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CAREER TRANSITIONS OF STREET DANCE DANCERS: TRENDS, IMPACTS, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS – A BIBLIOMETRIC AND CONTENT ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The paper examines the development and global research landscape of career pathways and career transition studies related to street dance dancers, situated within the broader field of athletic career development, from 1985 to 2025. Emphasis is placed on influential contributors, dominant thematic patterns, and emerging research directions to clarify how this interdisciplinary area has evolved and where it is heading. Three core research questions guide the analysis: (1) How has research on career transition and post-performance development evolved over time, particularly in relation to street dance and comparable performance based sports? (2) What are the priority themes and the topical in this field of study? (3) What are the theoretical and practical implications of the findings and what can be achieved in the future? Using a mixed methods approach, this study integrates bibliometric analysis and qualitative content analysis to examine 426 scholarly publications indexed in major academic databases. The findings reveal remarkable growth in the number of research, particularly since 2014. Cite Space analysis shows the large contributors, among them Hogskolani Halmstad and the University of Stirling, with the United States, the United Kingdom and Sweden being the most active in number of publications. Thematic analysis indicates that current research converges around athletes' experiences of career transition, structural and psychological factors facilitating or constraining post-career adaptation, and the increasing emphasis on identity reconstruction, meaning-making, and professional role transformation, including dancer-to-coach pathways as an emerging theme. By synthesizing bibliometric patterns and thematic insights, this study contributes a conceptual framework that clarifies the positioning of street dance dancers within the broader discourse of athletic career transitions. The findings offer both theoretical contributions to sport and cultural studies and practical implications for athlete development programs, coach education, and policy design, while also outlining directions for future interdisciplinary research.

KEYWORDS: Street Dance Dancers, Athletic Career Transition, Nontraditional Sport, Identity Reconstruction, Bibliometric Analysis, Content Analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION

Terminology note: In this manuscript, “street dance dancers” refers to individuals who practice street dance as a performance-based activity and career (including competitive breaking). Because much of the career-transition literature is written in sport science, the umbrella term “athletes” is used only when referring to that broader literature and theories. “Coaches” is used only to describe one common post-performance pathway (dancer-to-coach), discussed as an emerging theme rather than the sole scope of this review.

As a paradigmatic example of non-traditional sports (NTS), street dance has proliferated globally, evolving from an expressive urban subculture into a codified athletic discipline. Street dance has step by step turned into a mainstream culture in China, owing to the fact that its popularity has gained support through national policy of fitness, and the steadily rising popularity of street dance programs in the mainstream media, leading to street dance becoming an accepted part of mainstream society and influencing a large number of people (Liu, 2010). Crucially, the inclusion of breaking as an official medal event at the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, legitimizing street dance not merely as an art form but as high performance sport. This institutionalization has triggered a rapid expansion of industry. Official statistics indicate that China now hosts over 5,000 registered institutions and 300,000 practitioners (Lin, 2020). Within the higher education sector, street dance has transitioned from a student-initiated extracurricular activity to a formalized campus art form.

Consequently, a critical shift in the labor market has emerged, university dancers are increasingly pivoting from performance roles to sustainable careers in teaching and training. This study focuses on this specific phenomenon the professional transition of university street dancers into certified coaches, viewing it as a representative case of career development within the emerging NTS sector (Ashton & Ashton, 2016)

This career transition in the field of dance involves more than the accumulation of technical skills; it also requires a fundamental redefinition of professional roles and the reconstruction of personal and professional identity (Fitzgerald, 2023). The professionalization of the coaches of street dancing, the development of specialized schooling institutions in such cities as Changsha, Guangzhou, and others, has contributed to using street dance as part of a more professionalized vocational system in recent years (Lin, 2020).

However, existing research on career transition has been predominantly situated within the context of traditional competitive sports, such as football and basketball, where athletes’ post-career pathways are often examined through institutionalized sport systems and oriented performance frameworks. By contrast, artistic and skill-based performers, including street dance dancers, remain largely underrepresented in this body of literature. As a result, systematic research on the career transition of street dancers in the Chinese context remains fragmented, with limited theoretical integration and an absence of a comprehensive understanding of emerging trends.

To fill this research gap, the proposed study takes a mixed-method endeavour that comprises both bibliometric research analysis and content-analysis. It analyses the potential literature of the street dance career transition through the CiteSpace software and the visualized analysis identifies the important research topics, the prominent authors, the knowledge flows as well as future directions and influences of the research area. Being a scientific visualization instrument, CiteSpace allows exploring co-occurring keywords, author collaboration networks, and what literature is frequently cited and hence attains data-driven results with regards to structural and developmental patterns of existing research (Weichen & Ping, 2020).

The paper acknowledges the transformation between street dance performers and coaches trying to further understand the processes of individual development towards the professionalization avenue of street dance. It focuses particularly on the distinctive vocational ecology that is made and formed by the support of China, the culture, and schooling system. This work constitutes a theoretical basis and analytical angle of future empirical research and policy formulation by offering the background of literature and content analysis of the current research literature, thus developing a more sustainable talent development system in the street dance industry (Oreck et al., 2000).

In this study, the term “street dance dancers” is used consistently to denote practitioners whose primary expertise is street dance performance (and, where relevant, competitive participation). When reviewing the broader literature, we use the term “athletes” to reflect how prior career-transition scholarship is commonly framed in sport science, even when the populations include performers and other non-traditional sports.

When the term “coaches” is used, it refers to one frequent post-performance career pathway (dancer-

to-coach) identified in the thematic analysis; it should not be interpreted as narrowing the bibliometric scope to coaching research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. *The Development of Street Dance Culture in China*

Street dance was developed in the streets of the United States in 1970s and it slowly penetrated China as a result of global culture. The situation in China since the 21st century has seen a shift in the role of street dance as an underground subculture to a popular culture.

As a result of the encouragement by the government towards the sports and cultural industries and the mainstream media shows like the Street Dance of China, mainstream dance has been swiftly gaining popularity among the youngsters (Lin, 2020).

During more recent years, street dance has become part of the National Fitness Plan (2021-2025) and reform of physical-education among young people, indicating its transition as not a recreational form of entertainment but an educational one and also as a way of professional growth (Ng & Holman, 2023).

2.2. *Research Status of Career Transitions among Street Dance Dancers*

The change in the profession of a street dancer to a coach is not only the shift of employment, but also the complete rebuilding of the professional identity and the transition of the social evaluation. Other theorists who take a professional socialization view hold that dancers have several struggles during this process such as renewal of skills, acquisition of teaching skills, as well as leadership skills (Snell and Swanson, 2000).

The other researches point to the role of support systems like street dance associations, training institutes, and the policy guidance in advancing a career (Chua, 2015). However, there is contradictory and incomplete systemic investigation of career transition of street dance in China. On the one hand, the available literature is mostly case based studies or based on qualitative interviews, as they do not display a macro-level perspective of the research landscape of the field. Conversely, little has been done regarding the interaction of dancers with local cultural settings, teaching systems and vocational policies on their transition. Such a gap emphasizes the usefulness of bibliometric analysis to be used as a new point of entry to investigate knowledge

organization and development patterns in this field.

3. METHODS

3.1. *Data Sources and Search Strategy*

The information pertaining to this paper was collected in two of the most reputable and popular databases in the field of scientific research the Web of Science Core Collection (WoSCC) and the Scopus Core Collection (Zhu & Liu, 2020). The comprehensive search in both databases was performed on April 20th, 2025, with the goal of locating the literature on the given topic related to career transition of dance athletes. The following search terms were employed: TS = (dance OR dance instructor OR hip-hop OR athlete) AND TS = (career transition OR identity transition OR career development OR career identity) and the publication years were restricted to 1985-2025, as well as the language was to be English.

The history of street dance in China takes its shape in the mid-1980s when the American street dance film *Breakin'* reached the Chinese people and the formal introduction of street dance in China occurred. Street dance has been a dominating form of self-expression and creativity which has become very popular among the youth in the world since the 1990s, and this is because of its style and rhythm. Amateur street dancers in China have issues of their own when it comes to the move to a coaching profession, which are defined by the peculiarities of the cultural, social, and sports development organization found in the country (Chen, 2023). Thus, the year 1985 was used as a reference point, to broadly study the transition and progression of the career of street dancers into street dance coach. In contrast to other cultural backgrounds, the sports system is highly shaped by certain cultural and societal realities in China, such as high level of collectivism and hierarchical societies. The effects of these cultural norms are on the intake of athletes into the leadership position like coaching.

