

Circle Dancers Speak about Circle Dancing, Worldwide

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For all the Musicians, who make the Dance possible

Introduction

Over the years, many circle dancers have written articles or letters for the various circle dancing journals that exist in some countries, while many others have not. The recent development of on-line survey tools that make it easy to set up and respond to surveys created an ideal opportunity to find out what circle dancers, worldwide, have to say.

The first ever worldwide circle dancing survey was done (using the survey tool, “esurv”) between July and October 2014. A total of 274 people responded. Their responses were aggregated and interpreted using tables, graphs and word clouds, as shown in the following pages. All of the analysis upholds the anonymity of the respondents. The broad topics are: who responded (the demographics of the respondents); why people like circle dancing; what their relationship is to circle dancing (for instance, whether or not they teach it); their opinions about and experiences of dancing, dances and music; which (if any) communication tools they use for communicating about circle dancing; and their hopes, wishes and dreams for circle dancing in the future. There are three Annexures: the first contains the survey questions and the second the full text of the responses to the free-form questions, more than twenty pages in all.

In 2014, Ana Lucia Borges da Costa completed her Ph D thesis: *An investigation into circle dance as a medium to promote occupational well-being*. She conducted 39 in-depth interviews and made in-depth findings, while this survey received responses from seven times as many people on a broad range of questions related to circle dancing, but did not include any interviews or conversations. The third Annexure is the abstract of Ana’s thesis.

It is intentional that not many recommendations are made in the following pages, as the responses speak for themselves. There are also inferences that can be drawn. Two examples are, firstly, the most usual means of finding out about circle dancing (and how this information can be used when attracting new people to join), and, secondly, the section on what people would like to see more of and less of: it contains several points that could be of use to those of us who facilitate circle dancing.

Survey Responses - All

1. Who Responded

1.1. Country

Most of the respondents (132, or 55% of those with known country¹) were from the United Kingdom, followed by South Africa (46, or 19%) and Argentina (37, or 15%).

The total number of dancers per country has not been estimated. It is, however, known that South Africa does not have the second highest number of circle dancers in the world. Rather, the number of respondents was influenced by the fact that the survey originated in South Africa.

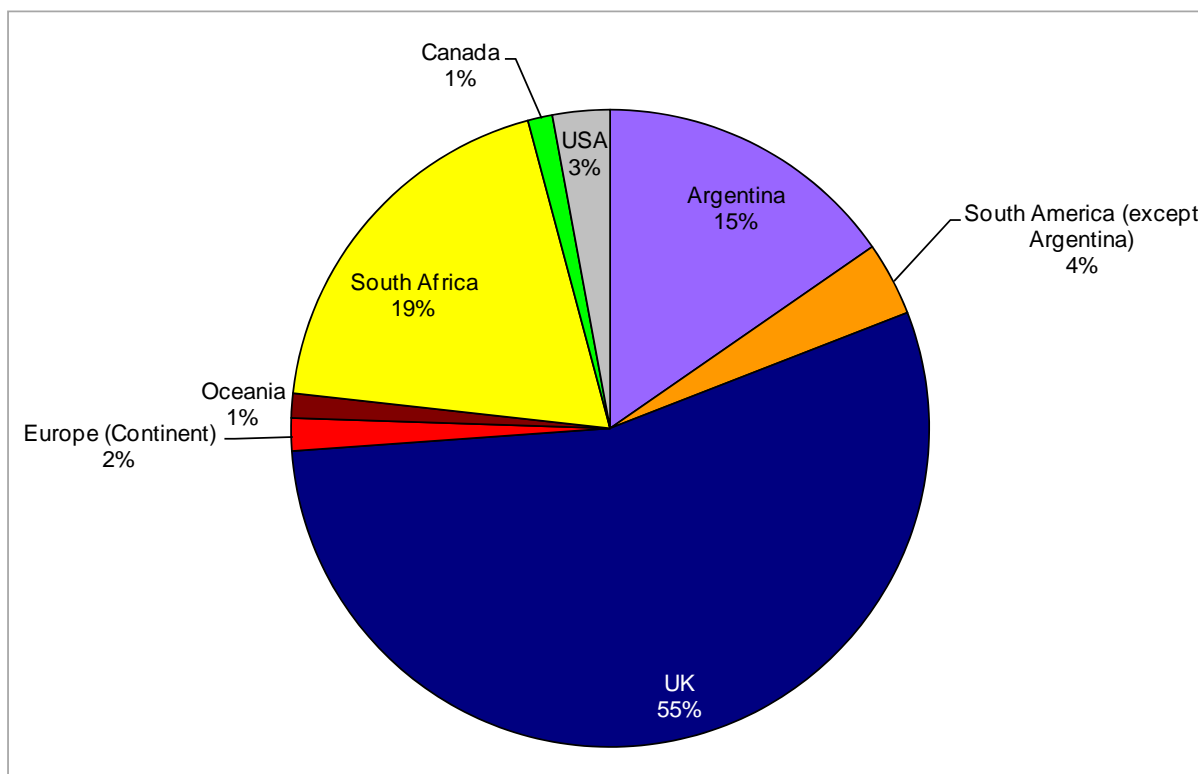
Table 1 shows the counts by Summarised Country (in some instances this refers to whole continents) and Detailed Country, and Figure 1 shows the percentages for those with known country by Summarised Country. A total of 33 people (12% of the total respondents) did not state their country, and it was also not possible to deduce it.

Table 1: Number of Respondents by Summarised Country and Detailed Country

Summarised Country	Detailed Country	Count
Argentina	Argentina	37
South America (except Argentina)	Brazil	2
	Chile	5
	Colombia	1
	Mexico	1
UK	UK	18
	UK: England	105
	UK: Scotland	6
	UK: Wales	3
Europe (Continent)	Greece	1
	Netherlands	1
	Spain	1
	Switzerland	1
Oceania	Australia	2
	New Zealand	1
South Africa	South Africa	46
Canada	Canada	3
USA	USA	7
Unknown	Unknown	33
Total		274

¹ A small number of people did not state their country. In some cases it was possible to deduce their country and this was done. Where it was not possible, their country was left as unknown.

Figure 1: Percentage of Respondents by Summarised Country



1.2. Age group

For the 232 people who stated their age group, approximately 62 was the median² age. The largest number (59, 25% of the 232 people) was 61 to 65, followed by those who were 66 to 70 years old (46, 20%) and those aged 56 to 60 (37, 16%). Figure 2 shows the age and gender distribution of the respondents who stated these.

Extrapolating these numbers to the general circle dancing population shows that the median age of circle dancers is substantially higher than the median age of the general population in their countries (which has been calculated³ to be 40 in the UK, 31 in Argentina, 26 in South Africa, 38 in the USA and 30 world-wide).

1.3. Gender

The respondents consisted of 210 women, 22 men and 42 people who did not state their gender (see Figure 2).

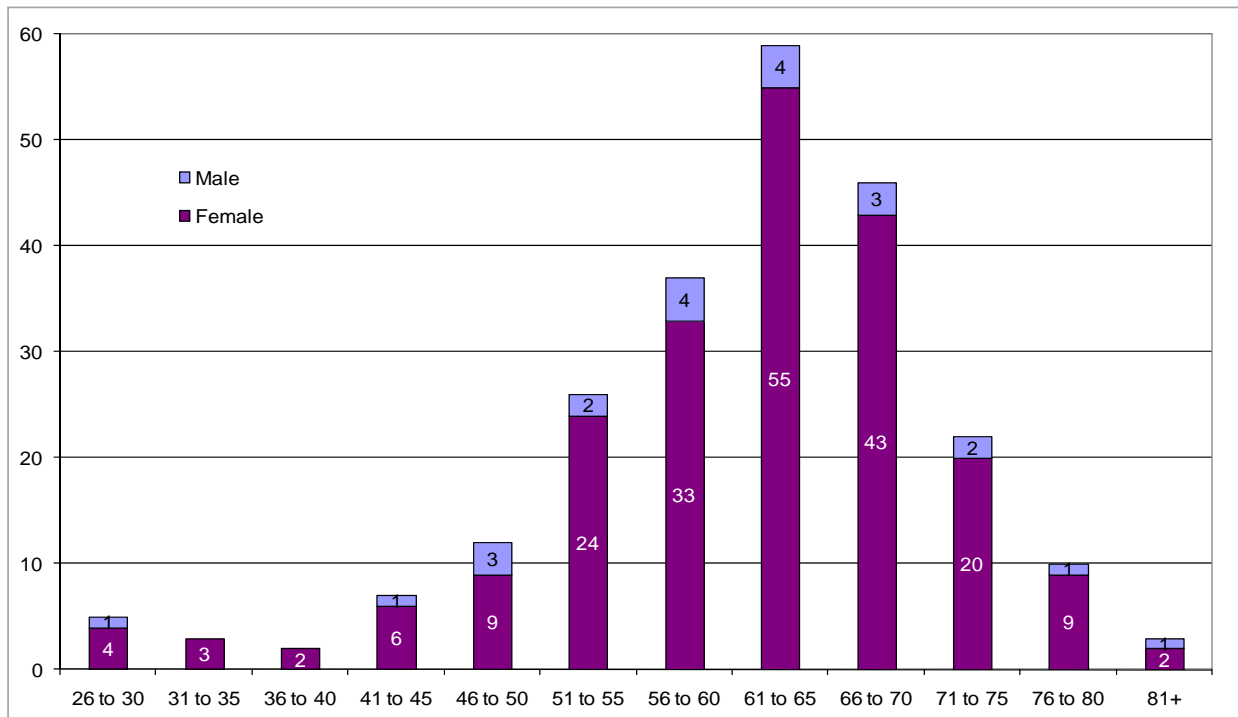
This, too, shows that women comprise more than 90% of circle dancers, which is substantially different from the overall population (which consists of 49.6% women and 50.4% men⁴).

² Median: the number that is in the middle. (The median is generally used, statistically, as a better indicator of average age than the mean.) In this case, half of the people in the group are aged above 62, and half are below. The spread of ages, however, ranges from more than 40 years below 62 to about 20 years above 62.

³ Source: www.cia.gov

⁴ www.worldometers.info

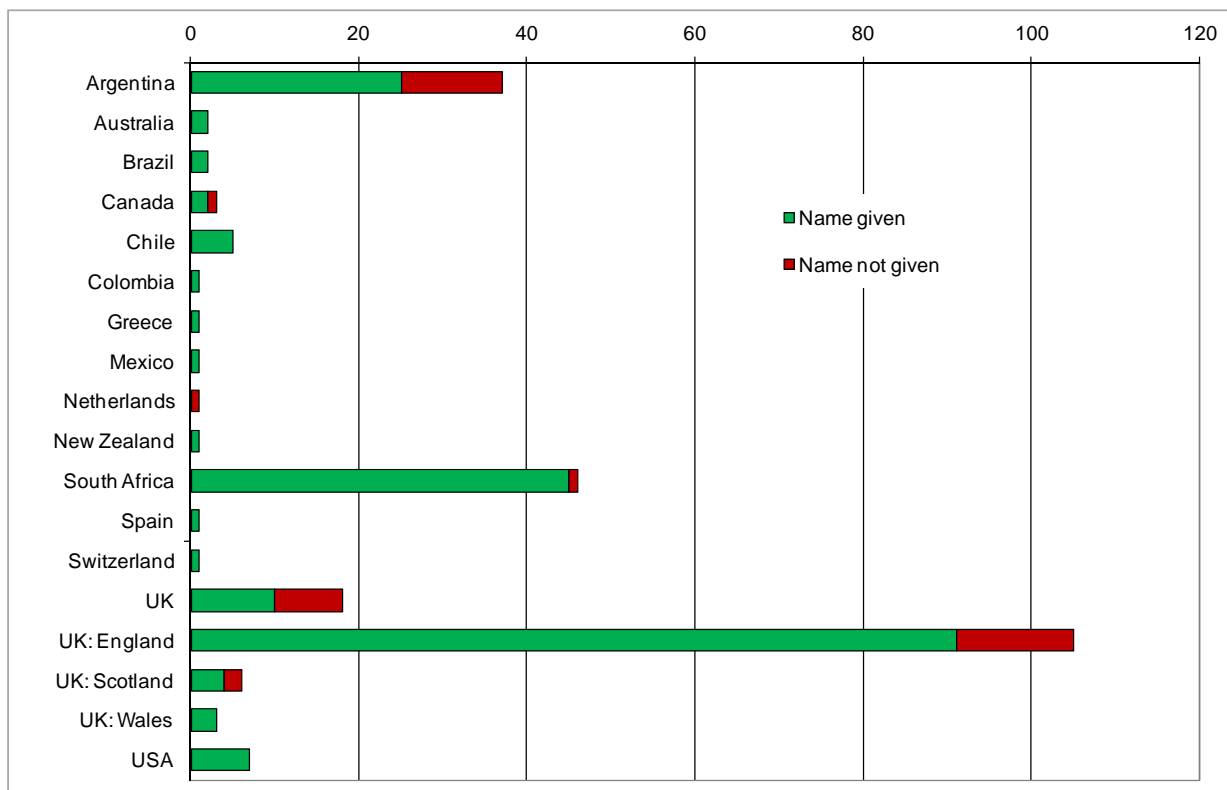
Figure 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age Group and Gender



1.4. Name

Most respondents (241, or 88%) were happy not to be anonymous. Figure 3 shows how many stated their names, or did not, by Detailed Country.

Figure 3: Whether or not Respondents stated their Names, by Detailed Country



1.5. Working Life

Most respondents (227, or 83%) stated whether or not they were working, and whether or not they were earning an income. This is summarised in Figure 4, which shows the 103 who are working, the 113 who are retired or semi-retired, the 10 who volunteer and / or are homemakers, and the one person who is unemployed, as well as how many in each of these categories are earning an income or not. The 47 people who did not answer these questions are not shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Distribution of Respondents by Working Status and Whether or Not they are Earning

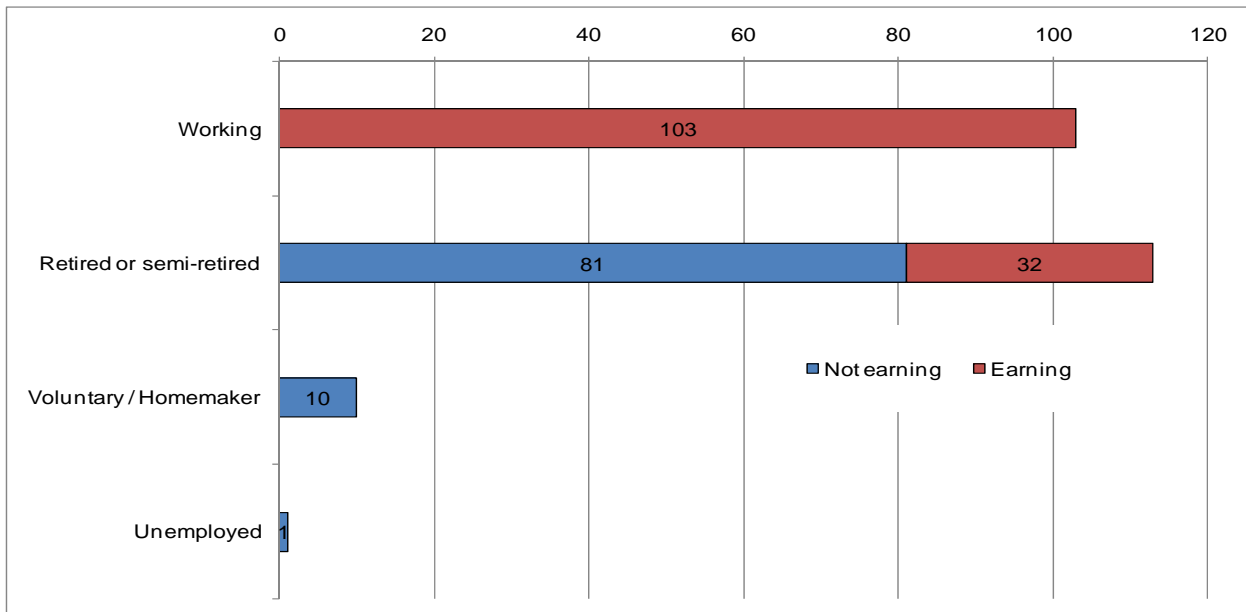
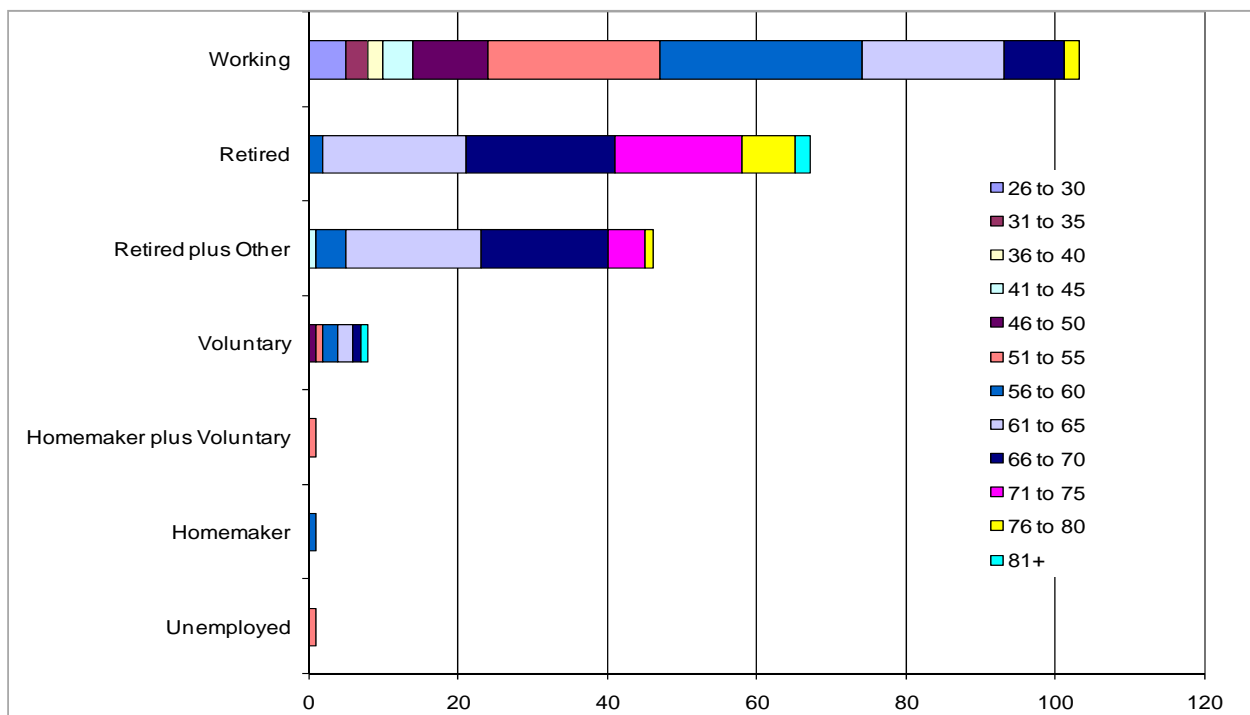


Figure 5 shows the same 227 people, by more detailed working status and age group.

Figure 5: Distribution of respondents by Working Status and Age Group

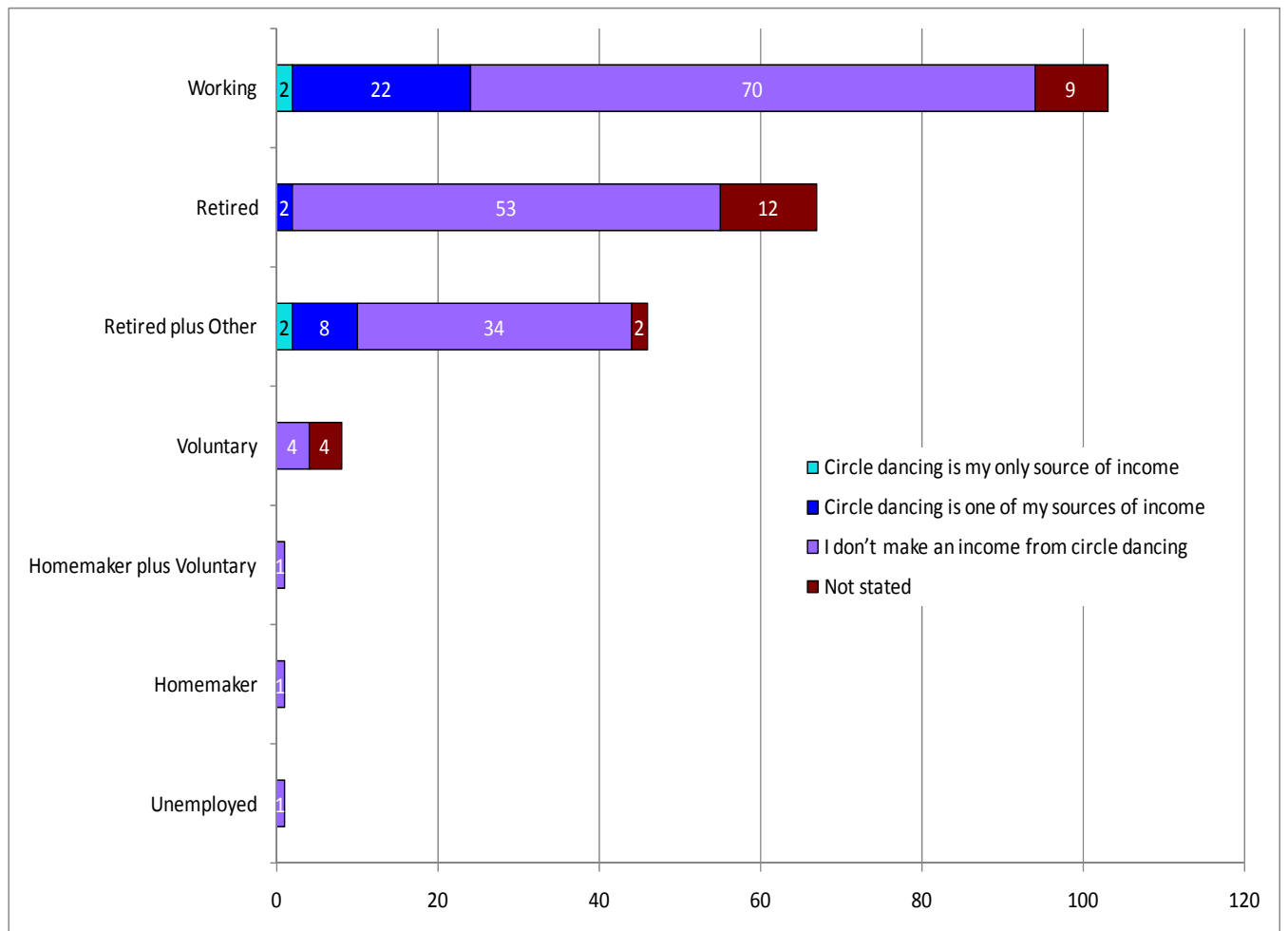


1.6. Working Life and Circle Dancing

A total of four people stated that circle dancing is their only source of income, and a further 32 people stated that it is one of their sources of income.

