

As a Researcher how important is to be familiar with the theoretical foundations of dance as research topic?

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Research is the search for a new idea, a new perception, new expressions or a new thought about existing theories and probabilities. A good research starts with an interesting research question. The research question/s give/s way to formulation of hypothesis/es. A solid hypothesis/es is / are the one/s which is/are falsifiable. The very quality of research is the core of falsifiability. This comes into picture when there exists a theory, which can be falsified. Thus, this testifies the indivisible nature of theoretical foundations in any research.

The researcher needs to re-search for all existing theories in order to choose one or a few and falsify it / them. In research which is quantifiable, the science comes to aid and hence the study of theories is indispensable, as they form the very basis of hypothesis/es. The study of theory involves the researchers' hold on the genre or experience or any curiosity in the subject.

Other than the science theories, the research in Social Sciences like, languages, sociology, psychology, performing arts, history, cultural studies, and so on, is very complex and involves great level of self-study, individual perception of the subject and their effect on the readers or other researchers. In particular, it is very difficult to theorize performing arts, especially dance, in order to formulate hypothesis/es. For us to understand about familiarity of a Researcher with the theoretical foundations, it is important to understand what are theoretical foundations and further, their importance in Dance research.

Dance is an integral part and a way of life from birth till death of living beings, but for the fact that it's always in disguise with non-practitioners! It's a visual challenge which needs expertise to conceptualize. It is like people wearing different attires for different occasions and their permutations and combinations. It is a prism of expressions which produces multiple shades of colourful expressions. Each one's perception of this art form is completely different, be it a presenter or a spectator. Hence there is a need for developing theories for treating different facets of dance like dancing, choreography, lighting, make-up, costumes, jewellery, sound, music, stage, props, multimedia and so on. In the backdrop of cultural diversification in a particular region the proportion or the ratio in different permutations and combinations vary distinctively.

Dance research has various approaches such as historical, political, socio-cultural, ethnic, epistemological and so on. These approaches need to be theorized for which theoretical foundations need to be addressed and adhered to, in order to give way for improvisation and innovation in Dance research.

A treatise of dance, music and dramatics called the 'Nāṭyaśāstra' has evolved around 2nd century BC to 2nd century AD, which has left nothing untouched, pertaining to the very way of life. This treatise is a colander of strong theoretical foundation through which the refinement percolates. It suggests the pros and cons of a performance depends on the blending of related theories under respective sub branches of any performing art. For example, a dance performance requires hard training for several years which is based on theories of expertise in teaching, learning and presenting the art form explicitly communicable by one and all. If there was a lack of theoretical foundation, the same would not have been passed on to the future generations and the generations to come.

In the treatise of dance & dramatics called the Nāṭyaśāstra ascribed to Bharata Muni, the disciple of Tandu Muni who was presumed to be the student of Lord Natarāja himself, all the above theories explain the level wise categorization of requirements to attain a targeted result or consequence. They form individual theories and their application in altering the consequence needs usage in different permutations and combinations.

Based on the usage, the components of Nāṭyaśāstra are interdependent and can provide us with different flavours of expressions, but as a whole it is aimed at aesthetic embodiment in the character and at the same time co-existence of a persona entirely different from the character. For example, a dancer who is performing on the stage enacting the role of Yashōda, the one who brought up Krishna as her own son, the

performer may not be married or may not have borne any child, but becomes Yashōda and experiences her plight. And at the same time, she is an individual and has her own way of portraying a mother or a child which is completely unique from other performers.

To support this argument, it is clear in Nāṭyaśāstra that the very basis of this treatise is called the Rasa sutra or the Theory of Aesthetics. This goes on like “Vibhāvānubhāva vyabhicāri saṃyogād rasanīṣpattih (Vibhāva + Anubhāva + Vyabhicāribhāva + Sthāyibhāva = Rasa)” meaning – Rasa is the resultant relish of drama which is created by the combination of vibhāva, anubhāva and vyabhicāribhāva with sthāyibhāva, the permanent emotion. To understand the components of the Aesthetics Theory of Bharata, it is important to understand their meaning and implications.

