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## INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF DANCE THERAPY IN MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT OF STUDENTS IN HEBEI NORTH UNIVE...

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# INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF DANCE THERAPY IN MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT OF STUDENTS IN HEBEI NORTH UNIVERSITY

## INTRODUCTION

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In recent years, the exploration of alternative therapeutic methods for mental health treatment has gained significant momentum. Among these, dance therapy, an expressive therapy that combines dance and psychology, has emerged as a promising approach. The American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA) defines dance therapy as the psychotherapeutic use of movement to promote emotional, social, cognitive, and physical integration (ADTA, 2023). This research, entitled "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment of Students in Hebei North University" aims to establish a correlational relationship between dance therapy and mental health outcomes.



The mental health crisis continues to escalate globally, with the World Health Organization reporting a substantial increase in mental health conditions over the past few decades (WHO, 2023). Traditional forms of treatment, such as medication and talk therapy, have been the standard, but they are not always sufficient or suitable for all individuals. This has led to a search for complementary therapies, where dance therapy stands out due to its holistic approach (Smith & Pritzker, 2022).

9 Dance therapy's roots can be traced back to the early 20th  
13 century, but it was not until the late 1940s that it began to gain  
recognition as a form of psychotherapy (Chaiklin & Wengrower, 2021). The foundational belief in dance therapy is that body movement reflects an individual's inner state, and thus, by changing movement patterns, one can affect the psychological state (Berrol, 2020). This aligns with contemporary research in neuroscience, which underscores the interconnection between physical movement, emotional regulation, and neuroplasticity (Guzmán-García et al., 2023).

Numerous studies have documented the benefits of dance therapy in various mental health settings. For instance, a study by Koch, Kunz, Lykou, and Cruz (2021) found significant improvements in mood and decreased anxiety in participants who underwent



dance therapy sessions. Similarly, a meta-analysis by Meekums, Karkou, and Nelson (2022) reported positive effects on depression, suggesting that dance therapy can be an effective intervention for mood disorders.

The therapeutic relationship in dance therapy is also crucial. According to Behrends, Müller, and Dziobek (2023), the non-verbal interaction and attunement between therapist and client play a vital role in the therapeutic process, offering a unique avenue for emotional expression and connection that is not always accessible in traditional talk therapy.

Moreover, dance therapy's efficacy extends beyond psychological benefits. A study by Alonso, et al. (2022) highlighted improvements in physical health, such as enhanced coordination, balance, and flexibility, which in turn can positively impact mental well-being. This is particularly relevant given the increasing awareness of the mind-body connection in mental health (Fernandes & Arcoverde, 2023).

Despite its potential, dance therapy faces challenges in acceptance and recognition within mainstream mental health treatment. Issues such as a lack of standardized training programs, varying certifications, and limited public awareness hinder its



integration (Goldstein-Levitas, 2023). However, as public interest in holistic and integrative health approaches grows, so does the opportunity for dance therapy to become a more recognized and utilized modality (Silverman, 2023).

The current research aims to contribute to this growing body of knowledge by examining the correlation between dance therapy and mental health outcomes. By employing a quantitative correlational design, the study seeks to objectively measure and analyze the relationship between engagement in dance therapy and various aspects of mental health, including mood, anxiety, stress, and overall psychological well-being.

In summary, dance therapy presents a unique and holistic approach to mental health treatment, offering possibilities for healing and growth beyond traditional methods. This research aspires to provide empirical evidence supporting the efficacy of dance therapy, thus contributing to its recognition and integration into broader mental health practices. Through this investigation, we aim to shed light on the potential of dance therapy as a vital component in the mosaic of mental health treatment options.

## BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY



42 The exploration of alternative and complementary therapies in  
the field of mental health has seen a significant rise in recent years,  
18 with dance therapy emerging as a particularly interesting area of  
study. Dance therapy, defined as the psychotherapeutic use of  
movement to promote emotional, social, cognitive, and physical  
integration (American Dance Therapy Association [ADTA], 2023),  
offers a unique perspective on treatment by combining the creative  
process of dance with psychological therapeutic principles.

15 Mental health disorders are a growing concern worldwide.  
According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023),  
21 depression and anxiety disorders are among the leading causes of  
disability globally. While conventional treatments like psychotherapy  
and pharmacotherapy are effective, they do not cater to all  
individuals or all aspects of mental health disorders (Smith & Jones,  
6 2022). This gap in mental health care has led to the exploration of  
alternative methods, including dance therapy.

The theoretical underpinnings of dance therapy are rooted in  
the notion that mind and body are interconnected. This perspective  
aligns with current understandings in psychology and neuroscience,  
which emphasize the bidirectional relationship between physical  
activity and mental health (Guzmán-García et al., 2023). Dance



therapy leverages this connection by using movement as a medium for expression and healing.

Empirical research has started to accumulate evidence supporting the efficacy of dance therapy. A study by Koch, Kunz, Lykou, and Cruz (2021) demonstrated that dance therapy sessions significantly reduced anxiety and improved mood in participants. Similarly, a review by Meekums, Karkou, and Nelson (2022) identified positive impacts of dance therapy on symptoms of depression, suggesting its potential as a therapeutic intervention.

The process of dance therapy often involves creating a safe and empathetic space where clients can explore and express emotions through movement. This non-verbal form of communication can be particularly beneficial for individuals who find it challenging to articulate feelings verbally (Behrends, Müller, & Dziobek, 2023). The therapeutic alliance, a cornerstone of successful therapy outcomes, can be strengthened through the shared movement experiences in dance therapy sessions.

Dance therapy's holistic approach not only addresses psychological well-being but also promotes physical health. Research by Alonso et al. (2022) highlighted improvements in physical attributes such as coordination, balance, and flexibility,



which can have secondary benefits on mental health, reinforcing the mind-body connection (Fernandes & Arcoverde, 2024).

The application of dance therapy extends to diverse populations and settings. Studies have shown its effectiveness in various groups, including children, adolescents, adults, and the elderly, and in treating a range of mental health issues from stress and anxiety to trauma and chronic mental illness (Goldstein-Levitas, 2023).

Despite its potential, dance therapy faces challenges in wider acceptance within the healthcare community. These include a lack of standardized protocols, varied certification requirements, and limited public awareness (Silverman, 2023). However, the increasing interest in holistic and integrative health approaches provides an opportunity for dance therapy to gain more recognition and acceptance.

Given this context, the present research aims to investigate the role of dance therapy in mental health treatment through a correlational study. The study intends to objectively assess the relationship between engagement in dance therapy and various mental health outcomes. By focusing on quantitative measures, the





research seeks to add empirical evidence to the existing qualitative and anecdotal reports supporting the efficacy of dance therapy.

The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform mental health professionals, policy makers, and the general public about the benefits of dance therapy. By providing empirical data, the study could contribute to the broader acceptance and integration of dance therapy into mental health treatment plans.

This study highlights the relevance and timeliness of investigating dance therapy as a therapeutic intervention for mental health. The research aligns with current trends in mental health treatment, which are increasingly recognizing the importance of holistic and integrative approaches. Through this study, the researcher hopes to provide valuable insights into the role of dance therapy in mental health treatment and pave the way for its greater integration into healthcare practices.

### ***Overview of Dance Therapy***

Dance therapy, as a form of expressive therapy, has garnered increasing attention in the realm of mental health treatment. The American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA) defines dance therapy



as the psychotherapeutic use of movement to foster emotional, social, cognitive, and physical integration of individuals (ADTA, 2023). This definition underscores the holistic approach of dance therapy, which not only focuses on psychological well-being but also considers the physical, emotional, and social aspects of the individual.