3.2. *Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria*

To ensure the rigor and relevance of the selected literature, the following inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied

Inclusion criteria were as follows

1. The source of the literature should be either WoSCC or Scopus databases.
2. The dates of publication were stipulated as between January 1, 1985, and April 20, 2025, to include the changes that occurred concerning the career transition of dancer-athletes. In the first retrieve 658 articles were found.

3. The publications that were selected were only those that were written in English to narrow down to popular international academic literature, eliminating 48 non-English publications.
4. The type of document was limited to peer-reviewed articles; thus, 184 reviews, conference proceedings, editorials and other non-qualifying publications were not included. Once these criteria were used, 426 articles were left.
5. The content should directly cover issues of career transitions of dancers, transitions of athletes or identity change.

Exclusion criteria included

1. Non-scholarly or non-peer-reviewed publications, such as conference abstracts, editorials, commentaries, and book chapters. Although book chapters were excluded, highly cited academic books and position papers relevant to career transitions were retained for contextual and theoretical reference and were not included in journal-level bibliometric indicators.
2. Studies focusing solely on dance pedagogy without a clear link to career transitions.

3.3. Screening and Quality Control

A hand-screening procedure was adopted where

every publication was evaluated by three investigators according to the given inclusion and exclusion criteria. Screening at the title and the abstract level was done, in cases the relevance was not clear, a review of the full text was done to confirm the relevance to the research topic. EndNote was employed to find duplicate records and remove them so as to avoid duplication in the databases.

There were no conflicts in the areas of inclusion and these areas were resolved by the discussions and consensus of the researchers. This was a multi-step process, which was necessary to guarantee the objectivity and reliability of the screening process. Overall, 426 articles were used to identify articles that would be referred to in-depth analysis. The review process was consistent due to the normal discussions and following of well-defined selection criteria.

3.4. Analysis Tools and Methods

After creating a dataset, the suitable tools to be used in bibliometric and content analysis were picked. Packages in R and Python (e.g., bibliometric, Network) are flexible to be used to standard citation analysis and, however, need significant tailoring to run sophisticated scholarly network analysis, like burst detection and temporal clustering.

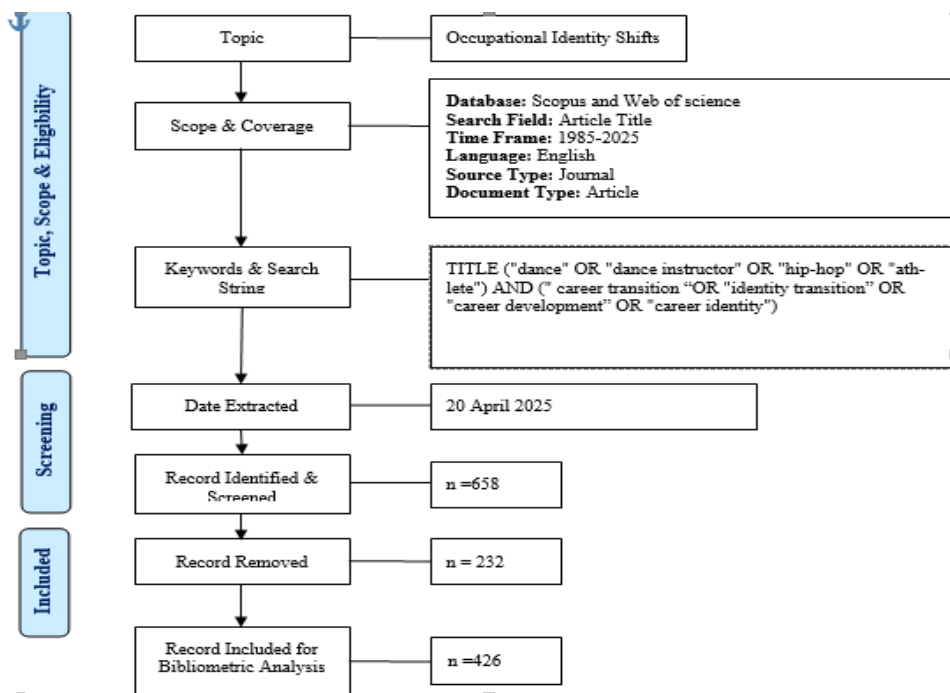


Figure 1: Flow Diagram of the Search Strategy. Source: Zakaria et al. (2020).

Cite Space has also been selected because of its specific features, and it is specialized to handle

academic citations. Cite Space has built-in citation burst detector, co-citation clustering and trend evolution visualizer functionality. The latter attributes render Cite Space especially appropriate to address the goals of this study, i.e., finding the new trends and key nodes in the evolution of street dance dancers' career transitions. As shown in Figure 1, the first stage involved data collection from WoSCC and Scopus databases. Using advanced search strategies, relevant literature on career transition among Chinese street dance dancers between 1985 and 2025 was retrieved. The search was further refined to focus primarily on articles published in English, resulting in a total of 426 identified publications.

4. RESULTS

This section presents a detailed review of scientific publications addressing the career

transitions of street dance dancers. It examines leading countries and regions, institutions, journals, and authors that have contributed to the development of this research area. In addition, the study employs citation and co-citation analyses to identify influential scholars, high-impact journals, and patterns of scholarly collaboration. This systematic examination enables the identification of key contributors and seminal publications while also revealing the structure of academic collaboration within the field. The findings offer an overview of the current state of research on career transitions among street dance dancers and provide valuable reference points for researchers and practitioners seeking to engage with or contribute to this emerging area of study.

4.1. Trends in Publications and Citations.

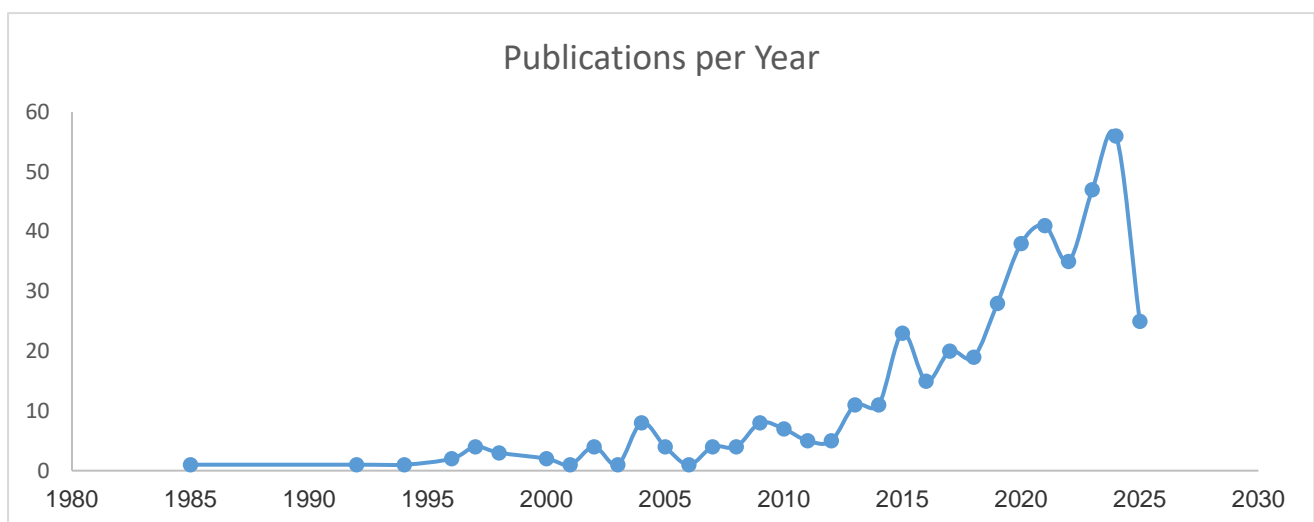


Figure 2: Publication and Citation Trends. Based on WOS and Scopus Data, This Figure Shows the Annual Number of Publications Related to the Career Transitions of Street Dance Dancers.
 Note: The Data Covers the Period From January 1, 1985 to December 6, 2025.

Table 1: Top 10 Institutions in Career-Transition Research (Street Dance Dancers).

Ranking	Article count	Centrality	Year	Institution
1	23	0.06	2004	Högskolann-i Halmstad
2	13	0.03	2012	University of Stirling
3	11	0.04	2010	Laurentian University
4	10	0	2005	Loughborough University
5	8	0.03	2015	Liverpool John Moores University
6	7	0.02	2014	Aarhus University
7	6	0	2010	University of Southern Denmark
8	6	0	2016	National Taiwan Normal University
9	6	0	2019	Abertay University
10	5	0	2013	University of California

Table 1 provides the top ten organizations in research studies concerning the transition of street dance athletes.