At the first instance, the Dance dynamics are theoretically explained with the help of the following concepts based on anatomical movements or on the concept of group and individual choreography and / or fusion between cross-cultural dance forms:

a) Bodily movements coming under the Āṅgika Abhinaya

Chapter eight to fourteen, twenty-one and twenty-two of Nāṭyaśāstra Volume-I are dedicated to Āṅgika which theorize the Āṅgika Abhinaya where in, there are Viniyōga's or usage instructions from all body parts from head to toe. Example: Single handed gestures, double handed gestures, eyes, eyebrows, lips, neck, head, shoulders, waist, Karana prakaranam or the combination of movements, legs, foot, gaits (Gati's) theorizing animalist, Godly, Evil and human gaits, and so on. The body parts are theorized under Anga, Pratyanga and Upāṅga sub-heads. The presentation pieces involve the usage of all body parts in accordance with their prominence at a given occasion. Without these theoretical foundations, it would have been impossible to emote using body parts through movement. These expressions usually need the literature or words and are equal to a thousand words sometimes, and best conveyed without words!

b) Sound, music, literature coming under the Vachika abhinaya

Under Vachika Abhinaya, theories based on language, literature, music (including musical instruments) are developed. The Vachika is thematic and heavily dependent on the theme, time and occasion of a presentation. These theories categorize the viewer discretion for respective presentations. Sometimes, the Vachika abhinaya uses meters or Chandhass in language which is impossible and time consuming to be communicated through Āṅgika Abhinaya. There is a need for usage of the abstract literature or music for dance productions, which has not yet been done. Aptness of choice of Vachika is still a challenge. Further, what type of raga or musical instruments should be used for a presentation is treated in Nāṭyaśāstra to some extent, but is still the choice of the presenter. The kinds of Acts, which are ten in number are elaborated. Each act consists of number of sub-acts and the entrance and exit of characters and the number of characters in a play are specified clearly. This theorization helps in documentation of scripts without delay in explanation of the themes of a play. The music and literature act supportive to the aesthetics of the performer. The following chapters of Nāṭyaśāstra cover the above-said points (Ghosh 1950)¹:

- Music is studied under chapters twenty-eight to thirty-three in Volume-II.
- Language and Literature with music are studied under chapters fifteen to nineteen of Nāṭyaśāstra Volume-I and chapter thirty-two (Dhruvā songs) of Nāṭyaśāstra Volume-II.

c) Make-up, jewellery, costumes, stage props, under the Āhārya Abhinaya

The best mode of voiceless interpretation of a situation or a character is done if the Āhārya is used judiciously and will result in conveying the right message to the right audience. For example: A Śūrpanakhā character (sister of Ravana, the villain in Rāmāyaṇa epic) is best depicted by the way her make-up, hair-do and costumes are done. There is no need or slight scope for Vachika Abhinaya. Aharya is heavily dependent on Āṅgika aspects and like make-up, jewellery, costumes, stage props and musical instruments used. There are theories developed for usage of these elements, which are indispensable for dance productions. Many expressions which can neither be conveyed through the other three aspects of abhinaya, are best conveyed through Āhārya of a particular character. The following chapters of Nāṭyaśāstra cover the above-said points:

- Jewellery, Stage Props, Costumes and Make-up under chapter twenty-three of Volume-I
- Musical Instruments under chapters twenty-eight and twenty-nine of Volume-II.

d) Expression and emotions coming under Sātvika

These are the aesthetics which are dealt with, under chapters six and seven of Nāṭyaśāstra Volume-I. The toughest to theorize is the Sātvika Abhinaya because, it is the experience or Rasa which is mutual i.e., for both presenter and the audience. It is the ultimate stage where the two connect aesthetically. Still the Nāṭyaśāstra addresses the Rasa Sūtra with utmost care and accuracy. The Navarasa theory, the Ashta Nayika /

Nayaka Bhaavas, based on Bhaava, Vibhaava and Anubhaava are developed. The feelings aroused through Sātvika Abhinaya are explicitly described in Nāṭyaśāstra, which has left no room for any innovation. Only improvements can be made based on strong theories mentioned in the said text.