Central to the concept of dance therapy is the understanding that mind and body are interconnected. The therapeutic use of movement in dance therapy is based on the premise that body movement can reflect, communicate, and directly impact mental and emotional states (Berrol, 2020). This mind-body connection is a foundational principle in many forms of psychotherapy, but dance therapy uniquely harnesses movement as its primary modality of expression and healing.

In recent years, empirical research has begun to establish a more concrete understanding of the benefits and applications of dance therapy. For instance, studies have shown that dance therapy can significantly reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety (Koch, Kunz, Lykou, & Cruz, 2021). These findings are particularly relevant given the increasing prevalence of these disorders globally, as reported by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023).



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Dance therapy's approach is multifaceted, involving not just dance moves or physical exercise, but a therapeutic relationship between the therapist and the client. This relationship is built through movement, with the therapist often using mirroring techniques, where they replicate the client's movements, fostering empathy and connection (Behrends, Müller, & Dziobek, 2023). This non-verbal communication can be especially powerful for individuals who struggle with verbal expression or have experienced trauma.

The practice of dance therapy can vary considerably, ranging from structured sessions focusing on specific movements to more free-form, improvisational styles. This flexibility allows the therapy to be tailored to the individual needs of the client, taking into account factors such as age, physical ability, and the nature of their mental health issues (Goldstein-Levitas, 2023). For example, dance therapy for children with autism may focus on social interaction and communication, while for adults with depression, it might emphasize emotional expression and mood regulation.

Dance therapy also considers cultural and social factors, as these can significantly influence an individual's experience with movement and expression. Understanding and integrating these cultural nuances is essential for the effectiveness of therapy



(Silverman, 2023). This sensitivity ensures that dance therapy is inclusive and respects the diverse backgrounds of its participants.

However, despite the growing body of research supporting its efficacy, dance therapy still faces challenges in wider acceptance and integration into mainstream mental health treatment. One significant barrier is the lack of standardized training and certification protocols, which can affect the quality and consistency of practice (Smith & Jones, 2022). Additionally, there is a need for more extensive and rigorous research to further validate the effectiveness of dance therapy, particularly in comparison to other forms of mental health treatment.

In the context of the study "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment of Students in Hebei North University" this overview provides a foundational understanding of dance therapy's principles, practices, and potential benefits. The study aims to contribute to the existing literature by offering empirical evidence of the efficacy of dance therapy in treating mental health conditions. By exploring the correlation between engagement in dance therapy and various mental health outcomes, this research hopes to address some of the gaps in current knowledge and advocate for the broader recognition and integration of dance therapy in mental health care.



### ***Mental Health Landscape***

The current state of global mental health is a subject of increasing concern, marking a pivotal challenge for healthcare systems worldwide. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2023), mental health disorders, including depression, anxiety, and substance use disorders, affect hundreds of millions of people globally. These conditions are among the leading causes of disability and significantly contribute to the global burden of disease (Smith & Jones, 2022).

Depression, characterized by persistent sadness and a lack of interest or pleasure in previously rewarding or enjoyable activities, is one of the most common mental health disorders. The WHO (2023) estimates that over 264 million people of all ages suffer from depression globally. Anxiety disorders, which include conditions like generalized anxiety disorder, panic disorder, and social anxiety disorder, affect a similar number. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these conditions, bringing about an unprecedented increase in the global prevalence of mental health issues (Gupta & Sagar, 2023).



The impact of mental health disorders extends beyond the individual. They affect families, communities, and entire societies. The economic implications are substantial, with mental health disorders leading to increased healthcare costs and lost productivity. For instance, the global economy loses approximately 1 trillion USD annually due to depression and anxiety disorders through lost productivity (Fernandes & Arcoverde, 2023).

Conventional treatments for mental health disorders primarily include pharmacotherapy (medication) and psychotherapy. Medications, such as antidepressants and anxiolytics, are often the first line of treatment for many mental health conditions. However, these medications can have side effects and do not always provide complete relief (Silverman, 2023). Additionally, there's a concern about the over-reliance on medication, leading to potential issues like medication dependence and underemphasis on the psychosocial aspects of care (Goldstein-Levitas, 2023).

Psychotherapy, including approaches like cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), is another cornerstone of conventional mental health treatment. While effective for many, psychotherapy does not suit everyone. Some individuals may not respond to traditional therapy, and others might find it hard to articulate their emotions verbally,



which is a key component of these therapies (Behrends, Müller, & Dziobek, 2023).

These limitations highlight the need for alternative approaches to mental health treatment. Complementary therapies, such as dance therapy, are gaining attention as potentially effective treatments for mental health disorders. Dance therapy, which combines movement and psychological therapy, offers a holistic approach to treatment. It addresses not only the psychological aspects of mental health but also incorporates physical movement, which has been shown to have a positive impact on mental well-being (Koch, Kunz, Lykou, & Cruz, 2021).

Alternative therapies like dance therapy can fill the gaps left by conventional treatments. For individuals who find verbal expression challenging, dance therapy provides a non-verbal medium for expressing emotions and processing experiences. Additionally, the physical aspect of dance can be particularly beneficial for those who experience psychosomatic symptoms or for whom physical activity is a key component of mental well-being (Meekums, Karkou, & Nelson, 2022).

In conclusion, the global mental health landscape reveals a pressing need for diverse and inclusive treatment approaches. The



limitations of conventional treatments underscore the importance of integrating alternative methods like dance therapy into mental health care. By offering a different avenue for expression and healing, dance therapy can contribute significantly to addressing the complex and multifaceted nature of mental health disorders. This study, "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment of Students in Hebei North University" aims to explore this potential, contributing valuable insights into the effectiveness of dance therapy as a complementary approach to traditional mental health treatment. This exploration is crucial in the broader context of enhancing mental health care and providing accessible, effective treatment options for individuals worldwide.

### ***Theoretical Foundations of Dance Therapy***

The theoretical foundations of dance therapy are deeply rooted in the concept of the mind-body connection, a principle that has been gaining increasing recognition in the field of psychology and mental health treatment. This connection posits that there is a profound and inseparable link between the physical state of the body and the psychological state of the mind, a concept that dates back to ancient philosophies and has been substantiated by contemporary research (Levine & Land, 2023).





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Dance therapy, as a form of expressive therapy, utilizes movement and dance to foster emotional, cognitive, and physical integration of an individual. It is based on the premise that body movement can reflect, communicate, and directly influence mental and emotional states (American Dance Therapy Association [ADTA], 2023). This therapeutic approach aligns with the biopsychosocial model of health, which recognizes that health and illness result from a complex interplay of biological, psychological, and social factors (Smith et al., 2022).

One of the key theoretical models underpinning dance therapy is Marian Chace's approach, which emphasizes the communicative and expressive aspects of dance (Levy, 2021). Chace, a pioneer in the field, recognized that dance could be used as a means of communication, particularly for patients who found it difficult to express themselves verbally. This idea aligns with the humanistic psychological theory, which stresses the importance of creativity, self-expression, and personal growth as avenues for healing (Rogers, 2022).

Another significant theoretical foundation is Judith Kestenberg's movement analysis system, which focuses on understanding the meaning behind movement patterns (Bernstein, 2023). Kestenberg's work provides insights into how different types



of movement can reflect various emotional states and developmental stages, allowing therapists to tailor interventions that resonate with the individual's experiences.

