

# AN ANALYSIS OF METHODS TO IMPROVING THE BASIC LITERACY OF INTERNATIONAL STANDARD DANCERS

Ziqing SHEN<sup>1</sup> and Supavadee POTIWETCHAKUL<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand;  
598211384@qq.com (Z. S.); supavadee.po@ssru.ac.th (S. P.)

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## ABSTRACT

This Article aims to analyze methods to improving the basic literacy of International Standard Dancers. The study used qualitative research tools and the data collection methods covered the literature review, observation, and analysis. The study found that the dancer's quality can be improved from the following three aspects: emotional expression and characterization, spatial dimension performance, and cultural literacy with artistic cultivation. Improving the quality of International Standard Dance performers plays an important role in improving the quality of International Standard Dance performance dance presentation, and also has an important impact on the future development of International Standard Dance performance dance. The expected benefits of the study are as follows: firstly, to enhance the quality of dancers and to broaden the nurturing dimension of the art of International Standard Dance; secondly, to broaden the way for the development of the industry of International Standard Dance; and thirdly, the development of the art of International Standard Dance performance dance can lead to the development of the peripheral industries and other industries.

**Keywords:** International Standard Dance, Artistic Performance Dance, Dancer Quality

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## INTRODUCTION

As a highly artistic and technical dance form, International Standard Dance requires dancers not only to have excellent physical quality and technical ability, but also to have profound cultural literacy and artistic cultivation. In the face of the growing social and cultural needs, people have new demands for the cultural function of International Standard Dance, and the artistic works of artistic performance dance and dance theatre are among them (Luo Xinyao, 2020). So the requirements for the quality of International Standard Dancers have begun to increase. In recent years, with the popularity and development of International Standard Dance in the world, how to improve the basic literacy of International Standard Dancers has become an important topic in the field of dance education and training. Enhancing the basic literacy of International Standard Dancers is of great significance to improving their dance expression and artistic infectiousness. Through systematic training and education, dancers can not only make progress in the technical level, but also get comprehensive improvement in emotional expression, characterisation and stage performance. This not only helps to cultivate high-level dance talents, but also promotes the development and popularisation of the art of International Standard Dance.

In the development of International Standard Dance, the basic quality of performers directly affects their dance expression and artistic influence. Basic literacy not only includes dance technique and physical quality, but also involves emotional expression, performance in the spatial dimension, cultural literacy and artistic cultivation and other aspects of ability. Traditional dance training often focuses on the improvement of technical skills, while neglecting the comprehensive development of dancers' overall literacy. This single training mode is difficult to adapt to the comprehensive requirements of modern dance performances for performers, so it is particularly important to explore ways to improve the basic literacy of International Standard Dancers.

In recent years, with the continuous deepening of dance research, more and more studies have begun to pay attention to the comprehensive quality cultivation of dancers. However, the current research mostly focuses on the technical level, and there is relatively little research on emotional expression, spatial performance and cultural and artistic cultivation. This makes the dancers often lack deep emotional resonance and cultural heritage in their performances, thus affecting the overall performance effect. Regarding the analysis of the methods to enhance the basic literacy of International Standard Dancers, when searching for 'International Standard Dance performance dance' on China Knowledge, the existing research is mainly based on the perspectives of work choreography, teaching curriculum reform, etc., and there are fewer researches specifically focusing on the literacy of International Standard Dancers. At present, domestic and foreign research on International Standard Dance mainly focuses on technical skills and competitive performance, while there is relatively little research on the comprehensive quality of dancers, especially artistic cultivation and cultural literacy. Most of the existing researches focus on the training of dance technique and competition strategy, and lack of in-depth discussion on the dancers' spatial performance, role modelling and emotional expression. With the diversification of International Standard Dance performance forms and the improvement of the audience's aesthetic demand, only technical mastery is not enough to meet the requirements of modern stage performance. Therefore, this paper will take emotional expression, spatial dimension performance, cultural literacy and artistic cultivation as the research objectives, hoping to enhance the basic literacy of International Standard Dance performers through in-depth discussion of the method, to make up for the gap in this research, to explore the important role of enhancing the literacy of International Standard Dance performers, to summarise the beneficial experience through the results of the research to be discussed and to put forward countermeasure suggestions, in order to provide theoretical basis for the follow-up of more in-depth research. The results of the study are summarised and

discussed, and countermeasures are proposed to provide a theoretical basis for more in-depth research. To promote the development of International Standard Dance in terms of artistic expression and cultural connotation.