The importance of a few theories which are required to proceed in dance research with regard to aesthetics are explained below as supportive examples:

a) Rasa could be said to be a two-fold experience felt by the creator and his expression through his art and the experience of the reader (Sahridayas) who receive the art. The creator undergoes an emotion and is so overwhelmed by it that he seeks a medium for the expression of his feelings. The reader receives this emotion through the creator's medium and thus undergoes the emotion felt by the creator. Thus, the word 'Rasa' is once again created by the creator and then is re-created by the reader. The extent to which the reader undergoes the emotion felt by the creator depends upon the intelligence of the creator in presenting it. The nature of our existence, which is a curious mixture of happiness and unhappiness is sought to be exactly represented in art media. For Lollota, Indian aesthetics is interminably based on the word 'Rasa'. According to Bharata, "Nahi rasādatē kaścīdāpyartaḥ pravartatē". (NS VI. 31). (No meaning can proceed from speech in the absence of Rasa) This proves the importance of Rasa in the aesthetics and literary criticism of India (Sunil 2005).²

b) 'Vibhāvānubhāvā vyabhicāri samyōgād rasa niṣpattiḥ' – This is the rasa theory the meaning of which is - the realisation of Rasa results from the union of Vibhāva, Anubhāva and Vyabhicāribhāva, and its alignment with the permanent mood known as Sthāyibhāva. Bharata says that there are eight Sthāyins or the basic mental states, thirty-three Vyabhicāriṇs or accessories and eight Sāṭṭvika bhava-s or involuntary physical reflexes. These forty-nine, taken together, make for Kāvya Rasābhivyakti. Rasas are born of these, when they are represented in a universalised state. He says, "It may be noted that these forty-nine emotions in their generalised form are the source of Rasa". (N.S.348).

To reiterate this or hypothecate this, a strong knowledge about all the forty-nine kinds of emotions and the technique of emoting them through dance theories taught in person by the Guru or the teacher. Since the ultimate goal of dance research is to connect with the audience through rasa (emotions & expressions), a study of this theory and its components is inevitable and is of utmost importance to the practitioner.

c) Nāṭyaśāstra prescribes that the hand gestures of persons of superior and middle levels of social rank should conform to the characterization of gestures as given in the treatise, in contrast with the hand gestures of persons of laymen who follow popular practice and own natural habit (Ghosh 1967). There are also some restrictions for usage of hand gestures for expression of certain emotions. As different parts of the body are allotted differential functions in the conduct of non-verbal communication involving the use of gestures, we find a significant allocation of functions. This provision makes the use of gesture in aesthetic arts as well as in day-to-day lives different from the use of gesture as an independent mode as found in the sign languages such as the American Sign Language or in the language of deaf-mutes. Further, hand gestures are dependent on the expression of the face, eyebrows and eyes, which need to stand co-ordinated with hand gestures. To support this, a theoretical statement put into practice by Bharata is "Yatō hastaḥ tathō dṛṣṭiḥ, yatō dṛṣṭiḥ tathō manaḥ, yatō manaḥ tathō bhāvaḥ, yatō bhāvasthō rasaḥ" meaning, where the hand moves, the eyes should follow, where the eyes move, the mind should follow, where the mind goes, the emotions follow and where there are emotions, there is expression or relish of the mood. If one process is missed out, the rasa sutra of Bharata is incomplete or the intent of dance performance is a failure.

In all the four dimensions of abhinaya or mode of expressions, mentioned in Nāṭyaśāstra, there exists an element of differentiation in the usage of the Āhārya in terms of gender so as to reflect the male and female aspects of nature which are like the two sides of a coin, which co-exist and so also are different in their own way! Further, the subjects are interdependent and form intersection sets of chapters, which serve as ready reckoner for several aspects of theories related to music, dance and drama.

There are other theories evolved in study of dance aspects which do not have this element of gender uniqueness.

Dance bases on 4 theories (Charles & Justin 2014, 251-259)³ namely:

- a) The philosophical aesthetic theory
- b) The choreologists aesthetic theory
- c) The sociological aesthetic theory and
- d) The medical/therapeutic dance theory

Thus, he stresses upon the fact that Dance is an art, ritual, or recreation that goes beyond the functional purposes of the movements used in work or athletics in order to express emotions, moods, or ideas; tell a story; serve religious, political, economic, or social needs; or simply be an experience that is pleasurable, exciting, or aesthetically valuable.

Interestingly, these four theories are the foundations for the wholesome art of Dance, in whichever of the facets it is revered. But, basically Dance theories can majorly be based on its place of origin, styles, aesthetics and so on through anatomical (bodily / expressive) movements like foot work, or through group interactions / conversations. The aesthetics may involve the music in terms of suitability towards the attainment of connect between the performer and spectator, for which separate theories have to be drawn. There is a need to study the four types of Abhinaya-s basing these four theories.