The University of Stirling and Laurentian

University have come after Hogskolani Halmstad (HU) in the rank of 13 and 11 publications each. Furthermore, the ratio of publications in University of Stirling and Laurentian University is quite even,

and it implies equal contribution to the sphere of research of street dance dancer career transition.

4.2. Time-zone Map of Institutions

The map demonstrates the time shifts of time

indices related to the institutions whose publications have been issued about the career changes of street dancers on the basis of the results of WoSCC (1995-2025). The different institutions are represented by the separate nodes.

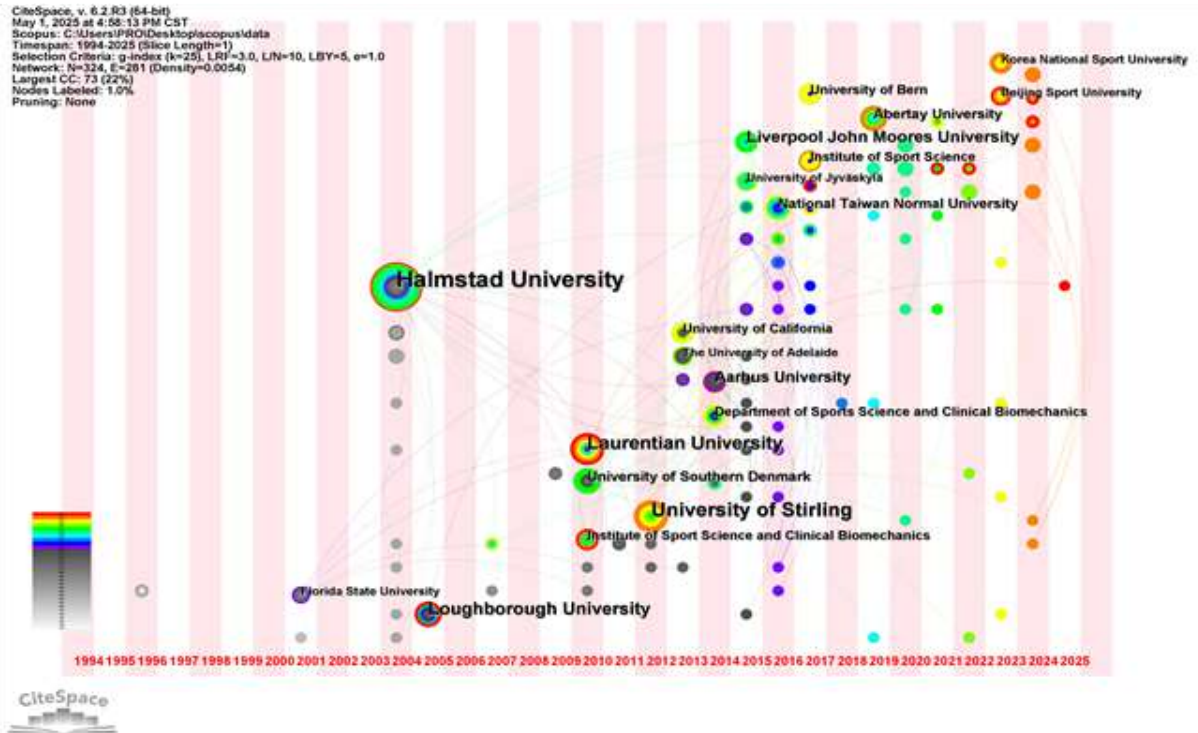


Figure 3: Time-Zone Map of Institutions.

Figure 3 shows the concentration of institutions that have published in this topic in terms of time zones. Table 1 and Figure 3 demonstrate that over the past eleven years, but since 2004, there has been a sharp rise in articles to do with career transition of street dance dancers, and institutions such as Hogskolani Halmstad and the University of Stirling have mainly contributed to the research outputs in this field since that time. There is similarly a steady increase in institutional intervention on this area of

research beginning with 2004 as Figure 3 indicates, a situation that can be attributed to the extensive international awareness to the problem of athlete career development, cultural diversity, and social inclusion. This has led to the research on the career transition of street dance dancers taking centre stage in universities across the world.

As the Hogskolani Halmstad and University of Stirling present such strong performance.

Table 2: Top 10 Countries/Regions in Career-Transition Research (Street Dance Dancers).

Ranking	Frequency	Centrality	Year	Country/Region
1	78	0.38	1996	UNITED STATES
2	77	0.43	2000	UNITED KINGDOM
3	36	0.16	2004	SWEDEN
4	32	0.13	2002	CANADA
5	29	0.07	1997	AUSTRALIA
6	26	0.04	2015	CHINA
7	21	0.04	2010	DENMARK
8	20	0.11	2004	SPAIN
9	17	0.09	2004	GERMANY
10	14	0.05	2015	FINLAND

Table 2 contains the top ten countries.

The USA, UK, and Sweden lead in this sphere as

it is demonstrated in Table 2. Specifically, the UA that has 43% of publications in the sphere proves its leading role in the sector. (Although its publication frequency is lower than that of the USA, the UK shows higher centrality and is more closely connected to the core of this research field.) Outputs of research by a developed nation such as Canada and Australia are also visible, but the contributions of research by developing nations such as China is continuously on the rise, which may mean that the

world grows in research on the transition of street dance dancers.

4.3. Collaboration Network between Countries/Regions

The visualization presents international collaboration in publications related to the career transitions of street dance dancers. Each node represents a country or region.



Figure 4: Collaboration Network between Countries/Regions.

The network of international collaboration within the research field of career transition of street dance dancers is shown in Figure 4 using CiteSpace. It consists of 42 nodes (countries or regions) and 59 collaborative links with the network density of 0.0685.

This framework reasserts the rising importance of international collaboration within the field of developing the studying of non-traditional career trajectories in sports today.

Chen et al. (2010) indicated that the nodes, which have a large centrality degree of betweenness (between 0 to 1) are vital in enhancing the connections and promoting cooperation amongst these networks. The nodes with more intermediary influence are highlighted by circles of purple color in the visualization.

In this map, the United Kingdom (0.43) United States (0.38), Sweden (0.16), Canada (0.13), Spain

(0.11) have quite significant levels of betweenness centrality and can thus be considered as hubs in the world research frontier.

Such countries not only show high levels of contributions in terms of the volume of publications but are also key linkagers on research activities in various locations. They are prominent because of strategic investments in the development of career of athletes, inclusive education, and academic inclusion of urban and street cultural practices (Hylton, 2013).

These cross-border partnerships have enhanced the knowledge base on this topic of study through drawing the comparison of cross-cultures and the interdisciplinary discourse on the career trajectories of street dance performers.

Such interdisciplinary aspects help in creating a more holistic view of identity reconstruction, socio-professional mobility and cultural validation in the larger context of young people and performance

cultures around the world.

Table 3: Top 10 Journals and Books with the Most Citations.

Note: JCI refers to the Journal Citation Indicator (2023); and CQ refers to the Category Quartile. This table includes both journal articles and influential non-journal sources (e.g., books and position papers) identified based on citation frequency. Non-journal sources were used for contextual interpretation only.

Ranking	Total number of citations	Year	Journal/Book	JCI	CQ
1	109	2013	Psychology of Sport and Exercise	1.07	Q1
2	108	1997	Journal of Applied Sport Psychology	0.95	Q1
3	93	1997	The Sport Psychologist	0.54	Q3
4	80	2013	ISSP Position Stand	0.68	Q1
5	68	2004	Career Transitions in Sport	0.88	Q1
6	58	2012	International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology	0.80	Q2
7	54	1996	Athletic Identity	1.07	Q1
8	46	2017	International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology	0.87	Q1
9	43	2010	Handbook Of Sport Psychology	0.38	Q1
10	40	2010	Career Development and Transitions of Athletes	0.80	Q1

Table 3 indicate the ten most common cited journals in dancer career transition. Journal co-citation analysis reveal the connections between the scholarly journals. Being the primary sources of publishing the scholarly achievement, journals mirror the main topics and progress lines in the given sphere of research. Through co-citation patterns, it is possible to develop a clearer academic framework for understanding how street dance practitioners navigate career transitions.

The demand for these journals is also high due to the interdisciplinary nature of research on street dance dancers’ career transitions. As an example, such sources as Psychology of Sport and Exercise, Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, The Sport Psychologist, and ISSP Position Stand are the most often mentioned ones. Their popularity implies that the professionalization of the street dance

performers has attracted intellectual interest among many disciplines such as education, sport science, youth development, and sociology.