Figure 6 shows the 227 people who gave their working status, with what they said (or did not say) about whether or not they earn an income from circle dancing. The 47 people who did not give information about their working lives continue to be excluded from Figure 6, as they also did not say whether or not they earn any income from circle dancing.

Figure 6: Distribution of Respondents by Working Status and whether or not they Earn any Income from Circle Dancing



2. Why People Like Circle Dancing

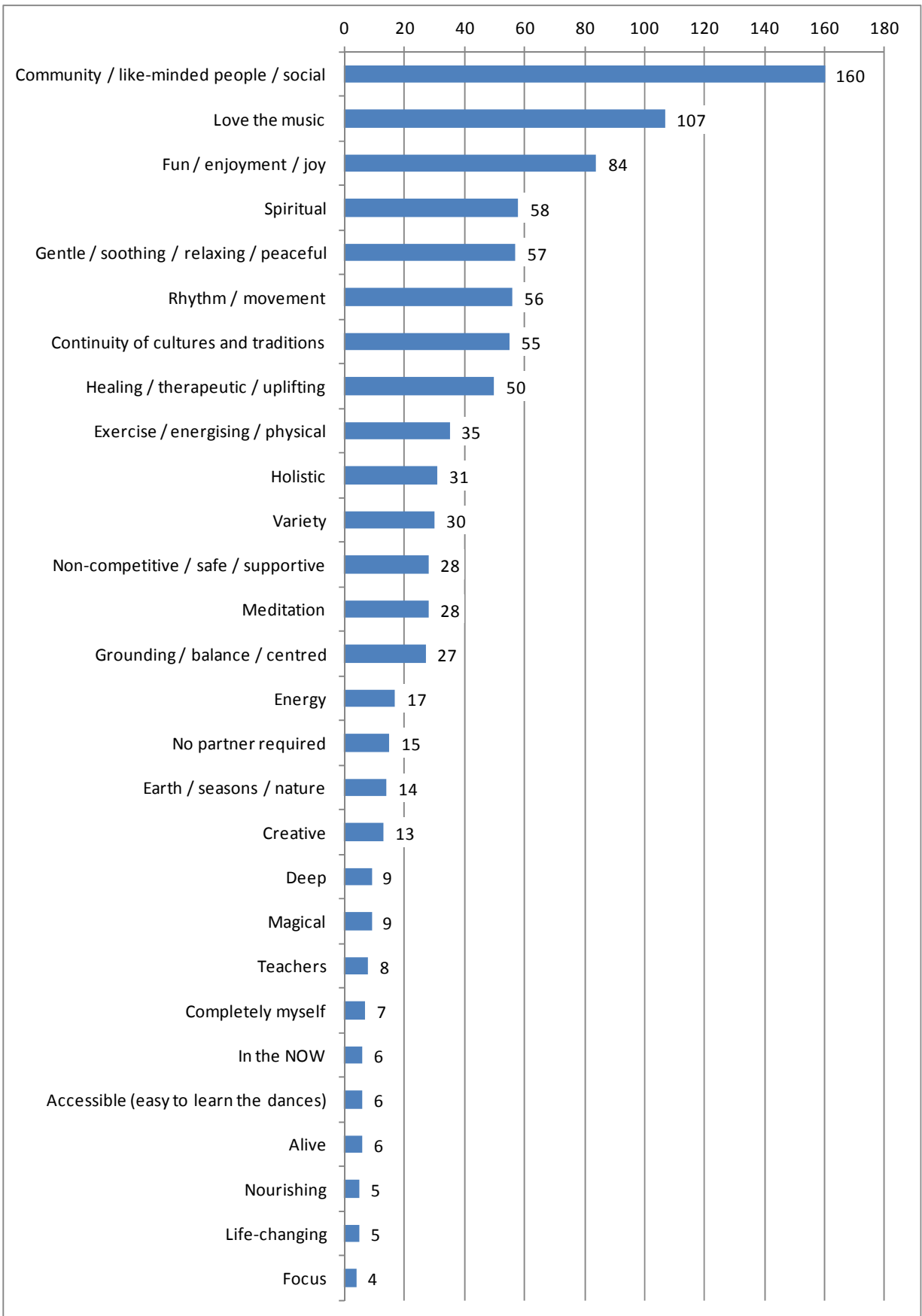
Altogether, 248 people responded to the question, “Why do you like circle dancing?” One person said “I don’t know”, while 247 gave a variety of reasons. The full text was analysed as a word cloud (see Figure 7). The reasons were also coded into 28 themes, and the number of occurrences of each was counted (see Figure 8). The full text of the responses is quoted verbatim in Annexure B.

The most notable reason for liking circle dancing, mentioned by 160 people, was its community / social aspect, including being with like-minded people. The music was mentioned very often: by 107 people in total. Enjoyability was mentioned or implied by 84 people, and spirituality by 58. One person’s response was so comprehensive that it covered 12 of the 28 themes (most people’s responses covered two to four).

Figure 7: Word cloud: Why People Like Circle Dancing



Figure 8: Count of Why People Like Circle Dancing, by Theme (total count across all 247 responses: 930)



3. Relationship to Circle Dancing

3.1. Doing circle dancing at present (or not)

A total of 245 people stated that they do circle dancing at present, and 29 said that they do not. Twelve people gave reasons for not dancing at present: five people mentioned health, injury or mobility issues, three people said that there is no group where they live. One person each cited age and time, being a full-time carer to someone who is ill, being away often, and a clash of schedule with work and church.

3.2. When people started circle dancing

A total of 231 people stated when they started circle dancing (regardless of whether or not they were still dancing) as well as their current age group, which meant that it was possible to calculate their starting age. These are shown in Figure 9.

Among the respondents, the most usual age group for starting was 36 to 40, and the time period when most people started was 1986 to 1990. Two people started very young, and two people were over 70 when they started. Six people were already dancing in the early 1970s.

Figure 9: Start Age and Period when Started

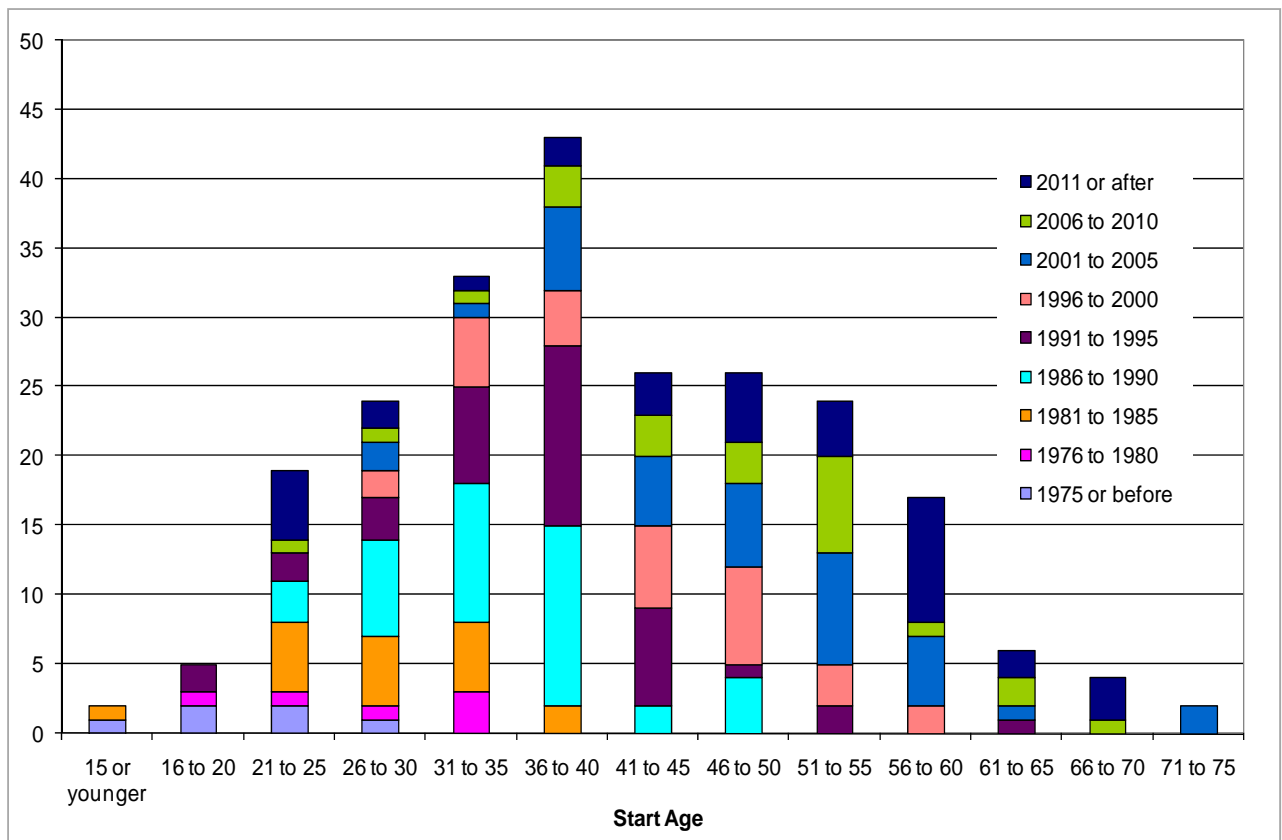


Figure 10 shows the comparison between people's year of starting and their current age. Of the people who started in the late 1980s or from 1996 to 2005, the largest current age group was 66 to 70, but for those who started in the early 1990s or from 2006 to the present, the largest current age group was 61 to 65.

Figure 11 shows the comparison between starting age and current age. The largest current age group was 56 to 60 for the people who started before age 30, while it was 61 to 65 for people who started in their 30s. The largest current age group was now 66 to 70 for those who started between 41 and 55; 61 to 65 for those who started between 56 and 60; and 71 to 75 for those who started in their sixties. The two people who started in their seventies were now over 80.

Not everyone is dancing currently: 245 of all 274 respondents are. Of these, 216 stated when they started (and 29 did not). Figure 12 shows the distribution of the number of years that the 216 people have been dancing: the largest number has been dancing for 14 to 23 years (i.e. they started dancing during the 1990s)

Figure 10: Start Year and Current Age

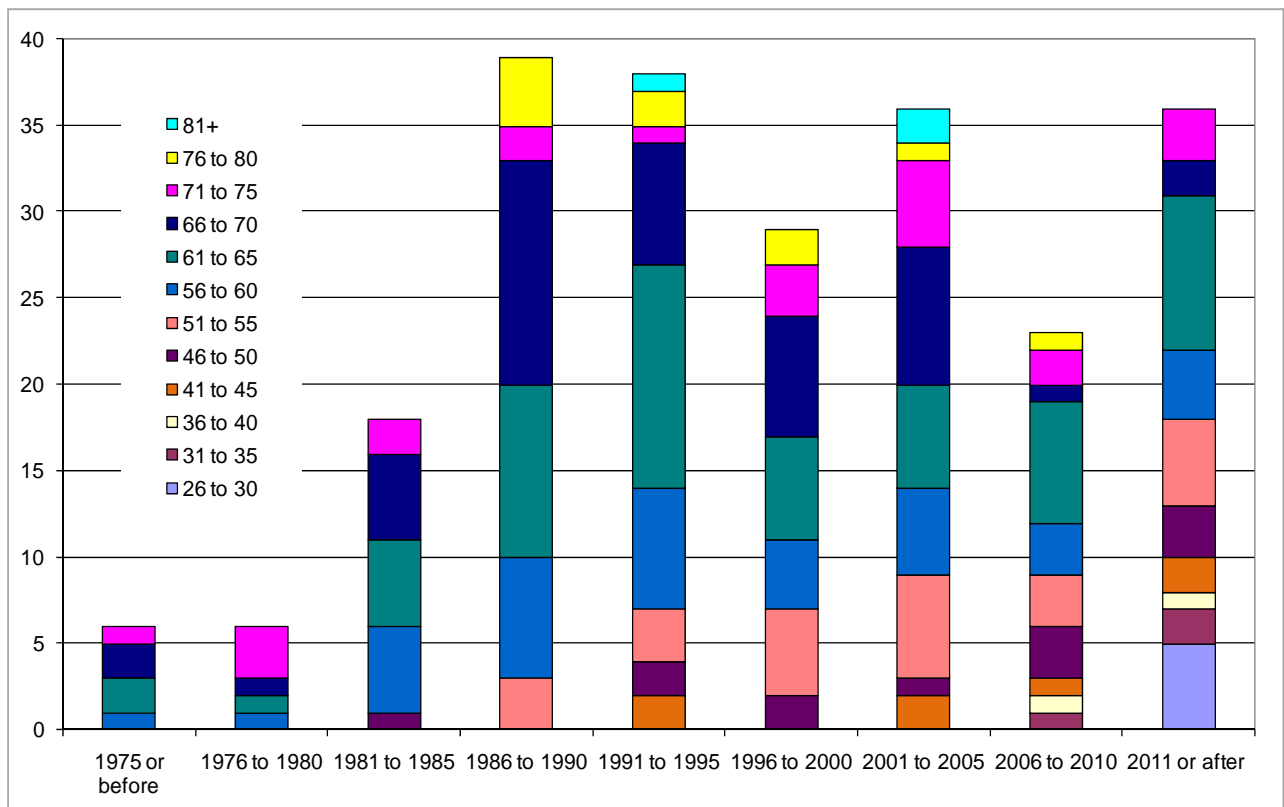


Figure 11: Start Age and Current Age

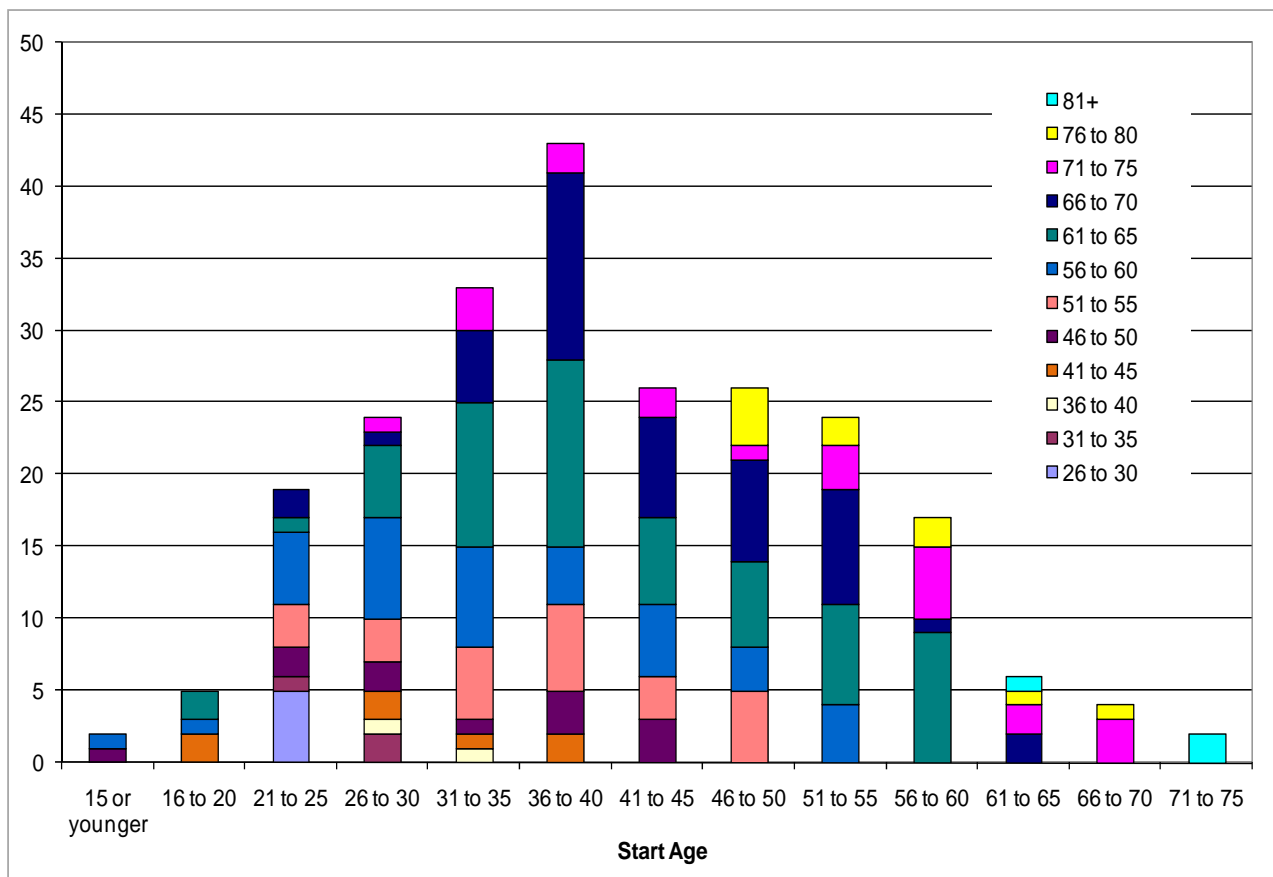
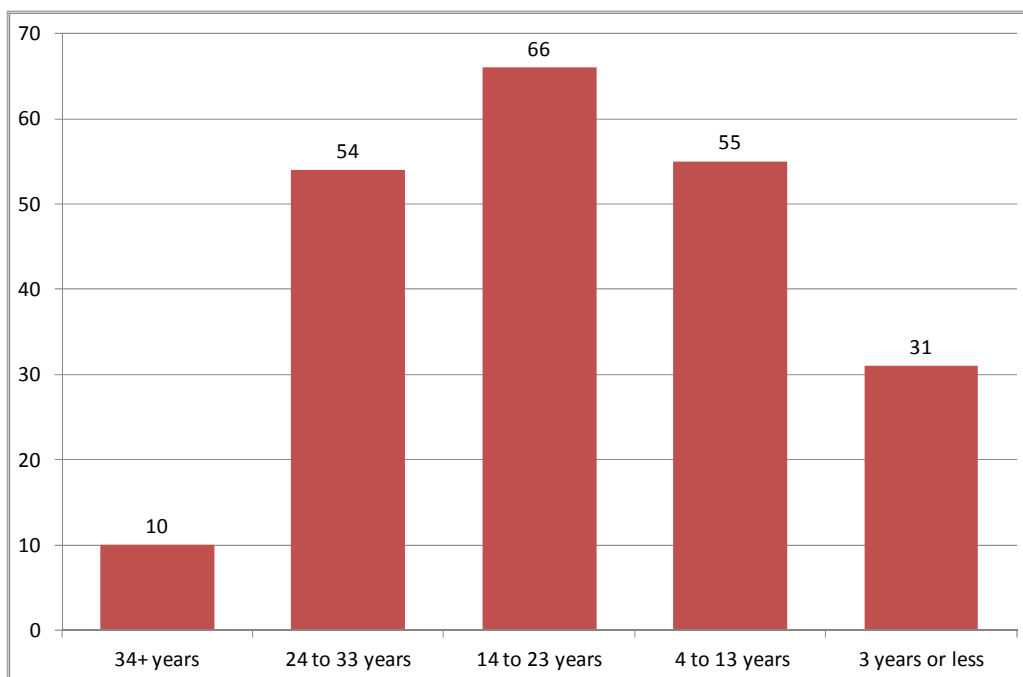


Figure 12: Count of People who Currently Dance, by the Number of Years that they have been Dancing

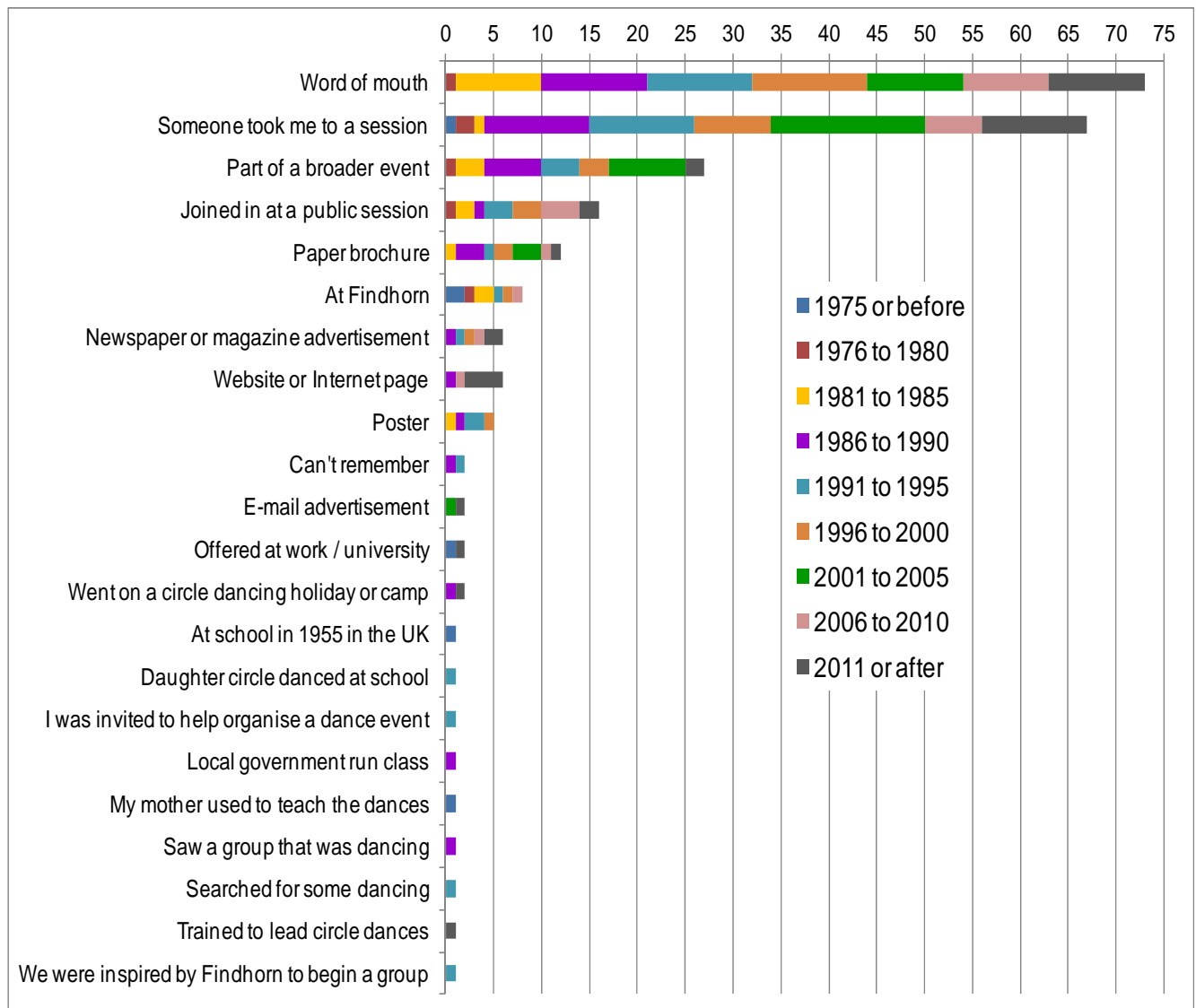


3.3. How people learnt about circle dancing

Of the 237 people who stated how they started circle dancing, almost a third (73, 31%) said it was by word of mouth. A further 67 (28%) said that someone took them to a circle dancing session, while 27 (11%) said that they first did circle dancing as part of a broader event. This means that almost 60% of the respondents started circle dancing through someone they already knew. Only 10% started after seeing an advertisement, poster or brochure. It seems, therefore, that there may not be much value to putting much budget or effort into such items. However, it could also mean that not much has ever been done along those lines.