The first theory mentioned above as in the journal, is the Philosophical Aesthetic Theory. This theory majorly deals with the interdependence of Dance and other art forms, their cultural background, practice, history and so on arriving at the application of the same in producing written descriptions, reviews and philosophical conclusions. It seems apt to consider the Vācika and Sātvika theories under this branch as they serve as individual identities of these instances or practices. The implications of this theory are, that the dancers, choreographers, historians and culturalists tend to enhance their skills in writing, choreographing, documenting, critical thinking and cultural language.

The second theory is the Sociological Aesthetic Theory which is formed by the sociologists and anthropologists. Under this, the study is based on the ethnicity, ideologies, social status, gender, nationality and so on. The Āhārya concept can be brought under this theory as the production standards depends on the social status and popularity of the teacher or performer, funding available from rich sources and sponsorship, legacy of artists, the natural resources of that country, gender roles and responsibilities in carrying forward the traditions and so on. The best example for this is, in many dances are performed collectively by communities through oral tradition from generation to generation. Given this, it is very important to develop a similar theory for preserving the traditions on a socio-cultural plane. Sometimes, though the sociological themes may be similar but the landscapes, history, background and purpose may differ from society to society. For example, Hanuman is a hero in India whereas, he is portrayed as a villain and womanizer in many other dance dramas in Southern and South-East Asian Countries. In this situation, the Sociological Aesthetic Theory comes for rescue. Since the ethnicity plays a major role, this theory may involve certain concepts of Vācika and Āngika elements too! The implications are, dance material such as scripts, conventions, costumes, make-up, musical instruments which govern the dance sociology, are very well perceived by the dancers and teachers alike.

The third theory is the Choreologists' Aesthetic Theory. The word choreography literally means "dance-writing" from the Greek words "Choreia" (circular dance) and "Graphy" (writing). It is clear that this theory explains the scripting of all dance components such as movement, motion and their analysis. It is the theory of body, effort, shape and space explanations.

This theory implies that a good dance piece should be choreographed well in order to be successful to communicate with emotions, mode and action. It combines the Āngika and Sātvika elements of Nāṭyaśāstra. The documenting of choreography is a challenge, as it is understood in different perspectives by different cultures.

The fourth theory being the Therapeutic / Medical Theory uses dance therapy or Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) which is the psychotherapeutic use of movement and dance for emotional, cognitive, social, behavioral and physical conditions (<http://www.adta.org/about/who.cfm>). It was developed during the 1940's and has progressed in recent years. It can cure the practitioners of many diseases, ailments and disabilities when administered with caution and care. Marian Chace of the United States, has developed this theory in 1942. The Āngika and Sātvika aspects fall under this theory and reiterates the mind and body are inseparable. Through dance, hidden emotions can be expressed in a nonverbal way and accepted by the conscious self.

This theory's implications can be seen in not only the usage of dance as a therapy but also as a measure for rehabilitation and treatment of degenerative diseases. These therapists heavily depend on bodily movements and mind control through them. The Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) was suggested for cancer patients, with positive results of improvement in their health conditions. It is also called as Movement Psycho-therapy. Through exposure with DMT, a therapist will use movement to help a client achieve emotional, cognitive, physical and social integration. The benefits include stress reduction and mood management. Within eating disorder recovery, it can also help improve body image and self-esteem. Founded within the idea that motion and emotion are interconnected, this creative expression can also help improve communication skills for better relationships.

All the above four theories hold good either to the individual or group presentations. Further, the treatise, Nāṭyaśāstra, has theorized all the concepts of dance under the aspects of Āngika, Vācika, Aharya and Sātvika Abhinaya's. Expression is the essence of life, and Dance is the mode of communication of these expressions.

A new dimension in viewing Dance as a theory is the need of the hour, since a lot of issues which were in practice, have remained unaddressed till today.