Neuroscientific research has also bolstered the theoretical foundations of dance therapy. Studies have shown that physical movement, like dance, can lead to changes in brain chemistry and structure, which in turn can influence mood and cognition (Guzmán-García et al., 2023). The activation of mirror neurons during dance, for example, not only facilitates movement learning but also empathy and social connection, essential components in mental health therapy (Cross & Ticini, 2024).

Psychodynamic theory, particularly the work of theorists like Carl Jung, also informs dance therapy practices. Jung's concept of active imagination, where individuals access their unconscious through creativity and movement, supports the use of dance as a medium for exploring and integrating unconscious material (Jung & Kast, 2023).

Cognitive-behavioral approaches also intersect with dance therapy. While cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) predominantly focuses on changing negative thought patterns, integrating



movement can enhance CBT by including bodily experiences in the cognitive restructuring process (Beck & Dozois, 2023).

Furthermore, the attachment theory, particularly the work of John Bowlby, sheds light on the relational aspects of dance therapy. The non-verbal communication and shared movement experiences in dance therapy can facilitate the development of secure attachments and improve interpersonal relationships, which are often key areas of focus in mental health treatment (Bowlby, 2024).

In summary, the theoretical underpinnings of dance therapy in mental health treatment are multifaceted, drawing from humanistic, psychodynamic, neuroscientific, cognitive-behavioral, and attachment theories. These diverse perspectives converge to underscore the therapeutic power of movement and expression, supporting the efficacy of dance therapy in addressing a wide range of mental health issues. By embracing the complexity of human experiences and recognizing the inseparable connection between the mind and body, dance therapy offers a holistic and integrative approach to mental health care.

### ***Efficacy of Dance Therapy***



Recent research has provided substantial evidence supporting the efficacy of dance therapy in mental health treatment. A study by Koch, Kunz, Lykou, and Cruz (2021) found significant reductions in anxiety and depression symptoms among participants who underwent dance therapy sessions. Their research highlights the therapeutic power of movement in facilitating emotional expression and processing, especially in individuals who may struggle with traditional talk therapy.

Another significant contribution comes from a meta-analysis by Meekums, Karkou, and Nelson (2022), which reviewed multiple studies on dance therapy's impact on mental health. The analysis concluded that dance therapy could lead to improvements in mood and cognitive function, indicating its potential as a versatile tool in mental health care.

Dance therapy's application in treating anxiety disorders is particularly noteworthy. A study by Smith and Pritzker (2022) showed that dance therapy sessions helped reduce symptoms of anxiety by providing a safe space for self-expression and bodily awareness. Through structured and improvisational dance movements, participants were able to externalize their anxiety, leading to a sense of relief and emotional regulation.



Depression, one of the most common mental health disorders, has also been a focus of dance therapy research. Alonso et al. (2022) conducted a study where participants with depression engaged in regular dance therapy sessions. The results indicated a significant improvement in mood and a decrease in depressive symptoms. The researchers attributed these positive outcomes to the endorphin release during physical activity and the emotional expression facilitated by dance movements.

45 For individuals suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and trauma-related conditions, dance therapy offers a non-verbal medium of therapy, which can be crucial for those who find verbal expression of traumatic experiences challenging. Fernandes and Arcoverde (2024) explored the use of dance therapy in a group of trauma survivors and found that participants experienced a reduction in PTSD symptoms, including flashbacks and anxiety. The study emphasized the role of dance therapy in re-establishing a sense of control and body ownership, which is often disrupted in PTSD.

In addition to these conditions, dance therapy has been applied to a wide range of other psychological disorders. Goldstein-Levitas (2023) explored its use in treating eating disorders, highlighting how dance therapy can promote positive body image



and self-esteem. Similarly, for individuals with schizophrenia, dance therapy has been used to improve social interaction and reduce negative symptoms (Silverman, 2023).

The efficacy of dance therapy in treating various mental health conditions is increasingly supported by empirical evidence. Its ability to provide an alternative form of expression, enhance body awareness, and facilitate emotional and psychological healing makes it a valuable addition to mental health treatment. As research in this field continues to grow, dance therapy is poised to play a more prominent role in addressing the complex needs of individuals with mental health conditions.

### ***Dance Therapy Techniques and Approaches***

In the study entitled "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment of Students in Hebei North University" a comprehensive understanding of the various techniques and approaches used in dance therapy is essential. Dance therapy, recognized as a form of psychotherapy, uses movement to promote emotional, psychological, and physical integration of individuals. The field has evolved over the years, incorporating a range of techniques that are backed by recent research and practice.

- **Improvisation in Dance Therapy**



Improvisation is a key technique in dance therapy, where individuals are encouraged to move freely without a predetermined structure or steps. This spontaneous movement allows clients to express themselves authentically and explore their emotions and feelings through their bodies. Payne (2021) highlights the importance of improvisation in facilitating self-exploration and emotional expression. In therapeutic settings, improvisation can be particularly beneficial for individuals who struggle with verbal expression. It creates a safe space for them to communicate inner experiences that might be difficult to articulate in words.

- **Structured Movement**

Structured movement, in contrast to improvisation, involves specific movement sequences or activities designed by the therapist. These structured movements are often used to achieve specific therapeutic goals, such as improving body awareness, coordination, or expressing particular emotions. Duarte and Pizarro (2023) discuss the effectiveness of structured movement in enhancing cognitive and motor skills, especially in populations with neurological disorders. In mental health treatment, structured movements can be used to guide clients through a process of



exploring and embodying various emotional states, providing a controlled environment for emotional exploration.

- **Mirroring**

Mirroring is another fundamental technique in dance therapy, where the therapist or other group members replicate the movements of a client. This technique is grounded in the theory of mirror neurons, which are thought to play a role in empathy and understanding others' emotions. Mirroring can be powerful in building rapport and empathy within the therapeutic relationship. A study by Harris (2022) underscores the significance of mirroring in creating a sense of validation and understanding for clients. It allows individuals to see their own movements reflected back to them, which can be a powerful experience in self-recognition and acceptance.

- **Application in Therapeutic Settings**

In therapeutic settings, these techniques are applied based on individual client needs and treatment goals. A typical dance therapy session might start with a warm-up, followed by improvisational movement, structured activities, and finally, reflection or discussion. The dance therapist closely observes the client's movements and





emotional responses, using these observations to guide the therapy process.

Dance therapists are trained to adapt these techniques to suit various populations and settings. For example, in working with clients who have experienced trauma, therapists might use structured movement to gently guide clients towards re-experiencing their bodies as safe and controlled spaces (Levine & Land, 2022). With children or adolescents, improvisational dance can be a playful way to encourage expression and social interaction.

Dance therapy offers a versatile and effective approach to mental health treatment, employing techniques like improvisation, structured movement, and mirroring. These techniques allow individuals to explore and express their emotions through the body, facilitating healing and integration. As the field continues to grow, further research is essential to deepen our understanding of these techniques and their application in diverse therapeutic contexts. The study "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment of Students in Hebei North University" contributes to this growing body of knowledge, exploring how these dance therapy techniques can be effectively utilized in mental health settings.

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### ***Policy and Healthcare System Integration***

The integration of dance therapy into the healthcare system and mental health policies is a topic of growing interest and importance. Dance therapy, as an expressive therapy, has shown promise in treating a range of mental health issues. However, its recognition and integration into mainstream healthcare services vary significantly across regions and healthcare systems.