This trend highlights the growing relevance of research on career transitions not only within dance and physical education related disciplines but also across broader social and cultural contexts. As noted by (Reyes-Gonzalez et al., 2016), co-authorship analysis constitutes a key element of bibliometric research, as it enables the assessment of collaborative intensity within a field and serves as an indicator of its level of scholarly development.

4.4. Collaboration Network between Authors

The visualization displays author collaboration in research on the career transitions of street dance dancers. Each node represents an individual author.

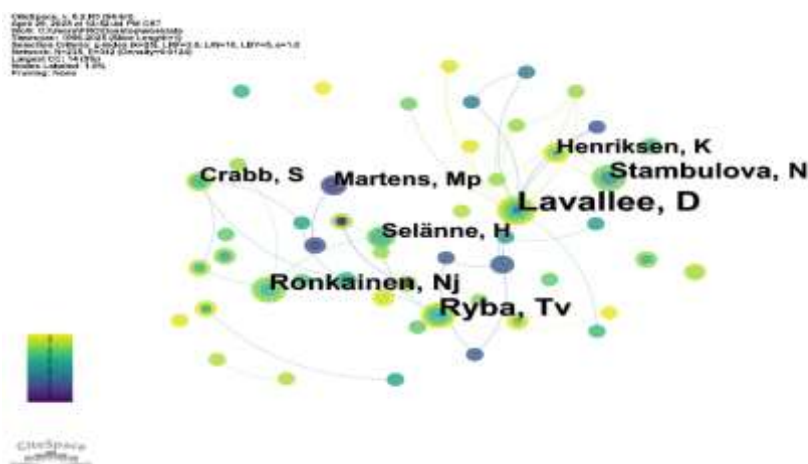


Figure 5: Collaboration Network between Authors. The Visualization Displays Author Collaboration in Research on the Career Transitions of Street Dance Dancers. Each Node Represents an Individual Author.

Figure 5 shows the network based on co-authorship within the academic discipline of career

transition of street dance dancers. The size of each element in the network is the number of times that an author appeared in any relevant publication. The network contains 235 author nodes and 342 collaborative links with a density of 0.0124 which shows that there is not much cohesion among researchers generally. Even though a few small and collaborative teams have been created, they are not well interrelated and no profound team-wise cooperation was realized.

Based on the current network design, scholars such as Lavallee, D., Ryba, T. V., Stambulova, N., and Ronkainen, N. J. occupy central positions, functioning as intermediaries among multiple research teams. Their work facilitates the transmission and integration of knowledge across subfields, including street dance career development, sport psychology, and identity transformation, thereby contributing to the overall cohesion and integration of the research network.

It is noteworthy that the largest connected

component of the network comprises 14 authors, representing approximately 5% of the total nodes. This finding suggests that most researchers operate within relatively closed groups and that large-scale, systematic collaborative structures have yet to emerge. Overall, research on the career transitions of street dance performers remains at a developmental stage, characterized by small research teams, low network density, and weak collaborative ties. A limited number of prominent scholars play a pivotal role in connecting research groups through cross-team collaboration, highlighting both the potential and the challenges of fostering interdisciplinary integration and sustained team building within this emerging field.

4.5. Literature Co-citation Network

This map was created using CiteSpace. Each node represents a publication, and the node size corresponds to its number of co-citations.

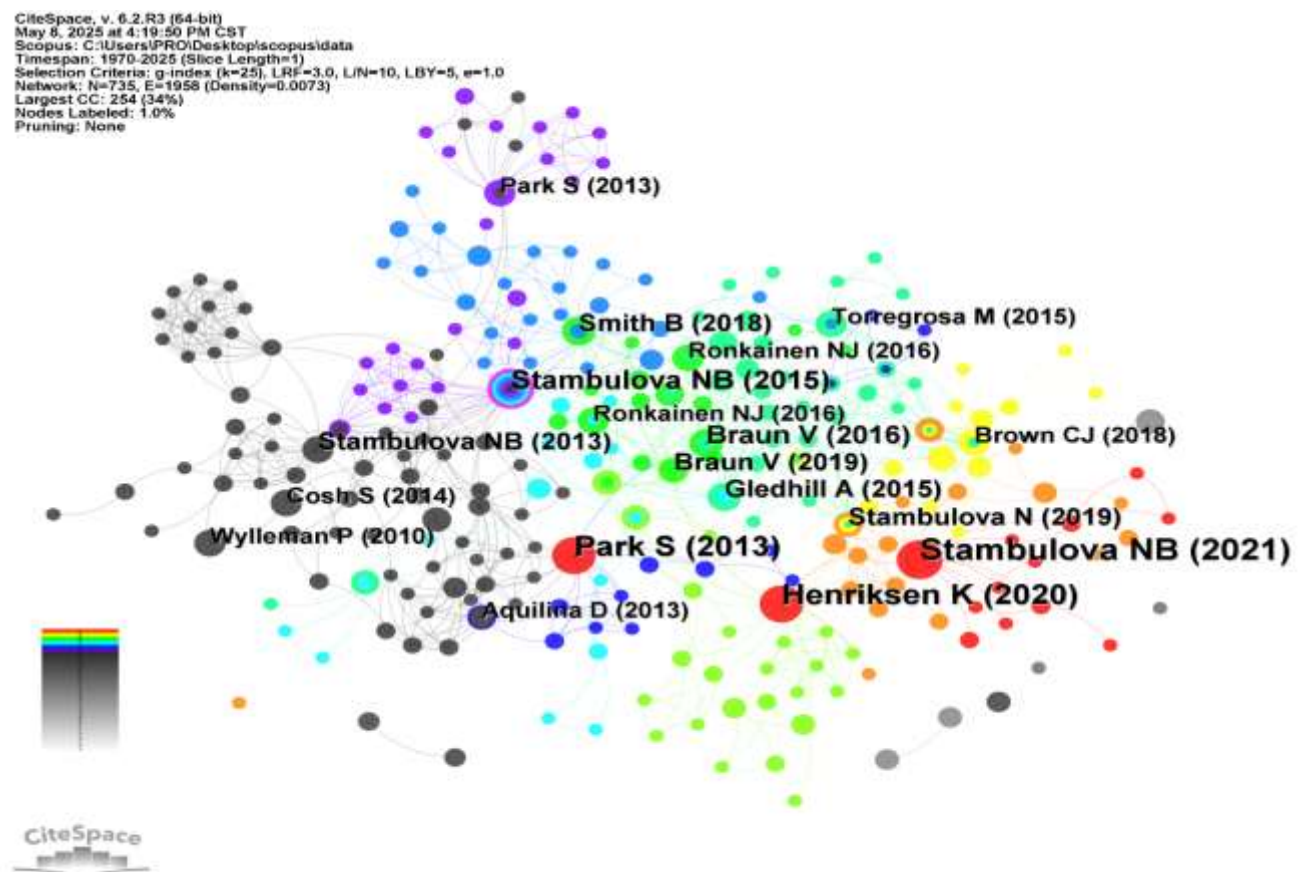


Figure 1: Literature Co-Citation Network. Each Node Represents a Publication, and the Node Size Corresponds to Its Number of Co-Citations.

Table 4: Top 5 Most Cited References (Frequency ≥ 10).

Source Title	Total Publications	Percentage (%)
Journal of Information Systems	19	5.14
International Journal of Accounting Information Systems	17	4.59
New Dimensions of Business Reporting and XBRL	11	2.97
International Journal of Digital Accounting Research	10	2.70
Ceur Workshop Proceedings	9	2.43
International Journal of Disclosure and Governance	8	2.16
Journal of Emerging Technologies in Accounting	8	2.16
Lecture Notes in Computer Science Including Subseries Lecture Notes in Artificial Intelligence and Lecture Notes in Bioinformatics	8	2.16
International Journal of Accounting and Information Management	7	1.89
Lecture Notes in Information Systems and Organization	7	1.89
Issues in Accounting Education	6	1.62
Accounting Horizons	5	1.35
Decision Support Systems	5	1.35
International Journal of E Business Research	5	1.35

4.6. Journal Co-citation Network

This map was generated using CiteSpace. Nodes

represent journals, and their size reflects their citation impact.