Dance Theories can develop on the basis of the following:

- 1) Oral traditions of knowledge transfer – where the art form is taught mouth-to-mouth or say ear, without documenting the procedure. This is followed in order to sharpen the memory of the learner and to revive the Guru Parampara, stress upon the greatness of one-to-one communication and also to avoid misinterpretation.
- 2) Manuscripts of dance literature – here the dance notations, music notations for dance, postures, hand and leg positions, beats and rhythm timings, kind of music i.e., raga, are documented in manuscripts on palm and other leaves.
- 3) Temple inscriptions – Major theories are developed by transliterating and transcribing the stone inscriptions and metal inscriptions on coins. Coinage collections have given a lot of information on the status of many art forms during a particular era.
- 4) Travelogues of travelers.

Travelogues are writings done while travelling to different places. Earlier, dance troupes would travel across the globe along with their selected patrons for recitals. During those times, they recorded their memoirs in their diaries which provided valuable sources of information for laying theoretical foundation for Dance. With that, drawn towards distinct cultural diversities, foreign travelers visited many countries and recorded their ethnographic experiences in their travelogues, which served as mirrors of the respective countries' culture.

5) Architecture (Shilpa Shastra)

The dance culture of a particular region is reflected along with the colloquial and regional touch in the sculptures. The sculptors used special theories for calculating the ratio of an idol to measure the proportionate fineness of a sculpture. Sculptures are like movements and moments captured in stones. The timeless frozen expressions depicted in sculptures helped in study of theorizing Dance. For example: the Madanikā-s of Bēlur & Halebeedu, the Apsara-s of Angkor, the maidens of Khajurāhō, and so on.

As the legend goes, the very origin of dance as per Nāṭyaśāstra is creation of Nāṭyavēda or the fifth Vēda is by adopting theories from the other four Vēdā-s namely the Scriptures from Rig Vēda, Music from Sāma Vēda, Practices & Rituals from Yajur Vēda and the Rasā (aesthetics) from the Atharvaṇa Vēda.

From the above aspects, even from the Vēdic period, the treatises were based on theories, and as per these, an artist must be familiar with theoretical foundations in Dance, which distinguishes him from common man and the knowledge of these theories is inevitable, may be due to the following reasons:

- The dancer, choreographer or the teacher should be well versed with the theoretical foundations on which the dance culture is built, so as to facilitate a universal understanding of the art form.
- Wrong administration of Dance as a therapy based on wrong theories may result in health complications, stressing upon the necessity of familiarity in theoretical foundations.
- Formulated theories promote social inclusion of all persons otherwise left out from the dance stream such as the physically challenged, mentally special and blind in dancing, choreography, teaching, documenting, music, and so on.
- Due to changes in learning and interpretation techniques, the original traditionality or the locality of the form is lost if the same are not theorized.
- It is important to theorize interdependent art forms to arrive at the dance form for capturing all the nuances of expressions.
- Authorial intentions, cultural ownership and migration constructs in Dance need to be addressed, which is possible only on the basis of theoretical foundations of Dance.
- To find out any deviations in the tradition of any performing art.
- Theoretical foundations enrich the Dance through an aesthetic approach.
- The future of innovation and improvisation within the traditional framework can take place only on the basis of theoretical foundations.
- It will help more and more people to pursue Dance as a career on the pretext of availability of theories on which the whole building of Dance stands.

- Many theories are to be integrated into Dance research, as dance is a way of life and includes all aspects of human development and knowledge gain.
- The connect between the past, present and future generation-s can be established only on existing theoretical foundations in Dance, which can identify and decode the gaps in evolution of Dance.

The main reason for connecting the said four theories i.e., the Philosophical Aesthetic Theory, the Choreologists' Aesthetic Theory, the Sociological Aesthetic Theory and the Medical/Therapeutic Dance Theory to the 4 aspects of Nāṭyaśāstra i.e., Āṅgika, Vachika, Aharya and Sātvika Abhinaya-s, is the fact that theorizing dance concepts is a great challenge because all the concepts and aspects are interdependent and cannot stand individually in order to give a lasting effect to conscious dance knowledge transfer with sensuous aesthetic value.

At the same time, it is necessary to change our perception through the looking glass in terms of uniqueness in masculine and feminine orders, by studying and connecting the Nāṭyaśāstra with other superficial theories which do not support the argument of the said uniqueness or to say differentiation.

This paper is an effort to study how important are these theoretical foundations, if dance were a topic for research under the following crucial aspects:

- a) Assimilation of knowledge in dance pedagogy to eternity and Preservation of traditionality in dance styles.