Figure 13 shows the counts of how people learnt about circle dancing, and when they started.

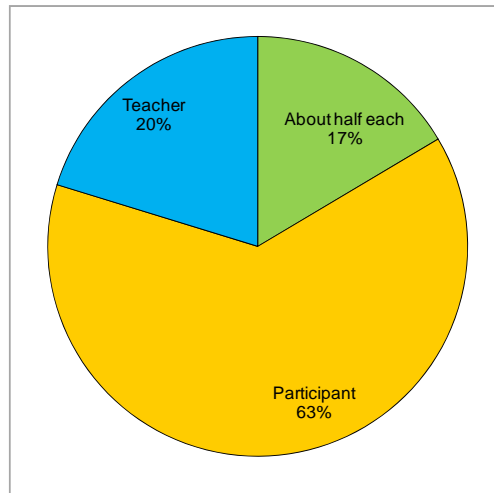
Figure 13: How People Learnt about Circle Dancing, and When they Started



3.4. Teacher or participant or both?

Of the 237 people who responded to this question, one-fifth (20%) said that they only teach circle dancing, and are never participants at other teachers' sessions. A further 17% said that they teach about half of the time that they are dancing. This means that 37% (more than a third) of the respondents are doing at least some teaching, as shown in Figure 14.

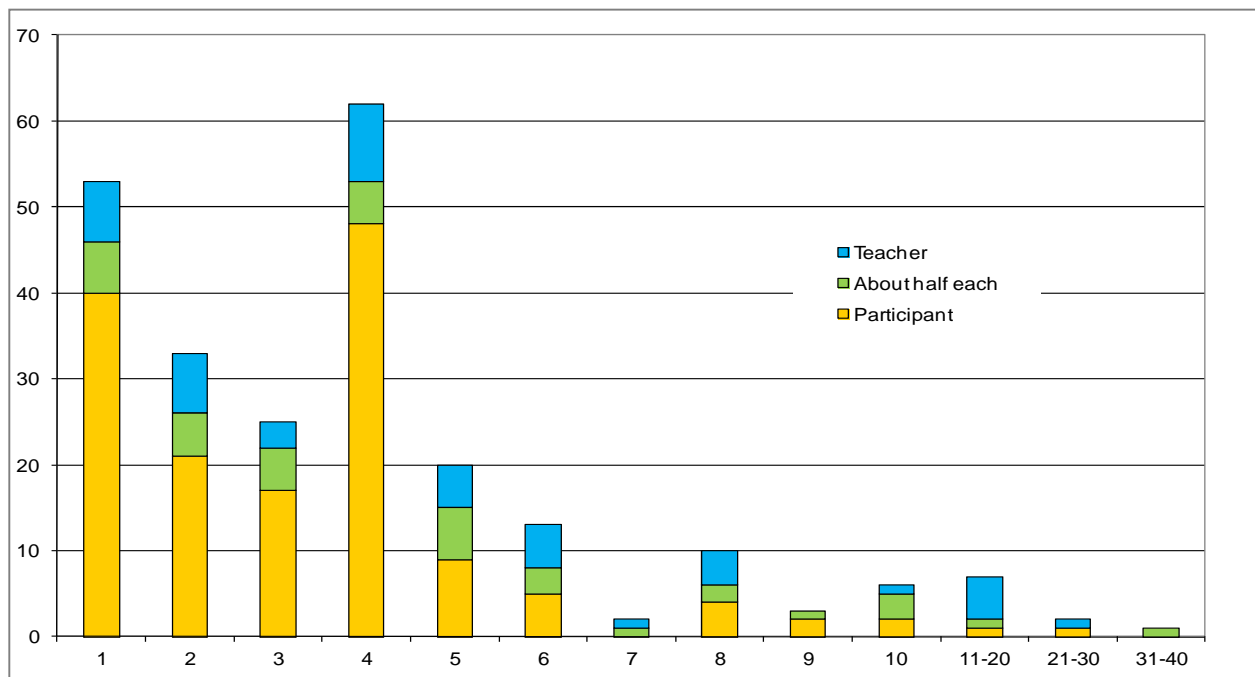
Figure 14: Percentage of Respondents who are Teachers or Participants or Both



3.5. Frequency (number of sessions per month)

The most usual number of sessions per month, among the 237 respondents to this question, was four, followed by one. One person said that she attends 31 to 40 sessions per month. If "session" is defined as "event", then she attends an average of one event every day of the year. However, it is possible that the three people who attend more than 20 sessions a month were taking the definition as "morning session", "afternoon session", etc, of a single event.

Figure 15: Count of People by the Number of Sessions they Attend per month, and whether they are Teachers or Participants or Both

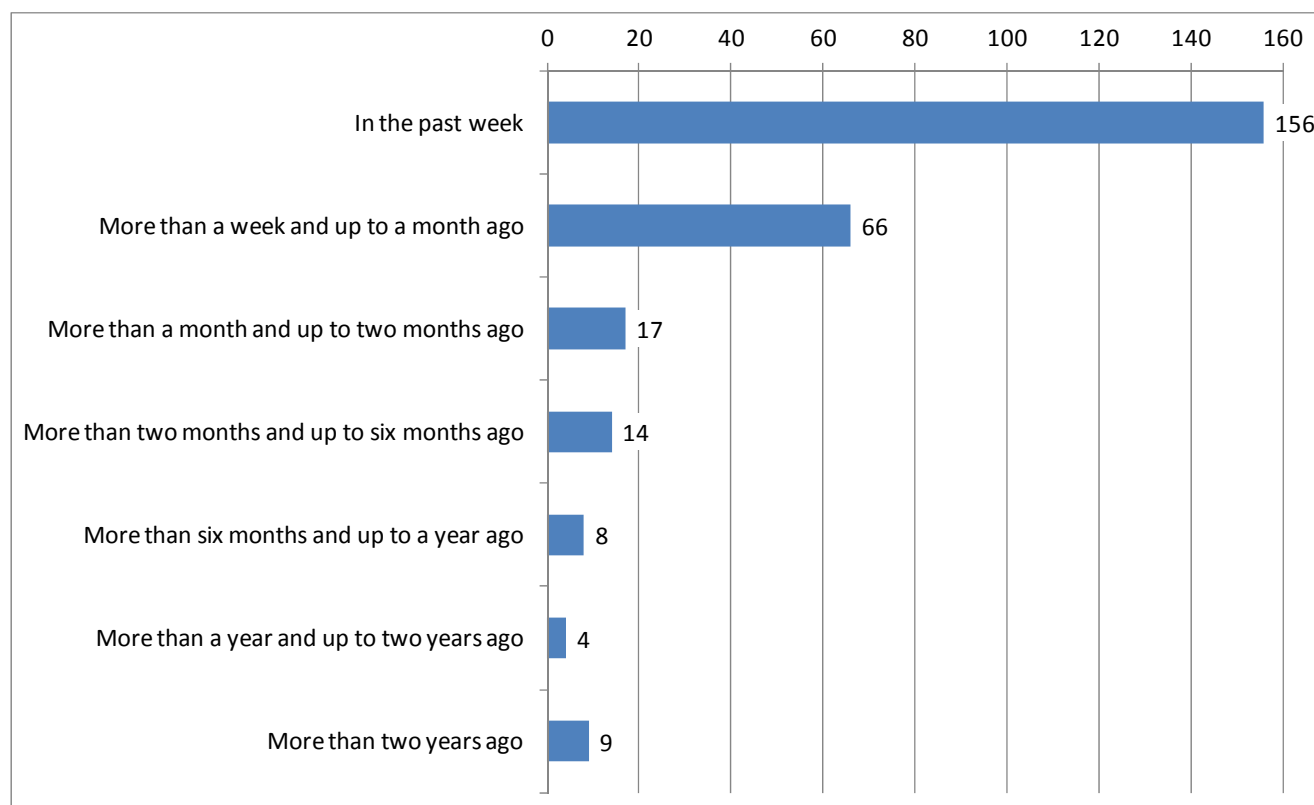


3.6. When people last attended a session

Figure 16 shows that more than half of the 274 people, who stated how recently they had last done circle dancing, had done so in the past week, and a further 66 people (almost a quarter) between a week and a month before.

Reasons given by the nine people who had last danced more than two years before, were old age, lack of time, other commitments such as work and church, living in a location where there is no interest in circle dancing, health issues, and mobility problems (including one broken hip).

Figure 16: Count of People by When last they attended a Circle Dancing Session



3.7. Teachers who have influenced dancers

A total of 221 people listed between one and fourteen teachers each; a total of 160 were listed:

"A teacher that came from another city", Adrian Pointon, Adriana do Girafloor, Ahmet Luleci, Alberto Williams, Allyn Edwards, Ana Maria Merayo, Andy Bettis, Ange, Anita Calderan, Anja Daniels, Anna Barton, Anna Dreda, Anne Armstrong, Anne-Lise Kryger, Barbara Driscoll, Bernadette Madden, Bethan Freedman, Bob Minney, Bobbi Bailin, Brenda Kelly, Brenda Shear, Bruno Perel, Catherine van Alphen, Celia Bain, Charles Petercen, Cherry Bryden, Chrisandra Harris, Chrissie Gamble, Christiana Katsarou, Cindy Kelly, the late Clara Dorfman, Claudia del castillo, Claudio Delfini, Clive Olliver, Colin Harrison, Cornelia Meyburgh, Cristiana Menezes, Cristina Bonetti, Dairmud, David Roberts, Dawn Barnes, Debbie Shakira, Deborah Don, Dee Voce, Diane Meyer, Dimitris Delis, Efthimios Evangelou, Elba Meier, Eliane do Girafloor, Erik Bendix, Estela Arturi, Felisa Chalcoff, Fiona Parr, Fleur Barragan, Frida Zalcman, Friedel Kloeke-Eibl, Gabriele Wosien, Gail Howarth, Gergana Panova, Gilly Neill, Gwyn Peterdi, Hazel Young, Helen O, Helen Ormerod, Hennie Konigs, Hilary Webster, Hilda Carmona, Holly Burn Crain,

Howard Siegel, Hugh Spriggs, Imogen Mark, Jackie Spearpoint, Jane McKee, Joan Peart, Joe Miller, John Bear, John Ford, Jorge de Oro, Josephine Feller, Judie Davidson, Judith Thompson, Judy David, Judy King, Julia Martin, Julie Bell, June Watts, Karen Davies, Karen Michaelson, Kate Forster, Kath Penney, Katy van Wyk, Keryn Evely, Kevin Meyer, Krista Sands, Laura Shannon, Lesley Laslett, Lisl Foss, Lorraine Pratt, Lucia Cordeiro, Lulo Rossi, Lyn Ingram, Lynn Frances, Mandy de Winter, Margaret Bosshart, Marge Oppliger, Maria Miller, Mariana, Mariana Rodriguez Albertani, Marianne Inselmini, Marina Bear, Marinette Aristov, Marion Violets, Martine Winnington, Mary, Matia Fuentes, Maxine Wood, Michael Loxton, Mike Machin, Milena Herrera, Moonyeen, mostly Kloke family, Nan Musgrove, Nanni Kloke, Nawal Gadalla, Nikos Kostopoulos / Kostakoupolos, Olivia Brady, Pablo Scornik, Pat Oliver, Pat Welch, Paul Boizot, Peter Vallance, Phil Smith, Ray Price, Raymond Thompson, Renata Ramos, Rita Sternbach, Ronete Esteves Elias, Rosa James, Rosie Eva, Sandie Wade, Saskia Kloke, Sergio Malqui, Sheila Buckfield, Sheila Buckley, Silvia Balado, Sister Bernadette, Sophia Hatch, Stefan Freedman, Stephanie Rose, Stephen Nutt, Sunnara, Susanne Bartholomai, the late Suzy Straw, Tarleton Brooks, The Huddlers, Ursula Stubbings, Walter, Yves Moreau, Yvonne Shapiro.

Many reasons were given, among them inspiration, style, knowledge, repertoire, facilitation, powerful, community mother, community building, inclusiveness, passion, love, fun, welcoming, joy, grace, magical, encouraging, role model, patience, kindness, respect, energy, attention to detail, charisma, humility, skilled teacher, choreographing dances; "preserving the culture of the dance, and ... understands and shares its background, tradition, and complexity".

4. Dancing, Dances and Music

4.1. Dance forms that are important to circle dancers (in terms of time and enjoyment)

This question proved to have multiple interpretations: once the responses were standardised, the number of different dance forms listed was 111. Table 2 shows the primary dance form listed by the 184 people who responded to the question.

Table 2: Primary Dance Form

Primary Dance Form	Count	%
Circle dancing	120	65.2%
Greek dancing	6	3.3%
Meditative dance	6	3.3%
Ballet	3	1.6%
Ballroom dancing	3	1.6%
Israeli dancing	3	1.6%
Modern dancing	3	1.6%
Traditional dancing	3	1.6%
All	2	1.1%
Armenian dancing	2	1.1%
Balkan dancing	2	1.1%
Contemporary dance	2	1.1%
Folk dancing	2	1.1%
Sacred Dance	2	1.1%
Ancient, traditional dances	1	0.5%
Appalachian clog dancing	1	0.5%
Arabic / Arabian dancing	1	0.5%
Argentinean folklore dances	1	0.5%
Belly dancing	1	0.5%
Biodanza	1	0.5%
Classical dance	1	0.5%
Classical Indian Dance	1	0.5%
Contra dance	1	0.5%
Country / folk / ceilidh dance	1	0.5%
Dance meditation	1	0.5%
Dances of Universal Peace	1	0.5%
Ecstatic dance	1	0.5%
European Folk Dance	1	0.5%
Gypsy dancing	1	0.5%
Historical dances (Renaissance and Baroque period)	1	0.5%
Hora	1	0.5%
Line dancing	1	0.5%
Russian dancing	1	0.5%
Sequence ballroom dancing	1	0.5%
Spiritual dances	1	0.5%
Tai Chi	1	0.5%
Turkish dancing	1	0.5%
Typical dances of all countries	1	0.5%
World dance	1	0.5%
Total	184	100.0%

Overall, 187 people gave 517 responses to the question of their five favourite dance forms. The dance forms that were favoured by four or more people are shown in Table 3. The reason that the percentages add up to more than 100% is that each person gave between one and five answers (an average of 2.8 answers for each of the 187 people).

Table 3: Top Five Dance Forms

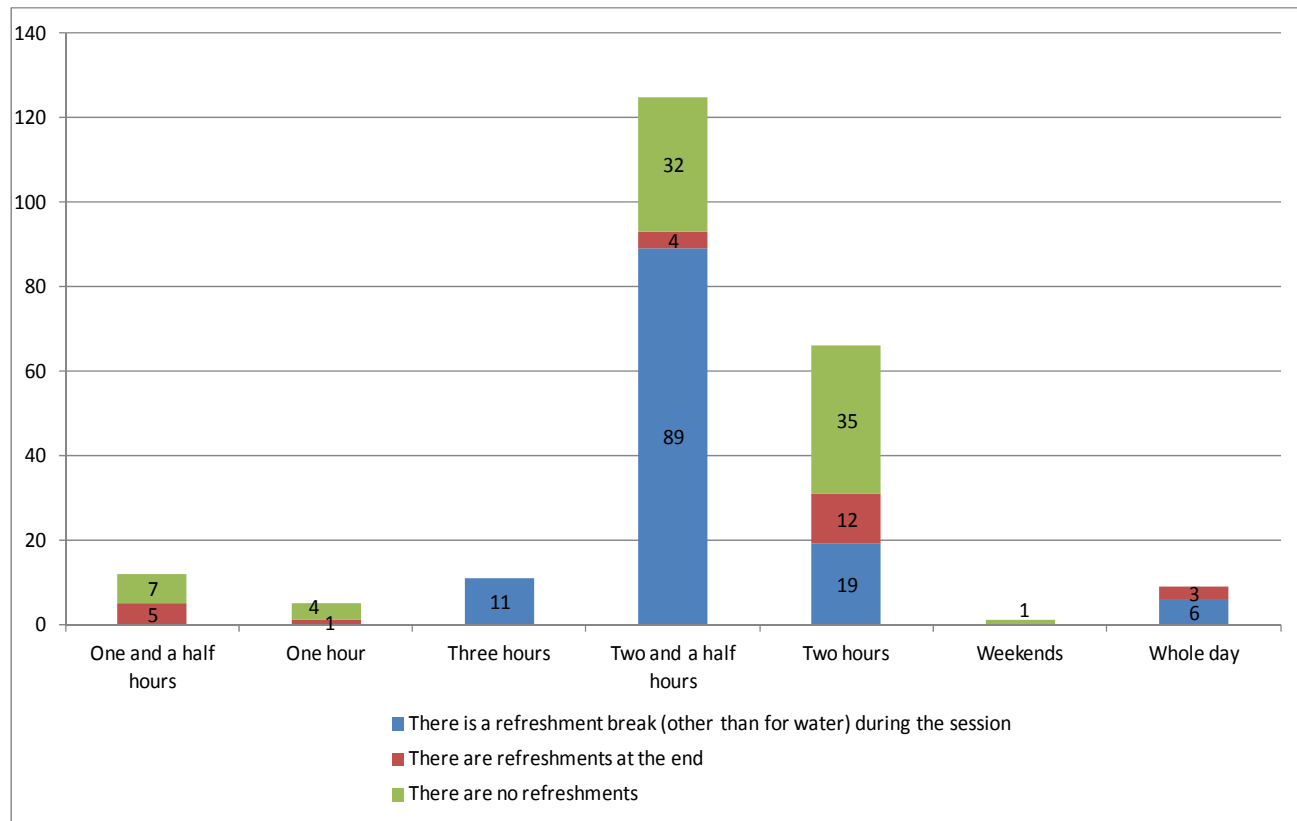
Top Five Dance Forms	Count	%
Circle dancing	165	88.2%
Ballroom dancing	20	10.7%
Free dance	19	10.2%
Ballet	18	9.6%
Folk dancing	18	9.6%
Greek dancing	18	9.6%
Meditative dance	16	8.6%
Country / folk / ceilidh dance	14	7.5%
Five Rhythms	11	5.9%
Contemporary dance	10	5.3%
Israeli dancing	10	5.3%
Modern dancing	8	4.3%
Armenian dancing	6	3.2%
Dances of Universal Peace	6	3.2%
Disco dancing	6	3.2%
Line dancing	6	3.2%
Arabic / Arabian dancing	5	2.7%
Salsa dance	5	2.7%
Jive	4	2.1%
Scottish dancing	4	2.1%
Traditional dancing	4	2.1%

4.2. Circle dancing sessions

4.2.1. Length of Sessions

A total of 229 people stated the length of the sessions they usually attend: the most usual length was two and a half hours, followed by two hours, as shown in Figure 17. Just over a third of the people, who attend sessions of two or two and a half hours, said that there are no refreshments at these sessions.

