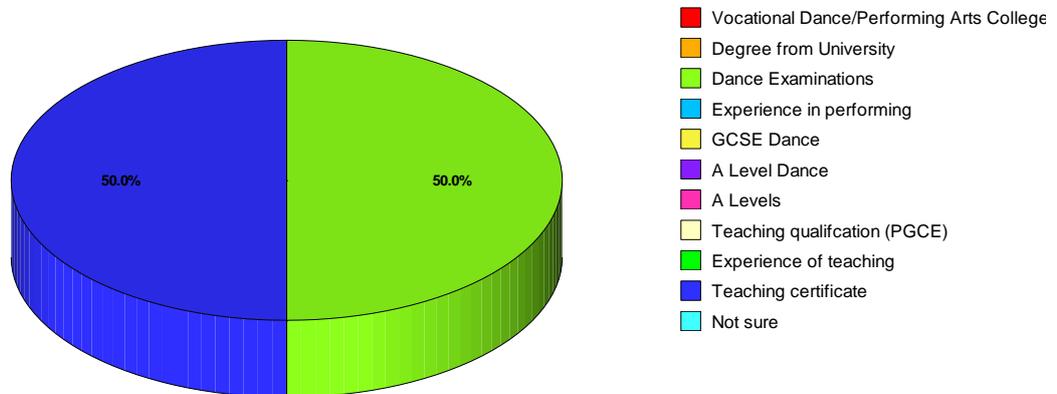
Figure 26.



A graph to show participants opinion of what training/experience they will need to become teachers in the public sector

Figure 26 presents that a majority of students feel they will need to obtain a degree from a university (54.5%) in order to become a dance teacher within the private sector.

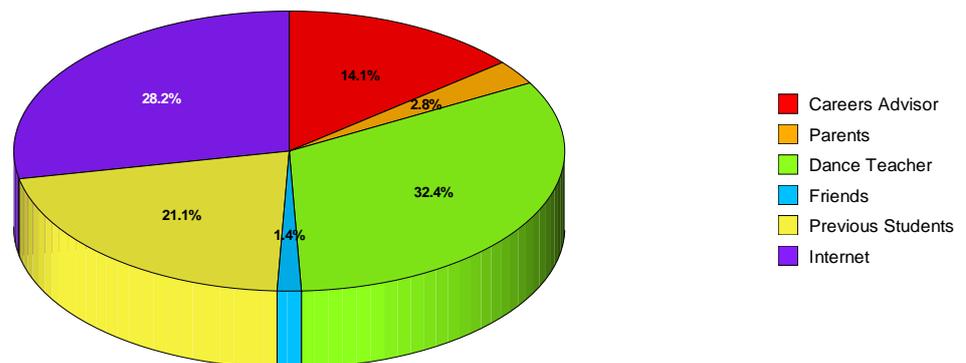
Figure 27.



A graph to show participants opinion of what training/experience they will need to become a teacher in the private sector

Figure 27 presents that students feel they need both dance examination qualifications (50%) and experience of teaching (50%).

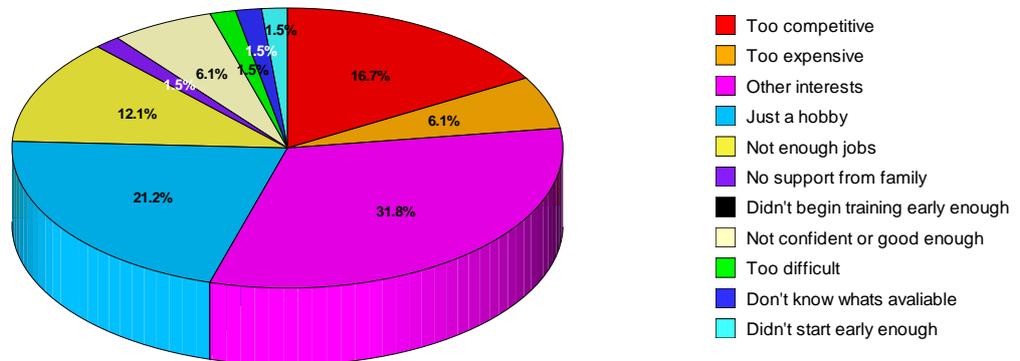
Figure 28.