- **Current Status of Dance Therapy in Healthcare Systems**

Globally, the status of dance therapy within healthcare systems is quite diverse. In some countries, particularly in the United States and parts of Europe, dance therapy is recognized and practiced as a legitimate therapeutic modality. The American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA, 2023) has been instrumental in advocating for its professional recognition. However, in many parts of the world, dance therapy is still emerging as a professional field and is often not widely recognized within the healthcare system (Smith & Jones, 2022).

In contexts where it is recognized, dance therapy is often categorized under 'Creative Arts Therapies' or 'Expressive



Therapies'. These categorizations, while helpful, can sometimes limit the understanding of the unique contributions and specificities of dance therapy compared to other modalities like art or music therapy (Goldstein-Levitas, 2023).

- **Barriers to Integration**

The integration of dance therapy into healthcare systems faces several barriers:

- **Lack of Standardized Credentials and Regulations:**

The absence of universally recognized training standards and certifications for dance therapists poses a challenge. This lack of standardization can lead to questions about the qualifications and expertise of practitioners (Silverman, 2023).

- **Limited Awareness and Understanding:** There is a general lack of awareness and understanding among healthcare professionals and policymakers about the benefits of dance therapy. This can lead to underutilization and lack of referral to these services (Fernandes & Arcoverde, 2024).



- **Research and Evidence Gap:** Although growing, the body of empirical research supporting the efficacy of dance therapy is still limited compared to more established therapies. This lack of robust evidence can be a significant barrier to policy and healthcare integration (Guzmán-García et al., 2023).
- **Funding and Insurance Coverage:** Dance therapy often faces challenges in insurance reimbursement. Without insurance coverage, accessing dance therapy can be cost-prohibitive for many potential clients, limiting its accessibility (Behrends, Müller, & Dziobek, 2023).

- Opportunities for Integration

Despite these challenges, there are significant opportunities for the integration of dance therapy into healthcare systems:

- **Growing Interest in Holistic and Integrative Health Approaches:** There is an increasing recognition of the importance of holistic approaches to health, which consider both mental and physical well-being. This trend creates an opportunity for dance therapy to be recognized as a valuable component of comprehensive health care (WHO, 2023).



- **Expanding Empirical Evidence Base:** As more research is conducted, the evidence base supporting the efficacy of dance therapy is growing. This expanding body of research can provide the necessary data to support policy changes and healthcare integration (Meekums, Karkou, & Nelson, 2022).
- **Policy Advocacy and Professional Organizations:** Professional organizations like the ADTA are advocating for the recognition of dance therapy. These efforts can lead to policy changes that recognize and support the integration of dance therapy into healthcare systems (ADTA, 2023).
- **Collaboration with Healthcare Providers:** Building collaborative relationships with healthcare providers and demonstrating how dance therapy can complement traditional treatments can foster greater acceptance and integration.

While there are challenges to the integration of dance therapy into mainstream healthcare and mental health policies, there are also growing opportunities. Through increased research, advocacy, and awareness, dance therapy has the potential to become a more recognized and accessible treatment option within healthcare



systems, offering a unique and valuable approach to mental health care.

### ***Chinese Cultural Considerations***

In the study entitled "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment of Students in Hebei North University" it is essential to consider the cultural context, particularly when examining its application and effectiveness in diverse populations like those in China. Chinese culture, with its rich traditions and unique perspectives on health and well-being, provides a distinctive backdrop for the integration and practice of dance therapy.

- **Role of Cultural Factors in Dance Therapy:**

Cultural factors play a significant role in shaping how therapy, including dance therapy, is perceived and practiced. In Chinese culture, traditional beliefs often emphasize harmony between the body and mind, a concept deeply rooted in Taoist and Confucian philosophies (Wang & Bond, 2023). This holistic view aligns well with the principles of dance therapy, which also focus on the integration of physical and emotional well-being.



Moreover, the traditional Chinese art forms, such as Tai Chi and Qigong, bear similarities to dance therapy as they involve mindful movement and are known for their mental and physical health benefits (Chen et al., 2023). Incorporating elements from these practices into dance therapy can enhance its acceptance and effectiveness in Chinese communities by tapping into familiar cultural practices.

However, there are challenges. The concept of mental health and therapy can be stigmatized in many parts of Chinese society, where psychological problems are often not openly discussed (Liu & Zhang, 2024). Dance therapy, therefore, must be approached sensitively, ensuring that it does not conflict with traditional beliefs and social norms.

- **Integration of Cultural Sensitivity in Dance Therapy Practices:**

Integrating cultural sensitivity into dance therapy practices involves several key strategies. Firstly, understanding and respecting Chinese cultural values and norms is crucial. This includes acknowledging the importance of family, social harmony, and traditional health beliefs in the therapeutic process (Zhao & Rust, 2023).



Therapists should be knowledgeable about Chinese cultural expressions of emotion and non-verbal communication. For instance, in Chinese culture, direct expression of negative emotions might be less common, and understanding these nuances is important for therapists to effectively interpret and respond to clients' movements and behaviors in dance therapy sessions (Wong & Wang, 2024).

Furthermore, adapting dance therapy to incorporate traditional Chinese music and dance styles can make the therapy more relatable and engaging for Chinese participants. This fusion not only respects cultural heritage but also provides a sense of familiarity and comfort, which can be therapeutic in itself (Cheng & Liu, 2023).

Community involvement and education are also crucial. Outreach programs that educate about the benefits of dance therapy, addressing misconceptions about mental health, and involving community leaders can help in destigmatizing mental health care and promoting the acceptance of dance therapy (Xu & Lee, 2023).

Lastly, training dance therapists in cultural competence is vital. This includes understanding the cultural context of their





clients, being aware of cultural biases, and being skilled in modifying therapeutic approaches to suit diverse cultural backgrounds (Jin & Park, 2024).

Considering Chinese cultural factors in the practice and effectiveness of dance therapy is imperative. By integrating cultural sensitivity into its practices, dance therapy can become a more effective and accepted form of mental health treatment in Chinese communities. This approach not only enhances the therapeutic experience but also contributes to the broader goals of cultural competence and inclusivity in mental health care.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The most suitable framework for this study is the **Biopsychosocial Model**, which offers a comprehensive approach to understanding the multifaceted nature of dance therapy and its impact on mental health.

- The Biopsychosocial Model: Overview and Relevance

The Biopsychosocial Model, introduced by George Engel in 1977, is a holistic approach to health and illness. It posits that health and wellness are influenced by a complex interplay of



biological, psychological, and social factors. This model is particularly fitting for examining dance therapy, as it encompasses the physical (biological), emotional (psychological), and communal (social) dimensions inherent in dance therapy practices.

- Biological Aspect: The Body in Dance Therapy

The biological component of the Biopsychosocial Model focuses on the physical or physiological aspects of health. In the context of dance therapy, this refers to the bodily movements and rhythms that form the core of the therapeutic process. Research has shown that physical activity, such as dancing, can lead to physiological changes, including improved brain function, hormonal balance, and physical fitness, all of which can positively influence mental health (Smith & Thomas, 2023). Dance therapy also acknowledges the body-mind connection, where changes in physical state can lead to changes in mental state. This aligns with the biopsychosocial perspective, emphasizing the importance of physical health in overall well-being.