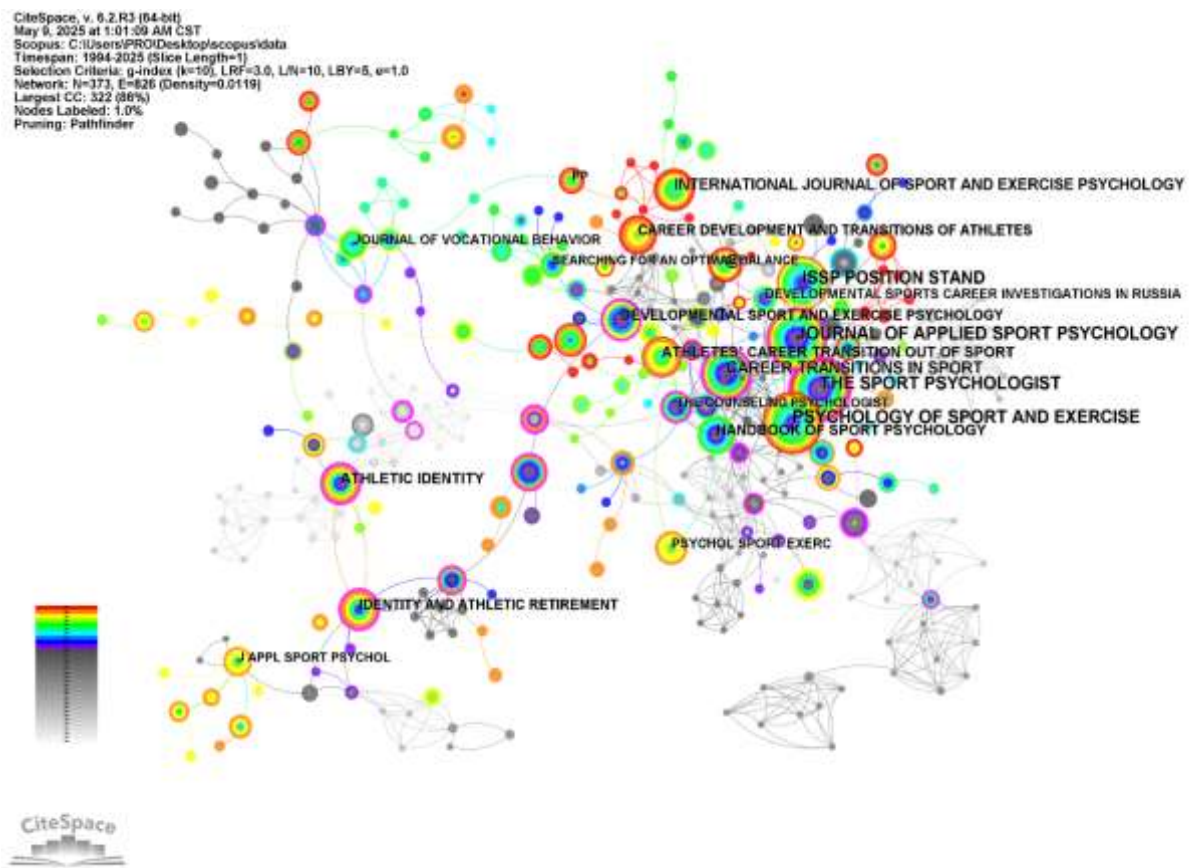


Figure 7: Journal Co-Citation Network. Nodes Represent Journals, and Their Size Reflects Their Citation Impact.

Figure 7 presents the co-citation network of journals. The most frequently cited journals include Psychology of Sport and Exercise, Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, and The Sport Psychologist. These journals hold significant influence in the field of research, are widely cited, and some are considered

high-impact journal.

4.7. Author Co-citation Network

The co-citation network shows high-impact authors in street dance dancers' career transition research, with node size representing citation

frequency.

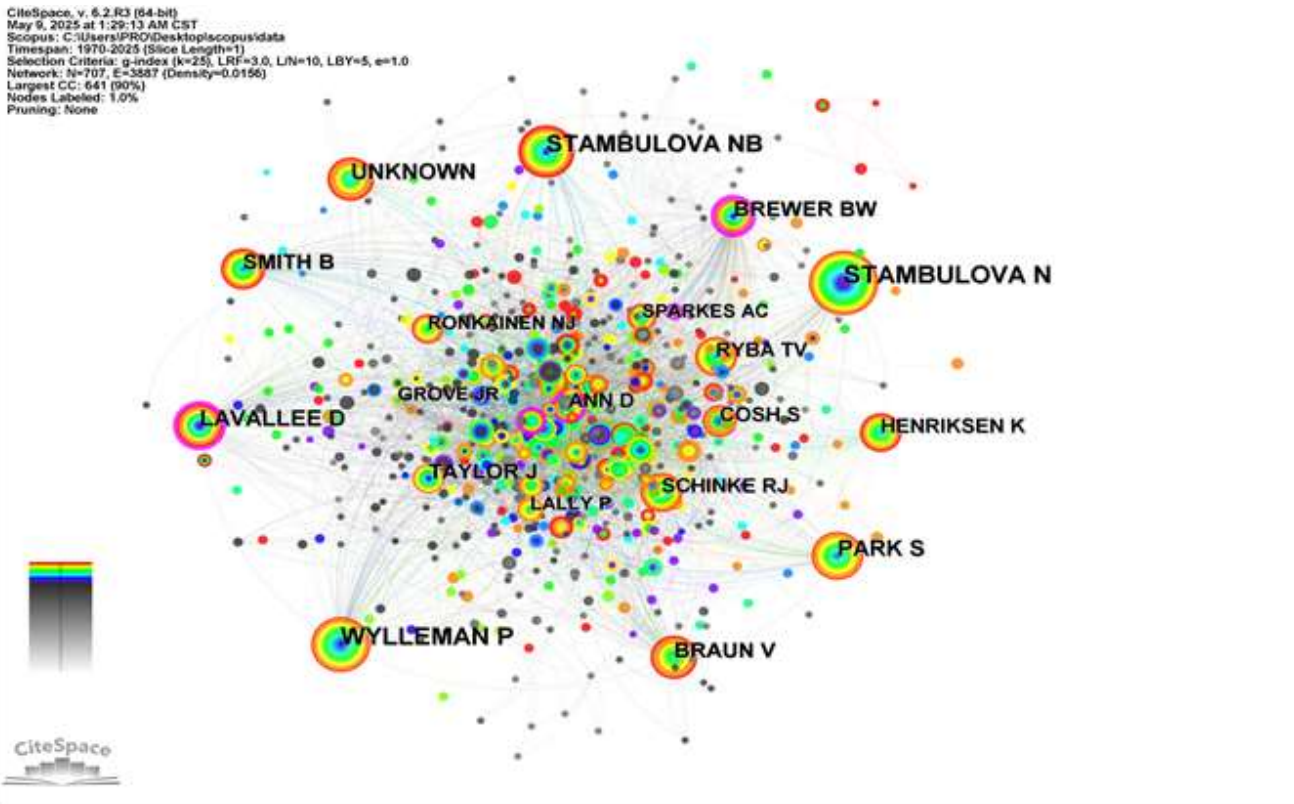


Figure 8: Author Co-Citation Network. The Co-Citation Network Shows High-Impact Authors in Street Dance Dancers' Career Transition Research, With Node Size Representing Citation Frequency and Highlighting Influential Contributors.

Figure 8 presents the co-citation network of high-impact authors, with node size representing citation frequency. Wylleman, P., Stambulova, N., and Stambulova, N. B. emerge as the most influential authors within the network. Their high citation rates reflect their scholarly authority and substantial impact on research concerning athletic career transitions.

Beyond the identification of highly influential publications, bibliometric analysis enables a systematic examination of the theoretical

contributions of prominent scholars in the study of athletic career development and transition. Synthesizing the conceptual frameworks advanced by these authors provides a foundation for constructing a theoretically informed model of career transition among street dance dancers. As shown in Table 5, the 10 most frequently cited authors represent the core intellectual contributors shaping the development and direction of research on career transitions within this emerging field.

Table 5: Top 10 Cited Authors with Higher Citation Frequency.

Rankin	Frequency	Centrality	Year	Cited author
1	147	0.06	2004	WYLLEMAN P
2	131	0.08	2010	STAMBULOVA N
3	97	0.04	2004	STAMBULOVA NB
4	90	0.04	2005	UNKNOWN
5	88	0.14	1996	LAVALLEE D
6	86	0.04	2014	PARK S
7	65	0.05	2013	BRAUN V
8	62	0.03	1997	TAYLOR J
9	61	0.08	2015	SMITH B
10	61	0.26	1996	BREWER BW

Two of the three most frequently cited scholars, Wylleman, P. and Stambulova, N., are widely

recognized for establishing foundational perspectives on athletic career development, namely the holistic athletic career model and a holistic view of athletic career trajectories, respectively, as shown in Table 5. Ranked third, Stambulova, N. B. also occupies a prominent position, with substantial contributions spanning applied psychology, sport psychology, athlete career development, and social psychology. Although some of her work addresses domains such as mental health, social sciences, and holistic education, these theoretical perspectives have proven particularly valuable for examining identity transitions from street dance performance to coaching roles. The high frequency of citations attributed to Wylleman, P., Stambulova, N., and Stambulova, N. B. underscores their academic authority and broad influence within the field of athlete career transition research.

