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DANCE/MOVEMENT THERAPY, ADOLESCENTS & TRAUMA

The Effects of Dance and Movement Therapy with Adolescents Who Have Experienced Trauma,

a Literature Review

Capstone Thesis

Lesley University

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Dance/Movement Therapy

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Abstract

With the growing number of trauma-informed practices in the mental health field, it is necessary to look at what best practices should be implemented in treating adolescents who have experienced trauma, specifically from a body-based intervention, such as dance and movement therapy. In this literature review, articles are discussed that encompass the following topics: dance and movement therapy and trauma, general dance interventions for the adolescent population, empowerment models as a way to cope with trauma symptoms, and cultural considerations of treating adolescent females of color. The gaps in current research must be acknowledged, specifically dance and movement therapy interventions for traumatized adolescents in the United States and treatment options for oppressed populations. Through studying, researching, explaining, and critically evaluating existing literature in dance and movement therapy, it can be formulated where future research is needed for this target population. As trauma-informed care continues to increase, it is essential to explore where further research should be conducted to best treat adolescents who have experienced trauma.

The Effects of Dance and Movement Therapy with Adolescents Who Have Experienced Trauma,
a Literature Review

This thesis capstone investigated the effects of a dance and movement therapy intervention for adolescents who have experienced trauma. For the purpose of this capstone thesis, dance and movement therapy is defined as the psychotherapeutic use of movement to promote emotional, social, cognitive, and physical integration of the individual, with the intent of improving health and well-being (ADTA, 2016). Throughout this capstone thesis, trauma is defined as a noticeably significant life event that has affected an individual's physical or emotional well-being. The definition of an adolescent for this capstone thesis is anyone typically developing between the ages of 12-18 years old. For practitioners to implement best practices, it is important that research is critically evaluated and analyzed.

Although all humans have experienced varying degrees of trauma, this capstone thesis hones in on the adolescent population due to lack of research. The adolescent age can be a particularly difficult time in an individual's life. This is due to changing bodies and natural hormonal developments. When an adolescent experiences trauma the mental health of the individual can begin to unravel. If adolescents are not equipped to handle life's unforeseen stressors they can develop symptoms of anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder in the result of a significant life changing event. Through the use of dance and movement therapy, adolescents can learn to cope with their experiences of trauma and how it may be impacting them on a day to day basis (Levine & Land, 2016).

Through this literature review current existing research about the effectiveness of dance and movement therapy in treating adolescents who have experienced trauma it will be explored. Throughout this capstone thesis gaps in the literature were identified for the purpose of orienting

the reader. Lastly, suggestions are made on where future research should be conducted in the field of dance and movement therapy. This analysis has the potential to impact practitioners who provide treatment for adolescents who have experienced trauma through being able to learn what best practices exist from a body-based therapeutic intervention. Practitioners can then make sure that they are utilizing therapeutic techniques that are empirically supported by the most current and accurate research on this specific topic.

Literature Review

The articles that were researched during the literature review have been organized into five categories: historical context, theoretical orientations, research support, designs and methods of current research, and lastly identifying gaps in the current literature that pertain to this capstone thesis topic. These articles were found through thorough online research at the Lesley University Library online database.

Historical Context

In relation to historical context, Levine and Land (2016) explored how dance and movement therapy impacts individuals with trauma. The researchers explored the idea of, “engaging the body in trauma treatment might reduce the length of treatment by addressing the connections among thoughts, feelings, neurobiology, and somatic responses in the survivor” (p. 330).

Levine and Land’s (2016) research article is particularly applicable to the topic of this capstone thesis because the authors discussed the current gaps in research. Levine and Land (2016) stated:

Existing literature in this field, although rich in descriptions of the experience of dance/movement therapy, is predominantly conceptual. To develop a manual for mental

health care professionals to understand how to use the body in the treatment process, the present study aimed to gain a stronger understanding of the use of dance/movement therapy by systematically reviewing comparative texts of published material on dance/movement therapy for the treatment of trauma. With this information, a manual can be developed to investigate the efficacy of the intervention. (p. 330)

Levine and Land (2016) discussed how current treatment modalities, such as trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy, target to reduce the symptomatology of post-traumatic stress disorder but these modalities do not necessarily address the resolution of underlying trauma (Levine & Land, 2016, p. 331). The authors went on to discuss how case studies are generally a strong fit for studying dance and movement therapy intervention, but for an intervention to be evidence based, it is essential that a manual of the interventions exists (Levine & Land, 2016, p. 331).

