Manuscript Title: ***Assessing Validity and Reliability of the Dance-Specific Movement Competency Screen***

Reviewer's Comments:

1. Overall Evaluation: This manuscript presents a well-structured and methodologically sound study evaluating the **Dance-Specific Movement Competency Screen (DSMCS)**. It addresses a clear gap in dance medicine by offering a screening tool tailored to dancers practicing multiple genres, a population underserved by existing assessments. The study's mixed-methods approach, including content, concurrent, and predictive validity along with inter-rater reliability, is commendable and contributes meaningfully to both clinical and educational domains in dance science.

2. Strengths

- **Novelty and Relevance**: The DSMCS is a unique contribution, designed to assess movement competency across diverse dance genres, including African diasporic forms, which are often excluded from traditional ballet-centric tools.
- **Methodological Rigor**: The study follows established guidelines for tool development and validation, with clear procedures for assessing content validity, concurrent validity (via mSEBT), and inter-rater reliability.
- **Comprehensive Design**: The inclusion of cognitive load, varied movement speeds, and multidirectional tasks reflects real-world dance demands and enhances ecological validity.
- **Strong Preliminary Results**: High inter-rater reliability (ICC = 0.917) and significant correlations with mSEBT scores support the tool's potential utility.
- **Clinical Relevance**: The tool has practical applications for injury prevention and performance assessment in diverse dance populations.
- **Clear Writing and Structure**: The manuscript is well-organized and mostly clear, with appropriate use of technical language.

3. Areas for Improvement

a. Title:

- The title is appropriate and descriptive. If desired, a slightly more engaging alternative could be: "Development and Validation of the Dance-Specific Movement Competency Screen for Multi-Genre Dancers"

b. Abstract:

- The abstract is informative but could be improved by:
    - Including sample size for each validity and reliability test.
    - Clarifying the statistical methods used (e.g., ICC model type).
    - Emphasizing the practical implications of findings. End with a clear statement on the tool's implications for practice or research.

c. Language and Clarity:

- The manuscript is generally well-written, but some sections are dense with technical language. Consider simplifying complex sentences for broader accessibility.
- Example: “Tasks include movements such as knee flexion (plié), leg lifts (extensions), quadruped crawling…” could be streamlined for clarity.
- Example: Instead of “The DSMCS was developed to assess movement competency in dancers practicing multiple genres,” consider “The DSMCS assesses movement competency across multiple dance genres.”

c. Figures and Tables

- Tables referenced (e.g., Table 1, Table 2, Table 3) are critical to understanding the tool’s development and validation. Ensure they are clearly labeled and formatted for publication.
- Consider adding visual examples or diagrams of selected DSMCS tasks to enhance reader comprehension.

d. Discussion and Limitations

- The discussion is thoughtful and acknowledges key limitations, including sample size and genre representation.
- Future directions could be expanded to include:
    - Longitudinal studies to assess predictive validity over time.
    - Adaptations for younger or less experienced dancers.
    - Integration into dance curricula or injury prevention programs.

e. Scholarly Framing

- The manuscript is well-cited, but a few references could be updated or expanded to include recent developments in dance screening and neuromuscular assessment.
- Consider briefly comparing DSMCS to other emerging tools beyond mSEBT and FMS to contextualize its place in the broader landscape.

Final Recommendation

Minor revisions recommended. This manuscript offers a valuable and innovative contribution to dance science and rehabilitation. With modest improvements in clarity, formatting, and framing, it is well-suited for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.