

Career transitions of freelance dancers in the Netherlands

A qualitative research

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ABSTRACT

The diminishment of subsidies over the last six years affected the Dutch dance landscape, where the boundaryless career type of freelance dancer became a norm. Regardless the type of dance or career path, dancers decide to change career at a certain point of life. Literature dedicated to the subject of career transition in the dance profession exists, none of it however focuses on dancers who work on a freelance basis. The process and the dynamics of career transition within the freelance environment in dance needs more understanding. This thesis aims to analyse the dynamics of career transition of professional freelance dancers working in the Netherlands in terms of timing, career choices, transferable skills, (re) education and available support; and to analyse the relationship between the boundaryless career type of freelance dancers and the process of their transition to another profession. This case study takes a qualitative approach and bases its results on 13 semi-structured interviews with dance professionals, who have worked as freelancers in the Netherlands and have transitioned or are in the process of transition to any another profession than performing dancer. The study analyses the results combining different theoretical perspectives and supports the research with transition theories frequently used in sport studies, by Schlossberg (1981) and Taylor & Ogilvie (1994) with an addition of human capital theory (Becker, 1993) and sorting theory (van Broekhuizen, 2009). The study covers a broad range of topics within career transition processes of freelance dancers in the Netherlands from a dance practitioner perspective. The results demonstrate that a boundaryless career path of freelance dancers has an influence on their precarious life style, which serves as a trigger to transition and often does not secure them with any institutional support.

Keywords: artist labour, career transition, dancers, career development

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	4
2	Social and academic relevance	6
2.1	Dutch dance landscape	6
2.2	Available support for dancers in the Netherlands	7
2.3	Scientific relevance	9
3	Literature review.....	10
3.1	Characteristics of art labour	10
3.2	Dance labour	11
3.2.1	Empirical studies on career transitions in the dance sector	12
4	Theoretical framework.....	15
4.1	Transition theory	15
4.2	Human capital and sorting theory	17
4.3	Conceptualizing the dance transition process	19
5	Methodology.....	21
5.1	Aim and Research Question.....	21
5.2	Research strategy, design and methods	21
5.3	Data analysis	23
5.4	Units of analysis.....	23
5.5	Interview approach.....	25
5.6	Insider research	25
6	Results.....	26
6.1	The situation.....	26
6.2	Strategies.....	34
6.3	Financial support.....	40

6.4	The Self.....	42
7	Conclusions and discussion	44
7.1	Limitations and recommendations for further research.....	46
	References	48
	Appendix - A sample of the coding frame.....	53
	Appendix B – the interview guide.....	55

1 Introduction

“The dancer’s earnings are generally the lowest, the span of years during which he can find employment is typically the shortest and his employment is generally the most uncertain, his working conditions are often the worst among the performing arts,” Baumol and Bowen wrote this in their influential study, *Performing Arts: The Economic Dilemma* in 1966 (p.125). Unfortunately, up until now the situation of dancers has not changed much. It is still a difficult, poorly payed and demanding profession, built not only on passion and dedication but also on hard and physical work. What remains however the most significant characteristic, that distinguishes dance profession from other art related jobs, is that for the majority, it does not last long. Dancers begin their career early on and most of them end it before they reach 40. Part of them remain working in the dance sector as teachers, choreographers, coaches, maybe artistic directors of dance companies. Another part chooses a different path and makes a radical transition to another profession, which usually involves re-education. However, enrolling in a new study and learning new skills takes courage, time and costs money.

There is a need for support in this transitional phase of dancer’s career, as it is an inevitable part of every dancer’s life. It has been noticed that career transition is a serious problem that dancers have to face all over the world (Jeffri & Throsby, 2006). After the establishment of Dancers Career Development in the UK in 1973, many countries have devised the establishment of special organizations to support dancers’ career transitions: United Kingdom, Canada, USA, Korea, Switzerland, Czech Republic, France, Poland and the Netherlands, which shows the global reach of the problem.

In the Netherlands, the Dutch Retraining Program for Dancers (Stichting Omscholingsregeling Dansers) offers tailor made support for dancers who face the end of their performing career. Not all dancers are however entitled to this program. In most cases, dancers working for companies which receive long-term subsidy and come under the Collective Labour Agreement automatically pay monthly contributions to the Omscholingsregeling. It is also possible for free-lance dancers to contribute to the Omscholingsregeling independently; this is however not a common practice. We could say that therefore dancers who are employed in companies on the base of pay role (Dutch: loondienst) have better conditions and chance to retrain themselves after their dance careers. However, some dance companies disobey the rules and choose not to use their additional

subsidy funds intended for retraining program of their dancers (Wiel, 2016). On the other hand, the flexible, boundaryless work style and the mentality of freelance dancers can be interpreted as a better preparation for the transition to another profession, because change is already a part of their career path. There is little scientific literature about career transition of modern dancers, and none that fully focuses on the dancers who work independently as freelancers. Nevertheless, the process and dynamics of career transition within the freelance environment in dance needs more understanding as the boundaryless career type within the Dutch dance landscape is becoming a norm.

This research has an explorative approach. Based on the literature review, theory triangulation and the in depth semi-structured interviews, the research explores the subject of career transitions of freelance dancers in the Netherlands. More specifically it aims to analyse the dynamics of career transition of professional freelance dancers working in the Netherlands in terms of timing, career choices, transferable skills, (re)education and available support; and to examine the possible relationship between the boundaryless career type of those dancers and the process of their transition to another profession. In line with the transition theory by Schlossberg (1981), the conceptual model by Taylor & Ogilvie (1994) with an addition of human capital theory and sorting theory, the research aims to answer the following questions:

1. How does the career transition process of dancers working in the Netherlands unfold within the context of the freelance dance environment?
2. How do dancers in the Netherlands experience and evaluate their career transition process in terms of (re)education, career choices, transferable skills and available support?
3. In what way does the boundaryless career of freelance dancers in the Netherlands influence their career process from a dancer to another profession?

This thesis is divided into 7 chapters. The introduction is followed by chapter 2, which specifies the social and scientific relevance of the topic. The third chapter reviews existing literature in the subject of art and dance labour and summarizes empirical studies about career transitions within the dance profession. Chapter 4 describes the theory framework, which supports the analysis of the results and conclusion of this thesis. Chapter 5 justifies choices of design and methods used in the empirical research. Chapter 6 analyses the data and presents the results of the empirical research. The thesis ends with conclusions and the main implication; the limitations of the study are also addressed.

2 Social and academic relevance

2.1 Dutch dance landscape

This thesis focuses on freelance dancers who have been working in the Netherlands and are currently residents of the Netherlands. To understand why this research focuses on the freelance dance world exclusively, it is important to look at the context and therefore the current situation and infrastructure of the Dutch dance landscape, with an emphasis on the change which came from subsidy cuts imposed since the year 2013.

The cultural infrastructure in the Netherlands has drastically changed after the government reinforced cutbacks and lowered the budget for the subsidized cultural sector by 200 million euros in 2011 (Bussenmaker, 2014). This meant a retraction of more than 21 percent of the total cultural budget. Within this, 125 million euros cut in 2013 was designed to expenditure on the basic cultural infrastructure (BIS). Moreover, provinces and municipalities have also lowered the budget for the cultural activities. The significant amount of money which has been withdrawn from the government budget has left its mark on the cultural sector and consequently influenced the dance scene in the Netherlands.

The dance companies are subsidized within the basic infrastructure framework (BIS) or by the Performing Arts Fund (Fonds Podiumkunsten). A number of nationally known companies receive also a multi-year subsidy from municipalities. Because of the budget cuts, the basic infrastructure has been reduced from seven to four dance companies (Raad voor Cultuur, 2011). These are Dutch National Ballet, Netherlands Dans Theater, Introdans and Scapino Ballet Rotterdam. The repertoire of these four companies consists mostly of ballet and academic modern dance (Fonds Podiumkunsten, 2017). The Fonds Podiumkunsten supports small and medium size dance companies and secures in that way the supply of the dance performances in various styles and genres, in spite of the cutbacks. In 2013 the budget of the Fonds Podiumkunsten however decreased from 60 million euros to 43 million euros, and the money devoted to companies which got multi-year subsidies went down from 40 to 24,5 million euros. Since 2013, the Fonds Podiumkunsten (FPK) had to provide a multi-year activity subsidy to 80 instead of 118 institutions. Currently there are 15 medium-sized and small dance companies, which receive a multi-year activity subsidy from the FPK. Part of the

money for Club Guy & Roni, Conny Janssen Danst and ISH is intended for talent development (AHK, 2019).

Another step in diminishing financial support in the cultural sector in 2012 was the termination of the WWIK- Wet Werk en Inkomen Kunstenaars (Work and Income Artists Act). The WWIK was created in 2005 (Overheid, 2011) to support artists' engagement in the labour market. It was intended as a basic income, which artists could use for a maximum of four years to build up a profitable practice.

All those changes in government policy were caused by the financial crisis and justified by the idea that artists should function as cultural entrepreneurs, who do not only make art but also take responsibility to make profit. In the eyes of the current governments artists should be able to put their product on the market, reach their audience and provide for their own income (Raad voor Cultuur, 2012). According to the report of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences (2016), the data from 2014 and 2015 confirm the decrease of jobs in the cultural and creative sector and an increase of the self-employed.

There is no data on how many freelance dancers currently work in the Netherlands. However, it is clear that the decrease of subsidies lowered the amount of theatre and dance companies as well as dance production houses, which consequently influenced the amount of available jobs, especially those on a pay role base. On the other hand, the amount of schools, who train professional dancers did not change. Students graduate as highly trained dance professionals but, the current situation of the dance labour market at the moment cannot provide full time jobs for all the graduates. Many dance companies and production houses offer projects or short contracts, which often force dancers switching to freelance work. That requires registration of a one-man company (ZZP) at the Chamber of Commerce ("Eenmanszaak oprichten," 2018). Self-employed artists do not have guarantee of social security and constant workflow. As a consequence, dancers often have to do multiple jobs or start thinking of transitioning to another career.