In terms of innovation, this study comprehensively analyses and explores the methods of improving the basic literacy of International Standard Dancers from three aspects: emotional expression, performance in spatial dimension, cultural literacy and artistic cultivation. Unlike previous studies, this study not only focuses on technical training, but also incorporates dancers' emotional and artistic cultivation into the scope of the study, and proposes a series of scientific and systematic training methods and educational strategies. These innovative points provide new perspectives and methods for International Standard Dance education, which have high theoretical value and practical significance.

The population of this study is the professional teachers and dancers of the Beijing Dance Academy (BDA), one of China's top art institutions. This population was selected because of their significant representation and influence in the field of International Standard Dance education and performance in China. As the highest level of dance education in China, Beijing Dance Academy has a wealth of practical and pedagogical experience, as its teachers and students have won numerous awards in several domestic and international competitions. Therefore, studying this group can provide strong support for exploring the enhancement of International Standard Dancers' literacy through artistic education. Ten teachers, 20 dancers, 10 award-winning works of International Standard Dance Artistic Performance Dance and two International Standard Dance Theatre selections were selected. In order to ensure the representativeness and quality of the research data, a purposive non-random sampling method was used to select 30 teachers and dancers with rich experience and outstanding performance from the overall population. The specific sampling steps are as follows:

This study makes an important contribution to the field of International Standard Dance in many ways. Through this study, it aims to provide scientific guidance and practical strategies for the training and education of International Standard Dancers. The results of the study will not only help to improve the comprehensive quality of dancers, but also provide a reference for dance educators and training organisations to promote the reform and development of International Standard Dance teaching. Ultimately, this study hopes to promote the overall enhancement of the art of International Standard Dance and contribute to the cultivation of more excellent dance talents. Guo Sharong (2022) said in 'Research on the creation elements of International Standard Dance performance dance' that 'when the development of International Standard Dance performance dance is getting better and better, it will increase the degree of publicity in the related media. Therefore, the International Standard Dance performance dance will be known by more and more people, and will promote more and more people to participate in it. When the participation of the masses is greatly increased, it will drive the related industrial chain; for example: clothing industry, colour cosmetics industry, etc., so as to promote the development of the economy. Whether it is to improve the economy of the society or to improve the physical quality of the masses, the diversified development of International Standard Dance is imperative."

In summary, this study proposes a systematic training and education strategy by comprehensively exploring and analysing the methods to enhance the basic quality of International Standard Dancers, starting from the aspects of emotional expression, spatial dimension performance and cultural literacy and artistic cultivation. It is hoped that this study can provide new perspectives and methods for International Standard Dance education, promote the improvement of the comprehensive quality of dancers, and contribute to the development of International Standard Dance art.

## LITERATURE REVIEWS

As an artistic and technical dance form, the comprehensive quality of dancers has a direct impact on the performance quality and artistic influence. In recent years, with the popularization and development of International Standard Dance, the enhancement of dancers' quality has gradually become an important issue in dance education and research. This paper summarizes the achievements and shortcomings of the existing researches from the aspects of emotional expression, spatial dimension performance, cultural literacy and artistic cultivation by combing the relevant literature at home and abroad, so as to provide theoretical support for the innovativeness of this research.

### **Emotional expression and characterization**

Emotional expression is one of the core elements of dance performance. Zhang Hailiang (2021) pointed out in "Analysis of Characterization in Dance Performance" that character experience can help dancers deeply understand the emotions of characters, thus enhancing the authenticity and infectiousness of performances. Similarly, Wang Yuanan (2020) found through an experimental study of the International Standard Dance drama Cinderella that role analysis combined with emotional memory techniques can significantly enhance dancers' emotional control. These studies emphasize that emotional expression not only relies on technical training, but also needs to be realized through psychological experience and character empathy. However, most of the existing studies have focused on single emotional training methods, lacked systematic integration, and insufficiently explored the mechanism of audience emotional resonance.