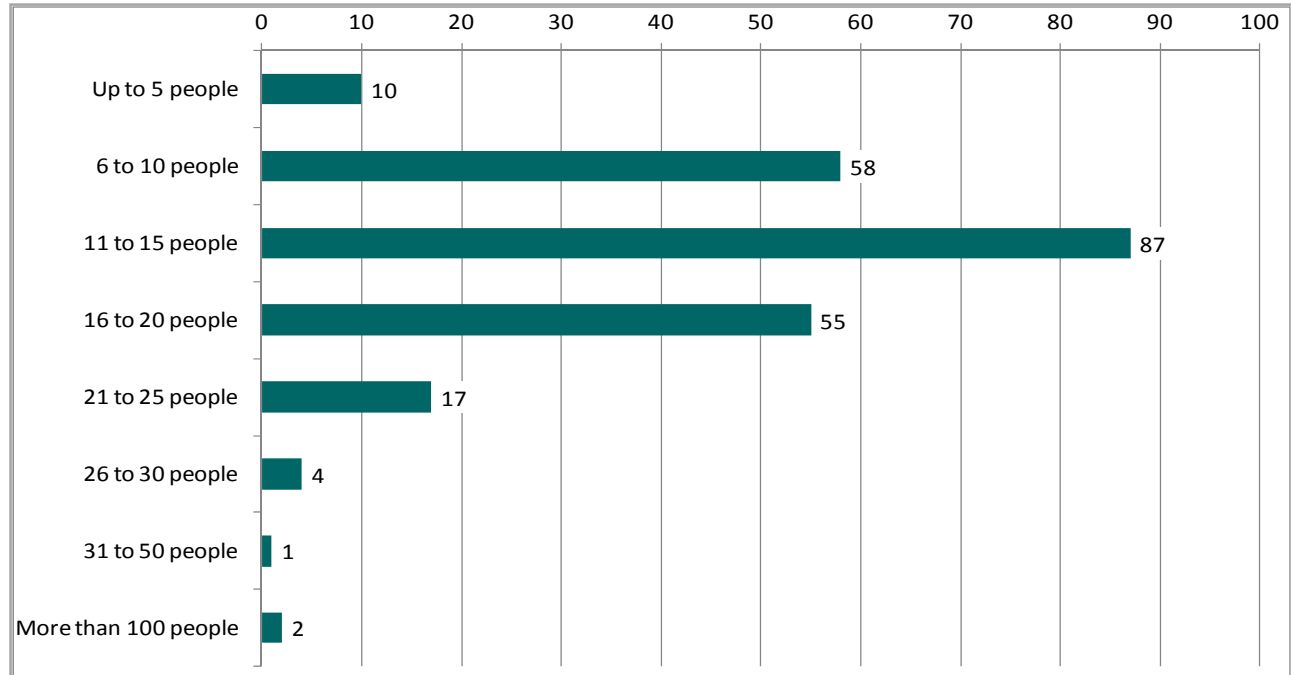
Figure 17: Length of Sessions, and whether or not there are Refreshments



4.2.2. Number of people

Figure 18 shows that, of the 234 people who stated how many people are usually present at the sessions they attend, more than a third dance in groups of 11 to 15 people. Group sizes of 6 to 10 people and 16 to 20 people were also prevalent. Two people said that they dance with more than 100 people.

Figure 18: Count of People by Group Size

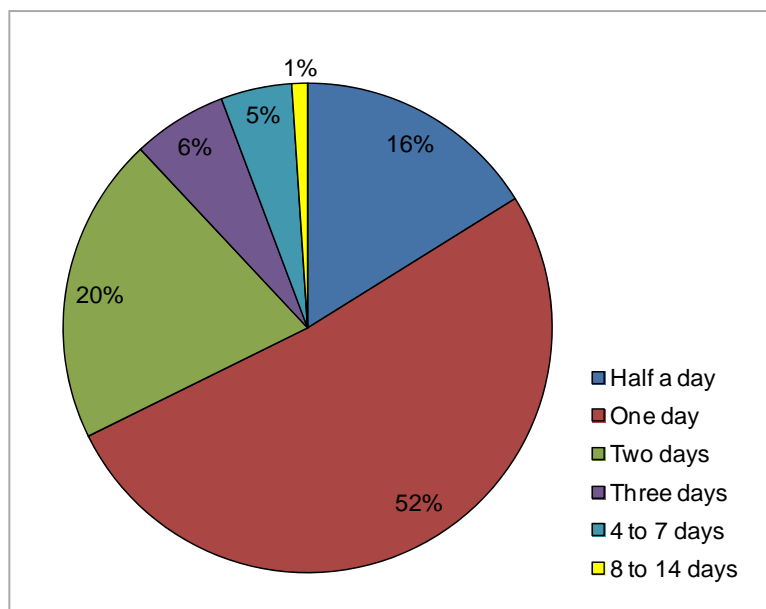


4.3. Circle dancing workshops

4.3.1. Length

Most (52%) of the 192 people, who responded to the question about the usual length of the workshops they facilitate or attend, said that they were usually one-day workshops, followed by two-day workshops for 20%, as shown in Figure 19.

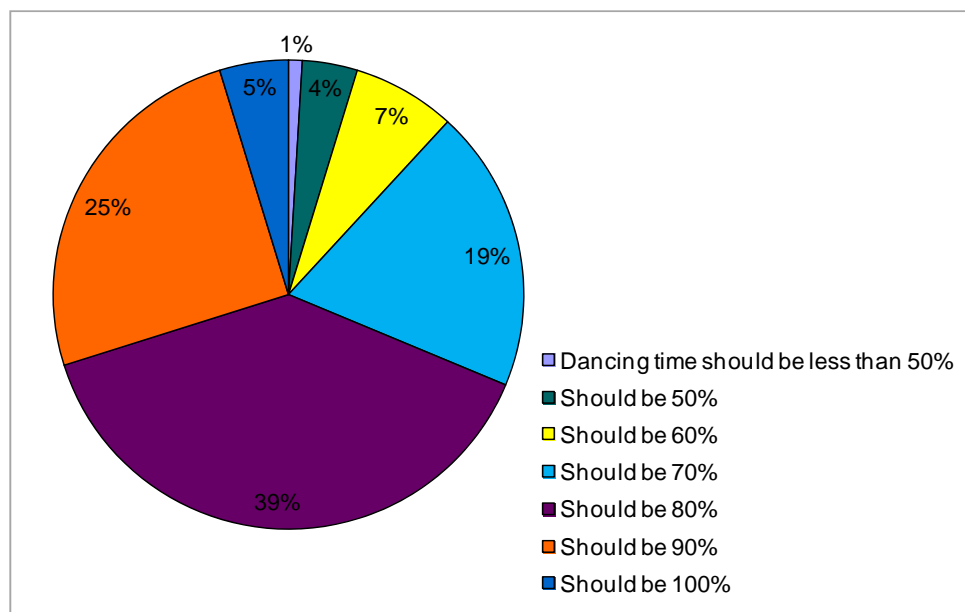
Figure 19: Workshop Length, and the Percentage of Respondents for each



4.3.2. Preferred percentage of dancing time (as compared with time for other activities)

Responses to the question, of what the percentage of dancing time (as compared with time for other activities such as talking or making things or meditating) should usually be, were varied. The majority of the 211 people who responded thought that it should be 80%, as shown in Figure 20.

Figure 20: Recommended Proportion of each Workshop for Activities Other than Dancing, and the Percentage of Respondents recommending each



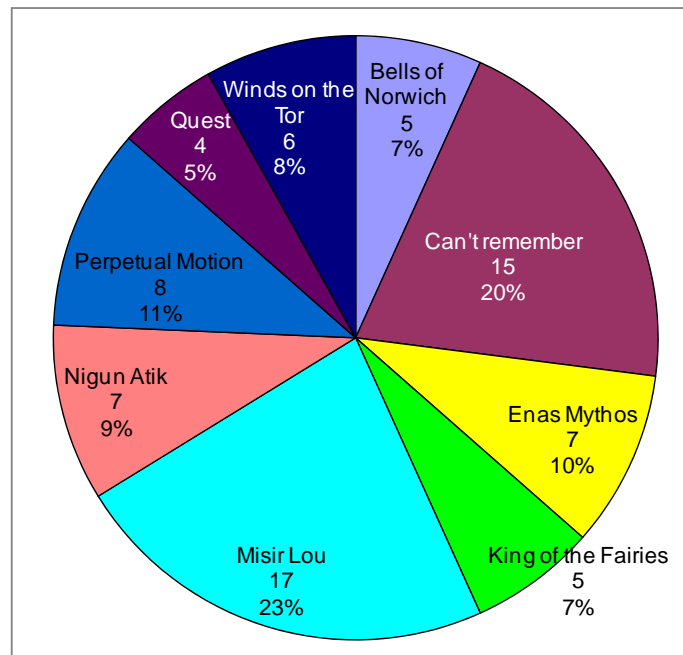
4.4. Special Dances

Among the respondents, there is one dance that has stood the test of time. It will probably not be too difficult to guess that this is “Misir Lou”. It is the only dance that was among the most popular, as remembered by 17 people from when they started dancing, and as still chosen now, although by far less people (three, one of whom had selected it as her early dance as well: her exact words were, “it will always be The Miserlou”). A further three people had unchanged favourites: “Winds on the Tor” (which was among the top ten for people’s initial favourites but not among the top ten current favourites), “Erev Shel Shoshanim” and “Hallelujah for the Whole World”.

4.4.1. Initial favourite dances

A total of 189 people responded to the question about the dance that stands out for them as one of the first they ever did and enjoyed: between them they selected about 100 dances, with 15 of the 189 people responding that they could not remember. Figure 21 shows the eight dances named by four or more people.

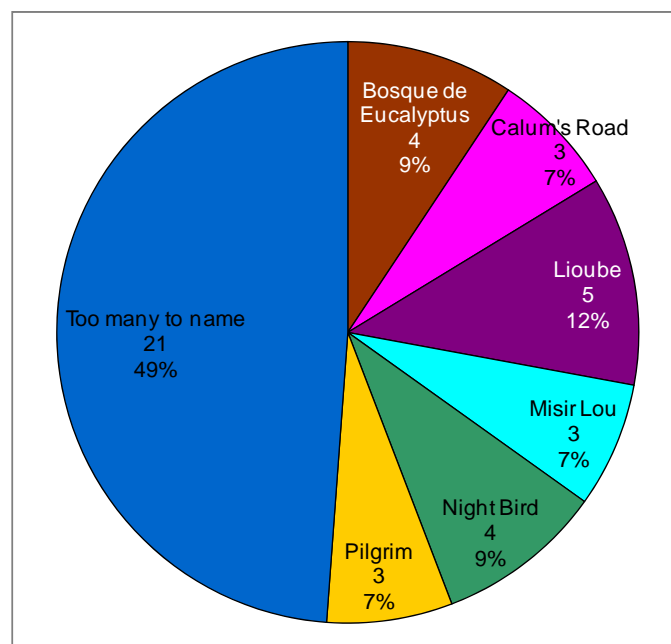
Figure 21: Dances that stand out from dancers' Early Days



4.4.2. Current favourite dances

A total of 170 people responded to the question about the dance that currently stands out for them: although less people responded to this than to the question about the early dances, they selected a greater variety between them – about 120 dances, with 21 of the 170 people responding that there are too many to name. Figure 22 shows the seven dances named by three or more people.

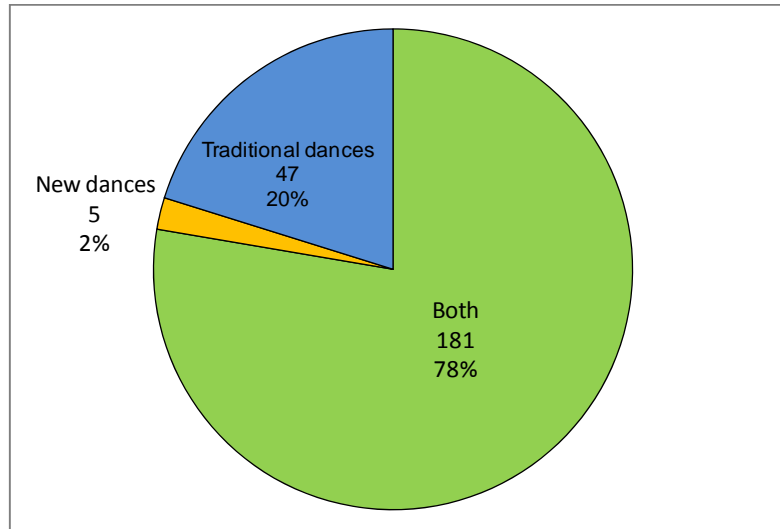
Figure 22: Dances that Currently stand out



4.5. Traditional or New Dances?

Of the 233 people who responded to the question of whether they prefer traditional or new dances, 47 (20%) prefer traditional dances, 5 (2%) prefer new dances, and 181 (71%) prefer both, as shown in Figure 23.

Figure 23: Proportion of People who prefer Traditional Dances, New Dances, or Both



4.6. Whether or not people have choreographed dances

Of the 237 people who responded to the question of whether they had ever choreographed a dance, 83 (35%) said that they had done so and 154 (65%) said that they had not.

4.7. Music

4.7.1. Most usual medium for the music at circle dancing sessions

A total of 217 people responded to the question about the most usual medium for the music for circle dancing. Of these people, 80 teach circle dancing. The proportions for all who responded and the teacher subset were very similar, with iPods as the most popular by far (40% and 36% respectively). CDs were next in line (27%) for the full group of respondents and third (26%) for the teacher subset, while laptops with speakers were third (24%) and second (29%) respectively. Tapes still have limited usage; 3% of the respondents are lucky to have live music as their most usual medium; and tablets with speakers are the most usual for 1% of the respondents. One person said that LPs are the most usual medium at the sessions she attends (although the teacher said that CDs are).

Figures 24 and 25 illustrate the responses.

Figure 24: Most Popular Media for playing Circle Dancing Music, as stated by 217 Respondents

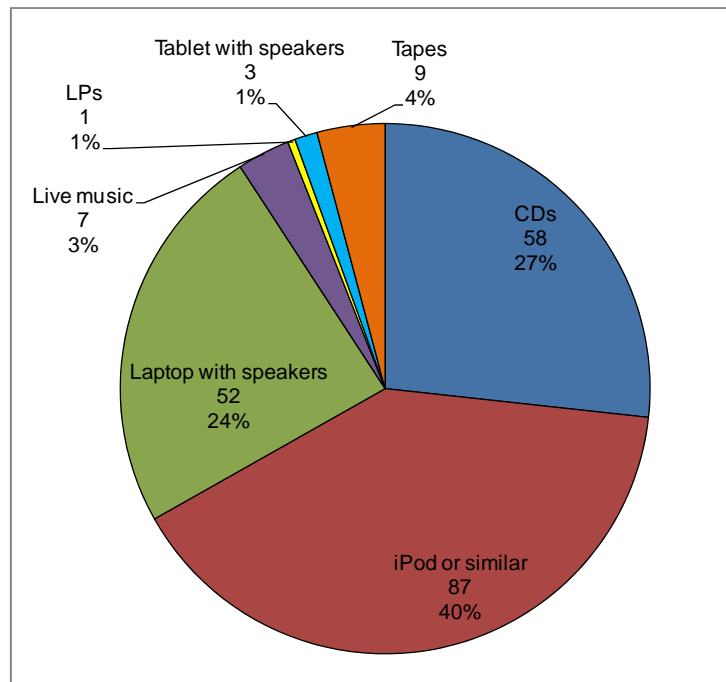
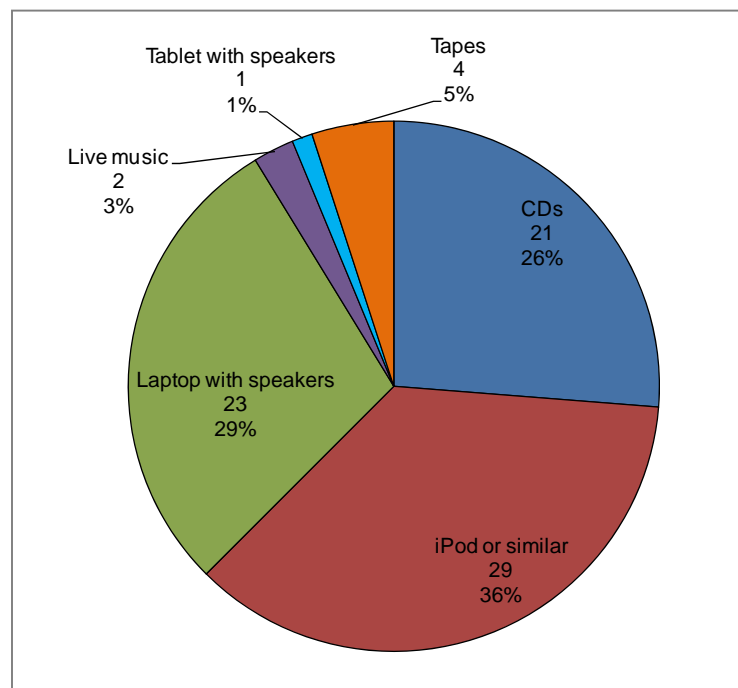


Figure 25: Most Popular Media for playing Circle Dancing Music, as stated by 80 People who Teach Circle Dancing



4.7.2. Playing music or singing for circle dancing

A total of 240 people responded to the question about whether they ever play music or sing for circle dancing: only 8% (20 people) said that they do so, often or very often. More than half (124 people) said that they never do. The responses are shown in Figure 26.

The responses were also compared with when people had started circle dancing, and it was found that people who joined from 1991 to 1995, or from 2006 onwards, were most active in playing music or singing for circle dancing, as shown in Figure 27.

Figure 26: Count of People by whether or not they ever play Live Music or Sing for Circle Dancing

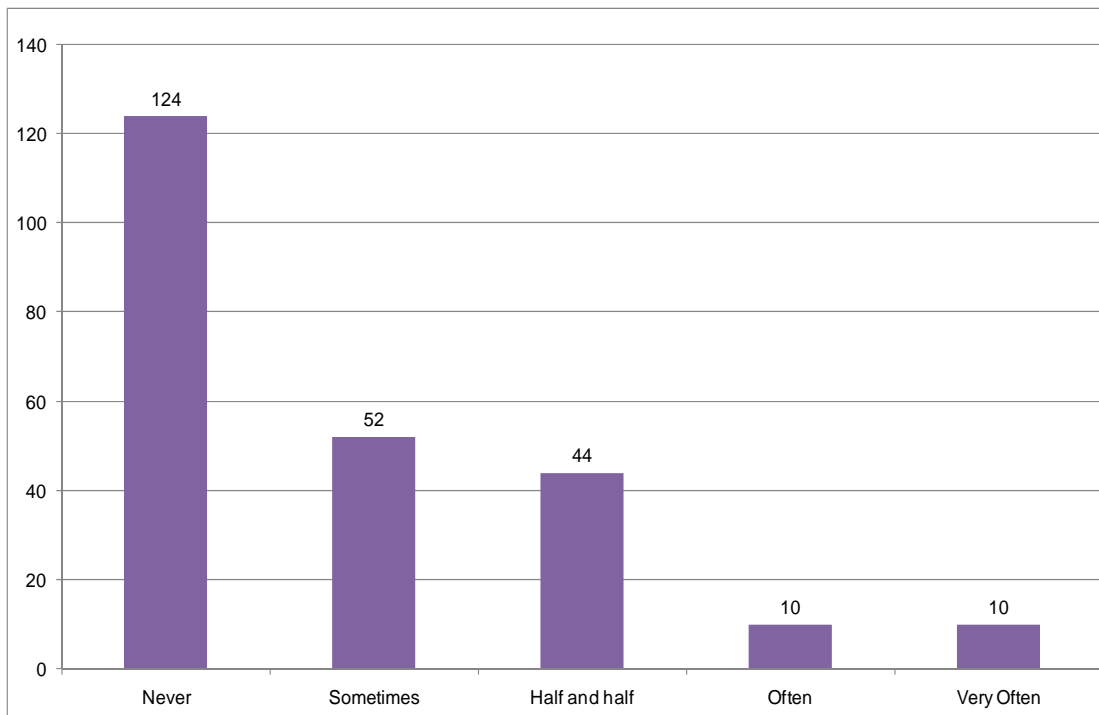
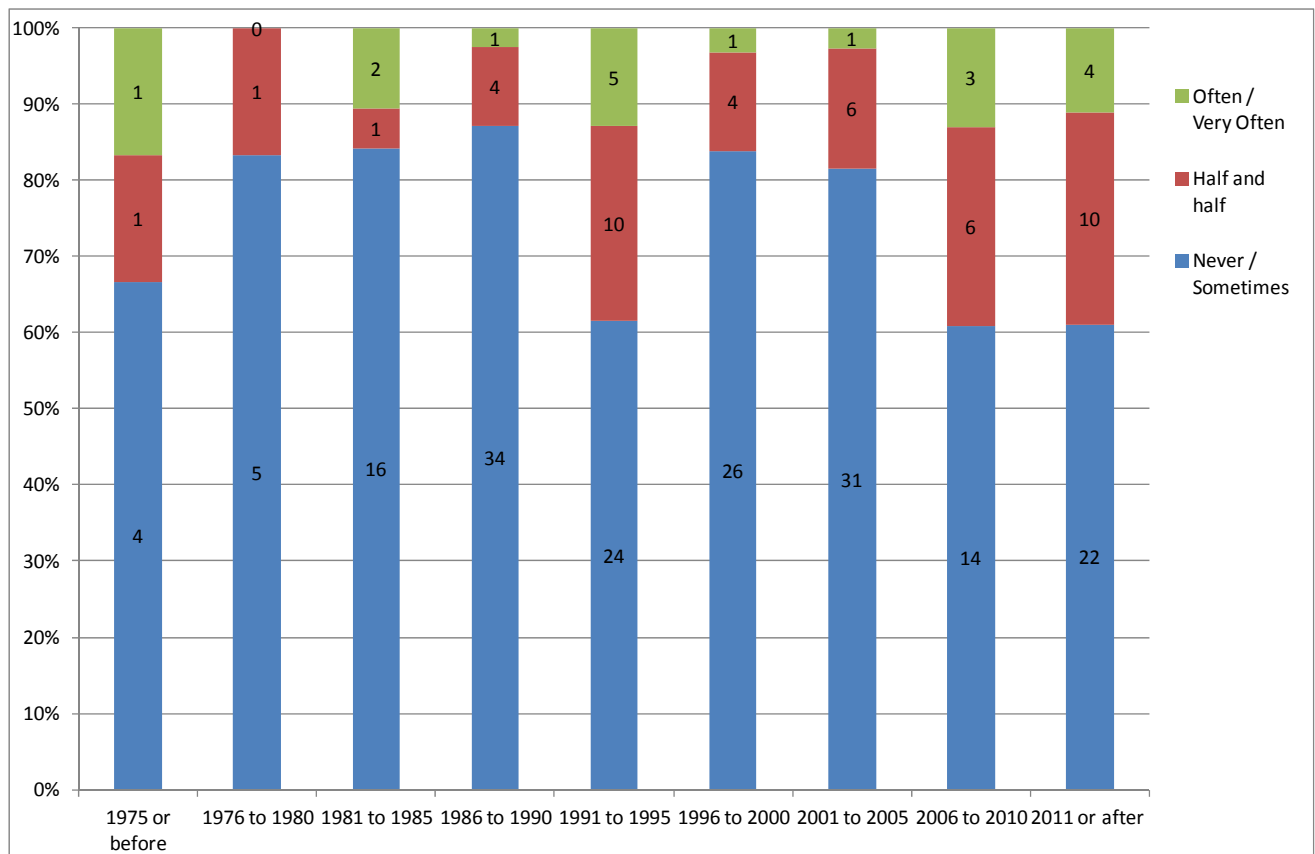