There are various styles and dance traditions which can be associated with a common treatise. These need to be studied under a common treatise in order to assimilate commonality between one another. Knowledge assimilation towards the same would either be the study of commonalities or the differences based on the theories mentioned in a common treatise say, the Nāṭyaśāstra. By this study based on theoretical foundations, the traditions or styles of dance could be preserved through practice.

For instance, during the 18th century, there existed this Pandanallūr style of dance, which is nearest to the Kalākṣētra style of Bharatanatyam. Due to lack of documentation of this style based on the Nāṭyaśāstra, the essence was lost and there are very less performers or nearly no one who are familiar with this style now. The only evidence was a video clipping which was documented in the very village of Pandanallūr. Due to lack of theoretical study and documentation, the style, which was at its peak during the 18th century, has neared extinction.

- b) Scope for innovation and improvisation.

There is scope for innovation and improvisation in terms of various aspects in a common treatise. As the knowledge of different dance forms is acquired through their study, it is easy to find the gaps in different dance styles and try to bridge them in order to convey the right message to the right audience. Innovation is the different way of presenting styles and the improvisation is the enhancement of the same. Innovation contributes to the theories and improvisation contributes to identify the gaps, and form hypotheses. Mere innovation and improvisation will have no boundaries and in turn will corrupt the essence of it, if it is not based on dance theories.

- c) Documentation of work in an organized manner.

Documentation in terms of dance research is a laborious task since each performer documents the studies in their own script or pictography. The basic steps are given a dance puppet code to show the positioning of the hands and legs. But these scripts do not provide the placement of the limbs with reference their angle. This disrupts the very style of dance and its presentation. If this documentation is based on theories which reroute to the styles of dancing with a video bibliography will definitely improve the thesaurus of dance research. There is a need for separate dance search engine based on theories in order to achieve an organized index for dance research, as the information is scattered.

- d) Retention of documented work for the use of future generations.

If dance theoretical studies document the work, their retention can be easily done just as to ensure the essence of styles by passing the same information which is authentic, to the future generations. A library of documented works with relation to dance research can be linked to their respective theories and vice-versa. Indexing of works becomes easy through document retention by correlating dance theories.

- e) Change in perception.

Each hand, each leg, each body movement conveys specific meanings in dance as an expression. If the presentations are based on theories, the perception of both the performer as well as the spectator changes

drastically. For example, if the dancer wants to use the dance as a therapy, the very essence of aesthetics is lost. Only the movement really matters, no matter what expressions are conveyed by the performer. This movement can be in synchrony, out of synchrony, asymmetric or symmetrical, or random. The very goal is to cover all kinds of movements as therapy for a particular illness or health issue. The patients may perceive movement in different ways. If the patient is high with Blood pressure, he may perceive that a particular movement will help him reduce the same. On the other instance, if it is prescribed for a deaf person, he may expect to convey a certain meaning with that movement.

f) Change in perception of theories results in change in presentation of dance skills. This opens new horizons for exploration by both the performer and the audience.

This paper attempts to study, how dance styles can fit into theories which are inter-continental and are not bound by national barriers. The Eastern dance forms like South-east Asian dance forms, Indian dance forms, Asian dance forms, can fit into the Western Dance Theories. Research on the Western dance forms fitting into Eastern Dance Theories is an area unexplored. Eastern Dance Theories are based on the very basic treatise of dramatics 'Nāṭyaśāstra.' The Western Dances, their styles, evolution, revival, practice, dissemination, theorization and execution need to be studied under this treatise to arrive at a common point of universal theorization. Since, the world is full of our own kind, who have scattered over a vast area and have evolved their own dance cultures, studies in dance research based on theoretical foundations, are indispensable to humanity.