2.2 Available support for dancers in the Netherlands

As mentioned earlier, Dancers Career Development, established in the UK in 1973, was the first organization in the world designed to support dancers' career transitions. Although few countries followed this idea and established their own organization of this kind, there is still a relatively small number of places where dancers can receive this kind of support. In the

Netherlands, the Omscholing Dansers Nederland (ODN) program was initiated in 1986. Since then the organization, under the direction of Paul Bronkhorst, offers advice and financial help to dancers who want to transition to another career. Throughout the years the ODN went through few structural transformations. Since several years, the ODN is no longer receiving direct subsidies from the Ministry of Education and the subsidy that is dedicated to dancers' transition program is transferred directly to dance companies. Not all dance companies use the money to pay the premiums for their dancers to the ODN, which according to the ODN has consequences on the financial support of a dancer career transition (ODN, 2014). Any dancer can turn to ODN for the advice concerning his or her transition. To be eligible for the financial support however, a dancer has to fulfil a set of criteria and pay a minimum amount of contributions. Dancers who work for subsidized companies usually automatically pay the contributions of 4% of the gross monthly salary, from which the employer pays a 3%. In case of other dancers, who work as freelancers or in the companies, who don't pay the contributions for them, they can join the program on a voluntary basis. In that case they have to pay 4% of their monthly income independently. This income however has to specifically come from jobs done as dancer. To be eligible for the return of study costs, a dancer has to pay at least 48 contributions in 5 years' time. To be suitable for the full amount which stands for the study and income allowance or refund of costs allowing to start up a business, a dancer has to pay at least 96 contributions within at least 10 years' time. While initially ODN was founded to support company dancers, the organization becomes more and more open towards supporting dancers who work as freelancers. For example, from October 2015 they adjusted the rules, and it's possible now to double the contributions, which in case of dancers working on short term contracts makes it more realistic to collect the minimum amount of contributions within the given time frame.

This research is done independently from any organization; however, it is meant to bring relevant information to ODN, that could be helpful in the development of their future policies and practices. The researcher has met with the director Paul Bronkhorst and career advisor Lieke van Campen to research the relevancy of the topic in the end of November 2018. To remain impartiality the thesis is written independently, however with consultancy and help received from ODN via emails and two personal meetings.

2.3 Scientific relevance

To the researcher's knowledge, although dance profession has been gaining a growing scientific interest, there is little amount of studies dedicated to the subject of career transition, especially when specified to modern dancers working as freelancers. The existing literature focuses on ballet dancers (Roncaglia, 2008, 2010), or does not distinguish between the types or styles making generalizations about a quite broad dance population (Baumol, Jeffri, & Throsby, 2004; IJdens & Langenberg, 2008). This thesis also looks at the subject from a more theoretical point of view, which has not been done in any of the above papers. The current study fills therefore a gap in the literature about career transitions within dance profession and contributes to the literature in branch of labour economics, from which artists labour market is known to be puzzling and challenging one (Menger, 2002).

3 Literature review

3.1 Characteristics of art labour

The existing literature characterizes artists as an occupational group which is on average younger than the general work force, better educated, showing higher rates of self-employment, unemployment and several forms of constrained underemployment (for example: non-voluntary part-time work) (Abbing, 2010; Menger, 2001; Throsby, 1994). Throsby (1994) argues that the standard economic model of labour supply does not apply to artists. He proposed the work-preference model, where the desire to create art is the "essential driving force behind an artist's labour supply decisions" (p.17), and where non-monetary motivations such as work satisfaction influence the artists' time allocation. Menger (2006) adds that the artistic labour market model, which is characterized by short-term contracts and self-employment, results in more efficient use of the artistic workforce. More flexible and less costly for art organizations trend in art labour, brought however new challenges into artistic careers. Freelance artists have to face discontinuity, unemployment, constant search for new employment and multi-job holding (Menger, 2006). Consequently, artists more often have lower wages, experience larger income inequality and variability than other labour groups with similar human capital characteristics (education, training and age) (Menger, 2001). Jeffri (2005) points out, that multiple job holding becomes a common practice around the world, and does not apply to the artistic professions only. A multi-directional career model allows for changes, gives a variety of options and gives possibility of personal development. Careers became more diverse and less structured and give employees more control.

This boundaryless types of careers are the result of new economic, technological and social realms, which went beyond the organizational systems of the linear career model (Baruch, 2004). "Put simply, boundaryless careers are the opposite of organizational careers - careers that unfold in a single employment setting" (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996, p.5). According to Bennet (2009), the best term used to describe careers in arts is protean. Protean career is an "extreme form of the boundaryless career" (Bridgstock, 2007; p.4). The word protean means flexible, versatile, taking many forms. It originates from Greek mythology, where the sea god Proteus, to avoid danger, could change form at will (Bennet, 2009). In a traditional type career, the organization is in charge, the degree of mobility is low and success is defined by the position level and salary (Hall, 2004). In comparison, the protean career

type characterizes self-management, high mobility and psychological success, work satisfaction (Hall, 2004). “It involves a psychological contract with one’s self rather than an organization or organizations.” (Bridgstock, 2007, p.4)

3.2 Dance labour

In general, all the characteristics of art labour mentioned above apply also to the profession of a contemporary dancer. Changes in modern economy, new modes of production and labour models, have influenced also the changes in current dance labour practices. After the global financial crisis of 2008, the dance work field went through a series of painful cuts (Njaradi, 2014), as described before. The diminishment of subsidies for arts, which resulted in less subsidized dance companies, caused a shift towards a project-based work and forced many dancers to more independent, commonly called, freelance work. Van Assche (2017) defines the contemporary dance artist's labour as highly mobile and transnational. Dance profession has become the "work without boundaries" (p.237) where project oriented and flexible arrangements with no secure income became a norm. Njaradi (2014) connects the highly mobile and flexible skills of dancers with immaterial labour. A dancer is an "immaterial worker", who produces immaterial goods, in this case, a cultural product. Additionally, dancers cannot limit themselves only to dance as their main interest and ability - they are often expected to be managers, administrators and technicians.

And although there are less dance companies offering permanent contracts, there are still two options of career path dancers can follow: a traditional type of company dancer and a protean/portfolio type of boundaryless freelance dancer. It should be mentioned, that within that division there are also different genres of dance, where two main groups are distinguished: ballet dancers and modern (often called contemporary) dancers. While the academic literature on ballet dancers is much more extended (Lavallee & Willard, 2016; Roncaglia, 2008, 2010), the number of available sources devoted to professional modern dance - although growing - is still in its infancy. This might be caused due to the premise, that modern dancers in comparison with ballet dancers, are much more difficult to define, are more mobile and work in less structured companies. It is therefore much more difficult to gather data on modern dancers. Modern dancers are a group of dancers, who perform diverse repertoire with the use of different techniques and styles of dance. In addition, it is more likely for a modern dancer to work as a freelancer, performing with several small companies or projects during a single year (Weiss, Shah, & Burchette, 2008).

Despite the career type or dance style, dance remains a difficult and demanding profession. It involves passion, dedication, discipline and most of all, hard and physical work. Dancers commit themselves to their profession with a great devotion and a single-mindedness, which often does not leave the room for other considerations (Polacek & Schneider, 2011).

Although the traditional image of a young and fit dancer is not the only accepted profile of today's dance performer, careers in performing dance are still generally short. In case of Australian dancers the median age is 29 years old (Bennett, 2008). Accordingly, the study by Weiss, Selina and Burchette (2008) on demographics and characteristics of professional modern dancers, which surveyed 184 USA individuals, defines the mean age of dancers by 30.1 +/- 7.3 years. Many dancers end their careers in the mid-thirties and have to face economic, psychological and educational difficulties caused by career transition (IJdens & Langenberg, 2008; Jeffri & Throsby, 2006; Roncaglia, 2010). It has been argued that the skills and experience accumulated by dancers throughout their active dance years are wasted resources when the end of their career arrives: "The inadequacy of transition support not only creates significant challenges for individual dancers, but also imposes a social cost in the form of wasted human capital." (Baumol, Jeffri and Throsby, 2004, p.1). Practices such as capitalizing on the skills of good employees and retraining programs which are popular outside of the arts world, are often overlooked by dance academies and dance employers (Jeffri, 2005).

3.2.1 Empirical studies on career transitions in dance sector

The research in career transition in the dance sector is relatively young. Although the issue of career transition gets more academic attention, it often has a generic approach, supported by little to none theoretical background and focuses mostly on company dancers. The first study of this kind, which provided hard data on challenges and realities of dancer's career transition was conducted in 2004 by the Research Centre for Arts and Culture at Columbia University's Teachers College and resulted in the report by Baumol, Jeffri and Throsby (2004). The research provides data from surveys conducted among current and former dancers in USA, Switzerland and Australia and additionally presents 8 country profiles (Canada, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Mexico and the Netherlands) with relation to dance and transition practices. Baumol, Jeffri and Throsby (2004) argue that low wages and early age of retirement makes the transition of dancers to post-dance career occupations more difficult

than in case of another career switch: “we know of no other occupation that requires such extensive training, which is held in such esteem as a contribution to culture and pays so little.” (p.15). The research indicates that dance profession is so demanding and time consuming; it leaves no space and time for following another education while working as a dancer. The results of the survey confirm the financial struggle of dancers, who decide to follow another education and the importance of social and family support, which facilitates easier transition. The majority of surveyed dancers had to self-finance their further education (51 percent in Australia, 49 percent in Switzerland, and 52 percent in the U.S.). Moreover, the researchers found out that those, who were better prepared for the challenges of the transitions have an advantage of getting the desirable outcome of the post transition careers. Baumol, Jeffri and Throsby (2004) argue therefore for the change to a realistic and practical attitude towards the subject of transition in the dance world, as it should be treated as a natural part of dancers training. The results demonstrate also the difference between current dancers' expectations and former dancers' experience. Surprisingly, current dancers seem to be more aware of the challenges awaiting them in the transition period than the former dancers (Baumol et al., 2004). However, these results leave space for different interpretation: are current dancers getting more and more aware, or is the transition more difficult and challenging than previously expected?