### **Space dimension and stage performance**

The use of space is an important dimension of International Standard Dance performance. Luo Xinyao (2020) suggests in "Research on the Creation of International Standard Dance Theater Characters" that the use of dynamic composition and spatial hierarchy can enhance the three-dimensionality and visual guiding effect of the dance. Li Chunkai (2022) further explored the role of "spatial field" in narrative through the case study of the dance work Roots. These studies reveal the positive effects of spatial training on dancers' coordination and performance fluency, but they mostly focus on technical spatial choreography, with less research on the cultivation strategies for dancers' spatial perception.

### **Cultural literacy and artistic cultivation**

Cultural background learning and cross-artistic communication are the keys to improving dancers' comprehensive literacy. Guo Sharong (2022) pointed out in "Research on Choreographic Elements of International Standard Dance Performance" that dancers' understanding of the cultural connotation of the work directly affects the depth and artistic value of the performance. Shang Yuetao (2024), on the other hand, advocated the enhancement of dancers' artistic perception through interdisciplinary courses such as music and drama. Existing research generally recognizes the supporting role of cultural literacy in characterization, but lacks in-depth exploration of the combination of cultural characteristics and globalization context in International Standard Dance.

### **Balance between technique and artistic expression**

The relationship between technique and art is a point of contention in dance education. Yang Xin (2021) argues that over-technicalization may weaken the emotional expression of performance, while Shang Yuetao (2024) advocates an artistic education path as an alternative to pure technical training. In contrast, this paper proposes an integrated strategy in which technique and emotion need to be developed in tandem, bridging the gap in existing research on systematic training methods.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative study in order to comprehensively analyse the role of the above three aspects of emotional expression, performance in the spatial dimension, cultural literacy and artistic cultivation in enhancing the literacy of International Standard Dancers. The data collection methods covered literature review, observation, and the population of this study was teachers and dancers of the Beijing Dance Academy (BDA), one of China's top art institutions. To ensure the representativeness and quality of the research data, a purposive non-random sampling method was used to select 30 teachers and dancers with rich experience and outstanding performance from the population. Literature was collected using a systematic search and screening method to ensure the quality and relevance of the selected literature. Observation method is one of the data collection methods in this study, aiming at obtaining first-hand, authentic data through video observation of the actual performance of International Standard Dance teachers and dancers in training and performance. This method is able to supplement the shortcomings of the literature study and provide more comprehensive and detailed information for this study.

### Literature Research

Literature was collected using a systematic search and screening method to ensure the quality and relevance of the selected literature. The specific steps are as follows: determine the scope of the search, covering the related fields of International Standard Dance, performing arts, artistry education, cultural literacy and artistic cultivation. Including academic papers, monographs, conference papers, research reports, and literature in authoritative journals and databases. Selection of databases and resources, the main databases are China Knowledge Network (CNKI), Wanfang Database, Wipu Information, Web of Science, Google Scholar, etc. Library resources include relevant books and journals in the library of Beijing Dance Academy and other university libraries. The search strategy was developed to set the keywords as International Standard Dance, Artistic Education, Dance Education, Performing Arts, Cultural Literacy, Artistic Cultivation and so on.

### Observation

Through a detailed analysis of the International Standard Dance drama “Sunrise”, “Cinderella” excerpts and the ninth. The 10 award-winning works including the 10th “Peach and Lee Cup” double performance dance video materials were watched, compared, analyzed and recorded. Mainly analyze the specific presentation of the dancers in the 16 International Standard Dance Performance Dance works to provide data support for the study. Focus on characterization, emotional expression, spatial dimension, cultural literacy and artistic cultivation. Through the comprehensive use of the above multiple research methods, we systematically conduct observation and research on the three aspects of emotional expression, performance in spatial dimension, cultural literacy and artistic cultivation, so as to provide scientific basis and specific guidance for theoretical research and practical application.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

This study focuses on the theme of ‘Analysis of the Methods of Enhancing the Basic Literacy of International Standard Dancers’, and carries out in-depth discussions and analyses in three aspects, namely, emotional expression, spatial performance, cultural literacy and artistic cultivation, and arrives at the following research results:

### Emotional expression

There are two methods for the enhancement of emotional expression. Firstly, through role experience and performance training (e.g., theatre performance and role-playing), dancers can deeply understand and experience the emotions of their roles more deeply. This kind of training helps dancers to express their emotions more naturally on stage, and improves the realism and infectiousness of the performance. Secondly, emotional memory and reproduction, with the

help of emotional memory techniques, dancers can recall similar emotional states from their own experiences and incorporate them into their performances. This method effectively enhances the dancer's ability to express emotion, enabling them to express emotion more vividly on stage. Research on emotional expression has found that the authenticity of emotional expression directly affects the emotional resonance of the audience. Through character analysis and emotional experience, dancers are able to understand the inner heart of the character more deeply and enhance the authenticity of emotional expression (Wang Yu'an, 2020). By combining facial expressions, body language and stage interactions, dancers can express their character's emotions more vividly and increase the infectiousness of their performance (Song Wenhe, 2023). Through the above training methods, dancers can better convey emotions in their performances, thus enhancing the interaction and empathy effect with the audience. In terms of emotional control and performance quality, the training of emotional expression not only improves the dancers' expressiveness, but also enhances their ability to control their emotions, which makes the performance more stable and consistent.

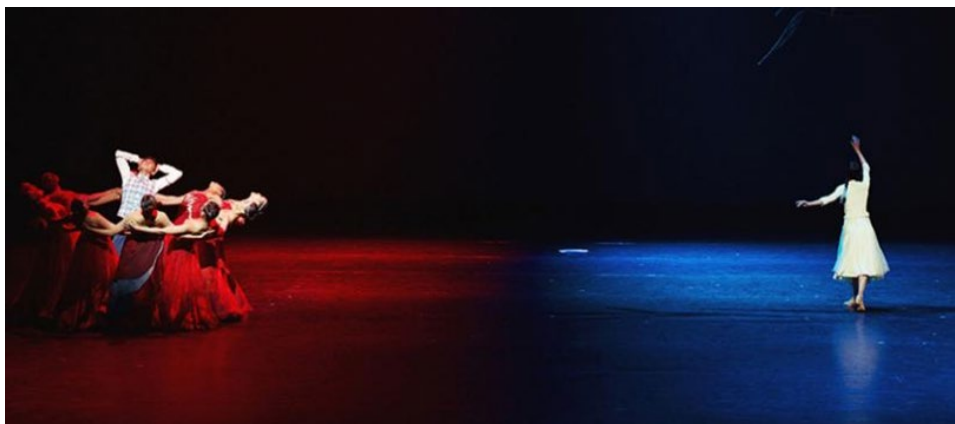


**Figure 1** Cinderella Rehearsal Photos

Note: The picture shows the second scene of Act II duo dance section “love at first sight”, which is a five-minute rumba duo dance, expresses Cinderella at the ball with the prince “love at first sight” first love scene, in the picture the dancers' styling to show that two people fall in love at first sight after the emotional warming.

### **Spatial dimension**

There are several ways to enhance spatial performance. Firstly, through spatial awareness training, dancers are able to better understand and utilise the stage space. This includes the spatial arrangement of dance steps, the change of stage position, and the spatial relationship with the dance partner. Second, through three-dimensional choreography and training, dancers are able to move more freely and flexibly in three-dimensional space, improving the visual effect and spatial sense of the dance performance. Studies in the spatial dimension have found that by simulating different stage scenes and spatial layouts, dancers are able to better understand and utilise space, enhancing the three-dimensionality and layering of the performance (Luo Xinyao, 2020). Effective spatial utilisation significantly enhances the visual effect of the dance performance. Dancers make full use of spatial changes on stage, which not only makes the performance more dynamic, but also increases the sense of hierarchy and three-dimensionality of the stage presentation. Through spatial training, the tacit understanding between dance partners is significantly improved. In duo dance, good spatial coordination ability makes the movement more fluent and coordinated, thus improving the overall performance quality.



**Figure 2** International Standard Dance Theater “April Day on Earth” (n.d.). Retrieved September 12, 2024.

Note: This image shows Lin Huiyin and Xu Zhimo's passionate and contradictory emotional entanglements, their deep-seated entanglements and struggles, as well as their painful choices between reason and emotion.



**Figure 3** International Standard Dance Theater “April Day on Earth” (n.d.). Retrieved September 12, 2024.

Note: This image shows a dance segment from the dance drama “Cloisonne - Doves of Peace”, in which the dancers show vivid frescoes on an ancient Chinese building.