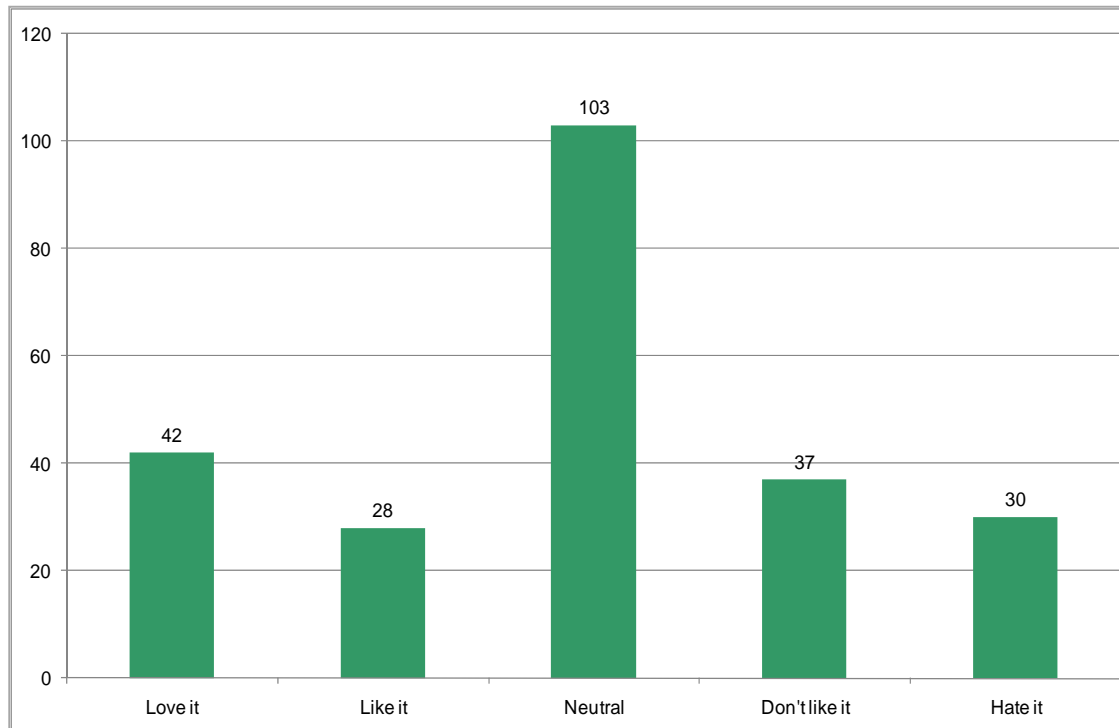
Figure 27: Count of People by when they Started and whether or not they Play Music or Sing for Circle Dancing



4.7.3. The use of “popular” tunes for traditional dances

A total of 240 people responded to the question about whether they enjoy occasionally using popular tunes for traditional dances: 43% (103 people) said that they are neutral, and the numbers who like or dislike it were almost the same, as shown in Figure 28: 29% like it and 28% dislike it.

Figure 28: Count of People by whether or not they enjoy occasionally using Popular Tunes for Traditional Dances



The stereotype – that younger people would be more likely to enjoy the use of popular tunes for traditional dances, and older people would not – was tested, and was found to be at least partially true, as shown in Figures 29 and 30 (Figure 30 is included for those who enjoy seeing “area” graphs).

Figure 29: Number of People who enjoy occasionally using Popular Tunes for Traditional Dances, by Current Age

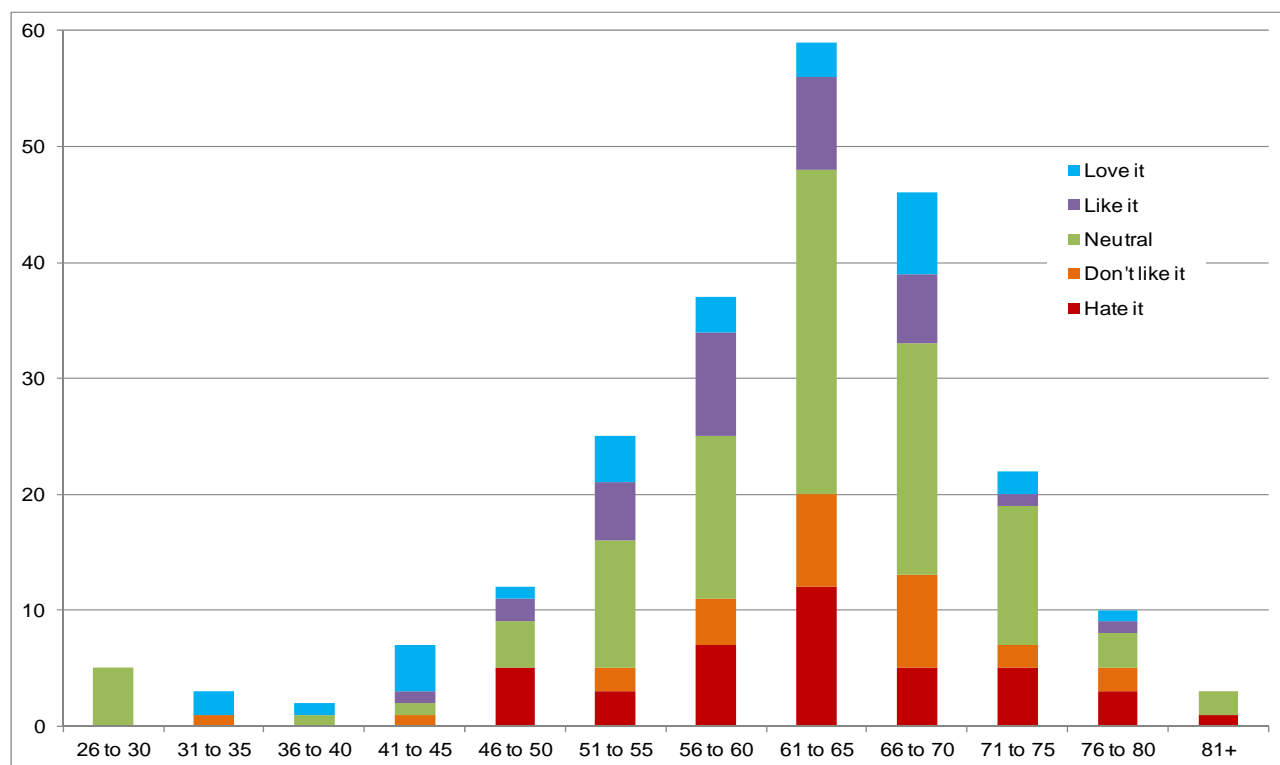
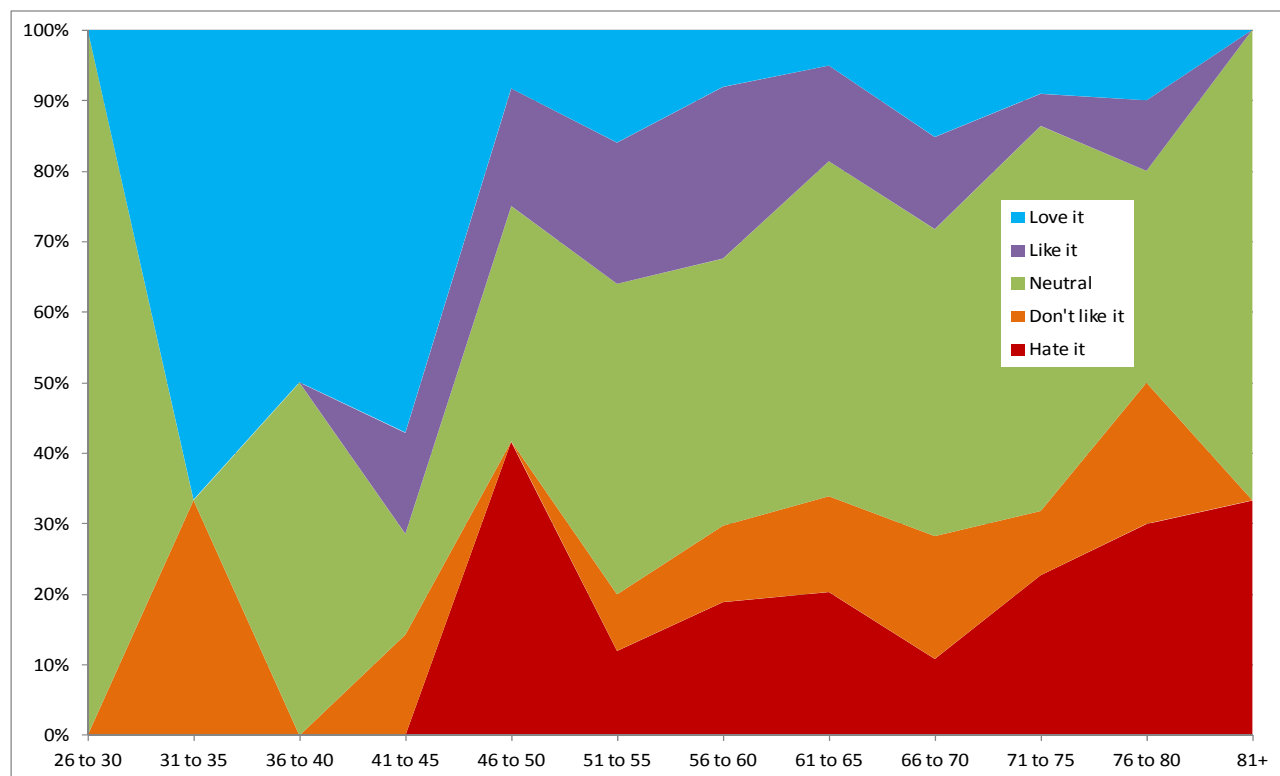


Figure 30: Percentage of People who enjoy occasionally using Popular Tunes for Traditional Dances, by Current Age



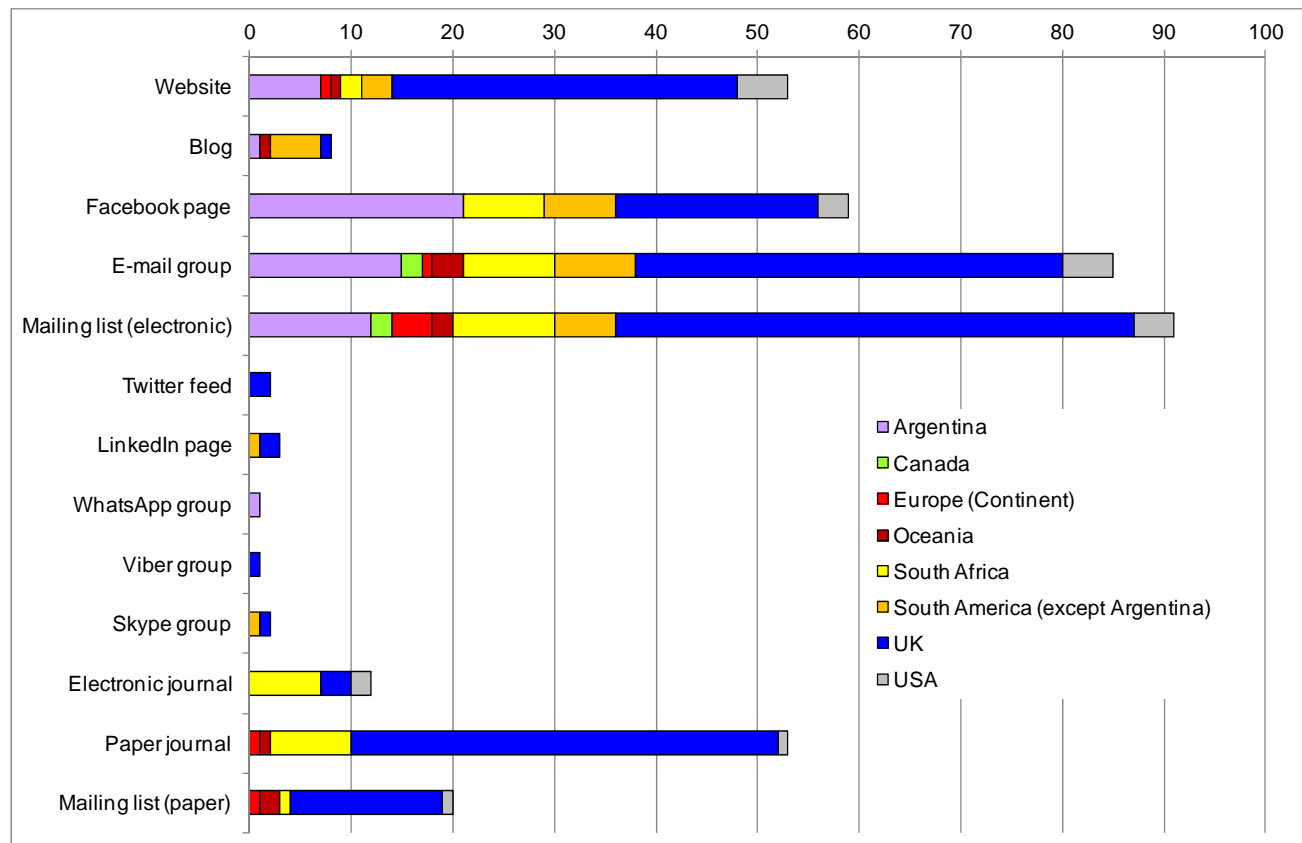
5. Communicating About Dancing

The majority of the 274 respondents seem not to use any type of communication about circle dancing. Alternatively, they simply did not answer the questions about whether they run (or make a substantial contribution to running), or receive or read any of the items listed in Table 4, specifically geared to circle dancing. For those who do use any of these, electronic mailing lists are the most commonly used, followed by e-mail groups. Figure 31 shows the same counts, by summarised country.

Table 4: Number of People who Use each Communication Method

Communication Method	Use	Don't use / did not answer
Website	53	221
Blog	8	266
Facebook page	59	215
E-mail group	85	189
Mailing list (electronic)	91	183
Twitter feed	2	272
LinkedIn page	3	271
WhatsApp group	1	273
Viber group	1	273
Skype group	2	272
Electronic journal	12	262
Paper journal	53	221
Mailing list (paper)	20	254

Figure 31: Number of People who Use each Communication Method, by Summarised Country



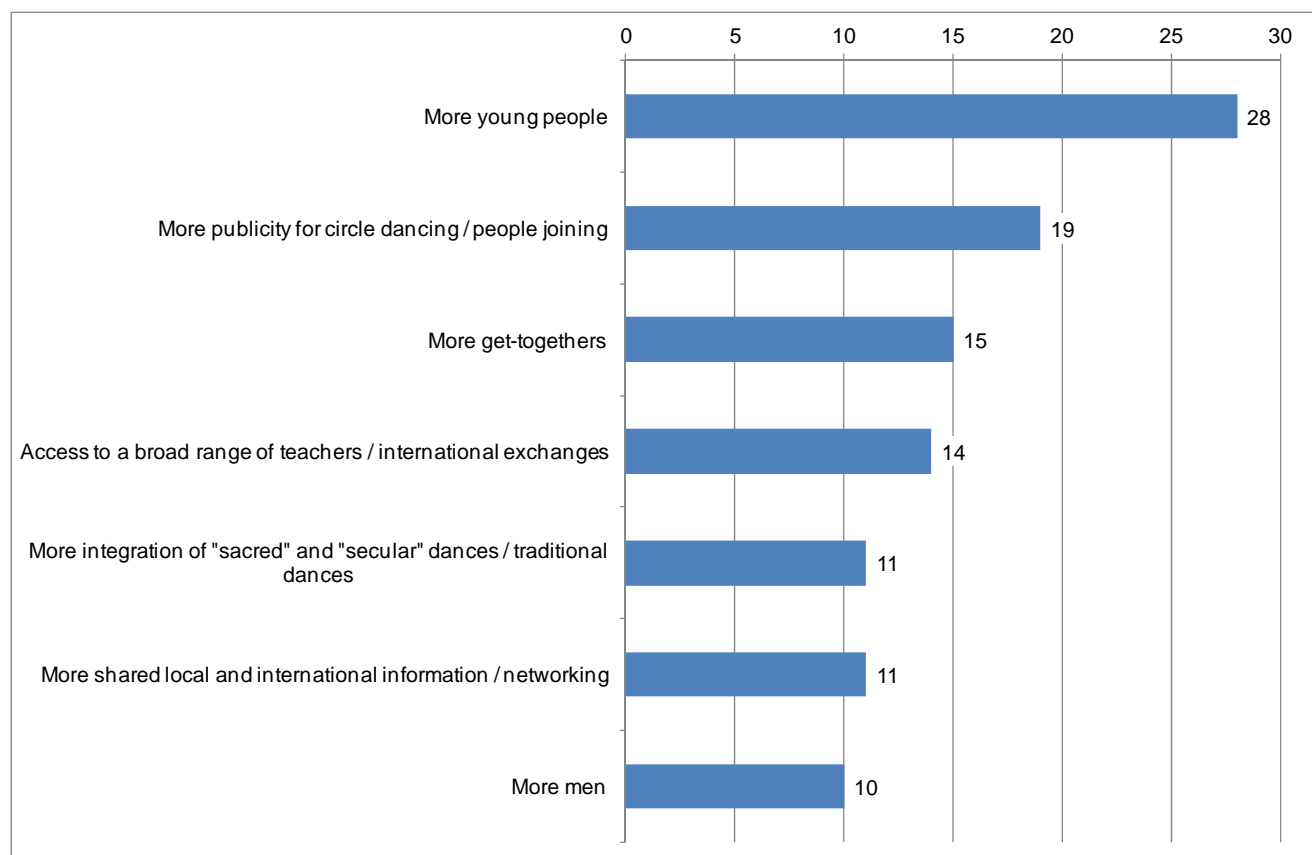
6. Thoughts for the Future

The responses to the question of what people would like to see more of and less of in the worldwide circle dancing community were comprehensive and varied. They are reproduced here in aggregated form, in order to see the trends, as well as in Annexure B in full, in order to see their depth and breadth. There may be items on the “wish list” that can be fulfilled relatively easily and for the benefit of all.

6.1. What people want more of

A total of 119 people gave relevant answers to what they would like to see more of. Figure 32 shows each of the responses given by 10 or more people.

Figure 32: What People Want More of, and the Number of People (10 or more) who want this.