IJdens & Langenberg (2008) took another approach and focused on career transitions of dancers who work internationally and are therefore not bound to a single country. They collected the information about the size and the nature of dancers of transition problems and geographical mobility through the surveys sent to dance employers of 15 EU countries, employers' associations and trade unions, desk research of cultural policies, and interviews with experts in social security and dance. The results show that employers do recognize the urgency of the problem of career transitions of their dancers but most of them do not feel responsible for the transition of their dancers. IJdens & Langenberg (2008) notice the lack of the support for dancers, who are more mobile and work internationally. They argue that work abroad is one of the characteristics of dance profession and that there should be more attention given to the problems these dancers acquire with career transitions and pensions. “Differences between national systems of social security in EU countries still causes problems of accessibility and portability of rights” (IJdens & Langenberg, 2008, p.1)

Both studies, mentioned above, have been conducted on the request of the International Organization for the Transition of Professional Dancers. From one side it shows the interest of the organization and their willingness to expand their knowledge, on the other side it proves again the lack of available information. Both studies provide valuable insights on issues concerning transitions among dancers, offering however vague definitions of transition and professional dancers. The research by Baumol, Jeffri and Throsby (2004) includes many types of dancers into the sample; IJdens & Langenberg (2008) focus mostly on company dancers.

Defining career transition of dancers seems quite problematic. The traditional definition of transition in dance is seen as a retirement from a performance career (Bennet, 2008). Heidi (Heidi, 2012) points out, however, that transition of dancers has to be seen as a long and complex process. For example, dancers often make a decision of transitioning to another career, but they continue seeking for dance jobs. Bennet (2008) notices, that freelance dancers do not see the relevance of the use of the word 'retirement' when talking about their transition. For them transition is a continuous process, a part of career development, not an abrupt moment in the career as it is in case of retirement. Freelance dancers are constantly planning forward accepting different art related projects or even other types of employment (Bennett, 2009). Bennet (2009) concludes that dance educators should make dancers more aware of the reality instead of "selling the dream" and focus on various aspects of the career (not only dance) to support the sustainability of the career. Baumol, Jeffri and Throsby (2004) in alike manner, argue for the need of change towards a more realistic and practical attitude, where the subject of transition is treated as a natural part of dancers training. Placing emphasis on the constant nature of transition seems important. "Redefining success as the achievement of a sustainable career is a substantial step toward viewing non-performance roles as exciting opportunities" (Bennet, 2009, p.34).

4 Theoretical framework

This chapter presents different theoretical perspectives, which are further used to strengthen the process of analysing the data. The lack of existing theory about career transition among professional dancers, made the researcher use theory triangulation. Using multiple theoretical perspectives from different fields to interpret a single set of data gives more validity to the research (Jack & Raturi, 2006). To fully comprehend the given phenomenon of career transition of dance professionals, the researcher found it crucial to look at it from different theoretical points of view. Therefore, the first section of this chapter describes frameworks by Schlossberg (1981) and Taylor & Ogilvie (1994) used frequently in sport career transition and starting to get attention among dance researchers (Harper, 2012; Roncaglia, 2008). The second section describes the human capital and sorting theory, which relates to education, training and skills. The third section of this chapter will utilize all the theories into a model, which serves as a guide and point of reference throughout the research and gives a framework for the construction of the interviews, coding and analysis of the results.

4.1 Transition theory

Career transition has been defined as a period in which an individual completely changes a role as well as any major shift to a work role already held (Louis, 1980; Nicholson 1984). Schlossberg (1981) focuses on adult development theories and defines transition as "an event or non-event resulting in a change in assumptions about oneself and the world and thus requires a corresponding change in one's behaviour and relationship" (p.5). Therefore, the career transition does not have to imply a drastic career switch, but the term may also include a shift of orientation/role within a given occupation.

Transition theory in sport applied to dance research

Most literature about career transition in dance is not supported by any theory. There are two papers to be found (Harper, 2012; Roncaglia, 2008) which apply theories used previously in the literature about sport career terminations to career transition of professional dancers.

According to Seaman (2003) modern economists should notice the potential value of collaboration between the art and sport research. Despite differences, careers of top athletes

can be in many aspects similar to career paths of dancers: difficult and long training from a young age, short duration of career due to age or injuries (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994; Roncaglia, 2010). The research in sport career terminations appears to be more advanced, and in contrast to those in dance, it is supported by theory and based frequently on two models: the transition model by Schlossberg (1981) and the conceptual model by Taylor & Ogilvie (1994).

The 4s system by Anderson, Goodman & Schlossberg (2012)

The original theory offers a model for analysing human adaptation to transition. Schlossberg (1981) proposes a framework with four factors in it: perception of the transition, characteristics of the pre and post transition environments, the characteristics of the individual and the adaptation process. This transition theory has been modified throughout Schlossberg's later work and this thesis uses the latest publication, which focuses on linking Schlossberg's theory (1981) with practice.

In the newest publication, building on previous theory, Schlossberg et al. (2012) identify different types of transitions: anticipated, unanticipated and non-event. In anticipated transition, the events leading towards the transition are expected by the individual. The unanticipated transition is induced by not predictable events. The third type, non-event transition is a transition which an individual had expected but due to some changes, it had never occurred.

Schlossberg et al. (2012) acknowledge four sets of factors, known also as 4s: *self*, *situation*, *support*, *strategies*, which help to specify the potential resources that influence a person's adaptation to transition. In other words: they are potential assets or/and liabilities, that influence how one copes with the transition.

- The *self* variable includes characteristics and issues of the individual and tells us more about the person who undergoes the transition.

- The *situation* variable answers the question 'what is happening?', describes the environment of the transition and includes factors such as: trigger, timing, role change, duration, control, assessment.

- The *support* variable tells us about available support.

- The *strategies* variable explains how one copes and navigates through the transition.

Taylor & Ogilvie (1994), combining the theory by Schlossberg (1981) with empirical research, propose a conceptual model of adaptation to retirement among athletes. Their model aims to provide a framework that encompasses the entire process of athletic career termination. Taylor & Ogilvie (1994) focus mostly on psychological aspects of the transition, which are not primarily interest of this thesis. However, their model includes an important component in the context of sport career termination causes, which include four aspects: age, deselection, injury, free choice.

4.2 Human capital and sorting theory

The theories described above discuss assets and liabilities one possesses, which influence an individual transition. One of the topics of career transition among athletes and dancers is the need for (re)education and the (re)use of already possessed skills. It is therefore important to have a look into labour economics with connection to education and training. Human capital theory and sorting theory are two of the most relevant topics in that matter.

The classical view on the human capital theory, which was initiated by Gary J. Becker in 1964, proposes a hypothesis that people increase their productivity and therefore their future earnings by investing in education, training and experience. According to Borjas (2013) human capital is “a unique set of abilities and acquired skills” (p.235), and most of the human capital is collected in schools and job related trainings. Additionally, investing in education costs not only the payments of the fees but also the forgone earnings, which could be earned during the period of schooling. (Towse, 2010)

Becker (1993) distinguishes two different types of training: *general training*, which prepares an individual for all types of professions, and *specific training*, which boosts productivity for one particular job. In case of *general training*, an individual can use learned skills and make it profitable in any type of job. *Specific training* is particular and only useful and therefore profitable in one specific company, it's an in-firm training. The building-up of the so-called knowledge stock can be achieved not only through schooling and training but also through learning by doing.

Furthermore, human capital theory acknowledges that inner abilities, such as talent, or family background also matter, and have influence on the earning power (Towse, 2010).

Everyone therefore possesses a stock of human capital which consists of a unique set of ingredients (van Broekhuizen, 2009). In conclusion, those who have developed certain skills and attributes are more productive in jobs which value those skills and attributes, but at the same time are less productive in occupations in jobs that value other sets of skills (van Broekhuizen, 2009).

Sorting theory, introduced, among others, by economists such as Berg (1970), Arrow (1973) and Spence (1973), argues that the most important role of education is to inform employers in the market about the “innate productivity-related characteristics of workers“ (van Broekhuizen, 2009, p.5). Sorting theory is not associated with costs and benefits of schooling, but with the inner-related attributes, which are unobservable at the point of employment. To illustrate: some characteristics such as maturity, self-motivation, perseverance, are only visible after some time. Sorting theory argues therefore that those characteristics are reflected in the school credentials.

Sorting theory consist of two models: the signalling and screening. Sorting theory sees education and training as a form of certification of workers to employers (Towse, 2010). Employees get ‘screened’ by employers based on their diplomas, throughout which workers ‘signal’ their relevant skills and training to do the job that’s being offered. Both models are there to filter potential employees in accordance with their unheeded abilities (A. Weiss, 1995).

And although as argued by Towse (2010) the certification in case of artists does not play a big role as it’s the case in other labour markets, in case of career transition it should be taken into consideration. While, in general, the costs of education are payed off by the high earnings, which also rise with age and experience till the age of retirement (Towse, 2010); in case of freelance dancers’ career, the period of earning money as a dancer would however be much shorter as they do not reach the retirement age of 65. Dancers get trained in specialized schools. We could argue that, there is an investment that leads to specialized capital, which requires further investment to prevent it from being a waste. On the other hand, a dancer can use the skills used in his dance profession and transfer them to new careers.

4.3 Conceptualizing the dance transition process

This section explains the rationale and significance of the utilization of previously described frameworks in the development and implementation of a conceptual framework for the current study about career transitions within a freelance dance profession.

To discover and describe dancers' career transition experience, this research has used four adaptation factors (Schlossberg et al., 2012) which affect the process of transition: *self*, *situation*, *support* and *strategy*. The study focused on dancers' *self*- personal characteristics, the *situation* – the environment of the freelance dance profession, the causes (triggers) for the transition, timing and the role change. Further on it will look at the types and sources of available financial *support* dedicated to career transition and how do freelancer dancers make a use of it. The *strategy* variable will describe the way dancers cope with the transition, the difficulties and the action taken by dancers during the transition process. Additionally, to those four adaptation factors, this research acknowledges Taylor and Ogilvie's (1994) four causes that gave a start to the athletes' transition: age, deselection, injury, free choice. Furthermore, human capital and sorting theory are used to navigate through the skills and attributes dancers gain throughout their career and possible transfer of those skills to new career or study choices.