Apart from the above theories, a scholarly dance research involves application of theories from other areas like, history, architecture and sculpture, literature and literacies, critical theories and eco-systemic trends, political theory, ethnography, feminism, and so on. A few theories which can impact dance research are explained further in the following paragraphs.

i) Theories related to history:

History is yesterday's present and today's past. A theory sprung up from the field of history is the Theory of Performance rooted in the discipline of communication (Bell 2008)⁴ wherein, the study related to communication related performance is deciphered based on theories. Since dance is a communication system involving several sub-communication streams, the hypotheses based on these theories hold good and can be tested in dance research too. Since dance research is based on history and evolution of mankind by sophisticated techniques, such theories rooted in history serve as a strong foundation for any kind of dance research.

ii) Theories related to architecture and sculpture:

Dance research involves study of Architecture in historical times of a particular geographical area and architecture is the whole and sole platform for sculptures. A dance researcher should be well versed in architectural and sculptural theories of a particular area in order to study the dance technique of that area. Architecture was the only primary source of information which existed before, writing, language, orality and typography, on which the whole history is built. Sculptures were one of the components of architecture to contribute individuality to architectural style. Further, sculptures represented the cultural characteristics of the performers during those times. The 20th Century Architectural theory studies the shaping up of architectural spaces and sculpture from the times of ancient Greece and classifies analysis of architecture as good and otherwise, ending up in modern philosophy.

iii) Theory of Literacies:

Literacy involves content area literacy and disciplinary literacy. The content area literacy is the knowledge of articulating the ideas through literature, whereas the disciplinary literacy is the specific discipline involved in research. The disciplinary literacy is inculcated through dance theories and their systematic study. Content area literacy is indispensable for every researcher to progress in scientific writing because, it is the art of articulating the content of research to the reader from his or her perspective and is a generalization theory.

iv) Critical theories and eco-systemic trends:

Critical realism is the basis for contemporary knowledge, skill-set development and theories which are the first and foremost requirements for a dance research. To explain this further, basically research is the search for new knowledge or new perspective for existing theories and analysis of justification or falsification of the same. For this, it is necessary to go hand-in-hand with the trends in dance research, critical theories are important and so are theories related to eco-systemic trends in the field of dance. Many related theories are like multiple horizons in dance research.

v) Political Theories:

Dances convey meaning through culturally understood conventions within social contexts, leading to study of political theories during a particular period which would have existed during their origin and evolution. The socio-political status of the dance performers impacts dance and its path towards progress towards research. Political theories are integral parts of cultural studies and is dance research of the latter, since, the themes and social message communicated through dance are heavily reliant on the politics of that place.

vi) Theories related to Ethnography:

Ethnography is omnipresent in dance, a movement as cultural knowledge. Ethnography is the study of life of people is also the study of people's cultural knowledge. Cultural knowledge includes, in anthropologist Clifford Geertz's words, "a people's ethos—the tone, character, and quality of their life, its moral and aesthetic style and mood—and their world view—the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order" (1973:89).

From an ethnographic perspective, dance is a highly stylized and codified movement in which the cultural knowledge or ethnography of a particular place is projected. The theories involved in dancing is not just physical but mental and emotional as well, encompassing cultural history, beliefs, values, and feelings (Sklar 1991)⁵. For example, if the classical dance involves a communication of a social message, a street dance can be a response to the demands of survival of a caravan dance community. Ethnographic theories come handy in developing a research about the subject with relation to thriving of the art form itself.

vii) Theories of Feminism:

Feminism is one strand of critical social theories, which is strong enough to shake the foundations on which the dance theories have been built up with. To explain further, the socio-cultural and socio-economic status of dance and dancers may not be the same as the ones if seen through the looking glass of 'feminism'. For example, the socio-economical theory projects the Dēvadāsi's in India as women of high status and occupied auspicious space in royal court and temple traditions, whereas, if the same study is based on the theories of feminism, it is reflected that, they were misused by Kings and Priests in the name of God. Both the theories are true but can also be falsified. If a dance research is based on these theories, there is scope for healthy debate and disclosure of the actuals.

There is a wide range of choices and scope for a dance researcher, since dance research is exhaustive, as it is the study of way of life of people engulfing and encapsulating all chronology, which in no way can thrive without theoretical foundations. These theoretical foundations based on multiple theories help to achieve a robust research design for a sound qualitative research with new perspectives in dance research.

Ultimately, dance without theoretical foundations is as good as knowledge without experience. Knowledge without experience is like a bottomless boat and is bound to sink eventually, devastating the very essence of Dance Research!

Inspired by an article about music composer Mr. Matt Morton in The Hindu newspaper dated December 24, 2020, I would say, since Dance is not a static form but dynamic, it constantly changes. These changes or sometimes, the so-called mistakes, unlock great potential for creativity, but only on the platform of strong theoretical foundations!

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