### **Cultural literacy and artistic cultivation**

There are the following methods for the enhancement of cultural and artistic cultivation. Firstly, cultural background learning, through in-depth learning of the cultural background of the dance works, the dancers are able to better understand the connotation and meaning of the works. This kind of learning includes the historical background, cultural practices and the creative background of the work. Secondly, art appreciation and communication, through extensive art appreciation and cross-border communication, dancers can broaden their artistic horizons and absorb the essence of various art forms. This includes watching different types of dance performances, attending art exhibitions and communicating with other artists. By participating in international dance exchanges and competitions, dancers are able to come into contact with different cultural backgrounds and dance styles, enriching their cultural literacy and artistic horizons (Guo Sharong, 2022). Thirdly, comprehensive art courses including music, theatre and fine arts are offered to help dancers improve their artistic cultivation in a comprehensive way (Shang Yuetao, 2024). Research on cultural and artistic cultivation has found that deep cultural literacy helps dancers portray their roles more accurately, giving their performances

more depth and substance. Dancers' understanding of the cultural context of a work directly affects the level and quality of their performance. Extensive art appreciation and communication significantly enhances dancers' artistic perception and expressiveness. Dancers' learning and practice in different art forms enrich their performance techniques and artistic expression.

To sum up, through the systematic training and enhancement of the three aspects of emotional expression, performance in the spatial dimension as well as cultural literacy and artistic cultivation, the basic qualities of International Standard Dancers have been comprehensively enhanced. These methods not only enhance the dancers' personal expression and comprehensive quality, but also play a positive role in promoting the overall development of the art of International Standard Dance.

## **DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION**

### **Discussion**

This study provides an in-depth discussion of methods to enhance the basic literacy of International Standard Dancers, particularly in three areas: emotional expression, performance in the spatial dimension, and cultural literacy and artistic cultivation. Compared with other related studies, the findings agree on several aspects, but there are also differences in some specific areas.

### **Consistency with the findings of other studies**

#### **1) Enhancement of dancers' comprehensive quality by role modeling**

This study points out that characterization plays an important role in enhancing the expressiveness and artistic expression of International Standard Dancers. This is consistent with the findings of Li Ming (2018). In his article "Characterization and Dancer's Quality Enhancement in Dance Performance", Li Ming pointed out that through a deeper understanding of a character's inherent emotions and background, dancers are able to show a more authentic expression of emotions in their performances, which in turn improves their comprehensive quality. This kind of characterization not only enhances the dancers' technical skills, but also improves their emotional expression and stage presence.

#### **2) Depth of emotional expression and performance**

This study emphasized the importance of emotional expression to dancers' performativity, especially through character experience and emotional memory to enhance the infectiousness of stage performance. Similarly, Wang Yu'an (2020) pointed out in "An Experimental Study on the Characterization and Performance Characteristics of the National Standard Dance Drama 'Cinderella'" that dancers must pass through in-depth character experience and emotional control in order to effectively convey the inner world of the character and to enhance the realism and resonance effect of the performance. Both studies agree that emotional expression is the core part of dancers' literacy, which directly affects the emotional interaction between dancers and audiences.

#### **3) The importance of spatial dimension in stage performance**

It was found that dancers' understanding and utilization of space on stage, especially in pas de deux, directly affects the fluency and visual effect of the performance. Luo Xinyao's (2020) study, "Research on Character Creation in National Standard Dance Theatre", similarly emphasized the sense of space and the three-dimensionality of stage performance. Through the precise utilization of stage space, dancers are able to enhance the layering of movements and make performances more vivid. Both confirmed the importance of spatial dimension training in enhancing dancers' expressiveness.

#### **4) Influence of cultural literacy on dancers' role modeling**

This study emphasizes that through cultural background learning and cross-border artistic exchanges, dancers' artistic cultivation and cultural awareness are significantly enhanced. Guo



Sharong (2022) also pointed out in “A Study of the Elements of Performance Dance Creation in International Standard Dance” that dancers are able to shape their roles more deeply through their understanding of different cultures, giving their performances more depth and cultural connotations. Both studies agree that cultural literacy is not only an important means for dancers to understand their roles, but also the key to improving the overall performance quality.