The following modified framework (see Table 1) shows the logic that guided the researcher in creating the interview guide, the analysis of the results, conclusions and further recommendations. The model utilizes and integrates the existing frameworks with 3 enquiries, which address various aspects of dancers' career transition. To answer the first research question: How does the career transition process of dancers working in the Netherlands unfold within the context of the freelance dance environment?; two elements of the theory of Schlossberg et al. (2012): *Self* and *Situation* were integrated with Taylor and Ogilvie's (1994) four causes of retirement. To address the second research question: How do dancers in the Netherlands experience and evaluate their career transition process in terms of (re)education, career choices, transferable skills and available support?; three factors from Schlossberg et al. (2012)'s theory were used: *Self*, *Strategies*, *Support*, with addition of elements from human capital and sorting theory. The answer to the third research question: In what way does the boundaryless career of freelance dancers in the Netherlands influence their

career process from dancer to another profession?; was answered based on the outcomes of the interviews and answers to the two preceding questions.

Table 1 Conceptual framework modified for the purpose of the study

Existing Framework	Existing Frameworks' Factors	Modified Framework to underpin the current study		
Schlossberg et al., 2012	Self Situation Support Strategies	RQ1: How does the career transition process of dancers working in the Netherlands unfold within the context of the freelance dance environment?	RQ2: How do dancers in the Netherlands experience and evaluate their career transition process in terms of (re)education, career choices, transferable skills and available support?	RQ3: In what way does the boundaryless career of freelance dancers in the Netherlands influence their career process from dancer to another profession?
Taylor and Ogilvie's (1994)	Age Injury Deselection Free-choice	Self Situation Age Injury	Self Strategies Support Human Capital	Depends on the outcome of the interviews
Becker (1964) van Broekhuizen (2009)	Human Capital	Deselection	Sorting Theory	
	Sorting theory	Free choice		

5 Methodology

This chapter provides the description of methodology used in the research, which corresponds with the explorative objectives of the research.

5.1 Aim and Research Question

This research has two main objectives:

1. To analyse the dynamics of career transition of professional freelance dancers working in the Netherlands in terms of timing, career choices, transferable skills, (re) education and available support, from the perspective of freelance dancers who have undergone or are currently undergoing a transition to another profession;
2. To analyse the relationship between the boundaryless career type of freelance dancers and the process of their transition to another profession.

The complexity and the wide range of concepts of the first objective will be achieved with the support of three research questions:

1. How does the career transition process of dancers working in the Netherlands unfold within the context of the freelance dance environment?
2. How do dancers in the Netherlands experience and evaluate their career transition process in terms of (re)education, career choices, transferable skills and available support?
3. In what way does the boundaryless career of freelance dancers in the Netherlands influence their career process from dancer to another profession?

5.2 Research strategy, design and methods

The explorative nature of the research asks for qualitative methods. Qualitative research focuses on words rather than quantification of collected data (Bryman, 2012). Another argument for the qualitative research method is the will of understanding the phenomena

through examination and interpretation of (in the case of this thesis) the dance world by its participants (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, as a main approach of data collection, the research used semi-structured in-depth interviews. The qualitative interview puts the interest in the interviewee's perspective on the studied subject (Bryman, 2012). Additionally, qualitative research is used in areas where little is known about the topic. The choice of the research design and method was strongly influenced by non-availability of secondary data, the difficulty of finding a big number of respondents in a given time frame and the lack of previous research on the subject.

For this study, the research design here adopted is a case study. The idea behind a case study is a detailed and intensive analysis of a single case, such as: a person, a single organization, a community or a single event (Bryman, 2012). This research explores and analyses a particular phenomenon: career transition within a specific group: freelance dancers working in the Netherlands. Another justification for the design choice is the fact that there is not enough studies in the subject of dancers' career transition, which are supported by the theory. As Eisen- Hardt (1989) argues case studies are "particularly well suited to new research areas or research areas for which existing theory seems inadequate" (p.548). Additionally, in case of this thesis the career transition phenomenon is investigated in the real-life context (Yin, 1994) of a Dutch freelance dance scene.

The research will use the grounded theory as the basis for how the data is collected and the way the data is analysed. Following the arguments by Halaweh, Fidler, & McRobb (2008), the method refers to "procedure or technique used to collect and/or analyse data" (p.2) and should not be confused with methodology which defines the entire process of the research. Grounded Theory has two main variants: Glaserian Approach (Glaser, 1994) and Strausarian Approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This thesis will use the Strausarian approach, according to which the prior knowledge of the literature and theory of the studied phenomenon is necessary. Integrating case study design with grounded theory approach to analyse data is a common practice (Halaweh et al., 2008). There are many similarities between those two methods; however, a case study does not have a systematic procedure to analyse data, hence the use of grounded theory method for that purpose.

5.3 Data analysis

The interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, coded and analysed according with Grounded Theory method. Coding the interviews is a central part of the qualitative research (Silver & Lewins, 2017). It is a process “by which segments of data are identified as relating to, or being an example of, a more general idea, instance, theme or category” (Silver & Lewins, 2017; p.2). Coding helps in searching for patterns, connections, similarities, differences and irregularities. Coding was executed with the use of the software Atlas.ti. Using a software of this kind makes the navigation between the documents, codes and memos easier and helps to code the interviews in a more systematic way. Atlas.it allows also for displaying documents next to each other and creating the linkages (networks) between related codes. To code the data a theory-informed abductive approach has been used, which combines inductive and deductive practices (Silver & Lewins, 2017). Some codes were therefore named using the theoretical framework, some were derived directly from the data. Following Strauss and Corbin (1990), a coding procedure within grounded theory method comprises three coding steps: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. First, a list of codes emerged after the first cycle of reading the transcripts, where open coding was used. After the first cycle, the axial coding categorized the codes by the main topics, which derived both from the theoretical framework and those explored during the interviews. For example, when a paragraph was coded as ‘transferable skills’, one sentence in that same paragraph was coded ‘creativity’. Consequently, the code ‘creativity’ was categorized as the code ‘transferable skills’. The last step was the selective coding, which pairs categorized codes into themes which derived from the discussed earlier theory. While open coding and selective coding was done with the use of Atlas.ti, the last stage of selective coding was done manually.

5.4 Units of analysis

Within this research the units of analysis are individuals who have worked as freelance professional dancers in the Netherlands and who have changed career or who are currently in the transition period. In detail, the interviewees were selected based on the following set of criteria. The respondents should:

- have worked actively as a freelance professional dancer in the Netherlands, which also includes business registration at the Dutch Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel);
- have transitioned or are in the process of transition to any another profession than performing dancer (additionally for the relevancy, it was important to interview persons, who changed career not earlier than 5 years ago);
- have graduated from a professional dance school in the Netherlands.

These specific criteria of the sample, required the non-probability purposive sampling technique (Bryman, 2012). Convenience sampling and snow-ball sampling has been used. It is important to mention that the researcher graduated at the Rotterdam Dance Academy in Rotterdam, Codarts in 2011 and ever since works as a freelance dancer and choreographer in the Netherlands. As a person connected to the dance field, the researcher has built her own professional network and has contact with many dance professionals and organizations in the Netherlands. The dancers and former dancers were approached and contacted through the use of social media and emails. The researcher personally contacted the individuals fitting the profile. The encountered difficulty of finding the right fit, made the researcher use the snowball sampling (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, to broaden the sample, an announcement on Facebook was posted, which was shared within different artistic communities. Dancers responded to the announcement directly or the names of potential candidates were tagged. To avoid limiting the sample to the social circle of the researcher, dancers were also sought via information found on the ODN website which features dancers who currently use or have used their transition program.

As mentioned before, the researcher experienced difficulty of finding the respondents fitting the exact mentioned description. The pressure of time and few cancellations of scheduled interviews forced the researcher to make exceptions and the interviews are therefore more various than the intended sample. There are 2 respondents who didn't graduate a dance school in the Netherlands; however, they were still accepted as they received an equivalent degree in another country. Additionally, the sample didn't exclude dancers who worked as company dancers before becoming a freelancer.

5.5 Interview approach

13 interviews were conducted. The audio of the conversations was recorded, upon the agreement of the interviewee. The interviews were held between 10th of April 2019 and 7th of May 2019. They took place, depending on the wish of the participant, in informal places or via Skype. Not all the participants gave permission to use their real identities; some asked for complete anonymity. The thesis will therefore address the participants as *Respondent* with an addition of consecutive number. The list with interviewee numbers and their corresponding names as well as the transcriptions of the interviews are kept in the archive of the researcher. For each interview an interview guide was used, which can be found in Appendix B. The interview guide was divided into 6 main topics guided by the literature and the theoretical framework: Introduction question, Dance Education, Dance Career, Career Transition, Available Financial Support, Connection Freelance-Transition.

5.6 Insider research

The researcher was aware already prior the research about possible critic and challenges which would come with personal connection with the studied subject due to her dance career. This type of research which is conducted by a member of the analysed social group is called an insider research (Greene, 2014). And although the insider research might be viewed as threat to the objectivity of the examined problem, it has also many advantages. With regards to interviewees, the insider researcher has the “ability to ask meaningful questions” and “project a more truthful, authentic understanding of the culture under study” (Merriam et al., 2001; p.411). Additionally, the insiders have more practical knowledge about the studied field (Chavez, 2008; p.481). Therefore, the studied subject might feel more trust towards the researcher, who has more understanding about the studied field and be therefore more open to share their personal experiences. Additionally, the lack of academic literature about the given problem, implies that the studied problem is not popular within the academic research and this gap might have been not noticed without the personal experience with the studied phenomenon. To assure objectivity and credibility of the research few measures have been taken. First, being conscious about the possible bias and therefore constantly reflecting on the results in that respect, the researcher has also asked those interviewees who knew her dance background, to answer her question as she wasn't a dancer.