The summary list of what people want more of, from the most to the least mentioned, is as follows (those shown in blue are mentioned once each):

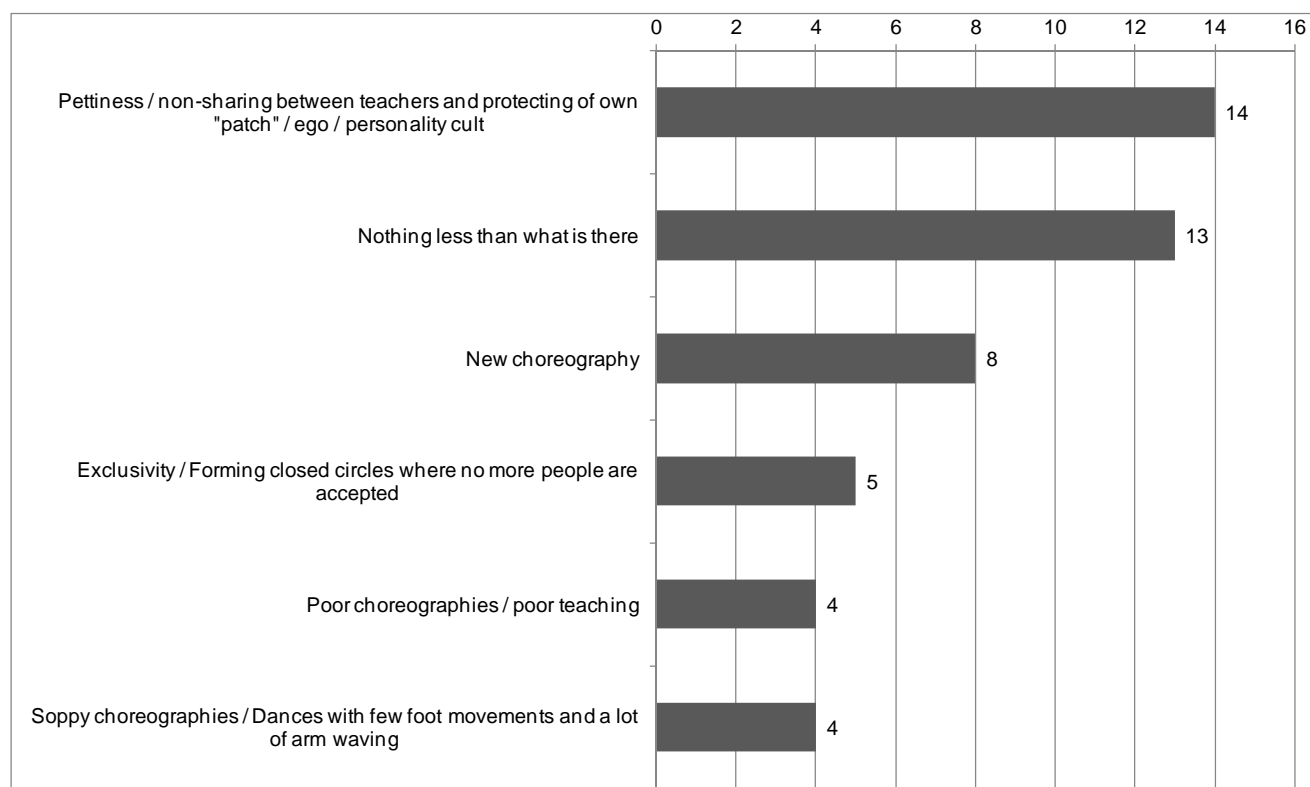
- 1 More young people
- 2 More publicity for circle dancing / people joining
- 3 More get-togethers
- 4 Access to a broad range of teachers / international exchanges
- 5 More integration of "sacred" and "secular" dances / traditional dances
- 6 More shared local and international information / networking

- 7 More men
- 8 More awareness of the roots and traditions from which we sprang, as well as an embracing of diversity
- 9 Circle dancing at schools
- 10 A worldwide central archive of dance notations / videos
- 11 Unity, harmony, enjoyment, flowing of movements and feelings, happiness, welcoming
- 12 Put the Grapevine resource pages / the whole of Grapevine on the Internet
- 13 The introduction of a concept of professional development / teachers faculty for peer support amongst teachers
- 14 More dancing with local people in their countries
- 15 Dancing for people living with dementia / other health issues / learning difficulties
- 16 A dancing group where I live
- 17 More live music
- 18 Available music / music in specific format
- 19 Halls at reasonable hiring rates / Venues that are accessible to more people
- 20 More in-depth work on less dances, to focus more on the quality of dancing as a group rather than the seemingly endless quest for more and more different dances
- 21 Some form of centralised organisation to support individual initiatives as well as institutions such as Grapevine, and a website for the benefit of the whole dancing community
- 22 Outdoor dancing in the summer
- 23 Respect for the original choreographies
- 24 More dancing in lovely places
- 25 Have more time to dance!
- 26 Use the dancing as a conduit for world peace and healing
- 27 Bigger groups
- 28 More opportunities for experienced dancers to just dance and maybe to learn new dances 'on the hop' so to speak!
- 29 Empowering others in a new art of creating and co-creating circle dancing as an authentic and relevant form of contemporary shared-spiritual-experience, and constructive community affirmation
- 30 More voluntary facilitators to take the dances to those who cannot pay.

6.2. What people want less of

A total of 58 people gave relevant answers to what they would like to see less of (although the second most frequent response was, in fact, an affirmation of what is there, and a desire not to change it). Figure 33 shows each of the responses given by four or more people.

Figure 33: What People Want Less of, and the Number of People (10 or more) who want this.



The summary list of what people want less of, from the most to the least mentioned, is as follows (those shown in blue are mentioned once each):

- 1 Pettiness / non-sharing between teachers and protecting of own "patch" / ego / personality cult
- 2 Nothing less than what is there
- 3 New choreography
- 4 Exclusivity / Forming closed circles where no more people are accepted
- 5 Poor choreographies / poor teaching
- 6 Sappy choreographies / Dances with few foot movements and a lot of arm waving
- 7 Talking
- 8 Use of modern music
- 9 Bad poetry
- 10 Fear of change
- 11 The assumption one knows all 'the' teachers and history of dance
- 12 Plodding
- 13 Less changing of traditional dances from their original forms, because once gone they are lost forever.
- 14 Can't have much less than nothing (there is no circle dancing where I am)
- 15 International travel to attend events (apart from the teachers)
- 16 Some of the meditative dances
- 17 Rom dances
- 18 Frivolity in people
- 19 Non-sustainable esotericism / inauthentic spiritualism

6.3. Other comments about circle dancing

A total of 78 people responded to the question, “Any other comments about circle dancing?”

A total of 78 people responded to the question, "Any other comments about circle dancing?"

Figure 34 is a word cloud of the responses, and they are also reproduced in full, in Annexure B.

Figure 34: Word cloud: Other Comments about Circle Dancing



Annexure A: The Survey

Welcome to the Circle Dancing Survey!

We hope to learn about people's circle dancing experiences, worldwide. In the process, we may be able to cross-pollinate some thoughts and ideas.

1. Why do you like circle dancing?

2. Do you do circle dancing at present?

3. When was the last time you did circle dancing?

In the past week

More than a week and up to a month ago

More than a month and up to two months ago

More than two months and up to six months ago

More than six months and up to a year ago

More than a year and up to two years ago

I have never yet done circle dancing, but intend to start soon

I have never done circle dancing, and am not going to (please expand on this)

More than two years ago (please specify)

Please add your comment here, if you specified one of the last two:

4. When was the very first time you did circle dancing?

1975 or before

1976 to 1980

1981 to 1985

1986 to 1990

1991 to 1995

1996 to 2000

2001 to 2005

2006 to 2010

2011 or after

5. At that time, how did you learn about circle dancing?

Word of mouth

Someone took me to a session

Joined in at a public session

Newspaper advertisement

Website or Internet page

Paper brochure

E-mail advertisement

Saw a copy of a circle dancing journal

Other (please specify)

6. What are the dance forms that are most important in your life (in terms of time and enjoyment), in order of importance? If you have more than five, please just give your top five.

7. In a usual month, in how many circle dancing sessions do you participate?

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11-20

21-30

31-40

8. At circle dancing sessions, are you more often:

Participant
Teacher
About half each

9. What is the most usual medium for the music at the circle dancing sessions in which you participate? Please move those that apply to the right-hand column, in order of what is used most regularly.

Live music
Singing while dancing
LPs
Tapes
CDs in a portable CD player
CDs in a HiFi player
iPod (or similar) with a docking station
iPod (or similar) with speakers
Laptop with speakers
Tablet with speakers
Other (please specify)
Details for "Other"

10. What is the usual length of the circle dancing sessions in which you participate?

Half an hour
One hour
One and a half hours
Two hours
Two and a half hours
Three hours
Other (please specify)

11. For most of the circle dancing sessions that you attend:

There is a refreshment break (other than for water) during the session
There are refreshments at the end
There are refreshments beforehand
There are no refreshments

12. At the circle dancing group that you attend (or facilitate) most often, there are usually:

Up to 5 people
6 to 10 people
11 to 15 people
16 to 20 people
21 to 25 people
26 to 30 people
31 to 50 people
51 to 100 people
More than 100 people

13. The length of the circle dancing workshops that you usually attend (or facilitate) is:

Half a day
One day
Two days
Three days
4 to 7 days
8 to 14 days
Longer than 14 days

14. At a circle dancing workshop, what do you think the percentage of dancing time (as compared with time for other activities such as talking or making things or meditating) should usually be?

Less than 50%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Any comment on this?

15. Which circle dance stands out for you as one of the first you ever did and enjoyed?

16. Which circle dance currently stands out the most for you?

17. Do you prefer:

Traditional dances?

New dances?

Both?

18. Which circle dancing teacher/s has/have influenced you the most, along your circle dancing journey? (You are welcome to say something about them, or simply to give their names.)

19. Have you ever choreographed a circle dance?

Yes

No

20. Do you ever play music or sing for circle dancing? (1 means "Never", and 5 means "Very often".)

21. Do you enjoy occasionally using "popular" tunes for traditional dances? (1 means "I love it" and 5 means "I hate it".)

22. Do you run (or make a substantial contribution to running), or receive or read any of the following, specifically geared to circle dancing?

For a group

For own circle dancing events

etc

Receive / Read

Website

Blog

Facebook page

E-mail group (such as Circle Dancing Friends)

Mailing list (electronic)

Twitter feed

LinkedIn page

WhatsApp group

Viber group

Skype group

Electronic journal

Paper journal

Mailing list (paper)

23. In the world-wide circle dancing community, what would you like to see more of?

24. In the world-wide circle dancing community, what would you like to see less of?

25. Any other comments about circle dancing?

Some biography:

26. What is your name?

(The reason for this question is to see who has answered the survey. It is not compulsory; if you do give your name, it will not be published.)

27. Country

28. Province / County / State

29. City / Town / Village

30. Age group

81+

76 to 80

71 to 75

66 to 70

61 to 65

56 to 60

51 to 55

46 to 50

41 to 45

36 to 40

31 to 35

26 to 30

21 to 25

16 to 20

15 or younger

31. Gender

Female

Male

32. Working Life (please tick all that are relevant)

Fully retired

Partially retired

Full-time voluntary work

Part-time voluntary work

Full-time paid work

Part-time paid work

Self-employed

Not self-employed

Other (please specify)

33. Working Life and Circle Dancing

Circle dancing is my only source of income

Circle dancing is one of my sources of income

I don't make an income from circle dancing

Annexure B: Full Text of the Responses to the Free-Form Questions

Why do you like circle dancing?

- 1 Because it is my spiritual practice and through it I feel more powerfully part of universal oneness.
- 2 I feel connected to who I am when I circle dance
- 3 It is yet another form of encountering myself
- 4 I love circle dancing, because when I dance, a spiral of energy is created, energy is released outwards and the ecstatic, awe-filled moment is captured in my heart and quietly and magically savoured in my heart where the dance continues with the Great Dancer. Through dancing (circle dance and peace dance), I feel we create peace and healing for our planet and all its inhabitants. Thank you to the likes of Bernard Wosien who brought circle dancing to life and all those who continue to keep the flame alive.
- 5 It connects me with a greater reality. I am transported to a place of peace and love. It makes me feel fully alive.
- 6 Because through the dances I find my basic essence again, so that I completely enjoy physical pleasure, joy, limitless, spaceless, timeless movement, my body as a friend, the hand that receives, the hand that gives, the profound expressions in eyes that say so much and give so much, it is addictive, an insatiable feeling. You dance once and you cannot stop. I like circle dancing because I feel part of a whole from my unique and original Self.
- 7 It frees my spirit and warms my heart. I love being danced by the music and forget all my troubles just for the delightful time I am dancing. Without dance my life would be diminished and I would not have met and become friends with all those delightful, dancing women. I'm passionate about dance and don't like dance - I love it!
- 8 It has a higher aspect, is fun, meet like-minded people, it is exercise.
- 9 Too many reasons to list. It's spiritual, it's fun, it's community connection, it's great exercise, it's beautiful music. I love to dance. The dances are fantastic. It is a unique feeling, like no other. It's meditative. It's joyful. It allows you to weep while moving and feel your heart soar in magical uplift! It feels great!!!
- 10 spiritual uplift
- 11 Because it is so spiritually uplifting, and like tai chi, is the perfect choreography of body and mind.
- 12 Ever since I've known Circle Dancing, happily many years ago, around 1996, I have felt that at last I am connected to the most sacred within ...the circle, the music, the movements in one direction and the other, all that occurs in this time-space, is truly sacred. I feel joy, happiness, true soul connection, sharing the movements, feeling that we are all part of the same circle without the need for words...it is pure love...thank you!!
- 13 Spiritual exercise, huge range of music compared to other dance genres, sharing in community, it's more than just dance.
- 14 I like the potential for it to be "Sacred Circle Dance". Accessible steps, beautiful music and positive group experience. It has changed my life.
- 15 I love circle dancing because it is so spiritual and sometimes takes almost takes you into a trance and the music is always so beautiful, doing the slow dances is like doing a dancing meditation.
An added bonus is I do it almost every week with my sister.
It is also great fun and funny if we get the dances wrong while learning them, as most dancers are lovely people.
- 16 It re-connects myself to world and spirit
- 17 Because it connects me to myself and to all.

- 18 For spiritual, physical, emotional and community reasons and just plain good fun too! Love World music and many choreographies, traditional and contemporary.
- 19 Because you can connect to yourself and others in the circle in a harmonious environment, in silence and through the music.
- 20 For me it is a spiritual practice, a way of being in community, connecting with the Earth, dancing through time and tradition. When I am dancing, I feel connected to all those who dance now and in the past, as well as to something bigger than myself.
- 21 I prefer to call it circle dance. "Dancing" has a somewhat frivolous image i.e. something not worthy of serious study. It isn't so much a matter of "like". I have been a professional dance teacher for nearly 60 years and it is just part of my working tapestry.
- 22 Touches a deeper side of being and is gentle enjoyment
- 23 Because it is very relaxing and helps take my mind off work just for a couple of minutes.
- 24 Relaxing
- 25 The music is soothing to the soul and the steps and movements are fluid with the music - it is time where I am living in the NOW. It is a lot of fun as well, especially when the steps take a bit longer to grasp. It is light-hearted and helps me to focus.
- 26 It relaxes me. It blows away my cares. It helps keep me fit. I love the motion of the dance and I love the music. I have a brilliant, patient circle dance teacher who makes it all fun whilst she subtly educates us (!). I look forward every week to the friendship and companionship of the other members of our group.
- 27 It's gentle, therapeutic and relaxing and I love dancing to music from all over the world.
- 28 So relaxing, with a feeling of well being and connectedness to others and the world in general. Beautiful music to respond to.
- 29 Makes me feel relaxed and my body enjoys the music and the dancing step.
- 30 It is such a restful and relaxing break from working and I have met some lovely people.
- 31 I like this gentle form of dancing because it brings a sense of connection with those you dance with and the place of origin of particular dances. I feel I learn something of the soul nature of a place or group of people in taking part and come to understand on a deeper level some of the experiences of other peoples in the world. Many circle dances seem to have a healing energy and it is lovely to be part of that-giving and receiving.
- 32 Relaxation, friendship, hugs, music, exercise, I am addicted!
- 33 In most of my time I participate in circle dancing at work during lunch time, It gives me a break from work and calms me down that my body and mind becomes refreshed to back to work with a positive energy.
- 34 It relaxes me and I stop thinking
- 35 Get to calm my soul down, it's a space when I can meditate through dance.
- 36 Relaxing. It's like Meditation. Traditional.
- 37 Relaxing, meditative, meet lovely like minded people. Make new friends. Good exercise for the brain and body. I feel as though I travel around the world with the variety dances.
- 38 It really is "in the moment" and allows me to flow with where I am. I just love the music and the movement, lifting me up, and experiencing teachers from all over the world. I love that I can leave off and pick up again as my schedule allows and the other dancers welcome me with such love and acceptance. It is a place for me to feel safe, inspired, welcomed, impassioned, loved, connected, at one with spirit.
- 39 Brings me into the moment - all else falls away. Music, movement, connection to others, self and spirit.
- 40 Because I have a lot of fun.
- 41 because its enjoyable
- 42 cos it's nice
- 43 Enjoyment
- 44 I like dancing in general and circle dancing in particular

- 45 I love to dance
- 46 I used to enjoy circle dancing. I have been in a geographical space that feels so problematic and this affecting my participating.
- 47 It is my fix for every week!
- 48 Such a joyful activity
- 49 That would take too long to say
- 50 Yes!
- 51 They bring joy to my life, they have helped my personal unfolding process, they relax me, they enchant me, make all my emotions flow...
- 52 The feeling I get from it - happiness, relaxation, energy, etc. The music alone can also inspire these feelings. I also like the ceremonial aspect with some of the teachers I dance with, and the whole ethos of inclusion, self-development, respect for all life, etc.
- 53 It makes me happy and relaxes my mind and also teaches about different dances.
- 54 Simple pleasure of the joint activity. Gentle dances from around the world and the music. It always makes me feel happy and de-stresses me. A harmless, life-enhancing activity in a busy world.
- 55 Feels good, calms me, opens sense of beauty, feels social without having to have conversations
- 56 It is lots of fun and also relaxing - a nice way to meet people
- 57 Pleasant way of moving creaking joints. Friendly social occasion.
- 58 It is a fun way to get in some exercise, get to know people and listen to lovely music!
- 59 I have done many types of dancing in my life, but for me circle dancing gives me more pleasure than any other. The music, rhythm and style of dance is so varied it seems to incorporate everything and more as it also has a spiritual element that I have not found in other dance.
- 60 The fun, laughter, joy of moving rhythmically to music, being able to look across the circle to see the other dancers smiling and fully engaged in being together.
I find most circle dance groups very friendly, open to greeting and supporting new members. And for single people, no need to find a partner or be left out because your partner isn't there.
I COULD GO ON.....
- 61 The joy of moving to multi cultural varied music with others.
To connect me to earth and spirit and community.
To connect me with my ancestors.
It brings me joy, peace, balance in mind and body.
- 62 Because it is very enjoyable. I love the dances, the music, the silences after the dances, the variety of music and dances -slow and meditative, fast and energetic, original folk dances and new choreographies. It brings me great joy and is good for me - body, mind and spirit.
- 63 Joy from dancing, the music, the dancers, feeling of community, meditation, insights and links into languages, history, folklore, music, dances. Also as a form of exercise for physical and mental wellbeing that I enjoy, practice for memory and balance, patterns.
I have had mobility restrictions in the past that have eased initially through yoga and then with dancing, so really appreciate being able to do it.
Some dance and music connects with part of my family background that I don't have any direct experience of, and this is a very emotional connection.
I have taught and led a few dances occasionally at parties and civil partnerships, and did my first choreography last year - all adds different dimensions to my circle dance experience and enjoyment.
- 64 love dance, music and the meditative aspect to it
- 65 Dancing is fun and no partner necessary.
- 66 For the joy of dancing as a group (not couples) and bringing a spiritual aspect to dancing. I particularly enjoy Traditional dances.

- 67 My physical body is happy...it vibrates...it comes alive...
- 68 It is stimulating and fun, and promotes a great sense of camaraderie among the participants.
- 69 Pleasure, reunion, friendship
- 70 It is great fun with interesting people and it is also spiritual
- 71 It gives me something that nothing else does! It is enjoyable exercise, companionship, but also much deeper. For me it has a spiritual element which goes beyond the circle. It is also great fun!
- 72 Fun, friendship and gentle exercise
- 73 It opens my heart to joy and communal wellbeing - constant magic is afoot!
I have long been interested in the healing aspect of circle dance and continue to investigate it.
It is a simple and easy way to access oneness of being both as an individual and as a group.
I love the dances!
I love the music!
- 74 It excites me. I enjoy the anticipation before circle dancing. I love dancing in a close group, as one, to music from around the world. I enjoy being part of the circle dance community, hearing new music, and learning the stories of the circle dance from different cultures. I wish I had found circle dancing years ago :-)
- 75 Because they are an infusion of joy. People are brought closer, it brings us closer to different musical and dance traditions, all centred in a common feeling. This is very good for me.
- 76 It's lots of fun and keeps me connected with my community, the seasons, and the Earth.
- 77 I find Circle Dancing a pleasant, joyful, social activity. I like it as a form of social meditation - I have a very intellectual, interactive, pressurised, sedentary job and do a lot of fast distance walking on my own as a balance. I enjoy the simpler more repetitive circle dances that enable me to feel peaceful, happy, and joined to others while doing mild exercise
- 78 it makes my heart, soul and feet sing
- 79 enjoyable - moving meditation
- 80 I find dancing in general a joyful activity but circle dancing adds an extra meditative/spiritual dimension and a sense of connection with other cultures and the past.
- 81 It helps to keep my mind clear and it is fun.
- 82 Exercise, relaxation, lovely music especially Balkan and Greek, nice people.
- 83 I love dancing and find circle dancing energising, uplifting and fun. I've also met lovely people at the dance sessions. It's a great way to connect with others.
- 84 Great exercise to wonderful music.
- 85 It combines exercise with music
The music comes in many styles
The circle is a sociable way to dance
- 86 Exercise to dance music without needing a partner, plus I like the idea of the inclusive circle. Also, I like folk music from different countries.
- 87 Any dancing gets the endorphins and serotonin going and makes me feel good.
The togetherness and community spirit also appeals to me.
- 88 exercise (mind and body), dancing with others
- 89 For the exercise, the company and the feeling of peace and security felt from being in a circle of like minded people.
- 90 It is a good form of exercise, a place to meet like minded people and the music is fabulous.
- 91 Great exercise for mind and body. Fosters friendship and belonging. Lifts the spirit. Moving all together to one beat creates community.
- 92 Movement, meditation, friendship.
- 93 its rhythmical , peaceful, varied and SUCH a wide spectrum of music
- 94 Movement, exhilaration, meditation, wholeness