With regard to thematic hotspot analysis, this approach is essential for identifying and interpreting

the core research concerns related to street dance performers transitioning into coaching and other professional roles. Such analysis highlights prevailing academic interests and emerging directions within the field. High-frequency keywords in the literature serve as indicators of central research themes, while citation frequency reflects the degree of theoretical consolidation and practical relevance of existing studies. As argued by Chen et al. (2012), keyword analysis facilitates the identification of current research hotspots and future trajectories, thereby deepening understanding of career development in street dance contexts. Accordingly, keyword analysis not only clarifies the underlying theoretical orientation of the field but also provides insight into key variables and evolving patterns in the career transitions of street dance performers.

4.8. Keyword Co-occurrence Network.

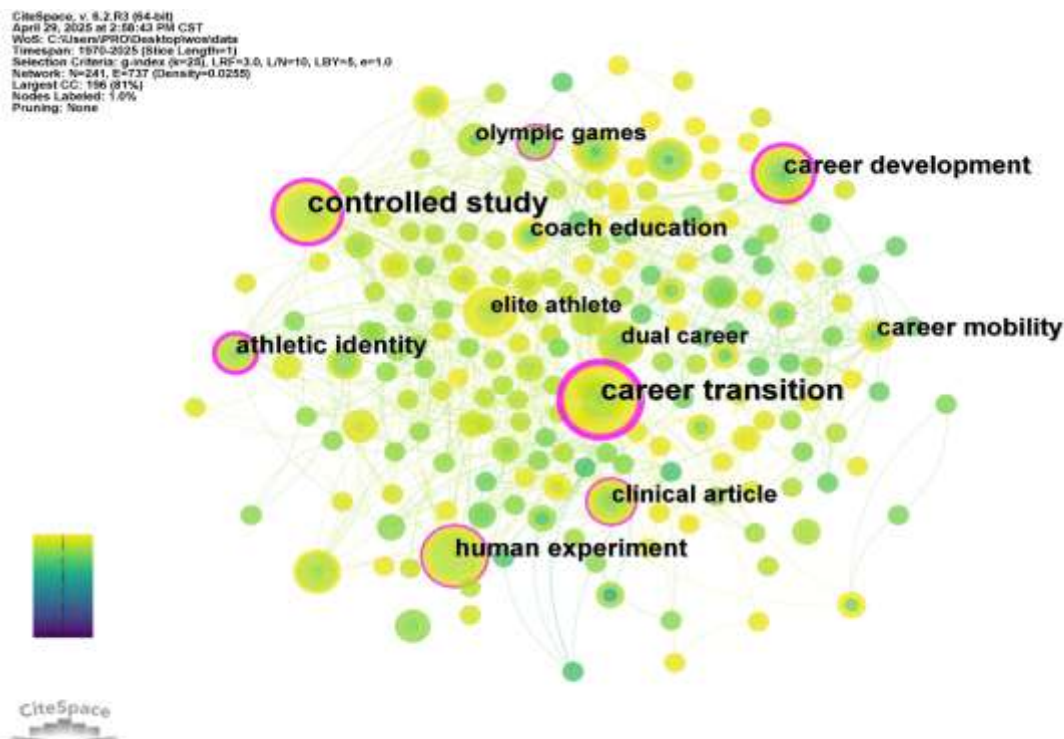


Figure 9: Keyword Co-Occurrence Network. Each Node Represents a Keyword, and Its Size Reflects the Frequency of Occurrence.

Figure 9 illustrates the keyword co-occurrence network related to career transitions among street dance dancers, generated using CiteSpace. The analysis identified 241 keywords based on the following parameters: a time slice of one year; selection criteria set to g -index = 25 with LRF = 3.0, L/N = 10, LBY = 5, and e = 1.0; and Pathfinder as the

pruning method. The resulting network consists of 241 nodes and 737 links, yielding a density of 0.0255, which reflects a moderate level of interconnectedness among key terms and allows for the exploration of intermediate-level thematic relationships.

Overall, the network demonstrates a relatively high degree of cohesion, suggesting that this research

area is gradually developing a more consistent and integrated theoretical framework. Nodes highlighted with purple rims indicate high betweenness centrality, signifying keywords that function as critical bridges between different thematic clusters. High-frequency terms such as career transition, controlled study, and career development dominate the network, reflecting sustained scholarly attention to identity transformation, career planning, and structured transition processes among street dance dancers. In addition, keywords including athlete identity, human experiment, clinical article, elite athlete, and dual career point to a growing emphasis on the psychological, educational, and social dimensions of career transition. These terms underscore persistent challenges faced by performers during career change, such as identity disruption, self-reconstruction, and strategies for coping with institutional and cultural demands.

By contrast, lower-frequency keywords such as coach education, career mobility, and Olympic Games suggest emerging areas for future research. These topics indicate potential directions for further investigation, including the role of structured coaching education in facilitating successful transitions and patterns of career mobility across

different competitive levels.

An examination of keyword frequency and co-occurrence provides valuable insight into evolving research priorities within the field. Recent trends indicate a shift from an exclusive focus on individual experiences toward broader analyses of institutional contexts and multilevel support systems. This transition reflects an increasing interest in interdisciplinary and cross-cultural perspectives on athlete career development. Keyword clustering analysis further reveals thematic concentrations and conceptual structures within the literature. Cluster labels, derived from noun phrases in article titles, abstracts, and keywords, represent dominant research streams when silhouette values exceed 0.5, offering a clear overview of major knowledge domains.

In summary, keyword co-occurrence analysis reveals that research on career transitions among street dance athletes is both thematically diverse and increasingly theoretically sophisticated. The field continues to deepen through interdisciplinary integration, while also highlighting significant opportunities for applied research in education, psychological adaptation, and policy-level support interventions.

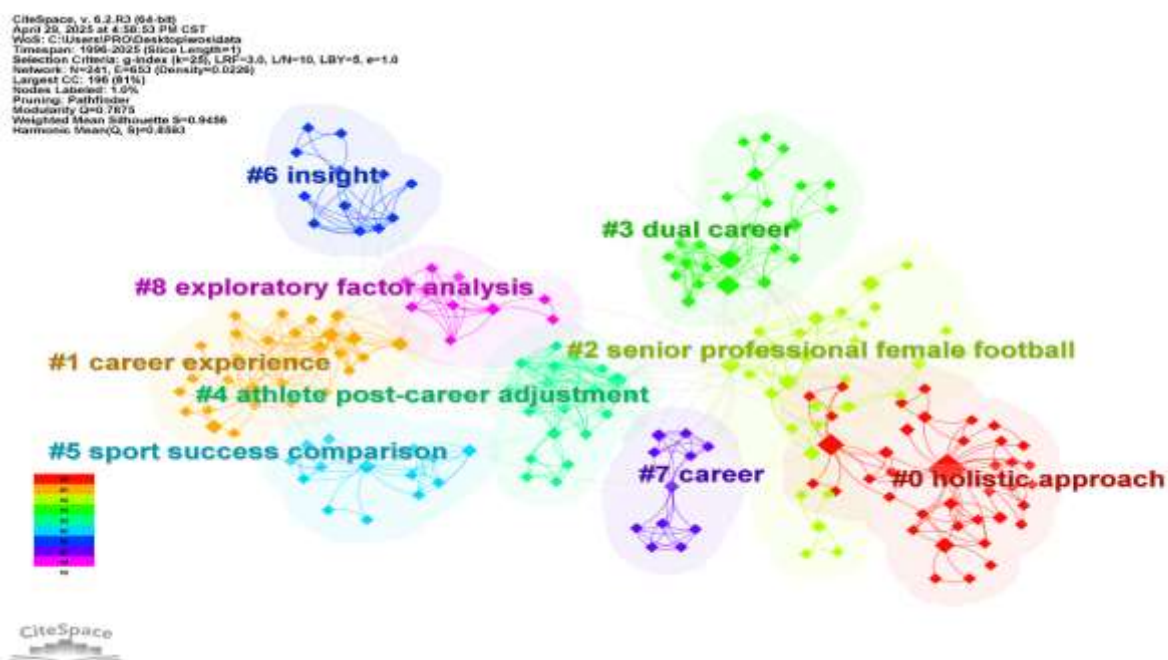


Figure 10. Keyword Clustering Map. Nine Keyword Clusters in the Field of Career Transitions of Street Dance Dancers Were Generated Using CiteSpace, With Each Cluster Represented in a Different Color.