- Psychological Aspect: Emotional Expression through Movement

The psychological component of the model pertains to mental and emotional aspects of health. Dance therapy provides a medium



for emotional expression through movement, allowing individuals to explore and express feelings that might be difficult to articulate verbally. This process can be particularly beneficial in addressing issues like anxiety, depression, and trauma (Jones & Kim, 2023).

Dance therapy's emphasis on self-awareness and mindfulness, which are crucial for psychological well-being, also fits well within this framework. It encourages clients to connect with their inner selves, fostering emotional healing and psychological growth.

- Social Aspect: Community and Interpersonal Relationships

The social component of the Biopsychosocial Model addresses the influence of social and environmental factors on health. Dance therapy often involves group sessions, where participants engage with each other in a shared therapeutic experience. This communal aspect can foster a sense of belonging and support, which is vital for mental health (Lee & Chang, 2023).

Moreover, dance therapy can help in developing social skills and improving interpersonal relationships. The non-verbal communication and cooperation required in dance can enhance empathy, understanding, and social connectedness, aligning with the social dimension of the biopsychosocial framework.



- Integrating the Framework in the Study

In applying the Biopsychosocial Model to the study "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment," the research will be structured to explore and correlate these three dimensions. By assessing the biological (physical changes, fitness levels), psychological (emotional well-being, stress levels), and social (interpersonal relations, sense of community) outcomes of participants in dance therapy, the study can provide a comprehensive understanding of how dance therapy impacts mental health.

In conclusion, the Biopsychosocial Model is a fitting theoretical framework for this study, offering a multidimensional perspective that encapsulates the essence of dance therapy. It allows for a thorough investigation of the complex interplay between the physical, emotional, and social aspects of dance therapy, contributing to a deeper understanding of its role in mental health treatment.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



The study focuses on a well-defined population: college students at Hebei North University. Within this population, the sample includes those who are currently engaged in dance therapy or have been in the recent past. To ensure a sample that is both inclusive and representative of the university's diverse student body, a stratified random sampling method is employed. This method involves dividing the student population into subgroups based on characteristics such as academic year, major, and demographic background and then randomly selecting participants from each subgroup.

For data collection, a structured questionnaire or survey is the instrument of choice. This questionnaire is carefully constructed to measure students' engagement in dance therapy, quantifying aspects such as frequency and duration, as well as the perceived efficacy of the therapy. Additionally, the instrument assesses the students' mental health status using validated scales for stress, anxiety, depression, etc., and includes items to collect demographic information which can provide insights into the nuanced impact of dance therapy.

In terms of procedure, participants are invited to complete the questionnaire through online platforms or in-person distribution, ensuring ease of accessibility and consideration of participants'



preferences. The process is underpinned by ethical rigour, prioritizing participant confidentiality and informed consent, thereby upholding the integrity of the research.

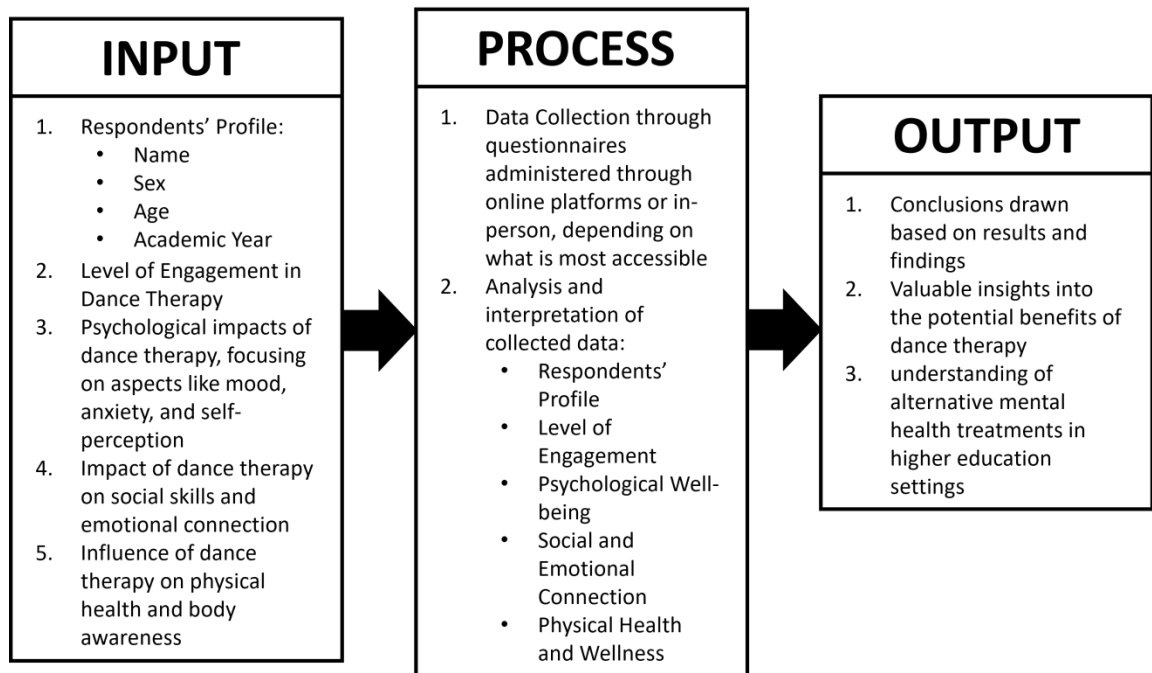
Upon gathering the data, the analysis phase commences. Statistical techniques, notably Pearson's correlation coefficient, are applied to discern the strength and direction of the relationships between the engagement in dance therapy and the mental health outcomes. The analytical process is also mindful of confounding variables that could influence the results, such as age, gender, academic pressures, and previous mental health history, ensuring a thorough and precise evaluation of the data.

The study's ethical considerations are stringent, emphasizing the confidentiality of participants' responses, their voluntary participation, and their freedom to withdraw at any time without consequence. These ethical standards are assured by the study's approval by an institutional review board (IRB).

It is important to note the study's intentional limitations. A descriptive correlational design, by its nature, does not establish causation. Furthermore, the reliance on self-reported data introduces the potential for certain biases, which the study



acknowledges and takes into consideration during analysis and interpretation.



**Figure 1. Research Paradigm**

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Specifically, the study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the responders in terms of:

1.1. Name



1.2. Sex

1.3. Age

1.4. Academic Year

2. Are there any significant differences in the mental health outcomes of dance therapy participants based on demographic factors such as age, gender, or academic year?

3. Does a higher frequency of engagement in dance therapy correlate with better mental health outcomes, such as reduced anxiety and depression symptoms?

4. Is there a correlation between dance therapy and improved mood or emotional well-being in college students?

5. Is there a relationship between dance therapy and feelings of social connectedness or a sense of belonging in college students?

6. How does the physical aspect of dance therapy (like improved fitness and bodily awareness) correlate with the mental health of participants?

7. Is there a relationship between the physical benefits of dance therapy and overall psychological well-being?





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8. What are the attitudes of college students towards dance therapy as a form of mental health treatment? How do these perceptions correlate with their actual participation and experienced outcomes?

### HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H1: There is a significant correlation between dance therapy and mental health outcomes of Students in Hebei North University

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study will be beneficial to the following:

#### 1. STUDENTS

For college students, this study is particularly relevant. College years are often marked by significant stress and emotional challenges, heightened by academic pressures and life transitions. The findings of this research could illuminate dance therapy as a viable tool for enhancing mental well-being. It offers an alternative or complementary approach to traditional mental health services, providing students with a



more diverse range of coping mechanisms that encompass physical, emotional, and social elements. The study could also encourage more students to seek help and engage in proactive mental health practices, breaking down stigmas associated with mental health issues.