### **Differences from the results of other studies**

#### 1) The relationship between technique and artistic expression

Furthermore, regarding the relationship between technical training and artistic expression, this study found that the two are inseparable and that technique is the basis of artistic expression. However, Yang Xin (2021) holds a different view in her article “The Interaction between Technical Training and Artistic Expression”. She argues that technique and artistic expression are sometimes separate, and that over-pursuit of technique may weaken a dancer's artistic expression. Yang Xin's study points out that on the basis of technical proficiency, dancers should pay more attention to emotional expression and audience interaction, and avoid “technicalizing” their performances. This viewpoint is somewhat different from the comprehensive discussion of the relationship between technique and art in this study.

#### 2) Balance between technique and emotion

Although this study proposes that technical training and emotional expression need to be synchronized, Shang Yuetao (2024), in “Exploration of New Paths of Artistic Education and Teaching of National Standard Dance,” advocates that more attention should be paid to the enhancement of emotional and cultural cultivation rather than overemphasizing technical training. According to Shang Yuetao, excessive technical training may weaken dancers' emotional expression and make performances mechanized. Therefore, he advocates the enhancement of dancers' emotional depth through artistic training paths rather than relying solely on technical ability. This view differs from the strategy of balancing technique and emotion advocated in this study.

### **Conclusion**

This study has made important discoveries in three aspects: emotional expression, performance in the spatial dimension, and cultural literacy and artistic cultivation. These findings not only provide new methods and ideas for improving the literacy of International Standard Dancers, but also inject new vigour into the innovation and development of dance art. These methods and findings are expected to be widely applied in future dance training and performance, thus promoting the overall progress of the art of International Standard Dance. The following is a detailed summary of the research findings:

Firstly, research has shown that emotional expression is one of the core elements to improve the quality of dancers' performance. Through methods such as role experience and performance training, emotional memory and reproduction, dancers are able to convey emotions more naturally and authentically. This not only improves the infectiousness of the performance, but also enhances the emotional resonance of the audience. At the same time, through the control of delicate emotions and micro-expressions, as well as the combination with the rhythm of the music, the dancers' emotional expression is more precise and fluid, which significantly improves the overall performance effect.

Secondly, spatial expression is an important part of stage performance. Through spatial awareness training and three-dimensional choreography, dancers are able to make more effective use of the stage space and enhance the visual effect and spatial sense of the performance. It was found that the application of dynamic composition and spatial hierarchy not only increased the visual aesthetics of the dance, but also enhanced the audience's attention to the dance plot through visual guidance. The dancers' free movement and co-ordination in multi-dimensional space make the performance more three-dimensional and layered.

Finally, cultural literacy and artistic cultivation are important reflections of the comprehensive quality of dancers. Through cultural background learning and artistic appreciation and communication, dancers can better understand and interpret the connotation of dance works, and enhance the depth and artistic value of performance. It is found that deep cultural connotation not only enhances the performance quality of dancers, but also provides rich inspiration for artistic creation. Cross-cultural communication promotes the integration of multiple cultures and promotes the innovative and diversified development of the art of International Standard Dance.

The study proposes systematic and diversified comprehensive enhancement methods, including rigorous technical training, art appreciation and cultural learning, psychological training and teamwork exercises. These methods, through organic combination, form a systematic training system that comprehensively improves the overall quality of dancers. Individualised training strategies for dancers of different levels help dancers of all levels to develop in a balanced way and improve the overall performance level. Through the enhancement methods and strategies proposed in this study, International Standard Dancers have developed comprehensively in emotional expression, spatial performance and cultural and artistic cultivation. These findings not only provide a scientific basis and practical guidance for the career development of individual dancers, but also provide new methods and ideas for dance education and training. Future research and practice should further explore and verify the practical application effects of these methods, and continue to improve and innovate to promote the continued prosperity and progress of the art of International Standard Dance.

In summary, this study has achieved important results in improving the basic literacy of International Standard Dancers. Through systematic and diversified methods, the dancers were significantly improved in emotional expression, spatial performance and cultural and artistic cultivation. These results not only provide strong support for the development of individual dancers, but also inject new impetus for the innovation and progress of the art of International Standard Dance, which is of great theoretical and practical significance.

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**Data Availability Statement:** The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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