Figure 10 presents nine keyword clusters identified within research on career transitions among street dance dancers. These clusters include holistic approach, career experience, senior

professional female football, dual career, athlete post-career adjustment, sport success comparison, insight, career, and exploratory factor analysis. Cluster labels range from 0 to 8, with lower numbers

representation of the evolution of the knowledge structure and shifting research priorities within the field. Such analysis enables the identification of changes in academic focus, dominant trends, and the overall developmental trajectory of core research themes.

The spatial and temporal distribution of keywords is illustrated in Figure 11, while Figure 12 presents the chronological evolution of keyword

usage. When considered together, these visualizations reveal clear patterns of thematic continuity and transformation. The findings suggest that research on career transitions among street dance dancers has progressed through distinct developmental phases. Early studies primarily concentrated on foundational issues such as career transition and athlete development, with a strong emphasis on individual career progression.

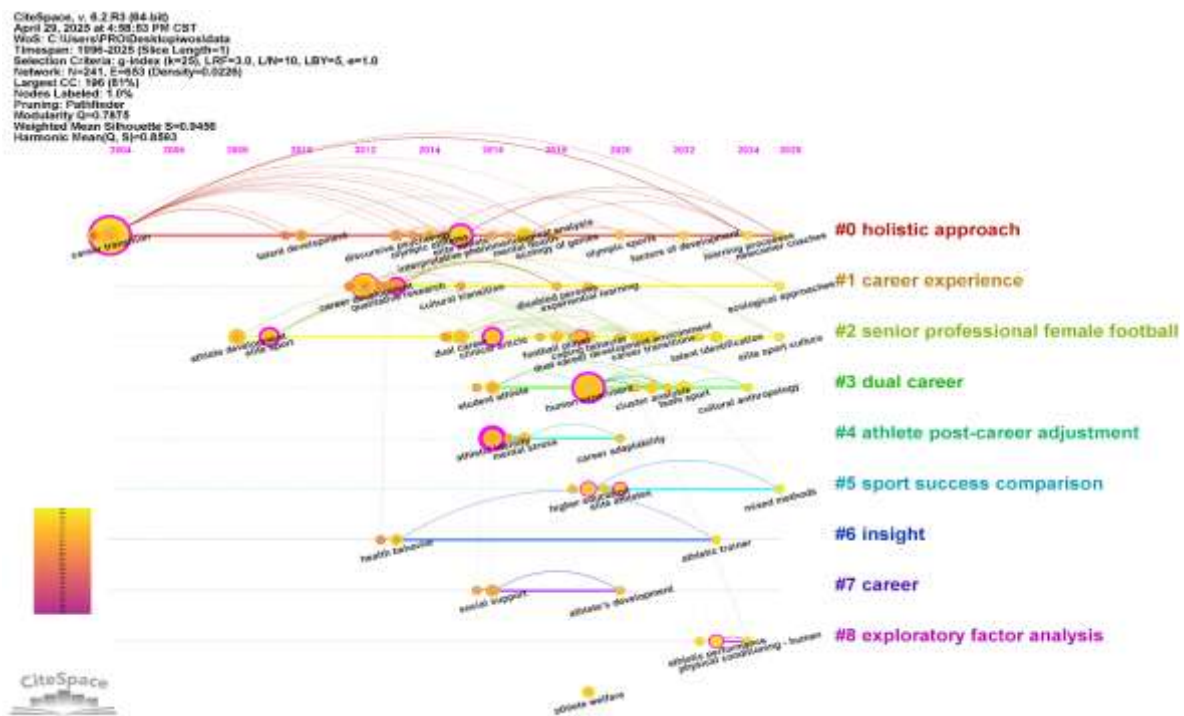


Figure 12: Timeline Visualization Map of Keywords. This Map Was Generated Using CiteSpace. It Highlights the Temporal Dynamics and Evolving Significance of Keywords in Research on the Career Transitions of Street Dance Dancers.

Over time, scholarly attention expanded to include themes such as career development, elite athlete status, and dual career pathways, alongside a growing interest in identity transformation, educational support, and career planning. More recent research has increasingly addressed applied concerns, including mental health, post-career adaptation, and team-based support mechanisms. This shift reflects heightened responsiveness to real-world challenges and a broader trend toward interdisciplinary integration.

Figure 11 further demonstrates a marked increase in the volume of career transition-related keywords between 2004 and 2014, particularly in areas such as career development and dual identity. Since 2015, the emergence of new keywords indicates a phase of steady expansion, with several themes showing potential to become central directions for future

research. Over-all, these findings highlight the progressive maturation of the field and its movement toward more complex, applied, and integrative research perspectives.

Citation burst analysis captures periods of sharp increases in the use of specific keywords, serving as important indicators of emerging research directions. Figure 13 displays the 18 strongest keyword citation bursts, with red segments representing the duration of each burst. Among these, transition emerges as the earliest burst keyword related to career change and demonstrates a sustained influence over an extended period (see Figure 13). Additional keywords such as coping, elite athlete, and career transition also exhibit notable bursts, reflecting continued scholarly attention to adaptive processes in athletic careers.

By contrast, the keyword well-being shows a prolonged and ongoing burst, indicating a sustained

research focus on the role of external support systems in facilitating successful career transitions among street dance dancers. Notably, since 2015, the term

identity has demonstrated a strong citation burst (burst strength = 5.22), marking it as a prominent and rapidly emerging research hotspot.

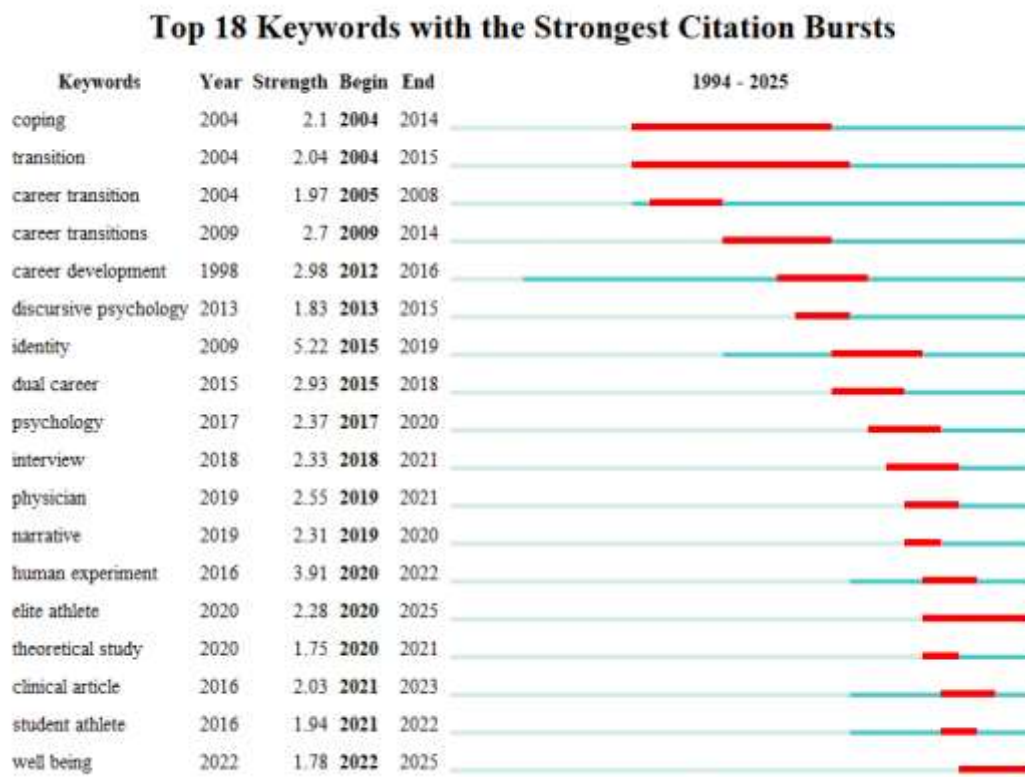


Figure 13: Citation Bursts Map. Top 18 Keywords With the Strongest Citation Bursts, Highlighting Periods of Significant Citation Increases.

This trend underscores increasing scholarly attention to role change, identity reconstruction, and psychological adjustment during career transitions. The evolution of burst keywords further suggests a gradual shift in research focus from competitive performance toward educational and pedagogical contexts. As digital technologies and new media continue to shape learning environments, street dance practitioners transitioning into coaching roles are increasingly required to develop technological competencies and innovative pedagogical approaches. The progression of burst keywords from elite athlete to coach reflects this narrowing and redirection of research interest toward education, training, and professional development.