- 95 I love moving in time to music which has different moods and energies. The variety of all sorts of 'world' and sacred music appeals to me. When I know a dance well, my body and soul find expression together which is healing, as is the support, attunement, awareness and friendliness of other dancers in the circle.
The feeling of being 'as one' in the movements and spirit of the dance always leaves me feeling uplifted and energised.
- 96 I love moving to music, had wanted to dance all my life - this is easy and no partner necessary. Good way to socialise for a shy person. Entranced by ethnic music. The opportunity for expression of emotional and spiritual feelings through the dance is a very important element for me, and deepens in a like-minded group. Open hearted acceptance of one another. Circle dance has changed me, and my life...I have become more open, confident, able to relate to others and made friends. One gets to know people heart to heart when dancing together - no words necessary. Good for body, co-ordination, grace, memory. Creates sense of well-being and happiness.
- 97 I love the skill of dancing and the feel of my own movement; the music ignites my energy; the community feels like Home (not necessarily in that order).
- 98 Enjoy movement, music and opportunity to socialise. Don't need a partner as in ballroom dancing.
- 99 I enjoy finding rhythm and harmony with a like minded group of individuals.
- 100 Because I like music very much since I was a child, and also the movement and dance are part of my habitual living. The special way of circle dancing gave me wonderful experiences and a lot of friends with which I share the same enjoying.
Hands - holding give us a real experience of the Human Being as One. The centre means the cosmos elements, and the source of the life energy.
- 101 I enjoy the movement in a circle together. I find it relaxing, and concentrating on the steps makes one forget about everyday concerns. The music is varied and interesting, you feel as if you are on holiday! The people I meet are kind and caring.
The whole experience is positive and enjoyable.
- 102 Because I love the movements, the sense of community, the music and still doing a skill which I started learning half a lifetime ago. And it attracts such wonderful people. And connects us to other culture and times.
- 103 I love the music, and to be able to move so gracefully to it is a bonus.
- 104 For the variety of music and styles
- 105 I love dancing to a variety of music
- 106 I love the variety of music and dances. The atmosphere is always calming and the company friendly.
- 107 I love the variety of music we dance to, and enjoy the sense of community and peace that I get from dancing in a circle with people.
- 108 I love the variation of dances, all the different music, most of which I would never have come across without circle dancing. I love the energy of the circle and the warmth, friendship and laughter of everyone who takes part. The way each teacher is different, and that dancing lifts my spirits and makes me feel wonderful.
- 109 I enjoy the variety of music and the sense of community when doing the dancing
- 110 I love the variety of music and the opportunity to dance with others
- 111 The variety of music and the range of moods that the music inspires; the feeling of strength and connectedness with the other dancers that comes from dancing as part of a circle, where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts
- 112 Infinite variety; balance of yin and yang; wonderful rhythms and tunes; love the people; stress release; links between cultures and countries; it feels like we contribute towards world peace.
- 113 It helps me to feel good
- 114 Uplifting, relaxing, spiritual, learning something new, nice to be with people but not having to be too sociable, lots of spin of things (e.g. people telling others of forthcoming events)

- 115 I find it uplifting, fun good exercise. I love the feeling of unity in the circle and the music that we dance to.
- 116 up lifting learning steps meeting people relaxing
- 117 Because it transports me, it moves me emotionally, I can access the circular manifestations of other cultures from other places and other times.
- 118 I love it - it gives me a breakaway and lifts me up. Wonderful traditional music from so many different cultures and steps that fit the music; modern choreographies also fun. I can see and connect/communicate with all the friends in the circle. The circle welcomes all ages, sizes and abilities.
- 119 Because it generates a very special communication with oneself and with others...through the music and synchronised movements. It generates positive emotions, it energises, changes moods, connects different cultures, favours unity in diversity
- 120 It lifts my spirits immensely. I love the feeling of connection and belonging. I love the music and the lovely movements. I love that's it's so inclusive in terms of ages and abilities. It brings joy to my life.
- 121 It makes my heart sing. Lots of lovely people do it. It's open to all.
- 122 Because when dancing in a circle I feel complete and connected to Universal Energy!
- 123 Because makes me feel very well. I love the integration and the energy with the other circle members.
- 124 Because it brings me closer to our universal human roots
- 125 I love the ancient messages of the traditional steps and the wonderful variety of extraordinary music and instruments - such joy
- 126 For the wonderful dances from around the world, for the beautiful music, for fun and laughter, sometimes almost tears when a dance is moving, but most of all for the loving community it creates, which is more than family.
- 127 I like dancing very much, sharing dances of different epochs and also contemporary ones...it's really fantastic.
Having to be aware of the other while dancing, unite with a group of unfamiliar people, this beautiful magic and when the dance ends, feeling such a special state...
- 128 I love learning the dances of other countries and enjoy the companionship of the circle and of the dancers. Also we have a very good teacher
- 129 As all who love circle dancing know, this ancient form for community-in-union communion is found in an indigenous form among cultures all over the world, and is one of the most grounded and grounding forms of universally authentic community celebration. Through playing and working in the music and dance worlds all my life, and as a person who loves Kirtan singing, Teze/Gregorian Chant, and Sufi-dancing, I have been creating/evolving a new form of circle-dancing that brings all of these movement and call-and-response singing traditions together as a unified and unifying experience.
- 130 Because I get to know other cultures, because people of all ages, social conditions and any gender can dance...because we are all equal in the circle and this helps us to adapt to and to accept our differences.
- 131 I love the music, particularly Balkan, and find the dancing relaxing and friendly.
- 132 I love dancing to beautiful music. Circle dancing lifts my spirits, gives me energy and makes me feel alive afterwards.
- 133 The music is gorgeous, the steps are fun, when I get them!
There's a great feeling of community and gentleness amongst the dancers.
- 134 Where do I start?? The music, the movement, the magic of the circle, the sheer joy of moving to music in rhythm and harmony with others, the range of styles and energies of the dances, the continuity of ancient traditions, the flow and invention of the new, the focus and clear intent of the dancers, and respect for the dance itself.

- 135 It is movement to music - beautiful music!! It is being able to move one's whole body in time and with the rhythm of music without the formality of formalised dance (as in ballet). This is a freedom in which one can let go with the music without trying to think about the specified steps and patterns.
- 136 Love the music, the movement, the community.
- 137 I love the music, feeling my body moving smoothly and rhythmically with the music, it is energetic, fun, sometimes meditative and often spiritual. I find it nourishing and uplifting.
- 138 Because I like music and dance, because I move, I get some exercise, I generate endorphins, because it is a group thing, you meet people, it is good for the soul.
- 139 I love the music, especially the irregular rhythms from the Balkans. But I also love the variety of genres, the variety of the dance motifs and the different moods and atmospheres that the dance and the music creates. I love dancing and circle dancing opened a whole new world of dance experience, dancing with others, moving together and appreciating what we create together.
- 140 the wide circle of music from so many sources - the challenge of stunningly different rhythms - the magic of the line or circle on those occasions when we move together as one - the mix of high energy, lyrical and the quietly spiritual dances - the camaraderie - the rootedness and feeling of connection with all those dancers who have danced the traditional dances before us.
- 141 I love the music, the dances with the tricky rhythms, you don't need a partner, the feeling of being at one with others and just the dancing generally.
- 142 Love the music, movements and fellowship
- 143 Love the music, the choreography and dancing and moving in community.
- 144 The beautiful music, the rhythms, the moves, the lovely people you meet
- 145 The diverse music; the symbolism; the movement; the holding hands in a circle; the closing reflection; like-minded but diverse people one dances with.
- 146 I love the music, the movement and the feeling of togetherness with the group. It is infinitely varied in style, mood and form and invokes the different countries from which the dances originate. I could go on
- 147 I can feel transformed by the music and movement of the dancing, love the togetherness of the circle, often a lovely energy is felt, a joy in just the repetition of the steps, or a kind of spiritual/emotional pull to something, not sure what!
- 148 The wonderful music.
The variations in styles and choreography.
Being part of a group and being with people who have a shared interest.
Learning about the history of certain dances and the meaning behind the steps.
Circle dancing is a joy - it can rejuvenate and relax at the same time.
- 149 I love dancing - we have superb teachers - the music is great - the dances are varied and it is good to be with like minded people
- 150 For various reasons. Firstly the music: each dance transports me to a different place. Secondly for my physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing, and thirdly for the connection to people who share my same love of the dance, even without knowing each other, we feel united in the circle.
- 151 Listening to the ethnic music of a country makes me feel alive...and fills me with a sense of joy and peace as I feel an affinity for the culture.
- 152 I love learning about music and choreography in other countries, I love listening to the music, I love the togetherness of the circle, I love the descriptions of the dances and the alignment of the choreography with nature
- 153 Enjoy the music and dances not to mention meeting other dancers who become friends
- 154 I love dancing, music, the feeling of being part of a circle and the spiritual aspect to this.
- 155 I love the music and the dancing and the friendly and peaceful atmosphere
- 156 I love the music, the sense of community, the fun and laughter and the rich experience,

- 157 Lovely music, easy to learn (but also enjoying the more challenging dances!), a nice way to get to know and spend time with other people.
- 158 I love the music
Exercise for all comers, inclusiveness.
"Sisterhood" - like minded people.
- 159 I love the music, the friendship, the movement of dance and being able to do something without feeling self-conscious in any way.
- 160 The music.
The sense of community.
Its physicality.
Linking with new rhythms, unfamiliar languages and cultures
Other circle dancers
- 161 Lots of reasons, including: I discovered I can dance; I like the steps; I like the music (particularly for traditional dances); I like the community; you don't need a partner; it's great exercise; it takes me out of my head.
- 162 I have always enjoyed dancing to music and circle dancing gives me the opportunity to come together with others in a supportive, peaceful experience, to switch off from other concerns and join with a group to participate in a joyful and therapeutic kind of dancing. I enjoy sharing the experience with my daughter, and we have connected with a small community of circle dancers who meet monthly, and who provide a caring community for her (and me). I love the cross-cultural music and the knowledge that circle dancing evolved from ancient rituals and dances performed all over the world through the ages.
- 163 It was the music that first attracted me. Doing steps to the music seems such a natural thing to do, I sometimes have deja vu with the music, and have had some connection with dance in a previous life.
- 164 Love the music, love the dances, very inclusive supportive ethos.
- 165 Self-expression through dance
Sense of community
invoking different atmospheres with the different music chosen
Sense of the history of the different cultures the music comes from
Chance to choreograph in a small way and the joy of sharing new creations with others.
Sending out positive energy and Light beyond the circle
- 166 It makes me feel free releasing me from inhibitions. The social element of others who equally love the dancing is something you feel before you know it. Worldwide dancing takes me to other continents.
- 167 The energy of the dance has a healing effect
- 168 Because I share energy with others, I become revitalised
- 169 Because they unite. They connect me to ancestral energies, they fill me with energy.
- 170 The energy of the circle, because it transcends all ages and conditions, because it does not seek perfection but the feeling of dancing together
- 171 Because the circle is magical and the energy balances when we take hands. When the circle turns, it generates a spiral which ascends directly into the sky.
- 172 I have always loved to dance, and I started to circle dance because I didn't need a partner. Then I discovered hidden depths. It gives me a feeling of connection and community with others and a sense of wellbeing. As a burnt-out teacher I rediscovered my joy in teaching and now lead several groups. Circle Dance has been a life changer for me.
- 173 Circle dancing offers every individual to dance without the need of a partner - as the whole circle is one's partner. It offers a release from the pressures of life so that one can escape and enjoy letting go.
- 174 I love dancing and am single, and this is one way to dance without a partner, and because it is a fun way of doing exercise and relaxing. Our group is also a very special group of people who are great to be around.

- 175 You don't need a partner
all types of music
dances are taught every time
so many varied and talented teachers
- 176 I do not need a partner, the dance steps are easy yet the repetitive nature of the dances is
mesmeric and you can feel the energy building. It is quiet without loud noises or that much
chatter so peaceful
- 177 It makes me feel alive
- 178 I love the good teaching, the music and the originality of the dances. I also like the social side
of the sessions.
- 179 It is a lovely community activity.
- 180 Because I like group activities and they (the dances) connect me to all and to myself
- 181 connection to community and spirit
- 182 I love being in the community of dancers. I like the spiritual aspect of circle dancing as well as
the exercise. I believe it helps me, as a senior to maintain good balance in my body and in my
mind!
- 183 Lovely to dance with friends, dances easy to pick up, the spiritual side, dances from the world.
- 184 In the circle I find connection with others, with myself, the music, and movement, and all that
is. It is pure joy.
- 185 A group of happy people, encourage me to have fun in a relaxed setting. A good reminder to
keep moving and that there may be peace around the soft glow of a candle. I am motivated to
improve my co ordination, which is a touch challenging for me.
- 186 Builds a sense of community; can bring happiness, relaxation in individuals and in the group;
enjoyable way to practice rhythm, sequence of movements; the variety of good music from
around the world; inspired choreographies.
- 187 It's sociable, fun, good exercise and I do it with a group of lovely people.
- 188 It's very like the dancing that the Turks do at times and when I lived in turkey for a while I was
very envious of the connection, unity and fun the people there had and I feel circle dancing
brings that to us and is as close as we can get to that. And I'm very grateful for that and the fun
and joy it brings into my life, alongside all the wonderful people I've met. I also find it very
meditative and am sometimes reduced to tears by the connection I feel to the group. I always
feel 10 times better when I come out than I did when I went in. Wonderful. Wish I'd found it
earlier.
- 189 It is a social event and it is great exercise.
- 190 It's sociable whilst being very good exercise. It's uplifting, invigorating and relaxing all in one
session. And the music is an eclectic mix from many cultures - some traditional and some
more modern, some from the folk music tradition, some classical. And you don't need a
partner.
- 191 Friendly atmosphere, exercise, learning about other cultures
- 192 It's sociable and good exercise. I like the music
- 193 I like the communion/community feeling because we are in a circle with joined hands. It lifts
my spirits when I feel low or tired. It just generally does me good.
- 194 The closeness to other human beings dancing together. Very healing,
The music
The history of the dance
- 195 Sense of community, the uplifting experience of a group moving as one, when it happens, but
the knowledge that if one isn't getting it right that's Ok too. Spiritual uplift.
- 196 I find it empowering, the link to women worldwide and the links with the history of so many
countries.
- 197 I love the connection with other people, other cultures and the sense of participating in
something that spans a long stretch of history

- 198 I like connecting with people through movement and dance, and also love the connection with the seasons, our beautiful planet and respecting our past.
- 199 I like the sense of togetherness it brings, and the music.
- 200 The sense of togetherness and dancing to music I might not normally listen to.
- 201 I like it circle dancing as a connection between me and others and I enjoy the music, movement and spiritual connection.
- 202 Sense of community, the music, the lovely choreography. Good for gentle exercise. Like learning the dances 'in the moment'.
- 203 It is a life training, somebody takes my hand, I take somebody's hand, I follow certain "norms", the music, and above all, achieving harmony amongst everybody is magical.
- 204 Joining hands with others in a non-threatening ambience. Great music. Everyone is equal in the circle, supporting each other, no-one has a star role, we are all equally valued. We create something together that is greater than the sum of us as individuals. It gives me energy. We are all connected. We all feel united in the dance, rather than our usual lonely state. (Many of us live alone). Love the rhythms from the Balkan countries, love moving to World music.
- 205 Togetherness, connection to earth and sky, being part of a lineage of ancient traditions and wisdom, the beauty of dancing to music, the joy and peace that always comes from dancing.
- 206 Because I like dancing, if with others, so much the better. Because it fills me with energy, joy, peace, it keeps me physically, mentally and spiritually healthy. It is gratifying, it satisfies me. Because I feel that I transcend, it fills my soul. It uplifts me. I feel plenitude.
- 207 Because it is a great way of getting together, because you can choreograph dances, the kaleidoscope of the circle thrills me because it allows me to create dances to the songs which touch me deeply and to share these with my fellow dancers.
- 208 It offers me a place amongst like-minded people to be completely myself in the dance; as a teacher, it also provides me with a means of creative expression not found elsewhere. I find the combination of mind and body/music and movement very freeing within the safe environment of the circle and a furtherance of my spiritual practise.
- 209 I love the connectedness of the circle.
- 210 I like the sense of community, helping partners, and being helped when learning new dance steps.
- 211 It is unique and conducted in a friendly and convivial atmosphere, non-competitive and suitable for all ages. Has a spiritual element.
- 212 I enjoy the sense of community and mutual support as we move together - usually without partners. I like to find the sacred there too in the more meditative ones.
- 213 It's a "nice people magnet". No one cares what level you're at. The music is generally moving, deep and uplifting. (OK, those last two would seem to be mutually exclusive but aren't, really.)
- 214 It is shared moving meditation.
- 215 I love the inclusiveness of the group and the meditative quality of the dancing. It's a couple of hours in the week when I don't dwell on problems and it keeps me moving and meeting people.
- 216 Balances, centres and spiritual
- 217 Because it is an activity which allows me to rest from my normal mental activity, I find it pleasurable, without strain and at the same time plentiful with elements that favour joy, coordination, relating to others in the group, peace, the sacred, encounters, personal challenge. Many qualities. I have been practising (circle dance) for 8 years in Mar del Plata. Weekly and those workshops/ venues that I can attend.
- 218 Because it is the activity which has taught me most and has moved me towards self-knowledge and the physical, emotional and mental planes from whence I have succeeded in understanding and knowing love and transcending limits.

- 219 I have always loved to dance and at 74 years of age find this the most satisfying form. Not too demanding of one's lower limbs! The music of the many different dances is inspiring. I always come away uplifted.
- 220 Loved it for its centring power! Swirling with friends to music and beat became a treat and even a treatment! Will recommend it to everyone. (Turned 80 this year).
- 221 It helps to ground me - I am a dreamer! - and enables me to express myself at all levels of being. I am also a choreographer, which means that I can share my creativity at a deep level with other dancers in many places.
- 222 It brings a sense of connection and wholeness and has transformed my relationship with my body
- 223 Because it is a life-infused activity which brings different states of harmony and brings us closer to different cultures
- 224 In this space I have been able to connect to invisible aspects of my essence. Through circle dance I have been able to express myself without fear of making mistakes, because the circle contains me and supports me, I give and receive, my creativity awakens and I can flow with the best part of myself. When I dance I feel that my energy changes and contributes to the global planetary change, bringing peace, love and light.
- 225 It's creative, accessible, engaging body, mind, and spirit, while being non-competitive and nourishing.
- 226 It recreates me mentally, physically and spiritually
- 227 I like it, because it has inner and outer movement- body and soul. It is interconnected with the universe. The whole creation is involved in the inner and outer movement. It has a spiritual dimension, relaxes the mind, fun and interesting moves.
- 228 Good exercise for mind and spirit as well as body, improves coordination, balance. It is relaxing. There's a link with the seasons and celebrating them. Nice group of people, variety of dances which celebrate international cultures and link with traditional practices around the world.
- 229 Because it is a wonderful feeling that you unite body, mind and spirit. Freedom and energy flow through your being and you can share it with others. Differences cease to exist, we are one.
- 230 I like circle dancing because circle has no beginning neither end, no top neither bottom, no principal neither backup. Everyone is on the same distance from the centre diametrically and significantly. We dance hand in hand, and sometimes without hands, it represents our life, to be with someone, to be alone. That's the reason why I enjoy Circle Dance.
- 231 It's stately. And even elderly persons can participate.
- 232 The caring/sharing nature of the participants; the chance to become totally immersed in something which brushes away the day to day concerns; the wonderful music used.
- 233 It means the world to me. We create a sharing, caring, non judgemental, safe space while dancing to a wide range of emotional styles of beautiful moving music. It's changed my life and opened up possibilities never dreamt of, new friendships, deep spiritual connection to the dance, natural world and cycles of life.
- 234 It's great for every ability. Some really easy dances where you can take your time and some taxing ones to make the brain work. I love the social side of it because everyone is friendly and it's great fun.
- 235 Not only is it dancing, which I love, but it also feeds my soul. It gives me a sense of connection.
- 236 It "feeds" me on many levels, spiritual, physical, mental, emotional. I meet lovely people and have made very special friends through circle dancing. I love the dances, the music, the company. I enjoy the challenge of learning new and often complex dances and also love to relax into the familiar old favourites. Circle dancing helped me find my "lost" sense of rhythm, and that is nothing less than a miracle :-)
- 237 Best meditation ever!
- 238 It's a meditative process.

- 239 It's different from other kinds of dance in that it takes one into a state of meditation.
- 240 Meditative/relaxing
Social aspect/community
Exercise
Spiritual aspect
Makes me feel good!
- 241 Personally it has been the best form of meditation, and always brings me joy.
As well as regaining a sense of community through movement, it is a lovely way of generating collective coherence.
- 242 It's energising and meditative, supportive in the circle where the energy circulates and a wonderful way of exercising brain, body and soul.
- 243 It is a way of meditating in movement. I relate to other people who like the same things as I do.
- 244 To me it is like a meditation in movement
It balances me, it harmonizes me, it makes me happy
I connect to within, to the circle and through this, energetically to the cosmos, I integrate until I truly experience that we are one.
- 245 I consider many of them to be a meditation in movement (when they are not complex)
Incorporating music (emotional charge) and simple repetitive movements, we are led to "stop thinking"
Non-dominant hemisphere comes into play
Dancing as a group implies belonging and sharing emotion
- 246 Because you meditate, share in equal position, make aerobics also!
- 247 I experience circle dancing as a moving meditation. I feel close to the people I dance with and many have become good friends, as it seems to create a bond between us. I love most of the music we dance to. Moving in time to music and as a response to it is one of the greatest pleasures I know.

What would you like to see more of?