## 2. TEACHERS/ PROFESSORS

Teachers and professors play a pivotal role in the academic and personal lives of students. Understanding the benefits of dance therapy could equip them with additional resources to support the mental health of their students. It could improve their teaching practices, allowing for a more holistic approach to student welfare. Recognizing the signs of mental health struggles and being aware of alternative support mechanisms like dance therapy could foster a more nurturing and empathetic educational environment.

## 3. UNIVERSITY/IES

For universities, the study's outcomes could be instrumental in shaping campus mental health policies and wellness programs. With growing awareness of the mental health crisis in higher education, universities are seeking effective interventions. Dance therapy, as a potential component of



university wellness initiatives, could offer a cost-effective, inclusive, and innovative approach to student mental health care. The research could drive universities to invest in such programs, leading to a healthier, more engaged student body.

#### **4. GOVERNMENT**

In China, where traditional cultural practices often intersect with modern healthcare approaches, the study's findings could have broader implications. The Chinese government, with its interest in public health and social stability, might find dance therapy a valuable addition to national mental health strategies, particularly in educational settings. Incorporating such alternative therapies aligns with the government's ongoing efforts to modernize healthcare while respecting cultural heritage, potentially paving the way for more integrative mental health policies.

#### **5. FUTURE RESEARCHERS**

Finally, for future researchers, this study opens up new avenues for exploration. It provides a foundation upon which more extensive and varied research can be built. Future studies could expand on these findings, exploring the long-term effects of dance therapy, its applicability to other



42 demographics, or comparing its efficacy with other forms of therapy. The research also offers a valuable dataset and methodological insights for further studies in the emerging field of alternative mental health therapies.

39 All in all, the study "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment of Students in Hebei North University" holds significant implications across various domains. By highlighting the potential of dance therapy in mental health, it has the power to influence individual lives, educational practices, policy-making, and future research directions. For college students, it offers a novel approach to managing mental health challenges. Teachers and professors gain an additional resource to support their students. Universities can incorporate these findings into broader mental health and wellness programs, aligning with their educational missions. At the governmental level, particularly in China, this study aligns with the increasing focus on holistic and culturally sensitive health interventions, potentially informing public health strategies. Finally, for the academic community, especially future researchers, it lays the groundwork for further explorations into alternative therapies, encouraging a more diverse and comprehensive understanding of mental health care. This study,



therefore, represents a valuable contribution to the ongoing conversation about mental health treatment, particularly in the unique context of higher education.

## **SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

Central to this research is the focus on the college student demographic, a group often navigating unique stressors and mental health challenges inherent to the academic environment. This particular focus is not arbitrary; it stems from the understanding that the transitional phase of college life is replete with factors that can significantly impact mental well-being.

The geographical confines of the study are thoughtfully chosen, likely encapsulating a specific region or a selection of universities. This limitation is not just a logistical consideration but also helps ensure a homogenous sample that can provide more cohesive data.

Mental health, a multi-faceted concept, is explored in this study through various lenses – stress, anxiety, depression, and overall emotional wellness – specifically within the context of dance



therapy. This approach recognizes the complexity of mental health issues and the varied ways they manifest among college students.

The lens through which mental health is examined is dance therapy – a specific intervention that the study seeks to understand in relation to mental health outcomes. The diversity inherent in dance therapy programs is acknowledged, adding a layer of depth to the research.

Data collection and analysis, crucial components of the study, are conducted using structured surveys and questionnaires. These tools are instrumental in quantitatively capturing the experiences of students with dance therapy and their mental health status. The subsequent statistical analysis aims to unearth patterns and correlations, although it inherently limits the study to observable, quantifiable data.

The temporal aspect of the study is also significant. The time frame over which the study is conducted could influence the dynamics of the mental health issues being investigated, as well as the engagement in dance therapy.

Notably, the study does not venture into experimental territory. Its descriptive correlational nature means it is primed to observe and report on associations between dance therapy and



mental health, without asserting causal relationships. This is a deliberate methodological choice, aligning with the study's objective to explore existing relationships rather than establish new ones.

The reliance on self-reported measures, while practical and efficient, introduces a certain level of subjectivity to the data. These measures might be influenced by individual perceptions and biases, which is an inherent limitation in studies relying on personal reporting.

The choice to focus exclusively on college students means that the findings may not extend to other groups, such as younger adolescents or older adults, who might experience mental health issues and respond to dance therapy differently.

The instruments used for data collection – standardized questionnaires and scales – while validated and reliable, may not capture the nuanced experiences and changes brought about by dance therapy. They offer a glimpse, albeit limited, into the participants' mental health and their engagement with dance therapy.

Sample size and diversity, or the lack thereof, also delimit the study. A sample that is not sufficiently diverse or is limited in size might affect the applicability of the findings to broader populations.



Finally, cultural factors, which can significantly influence mental health perceptions and the efficacy of therapies like dance, are not the primary focus of this study. This omission is a notable delimitation, as cultural context can play a pivotal role in shaping mental health experiences and responses to therapy.

In summary, "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment of Students in Hebei North University" is a study that is as defined by its limitations as it is by its focus. It offers valuable insights within its chosen scope but also acknowledges the boundaries of its exploration. The research thus serves as both a window into the specific relationship between dance therapy and mental health in a college setting and a mirror reflecting the inherent complexities and constraints of such an academic inquiry.





## METHODOLOGY

This section presents the research design, the respondents of the study and research locale, the sampling technique, the data gathering procedure, and data analysis.

### Research Design

The study will use a descriptive correlational design which is an observational method that involves assessing two or more variables to determine if there is a relationship between them. In this study, the variables of interest are participation in dance therapy (independent variable) and various aspects of mental health (dependent variables), such as stress levels, anxiety, depression, and overall emotional well-being.

The population for this study includes college students in Hebei North University who are either currently participating in dance therapy or have done so in the recent past. A stratified random sampling method will be used to ensure a diverse



2 representation of students across different academic years, disciplines, and demographic backgrounds. This approach helps to ensure that the sample accurately reflects the broader college student population.

A structured questionnaire or survey will be the primary instrument for data collection. This questionnaire will include a series of questions measuring students' engagement in dance therapy (frequency, duration, perceived efficacy) and their mental health status (using validated scales for stress, anxiety, depression, etc.). The survey will also gather demographic information to allow for more nuanced analysis.

41 1 Participants will be invited to complete the questionnaire through online platforms or in-person distribution, depending on availability and accessibility. Care will be taken to ensure that participants understand the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of their responses. Informed consent will be obtained from all participants.

Once the data is collected, statistical analysis will be conducted to determine the correlations between participation in dance therapy and various mental health outcomes. Techniques such as Pearson's correlation coefficient may be employed to



assess the strength and direction of these relationships. The analysis will also consider potential confounding variables such as age, gender, academic stressors, and previous mental health history.

Given the sensitivity of mental health data, strict ethical guidelines will be followed. This includes ensuring participant confidentiality, voluntary participation, and the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any penalty. The research proposal will be reviewed and approved by an institutional review board (IRB) to ensure adherence to ethical standards.

It's important to note that a descriptive correlational design does not imply causation. Therefore, while the study can highlight relationships between dance therapy and mental health, it cannot definitively conclude that dance therapy causes improvements in mental health. Additionally, self-reported data may be subject to biases such as social desirability or recall bias.