Moreover, street dance pedagogy has remained a central theme, with particular emphasis on learning strategies and student development. The continual emergence of new burst keywords indicates ongoing thematic diversification and conceptual renewal within the field. Overall, these patterns demonstrate that research on career transitions in street dance remains dynamic and responsive, offering sustained

opportunities for theoretical advancement and the exploration of new research questions.

5. DISCUSSION

This paper has reviewed 426 articles on career transition of street dance dancers between the years 1985 and 2025 through bibliometric analysis and content analysis. In this study, the results reveal the different phases of development in this area of research and give important implications of the most important contributions, themes and future directions in research on career transition in street dance.

Regarding Question 1, How has research on career transition and post athletic development evolved over time, particularly in relation to street dance and comparable performance based sports? The development of research in this field can be divided into three stages (Stambulova, 1994), slow development (1985- 2009), steady development (2010-2015) and rapid growth (2016- 2025). Throughout the slow development era, the total amount of research output was very low with the

majority of the early research findings being reported in books, industrial reports, and other lesser publications as opposed to publication in formal academic journals. Research has started to rise starting in 2008 when the industry of street dances and the competitions systems that existed in China starting to develop, with programs like Street Dance of China (TICSD) and Hot-Blood Dance Crew (HBDC) becoming popular. The new career lines began to be explored by dancers at the time generating further driving academic interest (Zhang & Li, 2014). Many issues utilized in studies at this stage included professional identity formation, transfer of skills and gradual educational transformation of street dance as people became more interested in this concept of performance to teaching as a career (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994). Since 2016, studies on street dance dancers career transition are growing at a rapid rate. It grew particularly during 2021-23, and over a hundred studies were published at the time (Chen, 2023). Research topics also expanded to include social support, qualification training, career planning, and market development (Liu, 2022; Wang and Zhu, 2021). During COVID-19, the live performances and competitions were limited, and therefore, a lot of dancers resorted to online dancing classes and production of online material. This shift appears to have encouraged more dancers to consider coaching or mentoring roles or mentors rather than being performers (He, 2022). Besides this, formal street dance education, teacher certification courses, and academic conferences further stabilized the research field and rendered it mature (Luo, 2024). On the whole, it is evident that research during this era shifted from descriptive explorations to more structured theoretical and applied research and this can be molded as the amusement of the street dance, which has over the years evolved into a professional career choice (Stambulova & Wylleman, 2014).

Regarding Question 2, What are the priority themes and the topical in this field of study? Career transition among street dance dancers has developed around several closely connected themes, with research attention showing a clear shift over time. Early studies mainly focused on individual level factors, such as career motivation, skill transfer, and psychological adjustment, and often treated career transition as a response to professional uncertainty or physical decline (Van Raalte *et al.*, 1993). In contrast, more recent studies have moved beyond deficit-based perspectives and increasingly examine issues of professional identity reconstruction, role hybridity, and the coexistence of performance and coaching roles. This thematic shift suggests a

growing understanding that career transition in street dance is not a fixed endpoint, but a continuous process embedded within dancers' broader career trajectories (Stambulova *et al.*, 2009). Unlike traditional sports, current research places greater emphasis on informal learning (Nelson *et al.*, 2006), peer networks, certification pathways (Cushion & Nelson, 2013), and local dance ecosystems as key mechanisms through which street dancers establish and sustain coaching roles (Rynne *et al.*, 2010). In addition, there is increasing interest in culturally situated practices and industry-specific norms, particularly within non-institutionalized sports such as street dance (Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). By integrating these themes, the present study shows that contemporary research is moving toward more holistic frameworks that connect individual experiences with structural and cultural dynamics, thereby extending existing models of athletic career transition.

Regarding Question 3, What are the theoretical and practical implications of the findings and what can be achieved in the future? From a theoretical perspective, this study integrates key findings in the field of athletic career transition and provides a comprehensive overview of the knowledge in this area (Ryba *et al.*, 2016). Through bibliometric and content analysis, the study identifies the main research hotspots and development trends, offering theoretical guidance for future studies. From a practical perspective, it provides scholars with references for research concepts and themes. Analyzing influential journals and institutions can also help researchers identify appropriate publication outlets and research partners. In addition, the study highlights gaps in current research, which can guide scholars in reconstructing knowledge and promoting innovation in the field. The study also points to several directions for future research. Longitudinal studies could further explore how street dancers' professional identities evolve during the transition process. Comparative studies across regions or cultural contexts may deepen understanding of how local dance ecosystems shape career opportunities. Together, these future efforts can contribute to more inclusive career development in emerging and non-traditional sports.

This study provides valuable insights for researchers examining career transitions in street dance dancers. Based on the findings, several potential directions for future research can be identified. (1) Career transition research has covered areas such as professional identity, skill transfer, coaching development, and industry practices;

however, most existing studies are limited within specific subfields. Future studies should explore more interdisciplinary perspectives, integrating insights from sports management, education, psychology, and cultural studies. (2) Future research could examine how national or regional policies, local dance ecosystems, and cultural contexts influence career transition pathways. (3) Studies should employ diverse research methods, including expert interviews and longitudinal designs, to validate findings and enhance the robustness and credibility of research in this field.

6. CONCLUSION

Research on the career transitions of street dance dancers has increased steadily in recent years; however, systematic bibliometric and visualized reviews remain scarce, which limits a clear understanding of the field's developmental trajectory and research pathways. Using CiteSpace, the present study conducted a comprehensive bibliometric review of relevant literature published since 1985 and **arrived at the following conclusions**

1. The volume of publications and citation rates per research on the transition to a career among street dance dancers have been steadily increasing since 2015, which can be attributed to the increased interest of researchers towards the issue of career evolution and its direction of transition by dancers.
2. The concentration of research outcome is more in such countries like the United Kingdom, the United States, and Sweden. It is important to note that the United Kingdom has 43% of all publications, a figure that highlights its dominance with respect to this area. A large amount of work has also appeared in Canada and Australia, and a body of work has also emerged in China and Denmark suggesting that the research on the career transition of street dance dancers across the globe is growing steadily. Specifically, over time, Chinese scholars have become actively researching on the topic, in terms of the volume of publications, and it is a sign that the issue of career transition has become a significant one in researching the culture of street dances and education in China. However, studies from Asian region are still scarce.
3. Research hotspots include themes, which are identity construction, career transition pathways, psychological adaptation, educational and training systems, and social

support networks. The overlap of these themes means that the professional shift of the street dance dancers is not only placed in the area of the studies of the dance sport and education, but also strictly connected to the fields of sociology, psychology, and cultural studies.

4. The literature that is most regularly cited is the psychological adaptation and social identity of dancers engaged in the transformation of competitive athletes to coaches, though part of the literature is determined to state the importance of education, training, and certification as key factors in easing transitions to the coaching career. In the meantime, there are recent trends in the research that indicate that interdisciplinary processes and digital solutions are being gradually employed, extending the limits and practical importance of the domain.

In comparison to traditional narrative reviews, the presented study integrates bibliometric analysis with qualitative content analysis to map the intellectual structure and thematic evolution of career-transition research relevant to street dance dancers and comparable performance-based sports.

Limitations: First, only the Web of Science Core Collection (WoSCC) and Scopus were searched, so relevant studies indexed elsewhere may not have been captured. Second, the search was restricted to English language peer reviewed journal articles, excluding books, conference proceedings, and grey literature. Third, because the search strategy used broader dance and performance based sport terms to contextualize street dance career transitions, the final dataset includes adjacent populations; therefore, findings should be interpreted as mapping a wider evidence base rather than street-dance-only scholarship.

Beyond these methodological constraints, the present study is limited by its dependence on previously published studies and commonly applied theoretical perspectives. Given that street dance develops within culturally specific, informal, and community based environments, established career transition models originating from conventional sports or performing arts may not adequately represent the professional trajectories and identity formations of street dance practitioners. Furthermore, while bibliometric and thematic analyses are effective in identifying research patterns and structural trends, these methods are inherently restricted in their ability to capture dancers' personal experiences, processes of identity reconstruction, and

the subtle, individualized functioning of support systems.

Future research could address these limitations by incorporating multilingual sources, a wider range of publication types, and additional databases. Further empirical and qualitative studies focusing specifically on street dance dancers and other performance based groups would also help to deepen understanding of diverse career transition

experiences and support mechanisms. In addition, future research may benefit from developing or adapting theoretical frameworks that are more sensitive to the cultural, social, and informal dimensions of street dance careers, thereby advancing a more contextually grounded understanding of career transitions in performance based domains.

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