A graph to show where students wishing to pursue dance careers would go to gain further information

Figure 28 illustrates that most students would go see their dance teacher (31.7%) for more information, then the internet (30.2%).

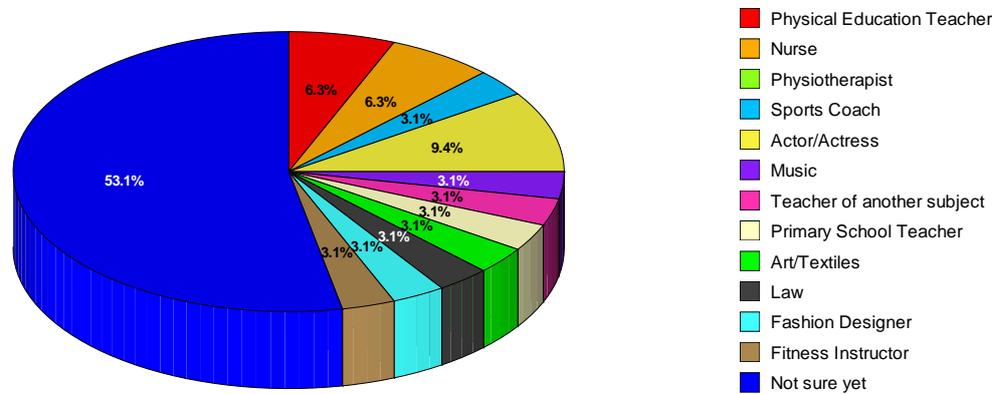
Figure 29.



A graph to show the reasons why students do not wish to pursue a career in dance

Figure 29 displays the most popular reason for students not wishing to pursue a career in dance were that they simply had other interests (31.8%) and that it was just a hobby (21.2%).

Figure 30.



A graph to show the career aspirations of students who do not wish to pursue a career in dance

Figure 30 presents the variety of career choices of the students who do not want to pursue a career in dance with 50.0% still unsure.

4.2 Qualitative Results

The qualitative data collected from the interviews was first displayed in transcripts before being reduced and organised in the form of short paragraphs and sentences from which correlations and patterns can be observed (Cohen et al, 2007).

**Question One: How did you become a teacher of dance within this sector?
What was your prior dance training?**

'I originally studied as a religious studies teacher seven years ago, but I used to be National Standard Gymnast therefore kinaesthetic learning was my second subject' (PARTICIPANT A)

'I studied and gained a BA (Hons) degree in dance before completing a PGCE in secondary dance. Previous to the degree I attended a dance school and took A level dance' (PARTICIPANT B)

'I danced from the age of 2 and a half, going through the dancing grades and naturally worked through to teaching' (PARTICIPANT C)

'I have no formal dance teaching qualifications, but have been with the dancing school since I was 8 or 9 years old and I did all the ISTD modern, tap and ballet grades and then at 15 I expressed an interest in teaching so I became a teaching assistant ' (PARTICIPANT D)

Question Two: **What is your awareness of how careers in dance have changed and developed and what careers are now available would you say?**

'I try to offer my students, I think perhaps because I came into dance a little later and because it's the only realm I know is the physical theatre, contemporary more gymnastic/acrobatics based performance work' (PARTICIPANT A).

'A lot more teacher jobs with increase in GCSE dance & A Level intake'
(PARTICIPANT B)

'So much more available, to anyone who is involved in dance really. When I was young, you either taught or you went to one of the few colleges which it was really hard to get into, or you just started auditioning for parts' (PARTICIPANT C)

'I wouldn't say I'm too aware of a wide range of careers that are available'
(PARTICIPANT D).