6 Results

This chapter presents the results of the research analysis. The outcomes of the research are structured based on the earlier discussed 4s model for analysing human adaptation to transition by Schlossberg et al., (2012), and accordingly divided into 4 following sections: *Situation, Strategy, Support and Self*. The *Situation* section describes the environment of the freelance dance profession, the time and the triggers causing the transition and answers therefore one of the research questions: How does the career transition process of dancers working in the Netherlands unfold within the context of the freelance dance environment? The section *Strategy* focuses on the ways dancers cope with the transition and describes: the (re)education, career choices and transferable skills. The third section talks about the way dancers support financially their career transition. Sections *Strategy* and *Support* give answer to the second research question: How do dancers in the Netherlands experience and evaluate their career transition process in terms of (re)education, career choices, transferable skills and available support? Concerning the last section of the chapter, the researcher noticed that the *Self* factor is already included in the analysis of 3 other elements and does not need a separate attention. The last section is therefore dedicated to the examples of how the variable *Self* is integrated in other sections.

6.1 The situation

A significant amount of the respondents (8 out of 13) mentioned that the situation of dance labour in the Netherlands has changed since the governmental cuts for cultural sector have been executed in 2013. Respondents confirm, that several dance companies and production houses got closed, which resulted in less work places for dancers. In accordance with Njaradi (2014), many started to work as freelancers as a result of the changes that came with the subsidy cuts. The diminishment of the subsidy caused a shift towards a different model of work within the dance environment. Freelance type of work started to be more popular according to few interviewees. And although when asked, most of the dancers did not feel forced to work as a freelancer, it was a necessary way of adjusting to the new situation. “When the whole crisis started, they all said it was better to be a freelancer, so I switched to freelancing” said Respondent 5. Working as a freelancer is characterized by the interviewees, as, among others: working on various projects within a single year, having a flexible schedule

but own responsibility of physical training, being independent but having no guarantee for constant work flow.

“Being a freelancer means that you are being paid for the time you work. You get multiple projects. There is often a lot of gaps in between. You don't get rights for unemployment, you don't get rights for holidays money or if you are sick.” (Respondent 12)

The freelance dance environment is therefore precarious and fits the description of the boundaryless protean career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Bridgstock, 2007), where the career unfolds within a multiple employment setting, and where flexibility, high mobility and self-management are the key characteristics.

Timing of the transition

The 13 interviews with freelance dancers and ex dancers proved the complexity of the career transition process. In most cases, the transition process has a gradual progression, without a clear-cut beginning and is triggered by combination of several reasons. Based on the interviews, 3 separate stages of the transition process emerged: awareness, decision and action.

- Awareness- is when dancers start to realize that they have to transition at a certain point of their career.
- Decision- is when dancers make a decision about changing their career.
- Action- is when dancers start to be involved in another career direction, either by commencing a study or being actively engaged in a new career. The main intention of the stage action is to change career.

Most of the respondents have not stopped their dancing career immediately after making the decision to pursue another career and many have not excluded working as a dancer in the future. Similarly, with the existing literature (Heidi, 2012) most of them kept working as dancers, after the decision had been made to study or do something else. However, it is worth noticing, that although 10 out of 13 respondents kept on working as dancers while studying, the dance involvement was declining towards the end of the studies. There is therefore a period of overlap of dance career and new career. In case of most of the respondents a start of

a new education or new career, and therefore ‘the action’ corresponds with how they understand the beginning of the transition. This research considers therefore the start of a new education or new career as a milestone and beginning of the transition. Furthermore, agreeing with the literature (Schlossberg et al., 2012), 3 different types of transitions emerged within freelance dance career: anticipated, unanticipated and non-event.

Table 2 Transition process

	Age	Transition type	Transition process experience	dancing while transitioning
Respondent 1	26	Anticipated	Gradual	yes
Respondent 2	29	Unanticipated	Abrupt	no
Respondent 3	29	Not clear	Spontaneous	yes
Respondent 4	29	Unanticipated + non event	Abrupt but now gradual	yes
Respondent 5	33	Anticipated	Gradual	yes
Respondent 6	34	Anticipated	Gradual	yes
Respondent 7	35	Anticipated	Gradual	no
Respondent 8	35	Anticipated	Gradual	yes
Respondent 9	38	Anticipated	Gradual	yes
Respondent 10	40	Anticipated	Gradual	yes
Respondent 11	41	Anticipated	Gradual	yes
Respondent 12	46	Anticipated	Gradual	yes
Respondent 13	52	Non event	Gradual	-

Anticipated transition

In case of 9 out of 13 interviewees the transition was to some extent anticipated; it was a conscious and gradually formed decision. This type of transition is self-initiated and made with enough time to consider different options (Schlossberg et al., 2012). Those dancers experienced transition as a gradual, lasting few years process. And while the process of transition is experienced by most respondents as gradual, the timing of when the anticipation had begun and the awareness of the necessity of transition came about differs per interviewee. While only 2 of the respondents were aware that dancing is not going to be their only career already after graduating from the dance academy, for the rest of the dancers, the thoughts of starting a new career emerged later, within several years from the moment of starting their dance career. “I thought I would dance forever” said Respondent 11. This would imply that freshly graduated dancers do not think about career transition and therefore do not anticipate the transition at the beginning of their careers:

“In the age of 20 you are not so busy with it. Maybe few people have this concern about: what do I do when I turn 40, have the future business plan. I don't think dancers do that.”
(Respondent, 13)

Unanticipated transition

There is an apparent difference if the decision of stopping a dance career comes gradually or is induced by unpredictable outside factors such as injuries or sickness. In case of transitions that were forced by unexpected events, the transition process begins suddenly, and therefore the initiation of it is more obvious than in case of anticipated transition. Two of the interviewed dancers had to start a transition process because of illness, which caused an abrupt stop of their dance career. In case of both this interruption came early (within 4 years after graduation) in their dance careers. They both were forced to transition, to go through a process which they didn't yet began to consider. While Respondent 2 had to stop dancing completely, Respondent 4, although initially afraid of the inevitability of giving up her dance career, now continues dancing while studying theatre dramaturgy. All things considered, the transitions of Respondent 2 and Respondent 4 were unanticipated, forced by unpredictable events.

Non-event transition

There are two persons in the sample, whose transition qualify into the non-event category. According to the literature (Schlossberg et al., 2012) the non-event transition defines a transition that was expected but one that had never happened. In case of Respondent 13, although she has been expecting the transition to happen for already several years, there is no action taken. She admits that every time she encounters problems with finding a dance job, forces her to think about the transition. However, she always ends up finding a dance job, which delays the decision about the transition, and the action is therefore not taken. The transition of Respondent 4, although defined as unanticipated in the first stage, can also due to further events be defined as non-event. Although she started studying, which was caused by an unexpected event, she is now coming back to the dance profession and has intention of continuing it as long as her physicality will enable her to do so. Due to her sickness she expected a full career transition, however the recovery allowed her to continue working as a dancer and delay the process of transition. Therefore, for the current moment, she expands her dance practice by adding new education to it.

“It was a kind of transition that I didn't want. So, then I transitioned back. [...] Now I feel like I'm expanding, and it feels more like a start of a super slow transition that it will take 20 years. Because I never want to cut it just like that.” (Respondent, 4)

Triggers

In line with the literature (Harper, 2012; Roncaglia, 2008; Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994) and based on the interviews, this research distinguishes two themes of factors triggering a transition within dancers careers: Voluntary and Involuntary. Voluntary (Internal) category includes triggers which derive from inner motivations and conscious decisions of the respondent such as need of stability, free choice. Involuntary (External) theme includes the reasons which were imposed upon the respondent without his or her will such as age, illness, injury and deselection. It is important to realize, that in most cases, the transition from the dance profession to another occupation was not a result of a single trigger but an outcome of a succession of events and triggers spread over few years.

	Age now	Voluntary choice				Involuntary choice		
		free choice	new challenge	need stability	support availability	injury/illness	deselection	age
Respondent 1	26	x	x					
Respondent 2	29					x		
Respondent 3	29	x		x			x	
Respondent 4	29					x		
Respondent 5	33	x		x				
Respondent 6	34	x					x	
Respondent 7	35			x			x	
Respondent 8	35			x				
Respondent 9	38	x	x		x			
Respondent 10	40			x				
Respondent 11	41				x			
Respondent 12	46			x				
Respondent 13	52				x			

Table 3 Transition triggers

Many triggers are also interconnected and should not be looked at separately. Overall, it is in most cases a combination of voluntary and voluntary triggers. There are few commonalities within the interviewed sample, however the peculiarity of each career path and small sample size makes it rather difficult to make generalizations.

Voluntary triggers

The most frequently mentioned voluntary reason for transition among freelance dancers was the need of stability. According to the interviewees working as a freelance dancer requires traveling, working unregular hours and having an unstable income. Dancers, who work on the base of self-employment have to constantly change workplaces and continually search for jobs. All of these components, in the eyes of the respondents, stand in the way of gaining more stable living conditions. Four respondents emphasized traveling as strong disadvantage of freelance living style. Accordingly, Respondent 3 says that freelancing involves “too much traveling, too much being away from home, from the family”.

Especially those dancers who already have families or those who plan having kids long for more stability. This trigger was mentioned regardless of gender. Having kids triggers in many a will to change their freelance lifestyle to something that brings also more secure and stable income. Respondent 12, who feels the need of contributing more to the household expenses said:

“You need to find a justification, not only for yourself but also for other people, who are dependent on you. Why would you do this (dance)? It does not bring anything to the house, to the table.”

In case of Respondent 8, having kids has influenced his physical and mental state: “you are sleeping less; you can’t just do whatever you want”. In case of Respondent 10, although she mentioned tiredness of traveling as one of the triggers that pushed her to change her career, pregnancy was the main trigger to transition: “the moment I got pregnant, that was very clear it's going to change...So it was pretty much when I decided to become a mum.”