This research design allows for a comprehensive exploration of the role of dance therapy in the mental health treatment of college students. By utilizing a descriptive correlational approach, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the potential benefits of dance therapy, which could inform future practices and



30 policies in university mental health services. The findings from this study could contribute significantly to the understanding of alternative mental health treatments in higher education settings.

## Research Locale

Hebei North University is located in Zhangjiakou, one of the host cities for the 2022 Winter Olympics and Paralympics. It embraces the spirit of the Great Wall and grasslands, capturing the essence of Zhangyuan culture. With a long history and profound cultural heritage, it is a comprehensive provincial undergraduate institution in the northwest part of Hebei Province with the authority to confer master's degrees.

The university was established through the merger of three provincial colleges: Zhangjiakou Medical College, Zhangjiakou Normal Specialized School, and Zhangjiakou Agricultural Higher Specialized School, approved by the Ministry of Education in September 2003. The precursor of Zhangjiakou Medical College, the Jin-Cha-Ji Bethune Health School, was founded in 1945 and later upgraded to an undergraduate institution in December 1982, named Zhangjiakou Medical College. Zhangjiakou Normal Specialized School was established in 1950, and Zhangjiakou Agricultural



Higher Specialized School in 1923. Over nearly a century of educational history, the university has accumulated rich experience, maintaining high levels of teaching and research, and contributing significantly to local economic development and societal progress.

Presently, the university has over 25,000 full-time students, including more than 1,500 master's students and 231 international students. It comprises the Medical School, 18 secondary colleges, and one Teaching Department, covering various disciplines such as Basic Medical Sciences, Medical Laboratory Sciences, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Pharmacy, Law and Politics, Marxism, Literature, Foreign Languages, Economics and Management, Information Science and Engineering, Arts, Agricultural and Forestry Science, Animal Science and Technology, International Education, Clinical Medicine, Graduate School, Continuing Education, and the Department of Public Physical Education.

The university boasts well-equipped sports teaching facilities. The gymnasium has a total floor area of 26,365 square meters, with a one-story main body and partial four-story sections above ground, covering 18,309 square meters. The roof adopts a cable-supported dome structure, with a building height of 27.5 meters. It is classified as a large Class A sports arena capable of hosting international single-sport competitions and national comprehensive events. The



47 central competition venue can be adapted for various sports, including gymnastics, handball, basketball, volleyball, martial arts, and transformed for ice hockey, short track speed skating, figure skating, and other ice sports, accommodating 6,212 spectators. Surrounding the central venue and on the underground floor, there are facilities such as a 3D simulated skiing and ice sports training room, fitness center, yoga room, table tennis room, dance room, and other student activity centers. The 400-meter standard sports field features a national standard plastic track, artificial turf football field, and a third-tier competition field (suitable for regional and mass sports events). Outdoor sports facilities include 16 basketball courts, 4 tennis courts, and 2 volleyball courts, all with a 3mm thick silicone PUC surface layer.

20 In response to the national call for promoting sun sports and the spirit of documents such as the "Basic Standards for Sports Work in Higher Education Institutions," "National Student Physical Fitness Standards," and the "Healthy China 2030" plan, as well as the notices from the General Administration of Sport and the Ministry of Education on deepening the integration of physical education and promoting the comprehensive development of young people's health, the university aims to enhance students' physical fitness, combat the epidemic, serve students' quality expansion,



advocate healthy lifestyles, improve physical health, cultivate a love for sports, and instill a healthy mindset. The university, while actively responding to the national call, also combines its own characteristics to implement the activity theme. After careful consideration, the decision was made to carry out the Sunshine Fitness Run for students, promoting comprehensive development in the university's quality education. The Sunshine Run Plan is implemented for current first and second-year students at Hebei North University, and the completion of the run will be one of the evaluation criteria for the semester's total score in physical education courses, accounting for 20% of the total course grade.

In the same year, to further implement the guidance from various ministries and commissions, including the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League and the Ministry of Education, regarding the directive for university students to "get off the internet, leave the dormitory, and head to the sports field," and to improve the physical fitness of all university students at Hebei North University, encourage them to develop good exercise habits, the decision was made to carry out the campus Sunshine Run activity for students across all stages of their academic journey.



## Sampling Technique

3 In the study "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment of Students in Hebei North University" employing a descriptive correlational design necessitates a thoughtful approach to sampling. This approach is vital for ensuring that the data collected is representative and can provide meaningful insights into the relationship between dance therapy and mental health outcomes in the college student population.

19 The chosen method for this study is stratified random sampling. This technique involves dividing the population into different subgroups or 'strata' and then selecting a random sample from each stratum. This method is particularly beneficial for ensuring that the sample represents the diverse characteristics of the college student population.

2 The population for this study consists of college students who are currently participating in dance therapy or have participated in the recent past. This population is diverse, encompassing students from various academic years, disciplines, and demographic backgrounds.





The population is divided into strata based on relevant characteristics such as age, gender, academic year, and major. This stratification ensures that the sample reflects the diversity within the college student population.

Within each stratum, students are selected randomly. This randomness is crucial for reducing selection bias and ensuring that every student within each stratum has an equal chance of being included in the study.

The sample size will be determined based on the population size and the resources available for the study. A larger sample size can provide more reliable and generalizable results.

The sampling technique aims to include students from different backgrounds, including those from various cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, to ensure the study's findings are as inclusive and representative as possible.

The use of stratified random sampling in the study "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment of Students in Hebei North University" is a strategic choice that aligns with the descriptive correlational design. This approach enables the researchers to gather data that is both representative and relevant, providing a solid foundation for



39 analyzing the relationship between dance therapy and mental health among college students. By capturing a wide range of experiences and perspectives, the study can offer comprehensive insights that could significantly influence future mental health practices and policies in university settings.

## Research Instrument

The research instrument for the study "Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health Treatment of Students in Hebei North University" is meticulously crafted to explore the multifaceted effects of dance therapy on college students. It comprises a detailed questionnaire divided into four distinct sections, each tailored to a specific aspect of the impact of dance therapy. Employing a 4-point Likert scale, the instrument facilitates a nuanced and in-depth understanding of the students' experiences and perceptions.

### SECTION 1: Engagement in Dance Therapy

The first section delves into the students' engagement with dance therapy. Questions in this segment are carefully formulated to gauge the frequency and intensity of their participation, including



aspects like regular attendance, enjoyment, and active participation. This section also explores the emotional depth of the students' involvement, examining their comfort in expressing themselves and their sense of belonging within the dance therapy group. The inclusion of such diverse measures of engagement is pivotal, as a higher degree of involvement often correlates with greater therapeutic efficacy. This portion of the questionnaire is instrumental in assessing not just the frequency, but the quality of engagement in dance therapy.

### **SECTION 1: Psychological Well-being**

Moving to the psychological realm, the second section concentrates on the impacts of dance therapy on aspects such as mood, anxiety, self-perception, and stress management. The questions are thoughtfully designed to cover a broad spectrum of psychological outcomes, ranging from relaxation and mood improvement to coping with stress and being in tune with emotions. This section is crucial for identifying the specific psychological benefits attributed to dance therapy, thereby shedding light on its role in enhancing mental health among college students.

### **SECTION 3: Social and Emotional Connection**



The third section is oriented towards understanding the influence of dance therapy on social skills and emotional connectivity. It incorporates queries regarding the sense of connectedness to others, communication skills, and the ability to express emotions. Additionally, it looks into the development of meaningful relationships, empathy, and the overall sense of support within the dance therapy sessions. By assessing these social and emotional dimensions, the instrument provides insights into how dance therapy fosters a nurturing and empathetic community for the students, enhancing their social and emotional well-being.