Question Three: **Do you feel you encourage or inform your students about the variety of dance related careers available to them?**

'Yeah, probably too much - but they probably do understand more about LABAN, London Contemporary and universities rather than musical theatre'
(PARTICIPANT A)

'As GCSE dance does not tend to focus on any one factor, students are given the chance to view a variety of different areas in dance which ranges from choreography to critiquing. This broadens their view of careers in dance not just being about the typical performing' (PARTICIPANT B)

'I encourage them but I don't have to give them the information because they get it all from the internet and from students who have gone before them – so I will advise and try and guide them the best I can but by the time they are 15 they know more than I do really' (PARTICIPANT C)

I wouldn't say we go out of our way to inform them, but we ask what kind of things they want to go into and if they ask what is available we can suggest they go online or see a careers advisor or perhaps advise them on performance related careers' (PARTICIPANT D)

Question Four: **Is there any particular training or education route you would perhaps or discourage your students to take?**

'Due to the talent that comes out of the GCSE to push them into musical theatre seems to limit them so I would try to encourage them in the more contemporary new angle' (PARTICIPANT A)

'No depends on students own individual skills/qualities. I often encourage students to combine with another subject if unclear of a future career' (PARTICIPANT B)

'It would all depend on the student because if you've got a very academically intelligent student who has talent in dance and academically gifted then I would encourage the A Level route first' (PARTICIPANT C)

'Probably the performance side and go into shows etc, because obviously they don't do academic/theory based things at our school, they are more suited to go on and perform' (PARTICIPANT D)

Additional Questions: **Do you think that students come into GCSE Dance with the hope of having dance as a career or are they just choosing it as a subject in school?** 'Real mixture, some link it with PE because they want to become an athlete or they want to go into the health sector or others team it with drama or music because they want to go onto be in the performing arts. (PARTICIPANT A)

CHAPTER V – DISCUSSION

CHAPTER VI – CONCLUSION

6.0 Conclusion

There is currently no clear structure in place or central organisation for young people and parents to visit in order to gain further information and advice on dance education and training, whether this is for a student who wishes to pursue a career in dance, or those seeking much more general information (Hall, 2008). Websites such as the Council for Dance Education and Training (www.cdnet.org.uk), and Youth Dance England (www.yde.org.uk) provide excellent information on varied occupations and careers advice; however students are clearly not informed or aware that such information is easily accessible to them. For students to gain access to this type of information dance teachers need on-going specialist advice and support to keep updated and informed about the development and extent of dance careers (Jobbins, 2000).

'The Dance Review' (Hall, 2008) highlights these two points as well as addressing other challenges and issues facing dance. Since the report, dance has received a significant boost with the government announcing that over £5 million will be spent on a series of measures to increase dance opportunities for young people in and out of schools (Jobbins, 2003). With access to a wider range of dance opportunities students could broaden their knowledge and ability to make better informed choices (NDTA, 2004).

There are secondary schools where dance teaching is excellent and pupils benefit enormously, as well as private dance schools teaching thousands of people (Dance UK, 2006). The public and private sector can offer two very different experiences of dance education and dance training, which then inevitably influences student's career routes and destinations. The study demonstrates that the private sector can prepare and equip students with the necessary skills for a performance career; however these students and teachers seem to have a very narrow vision of the career opportunities in dance. Due to the broader dance education provided by the public sector, it would appear that these students have wider opportunities for varied careers in dance, with less emphasis placed on performance skills.

However, these students and teachers also do not appear to be adequately informed of the vast variety of opportunities with their main focus still on performing and teaching.

The study highlights key issues regarding dance students ability to make informed choices about dance careers. 'There is no national focal point for schools, colleges, private dance schools, parents and most importantly young people where they can go for information and direction' (Hall, 2008, p.21). The establishment of a national strategy for dance careers advice could ensure all students are given equal access to conversant advice to enable them to make informed choices about participation in dance beyond school and into adult life (NDTA, 2004).The study also provides an insight into the need for continual professional development for dance teachers from both the private and public sector, in order to develop their skills and keep their knowledge current and up to date (Jobbins, 2000).

The study is not representative of a national picture. An additional study with a bigger sample and longer time scale needs to be carried out in order to draw further conclusions. The study could further its results, by gaining retrospective information from professionals presently employed in dance careers, questioning how they were informed and what educational/training route they followed.

In conclusion this study has a narrow focus upon student's opinions. The study could be advanced by collecting information from careers advisors and a larger sample of dance teachers serving different demographic populations to gain a clearer understanding of the advice provided to students in both the private and public sector.

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