Triggered by access to money

Few dancers were triggered by the access to the financial support, which was specifically devoted to their career transition. Respondent 11 admits that he was in a certain way tempted

to change his profession at still early stage of his life, because of the financial support availability:

“Because it's so arranged, you just follow the system”. Similarly, Respondent 9, after finding out he had access to some governmental support, he felt a push to use it. “It got to my attention, that I had the access to a certain amount of money. I had to use this money and do something with it.” On the contrary, Respondent 13, who although feels the age pressure and has the access to substantial amount of money designated to her career transition, had not used it yet.

Involuntary

One of the involuntary triggers for transition, which are a cause of unexpected involuntary career switch is injury/illness. Two dancers among the interviewed sample had to transition because of illness. This was a direct trigger, which forced the termination of the dance career. According to literature (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994) this cause of career ending in sport, might cause the identity crisis, social withdrawal and loss of self-esteem. That corresponds with both respondents who had to start a transition that they didn't want. The idea of letting go of the dance career was emotional for both: “Everybody knows me as a dancer and suddenly I am not dancing anymore. So, I also stepped out of the field for a while to feel...to protect myself”, said Respondent 4.

Injury and illness are not the only involuntary causes, triggering the career switch. Those dancers who kept dancing longer indicate age as a main factor that forced them to transition. They all agree that dance is still seen as a young profession, which favours young dancers, living no job options for older ones. Dancers admit that, more mature dancers are not invited to auditions, which is also connected to trigger deselection. Respondent 12 had to skip age on his CV, because he noticed that nobody responds back. Respondent 8 also questions the job availability for dancers at his age: “there is a lot of young dancers coming up, a lot of educations in the Netherlands, so will I still get through?”

On the other hand, some projects or jobs do not fit the needs of more experienced dancers. Respondent 13, who is a rare example of a dancer who still performs at the age of 52, admits that preferably she would like to continue working as a dancer. However, with each year it gets more difficult. From one side she would like to work in projects, which are still challenging and interesting for her, from the other she often doesn't get invited to auditions, which she admits is caused by age discrimination. However, in case of the dancers who transitioned already in their 20's and 30s, age is not mentioned as a direct trigger for the

transition. Some mention that they start to notice how the physical abilities change with age. It is therefore a factor that plays a role, but it is not a direct trigger which made most of the interviewed dancers to transition. It implies that most of the respondents, although aware of the age factor, transition before they reach the age which could really affect their physical abilities.

In line with the literature (Taylor & Ogilvie, 1994), deselection is seen as a separate trigger; however, it is strongly related to “physiological consequence of age” (p.6). In case of freelance dancers’ deselection means not being invited to the audition, or not being chosen at the audition. Based on the interviews it is more difficult to even be invited to the audition after reaching a certain age. The reason for deselecting older dancers is often connected to the fact that their fees should be higher than those of the less experienced dancers: “they don't want to work with older dancers, they are more expensive”, says Respondent 12. Also, for Respondent 3, deselection was one of the triggers, which pushed her to stop dancing: “Basically, someone else decided for me, that I was not in the mood anymore for being on stage. And they decided to say: ok, we are not offering you any new jobs anymore”.

Few mention also the financial crisis and the cuts in funding of culture, as a trigger that made them start to think about living dance profession: “I think because this crisis came in and there were too little jobs and I wanted to do my own work....then I thought I have to transition now.” (Respondent 11)

As mentioned before, some triggers might be a consequence of other less explicit triggers, although in the eyes of the dancers were directly causing the transition. The will of the lifestyle change and longing for stability can also be indirectly caused by reaching a certain age. The unstable income can be a consequence of deselection. Deselection on the other hand is strongly connected to the age factor. However, to really understand this dependence, a quantitative research with a much bigger sample is needed.

6.2 Strategies

(Re)education and career choices

All the interviewed dancers completed dance education with a Bachelor or Master degree in one of the dance academies in the Netherlands (11 out of 13) or in another country (2 out of 13). In the majority of the cases they got trained specifically in modern dance techniques as the main dance style and graduated as performing dancers. According with the sorting theory (Weiss, 1995), diploma in dance signals therefore the relevant skills that are necessary to do a dance job. However, in order to pursue a different career than dance, dance education in case of the chosen sample was not sufficient enough. 11 of out 13 interviewed dancers decided to transition by following a second study of their choice. Only in case of Respondent 6, who is an autodidact vegan chef, another education wasn't a necessity. He argues that as a dancer "You can learn things very fast and adjust to things very quickly. So sometimes you don't need even an education." (Respondent 6) However, he also admits that he was interested in going to a cooking school but at that time he couldn't find an appropriate match.

To most of the interviewees, having only a dance diploma, would not be enough for pursuing a career of their choice. For example, for Respondent 12 a dance diploma has had no use when searching for other jobs, which could satisfy him. Although he has completed a master's degree, because it was a dance academy, in his opinion he could get only jobs that are below his intellectual capabilities:

"What can I expect with my diploma is to work in the supermarket...hello...no way! I can't start climbing the ladder from under the floor. I did the study to have some kind of paper to show what I am able to do: intellectually, not only that I can swing my arms and legs."

(Respondent 12)

The second study serves therefore as a justification that a dancer is not only exclusively a physical performer but also capable of doing other jobs. A past dance career might therefore make finding another job more challenging. Respondent 1, who soon will start searching for jobs outside the dance sector, doubts about placing her dance education and experience in some of the motivation letters. In her opinion dance education can, in some cases, work against her: "For some people it is nice that you have a dance background and some people assume...that...you are not that intellectually capable as someone else". There are stereotypes

and presumptions about what a dancer is capable of which are consequently causing insecurities about dancers' past careers.

On the contrary, those respondents who chose professions related to dance and movement, see their previous education and experience as beneficial. Respondent 3, for example, who started already teaching dance while working as a dancer, didn't need an additional diploma to show her competences to her employer. Respondent 2 got a job in the Pilates training centre, because of her previous dance experience: "The Pilates techniques is very close to ballet technique. I think that was an advantage, for sure. And that's also why they trusted me with that. Actually, they offered me a job, also because of the dance background."

	new career choice
Respondent 1	cultural economist
Respondent 2	Pilates teacher
Respondent 3	dance teacher
Respondent 4	dramaturge
Respondent 5	makeup artist, hairdresser
Respondent 6	vegan chef
Respondent 7	cardiovascular technician
Respondent 8	primary teacher
Respondent 9	choreographer, filmmaker
Respondent 10	movement therapist
Respondent 11	photographer, B&B owner
Respondent 12	cultural sociologist
Respondent 13	doesn't know yet

Table 4 New career choice

Coping with role change

Nevertheless, the transition from being a dancer to another profession is experienced by most as difficult. "It wasn't easy. [...] Nothing was easy about it", says Respondent 7. The accumulated dance capital is therefore in most cases impossible to leave behind. One of the frequently experienced difficulty was, defined by few as the identity problem. Many

struggled with replacing 'being a dancer' as 'being someone else'. In fact, even those, who stopped dance activities completely, still refer to themselves as dancers. They argue that dance is not about 'doing' but about 'being', which makes it difficult to put back.

"You don't do dance; you are a dancer. It's your identity. It's everything. I found it very hard. You ask yourself: What am I? You are a dancer, even if you don't dance physically it's who you are". (Respondent 4)

In fact, most of the respondents struggle with letting go of the dance career. Some even experienced it as the feeling of giving up: "You feel almost like you are giving up on a certain dream, it feels maybe like a failure" (Respondent 6). To many, dance is a profession difficult to replace. The main reason for it is the fact that the choice of dancing careers was led by passion and a feeling of fulfilment. In that case, the change, although necessary, remains unwanted, seen as "following the steps of utility without experiencing the fulfilment." (Respondent 12)

As a consequence, many kept on dancing while studying or pursuing another career. And although only one of the interviewees is still participating in auditions and is actively seeking dance jobs, most of them do not exclude the possibility of dancing again in the future. Additionally, many based their choice of a second career on their past education and experience. Staying connected to the dance world is important. That's why probably most of the dancers don't see the transition, especially in the early stage, as change of a career but the extension of their practice, slowing down of the pace, expanding their knowledge and skills.

In some cases, the transition is easily accepted. The less involuntary triggers, the easier the transition is experienced. Another factor which makes the transition easier is finding another passion or goal, which can, with time, replace dancing; or as Respondent 11 put it: "dance needs to find a different level in my life". The moment dancers find another passion or job that fulfils them, it is easier to let go of the dance career.

Transferable skills

Although to some interviewees dance education and career makes the transition challenging, all respondents agree that the skills learned during their dance education and dancer career are transferable to other careers. That would indicate that not all human capital acquired through dance schooling and dance related jobs is lost at the moment of starting a new career. Many respondents believe that the experience and knowledge gathered during their dance career is valuable, should be preserved and shared with others. "As a dancer we still have so

much knowledge to share, different perspective on things. But you stop so early, it's all gone. I had a need to preserve that, to share it with other people.” (Respondent 11)

One way of preserving the skills and the experience, might be choosing a second career, which is in some way complimentary to the dance profession. Some, who chose as their second profession jobs such as dance teacher, Pilates teacher, movement therapist, dramaturgy, motivate their choice of the direction of a second career by a will of doing something that’s connected to the movement or a dance field. It was important for Respondent 10 to choose something where she could stay “involved in dance, but from a different perspective”.

Furthermore, most of the interviewees chose to continue their new career within one of the creative and cultural industries. It is therefore not only easier to match their acquired human capital during their dance years with the new job, but also a way of protecting their accumulated experience and skills from waste.