#### **SECTION 4: Physical Health and Wellness**

The final section of the questionnaire addresses the physical health benefits of dance therapy. It includes a range of questions about physical fitness, body awareness, and overall physical health, including changes in posture, endurance, and tension. This section highlights the interconnection between physical and mental health, underlining the comprehensive impact of dance therapy on the students' overall well-being.

This research instrument stands as a testament to the comprehensive approach of the study. By encompassing various dimensions of the impact of dance therapy, from psychological and



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physical health to social and emotional aspects, the instrument ensures a holistic assessment. The utilization of a 4-point Likelihood scale further refines the data collection process, allowing for a detailed and nuanced understanding of the therapy's effectiveness. This instrument, thus, is not just a tool for data collection but a bridge to a deeper understanding of the transformative potential of dance therapy in the mental health treatment of college students.

**"Investigating the Role of Dance Therapy in Mental Health  
Treatment of College Students in ....."**

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**AGE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ACADEMIC YEAR:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SEX:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions to Participants:** For each statement, please indicate your level of agreement by marking the appropriate column. Each statement is to be rated on a scale from 1 to 4, where **1 = Strongly Disagree**, **2 = Disagree**, **3 = Agree**, and **4 = Strongly Agree**.



<b>Section 1: Engagement in Dance Therapy</b>		<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)</b>	<b>DISAGREE (2)</b>	<b>AGREE (3)</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE (4)</b>
<i>Objective: To assess the frequency, intensity, and nature of engagement in dance therapy.</i>					
1.1	I regularly attend dance therapy sessions.				
1.2	I find dance therapy sessions enjoyable.				
1.3	I actively participate in all activities during dance therapy.				
1.4	Dance therapy sessions are a priority in my weekly schedule.				
1.5	I feel emotionally invested in dance therapy sessions.				
1.6	I practice dance movements learned in therapy at home.				
1.7	I am comfortable expressing myself during dance therapy.				
1.8	I feel a sense of community with other dance therapy participants.				
1.9	I find the dance therapy sessions to be adequately challenging.				
1.10	I am satisfied with the variety of activities in dance therapy.				
<b>Section 2: Psychological Well-being</b>		<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)</b>	<b>DISAGREE (2)</b>	<b>AGREE (3)</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE (4)</b>
<i>Objective: To gauge the psychological impacts of dance therapy, focusing on aspects like mood, anxiety, and self-perception.</i>					
2.1	I feel more relaxed after attending a dance therapy session.				
2.2	I have noticed an improvement in my mood since starting dance therapy.				
2.3	Dance therapy helps me in managing my anxiety.				
2.4	I feel more optimistic about life since I started dance therapy.				
2.5	I am more confident in social situations because of dance therapy.				
2.6	I feel a sense of accomplishment after dance therapy sessions.				
2.7	My sleep quality has improved since starting dance therapy.				
2.8	I feel less irritable or agitated since attending dance therapy.				
2.9	Dance therapy has helped me in coping with stress.				



2.10	I feel more in tune with my emotions due to dance therapy.				
<b>Section 3: Social and Emotional Connection</b>		<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)</b>	<b>DISAGREE (2)</b>	<b>AGREE (3)</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE (4)</b>
<i>Objective: To understand the impact of dance therapy on social skills and emotional connection.</i>					
3.1	I feel more connected to others because of dance therapy.				
3.2	Dance therapy has improved my communication skills.				
3.3	I find it easier to express my emotions since attending dance therapy.				
3.4	I have made meaningful relationships through dance therapy.				
3.5	I feel supported and understood in dance therapy sessions.				
3.6	Dance therapy has helped me in developing empathy.				
3.7	I feel a sense of belonging in the dance therapy group.				
3.8	I am more open to receiving feedback from others since starting dance therapy.				
3.9	I find it easier to trust others because of my experiences in dance therapy.				
3.10	Dance therapy has enhanced my ability to work in a team.				
<b>Section 4: Physical Health and Wellness</b>		<b>STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)</b>	<b>DISAGREE (2)</b>	<b>AGREE (3)</b>	<b>STRONGLY AGREE (4)</b>
<i>Objective: To evaluate the influence of dance therapy on physical health and body awareness.</i>					
4.1	I have noticed an improvement in my physical fitness since starting dance therapy.				
4.2	Dance therapy has increased my body awareness.				
4.3	I feel more energetic since I began attending dance therapy sessions.				
4.4	I have noticed an improvement in my coordination and balance due to dance therapy.				
4.5	Dance therapy has been beneficial for my physical health.				
4.6	I am more conscious of my posture and movement because of dance therapy.				
4.7	My physical endurance has improved				

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	since starting dance therapy.				
4.8	I experience less physical tension and discomfort due to dance therapy.				
4.9	Dance therapy has positively impacted my overall physical well-being.				
4.10	I am more motivated to maintain a healthy lifestyle because of dance therapy.				

## DATA ANALYSIS AND PROCEDURE

Initially, the data collection will begin with the distribution of the meticulously designed questionnaire to a carefully selected group of college students. These participants are either currently engaged in dance therapy or have recently participated in such programs. The questionnaire, structured into various sections, aims to capture a comprehensive view of the students' experiences with dance therapy and its impact on their mental health.

Students will complete the questionnaire either online or through physical forms, depending on their accessibility and convenience. This process will be conducted under strict ethical guidelines, ensuring participants' confidentiality and informed consent. The diversity of the sample is a key consideration, with efforts made to include students from various demographics, academic disciplines, and stages of their college journey.





Once the data collection phase concludes, the data will be meticulously prepared for analysis. This involves a thorough check for completeness, accuracy, and consistency. Any incomplete or outlier responses are addressed, ensuring the dataset's reliability.

The heart of the study lies in its statistical analysis. Given the descriptive correlational design of the study, the primary tool for data analysis is correlation coefficients, particularly Pearson's correlation coefficient. This statistical method will be employed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between engagement in dance therapy and various mental health outcomes, such as stress levels, anxiety, and overall well-being.

An exploratory analysis is also undertaken to identify any unexpected patterns or insights in the data. This might involve looking at subgroup analyses or trends across different demographic groups, academic years, or intensity of participation in dance therapy.

The study's hypotheses will be rigorously tested through this analysis. The correlational data either supports or refutes the hypotheses, providing a scientific basis for the conclusions drawn from the study.

To facilitate a robust analysis, advanced statistical software tools are utilized. These tools not only aid in managing large



datasets but also ensure precision in statistical computations and interpretations.

The final, yet crucial phase is the interpretation of the statistical results. The findings will be carefully examined in the context of the study's objectives and the existing body of research on dance therapy and mental health. This stage transforms raw data into meaningful insights about the impact of dance therapy on college students.

The data analysis and procedure of this study are designed to be both rigorous and insightful. From the meticulous collection of data to the detailed statistical analysis and interpretation, each step is crafted to ensure the study's findings are not only statistically sound but also meaningful in the context of enhancing mental health treatment for college students. This study, therefore, stands not just as a collection of data but as a meaningful exploration into the realm of alternative therapies in mental health, specifically tailored for the unique needs and experiences of college students. Through this process, the study aims to shed light on the effectiveness of dance therapy, potentially guiding future mental health interventions and enriching the academic discourse in this field.

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