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## **A Study on “Dance to Heal Mind, Body and Soul”**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

The "DANCE TO HEAL MIND, BODY AND SOUL", is a finding of the various benefits of dance. Dance helps a person with physical, mental and social wellbeing. It is in a form of physical exercise. It has various positive impacts on the physical health of an individual, like prevent and manage heart disease, cancer, increase flexibility, burning of fats, boost metabolism, and helps to stay fit and active. While, physical health and mental health are interconnected. One impacts the other. Thus, dance also boost mental health like reducing stress, depression, improves self-confidence and self-esteem, exercising the brain and increase in memory, and more. The social impact of dance includes increase in communication and coordination skills. The study also focuses on the importance of Dance Movement therapy(DMT).

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### **INTRODUCTION**

“Being physically active is critical for health and wellbeing – it can help add years to life and life to years” - WHO Director-General Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

Dance can be defined as movement of the body rhythmically to music. It follows a sequence of steps that matches the speed and rhythm of music, with the purpose of expressing an emotion, idea, story, or releasing energy or simply taking delight in the movement itself.

For many out there, dancing might be just a weekend activity like chilling, parties and loud music, enjoying in weddings, etc. For some, it may be a profession, passion or identity.

The power of dancing is that, it is an art form that makes a person engaged and active physically, mentally and emotionally at the same time. It can integrate and heal the mind, body and soul.

This study finds out how dancing heals the mind, body and soul of a person. It is very important to know and understand its benefits. Various people had researched and studied and came up with various advantages, facts, impacts or effects of dancing.

Movement, which is the core component of dance, is also a form of psychotherapy that is known as dance/movement therapy. It is used for social, emotional, physical and cognitive integration of an individual. It has been around since the early part of the second half of the last century, but is very little known. It is facilitated by a master's level clinician with a specific degree in it. A person do not have to be a dancer in order to participate or benefit from dance/movement therapy.

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### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Rowman Altamira (2006) wrote a book titled as 'Dancing for health: Conquering and preventing stress', where he had described about the various benefits of dance on a person's health He had mainly focused on how dancing helps to resist, reduce or escape from various stress. He describes the benefits of physical exercises in physical immunization against the negative consequences of stress. Physical exercises also helps to prevent heart attacks, lower blood pressure, prevent breast cancer, diabetes, strokes, depression, etc. According to him, dance contributes to the overall quality of the later years of one's life. It is associated with brain damage, impaired memory and learning, and reduces the risk of Alzheimer's disease. Dance can also help to prevent the stress of premenstrual discomfort in women.

In a systematic study conducted by Kiepe, M.S., Stockigt, B. and Keil, T. (2012) found that dance when used as a therapy was effective in improving the quality of life for adults with physical and mental illnesses. It has positive affects on people with breast cancer, depression, stress, diabetes and heart failure. The study also focuses on the importance of ballroom dances.

Another study on dance as a therapy for cancer prevention, by Gurbuz Aktas, Filiz Ogce (2005), found that dance can be an effective way in the prevention of cancer. Dance/ movement therapy is a form of physical activity and exercise which deals with a person's physical, mental, emotional and social

integration. Movement of the body improves the functions of the various body systems. Thus, dance as a form of physical exercise is an alternative to medicines for the treatment of cancer.

A study on "Creative healing" by Michael Samuels, Lane, M.R. (2011), focuses on the importance of creative activities like music, dance, writing or art, to heal body and soul. Hidden creativity is helpful for patients with life-threatening illness, like cancer, AIDS, a person with depression, physicians and nurses to enhance their medical practice, and more. By immersing oneself in creative activity, one can connect with a deeper part of himself herself and find their inner artist-healer, which helps to improve health, attitude and a sense of wellbeing. It helps to gain inner peace as creativity is filled with inspiration and guidance and helps to make positive changes in life.

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## FINDINGS :

### IMPACT ON PHYSICAL WELLBEING:

The studies found that, physical activity is very important for boosting mental health, to prevent and manage heart disease, cancer, diabetes, helps in weight management, strengthen bones and muscles, and more. Doctors too recommend physical exercises as a part of medication.

Dance is a form of exercise or physical activity. It has various positive impacts on physical health of an individual. Energy is required for dancing, which leads to burning of fats, boost metabolism and helps to stay fit and active. Dancing leads entire body movement, which increases flexibility.

Thus, dance has a variety of impacts in the physical wellbeing of an individual.

### IMPACT ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING

It is found that, dancing have been an effective way in preventing and reducing psychological issues like stress, depression of anxiety . Dancing releases certain chemicals in the brain like endorphins and neurotransmitter, which causes our body to feel calm and happy. It is a way of venting out one's emotions, thoughts, ideas, feelings and therefore result in reducing stress.

Dancing also improves self-confidence and boost self-esteem of an individual. It leads to expressing oneself and presenting to the audience, become self-dependent, and build one's personality. It helps to open up and remove shyness. Dance also increases the patience level.

Another important impact found is that, dancing also leads to the exercising of the brain and increase in memory. It improves thinking skills, as one has to match the steps and moves with the music, beats, words, theme, costume, simultaneously. It increases the creativity level of a person. Remembering and memorizing the movements, linking them with the music, words, tal, laya, keeps the mind sharp.

### IMPACT ON SOCIAL WELLBEING

Dancing is a medium of communication with the audience, which involves expression of thoughts along with body movements. It is a beneficial way of building trust and openness. This is because performing and practicing in groups leads to interaction, exchange of ideas, thoughts, movements, music, and more and results in coordination. Thus, the social skills of an individual enhances.

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## CONCLUSION:

Dancing has always been an effective way for the overall development of an individual. It is a form of physical exercise, which boost physical health, mental and social wellbeing. It is important for people to know its benefits, rather than just taking it casually as a fun activity. Also, more emphasize should be given on Dance Movement Therapy in India, which is a form of psychotherapy and very less people know about it.

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