- 1 Young people getting an interest in circle dancing.
Circle dance events (workshops or single sessions)run by young people, using mainly lively energetic dances.
- 2 Younger people coming to experience circle dancing as many of us are within sight of the end of our dancing days.
- 3 More young people taking part.
- 4 Younger people taking part
- 5 younger people coming in to the groups
- 6 More younger people dancing. How do we communicate to the next generation what a delight this kind of dancing is????!
- 7 More younger people taking part
- 8 Don't know. More young circle dancers in UK would be nice but not very likely it seems.
- 9 Younger people dancing
- 10 More young people joining groups
- 11 young people, and men.
- 12 Younger people and men
- 13 Younger dancers.... Children. More men.
- 14 More people under 50 years joining in, and more teaching it to primary age children
- 15 More youngsters and I would like an event targeted at children or grandchildren

- 16 More youngsters joining the community, to ensure that the dance goes on.
Teaching circle dance in schools as a vehicle for doing this.
- 17 Reaching out to young persons - work in schools? More dances in lovely places such as cathedrals.
- 18 More younger dancers - and of course more dancers in my own groups! More recognition for teachers - the amount of time they spend planning, practising and researching dance. I'm relatively new to teaching and it takes me AGES to plan, practise and find new dances for my group. But I love it!
I'd also like to see more sharing between teachers, sharing of steps, ways of teaching dance (tips etc.) and more support for fledgling teachers. At the moment I'm "supporting" two newer teachers - providing step-sheets, info on where to obtain music, and tips on easier ways of explaining dances to groups: because I've had such splendid help from nearby teachers - and those on my training course, obviously!
- 19 Young people in the circle. Reaching more people. Connecting with other groups. More men.
- 20 I'd love to have the resources pages from Grapevine put on the web (with more space made available in GV for articles and/or reduction in cost). In that way it really is time the CD network entered the 21st century!
For our own group:
We'd love to have more young people dancing with us.
It would be nice to have live music occasionally.
Access to the range of teachers etc that you have in the UK
- 21 This is a difficult one. I am only just beginning to realise the fact that the circle dancing community is so vast! It is indeed world-wide and I am excited by this fact, just wish I could afford to travel a bit further afield to experience it elsewhere and meet circle dancers from far flung places in this world.
Young people becoming involved.
- 22 Getting young people involved, also special needs groups, and older folk, including those with dementia.
- 23 More focus on traditional dances and music and more interest from young people
- 24 Traditional dances.
Younger participants.
- 25 More younger people dancing so that they will continue the tradition.
Ways to promote circle dancing to the public as very few know what it is.
- 26 Younger people and men becoming more involved with circle dance.
The health benefits of this type of dance become more widely known and accepted.
- 27 Just more dancing!
More getting "the public" to join on one off / drop in events.
Younger people encouraged
More teacher events.
Teaching kids. If nobody teaches them then CD won't carry on.
BIG events involving lots of people.
- 28 Dances put on video and then on YouTube, so that we could learn, or revise our knowledge of dances by observing the steps. I sometimes forget dances, or parts of dances, that I have previously taught and for me, observing them danced is the easiest way to learn.
Taking circle dancing into the wider community so that younger people experience it.
Therapeutic initiatives in places such as hospices, cancer centres, care homes.
- 29 More men taking part
- 30 Men
- 31 Male participation
- 32 I would like more men to come and dance, as we mainly have male teachers

- 33 Make it available at school level for boys and girls, it is a shame that so few men attend the groups that I have been to. We once took circle dance into a prison where I was running a programme and it had a profound effect on those men, all adult serious offenders.
- 34 Bringing the dance to more schools.
- 35 Get togethers to dance for the sheer joy of dancing.
- 36 Half day workshops
- 37 Dancing, celebration.
- 38 Workshops - but West Australia is not on any regular tour list. (to my knowledge)
- 39 Workshops
- 40 more places to go to dance
- 41 more dancing circles
- 42 More circle dancing sessions, and more workshops
- 43 dancing
- 44 Bigger groups and more dances.
- 45 I wish for more dance events, but am also aware of the economic cost that not everybody can carry, also that people cannot always put their chores aside. To receive more information about the dances and the music.
- 46 Community support for circle dance participants who would like to start the journey of becoming a teacher including an introduction to notation, sources of music, a mentor etc.
- 47 Connections between groups bringing greater understanding of different cultures and experiences. Honouring of traditions whilst being able to create new impulses.
- 48 Greater respect for the natural variety in our different approaches to dancing and teaching
- 49 more information about / access to dances from non-European cultures
- 50 Better underlying knowledge of the steps and background of dances from other cultures.
- 51 Share lyrics and meaning of the dances that are taught
- 52 Information about the origin of each dance
- 53 More live music opportunities
- 54 A worldwide central archive of dance notations.
- 55 That the choreographies be accessible to all: that all focalisers publish their dances on the internet, so that anybody who is interested can access and listen to the music or watch the video, the same goes for children's circles
- 56 Videos on YouTube. Dance music in MP3 format.
- 57 Outdoor dancing in the summer.
- 58 The continuation of grapevine magazine and this & listings available on the web.
- 59 Dance opportunities with teachers from around the world. The Grapevine published on-line.
- 60 Just fun happy people welcoming newcomers and spreading joy.
- 61 More unity and not so much personality cult amongst the focalisers
- 62 Total socialisation, harmony, empathy, opening up, equality
- 63 Unity, harmony, enjoyment, flowing of movements and feelings, happiness, respect to the original choreographies.
- 64 More dance venues, accessible to more people...
- 65 I would really like to have more time to dance!
- 66 International travel for participants (not only teachers). I realise that this is difficult because it is so expensive, but it can be life-changing!
- 67 I have enjoyed dancing in France where during the course of the week some of the local people come and join in with us. A whole new dimension. Dancing with the world has to be healing and cohesive, certainly a conduit for peace. So the opportunity to share more with the world.
- 68 dance for people living with dementia and other health issues

- 69 I think it could be helpful to people with mental health problems and learning difficulties.
- 70 Available music.
- 71 More in depth work on fewer number of dances so that people focus more on the quality of how they dance as a group rather than the seemingly endless quest for more and more different dances.
- 72 visiting dance leaders from different communities - visits to other dance centres or communities.
- 73 More workshops run by teachers from other countries
- 74 teachers coming to different classes
day workshops accessible by public transport
- 75 international workshops, festivals
- 76 visiting facilitators
- 77 Dances from different peoples and towns
- 78 People of different cultures coming together to enjoy learning each other's dances
- 79 More dances with live music. I would like to travel to more places to dance
- 80 Good teachers and dancers.
Halls at reasonable hiring rates
- 81 Preservation and seeding of traditional ethnic dances taught by members of these groups or by those who have studied the dances.
- 82 Demonstrations of a wide variety dances by different groups
- 83 Union, exchange
- 84 Dancing group here on Crete!
- 85 Some dancing in Mexico; I attempted to start a group but no interest.
- 86 More classes in different areas. It's very difficult to find local classes - they are always miles away.
- 87 More opportunities for experience dancers to just dance and maybe to learn new dances 'on the hop' so to speak! Not necessarily both at the same time.
I understand why most groups are suitable for beginners, and I am very much in favour of having beginner groups, but I really wish there were more groups around for experienced dancers. In a 2 hour session, one spends so much time learning steps, which is important for beginners, but really not so much fun for experienced dancers. These days when I go to a class or workshop, I know most if not all of the dances. I have a dodgy back and standing is rubbish for it, but dancing is fine, so standing learning dances I know again and again makes attending a regular class frustrating for several reasons. I have recently shifted to a folk dance group as my regular class partly because it has less teaching, and more new stuff, but I miss going to a weekly circle. I'd do both if there was a circle class for experienced dancers.
- 88 Empowering others in a new art of creating and co-creating circle dancing as an authentic and relevant form of contemporary shared-spiritual-experience, and constructive community affirmation.
- 89 More traditional dance, more Western European Circle Dance (eg Breton)
- 90 Traditional dance
- 91 More traditional dances, as they are my first love.
- 92 Traditional complex dances in unusual rhythms
- 93 Dances common to all
- 94 Traditional dances
- 95 traditional dances
- 96 traditional dances played with musicians

- 97 I should like to see more integration of "sacred" and "secular" dances. In fact, I do not like these labels, as I feel that any creativity which comes from the heart is to be honoured. Light-hearted dances can be as important to the health of an individual or a group as a very serious ones. I came to circle dance after a very severe depressive illness and needed all elements of the dance in order to help myself recover fully.
I feel that there could be far more publicity about circle dance in general. Most people I meet have never heard of it and it doesn't get coverage on radio or television when there is a programme on dance.
- 98 Collect support to embed ideas of the value of circle dance in the wider community. Too often we act independently and have no proper network or organisation to back us up. (I love what they are doing in Brazil!)
- 99 more people joining the circle dance
- 100 More publicity and media involvement, particularly in the line dancing world as the steps are very similar and many line dancers would enjoy it, also involvement with the U3A perhaps setting up new groups for them.
- 101 greater involvement by the larger community
- 102 The dance culture being introduced to more people and communities.
- 103 I would like circle dancing to be more mainstream and a natural form of celebration in local communities.
- 104 Flyers
- 105 This doesn't concern me - I just enjoy my dancing here. Even so I would like to see more people doing it for their mental and physical health.
- 106 publicity
- 107 Wider advertising
- 108 A presentation to the public or a concert/show
- 109 Just more people finding out about circle dance and getting the opportunity to experience it for themselves. We have had a small voluntary organisation in York for 7 years which fundraises to run circle dance projects in the community with children and adults who would not normally have access to circle dance. I would love to see more of these type of projects. Circle dance has so much to offer, to support people, to bring people together, to alleviate isolation and to encourage dancing to be part of growing up.
- 110 More publicity
- 111 Promote inclusion, make it accessible for most people, wider publicity
- 112 Information on who's doing what when, so when we travel we can find a circle to join!
- 113 Communications - gatherings are wonderful but difficult so probably has to be mostly by other means. Back to the roots was amazing.
- 114 Where to dance when I travel
- 115 Networking!
- 116 Friendship
Sharing
Diversity in the dance
Diversity of focalisers
Many repetitions of the dances in any given encounter so that they may be registered in our motor memory.
Less dances and more practice of the same, sometimes there are so many dances that only a few remain engraved in our motor memory
Teaching videos supplied by the focalisers I mentioned in the previous question
Accessible music in various formats
Bibliography
- 117 More encounters, exchanges, collaboration and solidarity. More voluntary facilitators to take the dances to those who cannot pay.

- 118 More networking and exchange of ideas, and forums in which to do this.
Some form of centralised organisation which could support individual initiatives as well as institutions such as Grapevine and a website for the benefit of the whole dancing community.
The introduction of a concept of professional development/teachers faculty for peer support amongst teachers.
More awareness of the roots and traditions from which we sprang, as well as an embracing of diversity.
- 119 Websites with contact details for dance facilitators in Spain and Portugal

What would you like to see less of?

- 1 use of modern music.
- 2 dancing to contemporary pop / new age music
- 3 Fear of change.
- 4 Less choreography
- 5 Constant search for novelty. Some of the old dances are gorgeous and we have a huge repertoire!
- 6 Fewer choreographed dances, but that's purely a matter of personal taste.
- 7 Choreographed dances
- 8 Constant drive to find or create new dances
- 9 In general I feel that too many new choreographies are ousting the bank of old traditional ones. The old ones carry stories, culture and heritage; we need to keep revisiting them to keep these alive.
- 10 modern made up dances
- 11 I celebrate that the circle dance community is a broad church and I hope that can continue. Though I myself am more committed and interested in traditional circle dance, I do also teach modern choreographies. However, it seems to me that some of the circle dance teacher training courses over emphasize the need to choreograph and concentrate less on the need to understand rhythms. I have found that some new teachers have no understanding of irregular rhythms and this lack of confidence can lead to some people feeling that irregular rhythms are 'difficult' or 'unaccessible.' The danger there is that the teachers then choose dances which are easy or seen to be easy and lack confidence to try more challenging things.
- 12 Poor choreographies and poor teaching!
- 13 Sloppy teaching
- 14 "bad" teaching (often excused by calling it sharing).
- 15 Less non-sharing between neighbouring teachers, less protecting of my own "patch" and more cross advertising of other dancing sessions! No names here - that would be wrong - but more sisterly support would be appreciated!
- 16 Pettiness
- 17 jealous and competitions
- 18 We are lucky in (this place) as we have a great variety of good teachers. I understand that in other places some teachers think they should stick to traditional and resent new choreographers coming into their area even for just dance days, or think dancers should just dance with only one teacher in each area. I think this is very small minded and wrong. There is room for everybody and I personally love the full breadth of Circle Dance.
- 19 Personality cult amongst the focalisers
- 20 Personalty cult to some focalisers
- 21 Egocentricity
- 22 Egotism
- 23 Egotism and negative egos

- 24 Competition between teachers, no respect to others participants, absence of light and happiness; to form closed circles in which no more people are accepted.
- 25 Competitiveness, individualist action, discrimination amongst participants: "those that know how to dance" and those with more difficulties
- 26 Competition, dividedness
- 27 Talking, politics.
- 28 Maybe not all dances have to be taught each time. Also, some (visiting) professionals actually seemed more concerned with their pride than with being inclusive. Circle dancing that is not inclusive destroys what makes it special.
- 29 Exclusivity.
- 30 Nothing aside from the previous (which was Promote inclusion, make it accessible for most people, wider publicity)
- 31 Bad poetry
- 32 often an assumption you know all 'the' teachers and history of dance
- 33 plodding!
- 34 Sappy choreographies
- 35 Circle dances with few foot movements and a lot of arm waving!
- 36 I could probably live without the proliferation of floaty arm waving dances, but I know lots of people like them, so I guess I wouldn't want to stop them existing, or being there for the folk who really like them!
- 37 Nothing really but I'm not overfond of modern dances with silly gestures- ok to an extent but not too much.
Not that keen on too many Rom dances.
- 38 Teachers who talk too much between dances. Nice to know a wee bit about where it comes from, who choreographed it etc, but some teachers talk more than they dance!!!
- 39 Less changing of traditional dances from their original forms, because once gone they are lost forever.
- 40 Can't have much less than nothing.
- 41 International travel to attend events (apart from the teachers).
- 42 The meditative theme of some dances does not suit me
- 43 Frivolity in people
- 44 Rendering cult to a non-sustainable esotericism or a not very authentic spiritualism
- 45 Less focus on modern individual choreographies unless they are more true to traditional steps and patterns without copying traditional dances. Bob Minney's own music and dances are a good example of what I mean about traditional style.
Less of being too "precious" about it but rather accepting it as a real and living tradition which people have danced in their villages for a long time so I think style is important too but without the "circle dance" created additions of nodding heads and bowing just because there is a side-behind when actually it is not appropriate for that country's style and energies.
- 46 N/a
- 47 Nothing
- 48 I like it the way it is, so uncommercial.
- 49 i wouldn't change anything
- 50 N/A
- 51 Nothing
- 52 Keep up the good work
- 53 No comment
- 54 Nothing
- 55 n/a

- 56 -no comment-
- 57 Nothing at present
- 58 N/A

Any other comments about circle dancing

- 1 It is great!!
- 2 Circle dance could be integrated into multi-arts events. The first time I saw circle dancing was when it was part of a celebration at St James's, Piccadilly, in the 1990s.
- 3 One of the great loves of my life. Getting too old to be very active anymore.
- 4 this survey has prompted me to look @ websites and maybe do more
- 5 This form of dancing is unknown to the regular person on the street. I would love to see more of this kind of dancing in church fetes, for example.
- 6 Circle dancing can be enjoyed anywhere and everywhere, once people get to know the purpose for it. It is very often underestimated.
- 7 I love the idea. I imagine the energy created by bigger groups works really well. As the group has dwindled so has my interest I am afraid.
- 8 A life changing activity
- 9 I love the freedom it gives to participate without being self-conscious.
- 10 I miss it so much and hope to return at some stage.
- 11 The joy of dancing in general does not seem to be part of our culture in the UK anymore.

- 12 It is a very welcome, joyful, important part of my life.
- 13 No, I love it
- 14 Can't seem to attract new / younger people! Never was any good at marketing
- 15 there are a lot of people that don't know about circle dance, so i think info about circle dance should be put in the public.
- 16 I love it and am sad that I only found out about it by sheer accident as I could have been dancing years ago.
- 17 Love it!
- 18 it can create a feeling of group community
- 19 I love it and wished I had discovered it years ago, as I only started weekly sessions in 2007, I would be very upset if I had to give it up for any reason.

- It keeps me sane.
- 20 Chrisandra's a wonderful teacher and has given me confidence to carry on even when I feel as if I sometimes have two left feet.
- 21 I love it and want to facilitate weekend workshops.
- 22 It is hard to find/build a regular/committed Circle Dance community.
- 23 I hope to at some stage be able to be involved again
- 24 -To be introduced to more people
-Create awareness about circle dancing cause people dont know about it
-To do it at least 2 tims a week
-To have events
- 25 It should be taught in all schools as a compulsory subject -like playing musical instruments and singing.
It should not be the preserve of elderly ladies of certain years!
It should be on prescription at your local GPs. (I'm working on that one)
- 26 I find the best way to really "get it", is to dance, dance, dance...

- 27 I think that world-wide circle dancing community is a gift that we have to take care very much. In this time, the peace and harmony given since circle- dancing is a treasure to the whole world.
- 28 I simply love it and feel uplifted and supported - ready to face the next week. xxx
- 29 it's the best activity i ever made. I love it , And i would like to be more popular like yoga that everyone accepts and requires.
- 30 I love it, wish evening sessions were closer to me; weekend sessions are also a bit far; but i make an effort when it is a one day workshop.
- 31 after many years of belly dancing i now enjoy more circle dancing. i enjoy the union and participation of circle dancing - not a performance but an experience
- 32 I enjoy it as it is with a good balance of old and new, far and wide influences.
- 33 It is a very healthy activity, physically, emotionally and for the mind.
- 34 Would like another day time group during the week (I presently attend a monthly day time group during the week.)
- 35 It has been an important part of my life. I love doing it outdoors, especially at dance camps
- 36 Circle dancing has given me many wonderful experiences, and led me to make wonderful friends. It is a very important part of my life, both as a dancer and teacher. It also led me into harmony singing, and playing live music for dancing.
- 37 Circle dance has been part of my life for many years, I would like to see more younger people become addicted to this form of dance.
- 38 Love it!
- 39 Just love it!
- 40 I have found it really helps to calm, centre and ground me when my life circumstances are difficult.
- 41 It isn't for everybody and it's important to encourage those who may enjoy the fun of it.
- 42 Each group needs a balance of traditional and new dances
- 43 I am still very new to circle dancing and cannot wait to learn more about it. I love the concept and music, and enjoy making new friends through dancing.
- 44 Circle dancing definitely speaks of age and history. The unlooked for healing element and spirituality of the dance feels like hands across time.
- 45 Invite more people to enjoy dancing and join the group
- 46 We are greatly blessed.
- 47 I think meditation and relaxation are good and healthy, and Circle Dance is good for that. But Circle Dance (lick Rock music before it) will not save the world!
- 48 I wish I had found it sooner.
- 49 its great for keeping you fit and making new friends
- 50 I have made some of my best friends through circle dancing.
- 51 I love it, it is an important element that give balance in my life
- 52 How can we work together to ensure that this wonderful tradition survives and prospers?
- 53 Just love it!!
- 54 It's not just for vegetarians !
- 55 I miss it!
- 56 Now I am discovering just how much is available, I have promised myself to attend a new teacher's workshop each year! It's a great way to enjoy a holiday, see a new place, learn some new dances and meet people who enjoy doing what I enjoy doing.
- 57 In general I love it
- 58 It's a great therapy and promoter of peace

- 59 I love it and would encourage everyone who enjoys dancing to try it. It's great if you're own your own because you don't need a partner and it's great for making new friends with the same interest.
- 60 It was a joy to discover Circle Dancing, in my old age.
- 61 It's a shame that it seems to be loosing its appeal to anyone below 'a certain age'.
- 62 May it go from strength to strength!
- 63 Love the fast dances best
- 64 It feeds my soul
- 65 It was my life and kept me sane for over 20 years! The sheer diversity opened up my mind and heart, leading me to explore other things as Mantras and Dances of Universal Peace, also different forms of Healing.
- 66 It is one of the most beautiful tools for reconnecting to ourselves and others - may we not destroy this through power struggles or individual protagonism. Circle dancing is union, major spirituality but not pseudo spirituality
- 67 I would like to see more publicity
- 68 Difficult to write about them, what counts is to dance
- 69 They fill me with life
- 70 Viva circle dancing!
- 71 It is an activity which contributes life, peace and knowledge, fun! It's beautiful. I would love it to be more popular.
- 72 It is a healing, reparatory and instructive activity. It wordlessly teaches true union and equality which is what we need to learn in order to evolve.
- 73 It is one of the most important things I have been doing ever since I have come to know it.
- 74 They fill my soul
- 75 It is marvellous, it makes me very happy to dance, although I may err in the steps. I may not have fantastic flexibility, but when I dance, I surrender to the music, whether I get the steps right or not
- 76 In general I like all the dances of the world.
- 77 I believe that the social aspect should not be left aside as a way of integrating the group
- 78 It is a great therapy and a meditation in motion. I first began in order to coordinate my life and today I feel that much of my coherence in thinking-feeling-doing is related to the dancing.

Annexure C: An investigation into circle dance as a medium to promote occupational well-being (Abstract of Ph D Thesis of Ana Lucia Borges Da Costa)

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Circle dance, which derives from the tradition of folk dances, is a popular form of dance and is practised worldwide. As a form of meaningful physical and leisure activity, circle dance can be explored in the context of occupational therapy principles and practices to promote health and well-being. However, to date, the synergy between circle dance, occupational therapy and well-being has yet to be explored. This research develops an understanding of the complexity and meanings attributed to circle dance and its impact on occupational well-being and considers how pedagogic practice might facilitate a sense of well-being in participants. Using a constructivist approach to grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006), thirty nine in-depth interviews with participants, teachers and coordinators of teacher training programmes from the circle dance network in the United Kingdom (U.K.) were undertaken. The process of simultaneous data collection and analysis culminated in the development of three major categories, representing the meanings and experiences of circle dance participants, teachers and training coordinators. From the intersection of the three major categories, a core category was generated and named by an in-vivo code "There is a place for everybody". The findings of this study suggest that engagement in circle dance creates meaning and can influence people's health and well-being; they also highlight the important role that pedagogical practice plays in enriching the experience of the participants and in sustaining occupational engagement and continued involvement. This investigation provides a detailed knowledge of the process of being engaged in circle dance, whilst informing occupational therapy practice and advancing occupation-based knowledge in the field of leisure, physical activity and wellbeing. It also makes a unique contribution in relation to the pedagogy of circle dance and informs teachers from within the U.K. network offering a comprehensive understanding of the benefits of circle dance.

Source: <http://ubir.bolton.ac.uk/679/>

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Yvonne Shapiro
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