“I don't think I will drift very far from the cultural scene [...] It is stupid to throw all that knowledge and experience away.” (Respondent 12)

	new career choice	transferable skills
Respondent 1	cultural economist	presentation, communication, networking
Respondent 2	Pilates teacher	body awareness, knowledge of dance techniques
Respondent 3	dance teacher	knowledge of dance techniques, teaching skills
Respondent 4	dramaturge	body awareness, creativity
Respondent 5	makeup artist, hairdresser	body awareness, discipline, presenting
Respondent 6	vegan chef	body awareness, presenting, working with people, perseverance, learning fast
Respondent 7	cardiovascular technician	discipline, perseverance, communication, working with people
Respondent 8	primary teacher	body awareness, creativity
Respondent 9	choreographer, filmmaker	perseverance, focus, working with people, creativity
Respondent 10	movement therapist	body awareness, discipline, creativity, working with people
Respondent 11	photographer, B&B owner	body awareness, ability to work independently
Respondent 12	cultural sociologist	body awareness, learning fast, communication
Respondent 13	doesn't know yet	working with people

Table 5 Transferable skills

“I did choose the study because it could complement what I did. If I wanted to keep on dancing, it could be really beneficial, but it could be also beneficial if I stopped dancing.”
(Respondent 1)

The human capital, in other words the “unique set of abilities’ (Borjas, 2013; p. 235) have an application even for those careers which are outside the cultural and creative industry. Certain skills have therefore universal application. The most frequently mentioned skills were body awareness, creativity, ability to learn fast, presentation skills, discipline and ability to work in the group. Respondent 7, who works now in the hospital and learns to become a cardiovascular technician, says that she transfers her ability to work in the group. Respondent 7 argues that there is a similarity between those two totally different work fields: “on stage you also have to adapt to each other. And it's the same in OR¹ - you have to connect and work together”.

The biggest part of dancers’ profession is the physical use of their body in the space. Dancers work and learn with their bodies, which differs from many other professions. This bodily awareness can be transferred and be useful in other professions. For example, Respondent 6 uses movement while cooking: “I learn fast to make things with my hands, it's a movement. As a dancer you have to learn quickly to do weird things with your body”. Respondent 8, thanks to his dance career can easily teach a gym class to his primary school students. Dance techniques are used for example by Respondent 3, who teaches dance and Respondent 2, who works as Pilates teacher. Even to Respondent 11, who works as a photographer, the way he uses space and his body is crucial: “I use of space, it's very valuable. We don't even realize how special that is [...] It feels like I'm dancing around the people.” Dancers work, learn and express things with their bodies, which not many people can comprehend.

“One skill that dancers have, that not all people have developed - is body awareness of where you are in the space. And also reading things with your body - it's something that not everybody can do or understand.” (Respondent 4)

What is noteworthy is the fact that most of the interviewed dancers focused on talking about the skills and attributes that are strictly connected to their dance profession, regardless the

¹ OR – stands for Operation Room in the hospital

freelance nature. However, many skills, which appeared across all the interviews such as flexibility, responsibility, entrepreneurial skills, being able to work independently and easily adapting to new environments were connected to freelance type of work. Also, the uncertainty of freelance work makes dancers constantly search for work and therefore develop their network: “I learned how important the network is. It’s also important now: for looking for jobs, to be representative, to write emails, to negotiate contracts.” (Respondent 1)

Another characteristic feature of freelance type of work among artists, which maybe not valued by dancers, but definitely worth mentioning is multi-job holding (Jeffri, 2005). Income irregularity and uncertainty forced 10 out of 13 interviewed dancers to take on side jobs next to their dance careers. Few of them were teaching dance or choreographing. However, most of them had to work outside the dance field in the months they had less income from work as a dancer. And although dancers see it only as a way of survival, it is an additional experience and implies that working as a dance freelancer does not limit the job to dance jobs only. Therefore, it is a part of the freelance dancer career. However, most of the dancers did extra jobs only sporadically with the main aim to make money which supports the ability to continue their dance career. All of those additional jobs did not require additional education and were based on the learning by doing principle. Respondent 12 summarizes his experience with doing many different jobs in this way:

“You become an amateur in many things but you’re not professional in anything. So, you kind of make these weird acrobatics to try to do what you want to do, so you end up doing all the weird stuff.” (Respondent 12)

6.3 Financial support

As mentioned before, most of the interviewed respondents decided to follow an additional education. Almost all of them used an external financial support to pay for the study they wanted to follow. It varies per interviewee what kind of support they have sought and who eventually supported their transition. From one side all the interviewees seem to find a way to finance their career transition, from the other side in most cases exclusion of the external bodies would result in choosing possibly a different path: “If I had money, I could study 4-5 years.” (Respondent 12) Some dancers admitted that their financial situation influenced the choices of their studies. Respondent 7, for example, had no money for (re)education and was searching for a job that would provide the financial support: “It was not so easy to find transition because I didn't have any money”.

4 main types of financial sources emerged from the interviews:

- Self-support
- Family support (parents or partners)
- Institutional support (social welfare, occupational organizations, foundations)
- Traineeship (new employer supports education)

Self-support

Self-support means that a person was able or had to support their transition within their own financial capabilities. Only 2 out of 13 interviewees did not use any of the external financial sources in order to transition. Only one interviewed person was able to finance his transition entirely from the money he earned as a dancer. Furthermore, he did not seek for other support, nor did he know about the ODN. The other dancer who self-supported his transition, decided not to follow any formal education and chose an autodidact way of learning. Many respondents self-financed their transition with a combination of sources.

Family

For 5 dancers the family played a role in financial support of their career transition. In case of two interviewees, parents were the ones who paid for the education. Parents of one dancer were also monthly contributing by transferring a small amount to the dancer's bank account. Two other dancers admit that, without partners with a regular income, studying wouldn't be possible.

Institutional support

Five of the interviewed dancers were part of the Omscholingsregeling program. Three of them working at some point as freelance dancers, began their careers working as a pay-role employee in a subsidized company, which paid the contributions for them. Respondent 13 works from project to project as a typical boundaryless freelancer but gets hired always on a pay-role base. In her case, the ODN contributions were partially paid by her employers, and partially she had to pay it independently. Respondent 10 never paid any contribution; however, her situation was evaluated as a special case, and her study got funded by ODN and International Organization for the Transition of Professional Dancers. What is interesting in the case of Respondent 10, is that she did not know about ODN till she decided to study and started looking for funding possibilities. And that's also evident in other cases. Dancers start to seek for ways to pay their tuitions, in the moment they decide to study. At that moment, applying for founding from the ODN is too late. Most of the interviewees knew about ODN's existence during their dance career, however they often had a wrong idea about whom the organization supports and about the criteria that needs to be fulfilled in order to get financed. The arguments behind not contributing to the ODN program vary: two of the respondents didn't know about it at all. Two of the respondents didn't know that they could also contribute to it independently. Two were just not interested. Those who knew about the program, did not see a point of contributing, because they experienced their career as uncertain. From one side, they were simply not earning enough, which makes it difficult to save money for even basic living costs or social security such as pension fund. Additionally, those dancers could not imagine paying monthly a contribution to something that they had no certainty about : "I think the real problem is that when you are starting out as a freelancer, it's very difficult to earn enough for you living so paying a fee wouldn't be attractive as a freelance dancer." (Respondent 4)

In case of dancers who did not get supported by ODN, the financial support came from other institutional sources. Four dancers turned for financial help to the organization called Service Punt Kunst & Cultuur, established by UWV (governmental agency) which offered financial support to actors, dancers, musicians and other artists who have lost their jobs due to the disappearance of cultural subsidies from the government. However, at a certain moment the money stopped being available and Respondent 4 therefore missed a chance of the support of that service. She, together with another respondent used the DUO, a governmental support

for students in the Netherlands. DUO offers money in a form of a loan, which has to be returned within a certain number of years after the graduation.

Traineeship

Respondent 2 got supported by few organizations and her study is sponsored by a company that she works for. Similarly, in case of Respondent 7, the training is paid by the hospital.

	Only freelancer?	Self-support	Family	Institutional support			Traineeship
				ODN	UWV	Other	
Respondent 1	No	x	x		x		
Respondent 2	No					x	x
Respondent 3	Yes		x				
Respondent 4	Yes	x			x		
Respondent 5	Yes		x		x		
Respondent 6	Yes	x					
Respondent 7	Yes						x
Respondent 8	Yes	x					
Respondent 9	No	x		x	x		
Respondent 10	Yes			x			
Respondent 11	No			x			
Respondent 12	No		x	x			
Respondent 13	No			x			

Table 6 Type of support

6.4 The Self

As mentioned in the beginning of chapter 6, the variable *Self*, which focuses on individual characteristics, is unavoidably included in all three sections of this chapter: *Situation*, *Support*, *Strategies*. On the one hand, this thesis looks at the experiences of freelance dancers as a group, who share certain characteristics such as ethnicity, education background and socioeconomic status. On the other hand, the transition is an individual process, and therefore certain personal characteristics are relevant. For example, in paragraph 6.1: *Situation*, the relevant *Self* elements that influence the transition process are: age, stage of life and the state of health. In paragraph 6.2: *Strategies*, individual outlook on the future career and the acceptance of role change differ per interviewed person and show personal perspective on the

matter. In paragraph 6.3: *Support*, the need of external financial support from most of the respondents for further education, gives us an indication about their socioeconomic status. Additionally, the individual choices and career paths have influenced their support availability.

7 Conclusions and discussion

The aim of this thesis is to research the career transitions from the perspective of freelance dancers in the Netherlands. With a critical review of existing literature, using triangulation of theories and qualitative study based on 13 interviews of freelance dancers working in the Netherlands, the research intended to answer the questions:

1. How does the career transition process of dancers working in the Netherlands unfold within the context of the freelance dance environment?
2. How do dancers in the Netherlands experience and evaluate their career transition process in terms of (re)education, career choices, transferable skills and available support?
3. In what way does the boundaryless career of freelance dancers in the Netherlands influences their career process from dancer to another profession?

In response to question one: The data derived from semi-structured in-depth interviews proved the complexity of the researched phenomenon. Transition is mostly understood as a beginning of new studies or career, but not necessarily as the end of the dance career. It is therefore often not seen as a retirement from dance but as a process of expanding the knowledge and skills of the dance career. That corresponds with definitions by Louis (1980) of career transition who defines transition as a period, where the role does not necessarily have to be completely changed but shifted to another position of the role already held.

Based on the interviews, three separate stages within dancers' transition process emerged: awareness, decision and action. The timing of when dancers begin realizing about the necessity of transition (awareness), when dancers make a decision and command the action to switch career is personal and differs per interviewee. It is certain, however, that dancers do not plan their career transition in the beginning of their careers as only 2 dancers out of 13 were aware of this necessity of the transition early on.

In line with Schlossberg et al. (2012) dance transition can be divided into 3 types: anticipated, unanticipated and non-event. Additionally, the transition process of the freelance dancers in the Netherlands, depends on the combination of different voluntary and involuntary factors. Freelance dancers work independently and are therefore dependent mostly on their own decisions. As a consequence, for many the transition is seen as a

voluntary choice. In that case the transition is experienced as a gradual process based on a conscious decision, and it is therefore expected. In case of voluntary, expected transition, changing career is easier accepted. In this group the most frequently given reason to transition was a need of stability. Many long for a constant income and fixed workplace, which a freelance dance career cannot ensure. Few respondents had to end their careers involuntary due to experienced age discrimination or sudden illness. In case of those involuntary transitions, the process is experienced as more difficult.

In response to question two: Most of the interviewed dancers decided to follow a second education which was supported by an external financial source. Dancers do find the way to finance their transition, however in some cases the financial situation influenced the choice of their second transition. The choices of new career direction are also influenced by the previous dance education and experience and the will of staying connected to the cultural or creative industry. Four main types of financial sources emerged from the interviews: Self-support, Family support (parents or partners), Institutional support (social welfare, occupational organizations, foundations), Traineeship (new employer supports education).

The skills learned while working as a dancer are transferable to other careers, even in the case of the unrelated to dance or movement professions. Agreeing with the human capital theory (Becker, 1964), dancers aim to increase their productivity and therefore the employability by investing in additional education. The human capital, which is collected across their dance career, although transferable to other professions, can work against finding a job outside of the artistic field. That would imply that to transfer to another profession, dancers have to have an additional study to dance education. Education however needs a financial investment, which because of the precariousness nature of dancers' freelance career is not easily affordable. The specially designed support for transition career is available and dancers are aware of its existence. However, dancers start to seek information about the available support too late. Most of those dancers who worked from the beginning of their career as freelancers did not pay the contributions to ODN and therefore are not eligible for the fund. The reasons why dancers do not contribute to the fund are connected to the unpredictability of their income and the uncertainty of the future plans. However, while ODN is changing its rules, dancers are not aware of it, and don't realize of the flexibility of the rules of the organization. That implies that dancers should be addressed earlier in their career about the available support. Another suggestion would be the ability of paying contributions based on a total artistic income, earned as a self-employed dancer. Based on the interviews

many dancers are multi-job or multi-profession holders. The ODN allows to pay contributions based on the income collected solely from jobs as a dancer. It would be more realistic to pay a monthly contribution from the income including all dance related jobs, such as choreographing or teaching.

In response to question three: The boundaryless career type in case of those who worked as freelancers from the beginning of their career was a way of dealing with current conditions of the dance labour market. The boundaryless career type has had an effect on dancers' lifestyle, which is characterized by dynamic and unregular working patterns, unstable income and frequent traveling. These factors were pointed as the main trigger to transition among freelance dancers. Most of the dancers had to additionally do jobs related to dance, such as teaching, choreographing or were holding jobs outside of the dance sector. This multi-holding features of boundaryless career did not seem to have a significant influence on the way of dancers' transition. Dancers see it only as an indispensable way of financial survival.

7.1 Limitations and recommendations for future research

This thesis gives an overview of the current situation of the freelance dance landscape and covers a broad range of topics and issues within career transition of freelance dancers in the Netherlands. And although the explorative character of the research fulfilled its purpose, the qualitative methodology brings few limitations. First of all, qualitative research is generally criticized to be subjective, as it depends on personal views and opinions (Bryman, 2012). However, in the case of this research, only people experiencing career transitions could provide valuable information about it. Second of all, the interpretative nature of analysing data within qualitative research, can be guided by the researcher's background and previous experiences (Creswell, 2007). Additionally, the researcher is personally connected to the studying case, which can be another subject of critique; however, as it was explained in chapter 5.6, the insider research was done consciously and is therefore seen as beneficial to the study.

The most significant limitation of the qualitative case study, however, is the non-generalizability of the results (Bryman, 2012). Considering the used methodology, the sample for the interviews was not ideal: the sample was chosen based on purposive sampling and represented only dancers who pursued another education after their dancer career. It did not include, however, dancers who change career without (re)educating. Their perspectives on

some of the transition aspects such as availability of financial support or the use of transferable skills might differ from those who chose to (re)educated themselves in another direction. Additionally, the results of this research did not show any particular difference caused by the gender or the cultural background of the interviewed dancers. Those differences could however occur with more participants.

Therefore, a much bigger sample with a quantitative approach would be necessary to make generalizations about the freelance dance population in the Netherlands. A broader sample could give a higher level of representativity, validity and reliability, and therefore the results could give better implications for future policies about the support of career transition. It has been argued that policy-makers give lower credibility to results from qualitative approach (Rahman, 2016). However, this thesis can serve as a first attempt of studying the career transitions of self-employed dancers working in the Netherlands and serve as a point of departure of further research.

First, it would be beneficial to conduct a comparative qualitative study of career transition processes and experiences for dancers working on a pay roll base and those who work as self-employed. It would investigate the similarities and differences between those two groups and therefore cross-validate the findings. Furthermore, it would be interesting to use the same theory framework, that has been formed for the purpose of this thesis and conduct a quantitative research with a survey as a method of collecting data. It would allow for collecting much bigger, and therefore more representative data about freelance dance population in the Netherlands. It would show whether certain results and patterns, which appeared already in this qualitative research such as dependence between boundaryless lifestyle characteristics and the main triggers to transition, are representative to a wider population.

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Appendix - A sample of coding frame

Codes	Axial codes	Selective codes
Trigger Illness	Involuntary trigger	Situation - Reasons and motivations causing transition
Trigger Injury		
Trigger Age		
Trigger Deselection		
Trigger Lifestyle	Voluntary trigger	
Trigger access to money		
Trigger free choice		
Trigger enough dance		
Time awareness	Timing	Situation – the unfold of freelance transition within the environment of freelance dance
Time decision		
Time Action		
Anticipated tr	Transition types	
Unanticipated tr		
Non-event tr		
Gradual tr	Transition process	
Sudden tr		
Spontaneous tr		
Not clear tr		
Freelance environment	Freelance environment	
Freelance influence		
Freelance motive[?]		
Freelance current sit		
Support parents	Family support	Financial Support recourses
Support partners		
Support government	Institutional support	
Support ODN		
Support employer		
Support other		

(re)study choice	(Re)study strategy	Strategy – how dancers cope with transition
(re)study network		
(re)study motive[?]		
(re)study complimentary		
First action	Role change	
Lack of money		
Seek dance job		
Still dance		
Seek info trans		
Stay connected		
New passion		
Insecurities		
Age		Personal attributes
Sex		
Origin		
Residence		
Values		
Dance edu	Dance education	Dance capital
Grad dance edu		
Dance work place	Dance experience	
Dance termination		
Dance confidence	Dancers attributes and skills	Transferable skills and attributes (human capital)
Dance passion		
Creativity		
Body awareness		
Discipline		
Perseverance		
Presenting		
Communication skills	Freelancer skills	
Flexibility		
Independence		
Network skills		

Appendix B – the interview guide

Introduction questions:

1. Age
2. Nationality
3. Place of residence
4. Current occupation

Dance education

5. At what age did you start your dance training?
6. Have you completed any professional dance education?
 - If yes, from what school and what year did you graduate?

Dance career

7. Can you tell me what kind of dance you do and where you have worked so far as a dancer?
(main dance companies and projects).
8. During your dance career, have you always worked as a freelancer?
 - Are you/were you officially registered as a ZZP'er at the Kamer van Koophandel (Chamber of Commerce)?
9. Was freelance type of work your voluntary choice?
 - If yes, why?
 - If no, what were the reasons you had to work as a freelancer?
10. In the time of your dance career, have you also had different work than dancer? What type of work was it and what were the main reasons for having another job next to your dance career?

Career Transition

11. Do you still dance, or did you completely stop dancing?
12. Are you still seeking work as a dancer?
13. How would you define the word 'transition' in case of a dance career?
 - How do you feel about the word 'retirement' in connection with your career switch?
14. When were you first aware of the realities of the 'retirement' or transition from dance career?
15. When did the transition start for you?
 - Did you experience it as an abrupt moment or was it gradual?

16. What are the main factors/reasons that made you decide to transition?
 - Would you consider your retirement as a voluntary decision or one that was forced by other circumstances?
17. What was the most difficult and most easy in your transition process?
18. Did/do you follow any courses or had to do a second study in order to transition to a different occupation?
 - Have you continued working as a dancer while studying?
19. Explain your choice of your new profession – motivation
20. What the choice of your new job influenced by your financial situation?
21. How did you get your job / How are you going to search for a new job?

Support

22. How did you support financially your transition?
23. In your opinion, did you earn enough money with your dance involvement to support you through the career transition?
24. Did you know about Omscholing Dansers while you were working as a dancer?
 - 24.1. Yes, I did know about it:
 - How did you know about it?
 - Did you participate in the program they offer?
 - If Yes: Where you paying monthly contributions independently?
 - If No: Why not?
 - 24.2. No, I didn't know about it:
 - Do you think that if you knew about it, you would have paid monthly contributions in order to later use it?
25. What do you know about Omscholing Dansers?
26. In your opinion what could be done better to attract more independent dancers to participate in the program?

Connection: Freelance work- transition

27. Do you think that freelancing influenced your transition in any way?
28. Are there any skills from that you learned working as a freelance dancer that are transferable to your current work or interest?
 - What skills learned in your dance career do you use in your new job?