There were four main themes that arose in Levine and Land's (2016) research article. In one of these four themes it was found where body and trauma can overlap, thus leading way to implementing dance and movement therapy techniques for individuals who have experienced trauma. Levine and Land (2016) stated that:

An awareness of the impact a traumatic experience can have on the body is often restricted by the body's natural response to trauma, referred to as the fear-freeze response. The body shuts down as a means of protecting the individual. As a result, the memory of the trauma is often held on a bodily level rather than a cognitive level, thereby making it difficult to resolve the trauma because the individual might not be fully cognizant of how his or her body has manifested the trauma. (p. 337)

Therefore, it can be surmised that when the body is physically involved in the treatment of trauma, individuals may be able to more effectively process their experienced trauma.

On the other hand, Mohr (2014), examined the long term effect of a 9-month art therapy intervention for traumatized youth aged between 11-19 years old. The trauma that occurred in this article was the shared experience of an earthquake in the Ica region of Peru. This earthquake occurred three years prior to the study. The eleven participants self reported having experienced significant emotional and psychological growth following the art therapy intervention.

This article began with the introduction in which post-traumatic growth is defined “as a positive experience of change that may occur as a result of a struggle with difficult challenges or trauma” (Mohr, 2014, p. 155). The results and emerging themes were discussed and described. The resounding themes that the research provoked were, honoring and holding, relatedness in community, perspective and balance, and having the freedom to move forward after experiencing this shared traumatic event.

The results of this study were that “participants had developed a stronger sense of life purpose, a heightened sense of perspective, and the freedom to move forward. The role of the arts in bringing comfort and joy to others, and affirming survival, was identified” (Mohr, 2014, p. 155). It can be concluded that throughout the art therapy intervention and subsequent inquiry, the arts provided a way of engaging with the community and helping others, despite the shared experience of trauma. Although this article does not utilize dance and movement therapy, the article relates to the thesis topic by exploring how an artistic intervention can impact individuals who have experienced trauma.

Duberg, Möller, and Sunvisson (2016) explored the experiences of adolescent girls, aged 13-18 years old, who participated in an 8-month long after school dance intervention. The dance

classes were structured as 75-minutes-long which consisted of a 15-minute warmup, 40 minutes of dance practice, and 15 minutes of relaxation which included a paired light massage, rounded off with 5 minutes for reflection.

Of 112 girls selected for the study, the intervention group consisted of 59 individuals, and 24 of the participants were then strategically selected to participate in subsequent interviews. The inclusion criteria for the participants included somatic symptoms such as headaches, stomach aches, tiredness, and aching shoulders. Further inclusion criteria included mental health issues categorized as nervousness, stress, or anxiety. The research was conducted using a randomized control trial method which analyzed the effects of the intervention. Five themes emerged, but the most pertinent theme was, “finding embodied self-trust that opens new doors, which emphasizes the increased trust in the self and the ability to approach life with a sense of freedom and openness” (Duberg et al., 2016, p. 1).

The researchers concluded that, “with the non-judgmental atmosphere and supportive togetherness as a safe platform, the enjoyment and empowerment in dancing gave rise to acceptance, increased trust in ability and a space for emotional expression” (Duberg et al., 2016, p. 12). These research findings are significant to current practitioners who provide treatment for adolescent that may have challenges with internalizing problems. In this way practitioners can implement interventions that can target reducing the burden of internalizing.

Similarly, O’Neill, Pate, & Hooker (2011) examined how dance contributes as physical activity for adolescent females. The article defined structured physical activity and discussed the guideline of youth having to achieve at least 60 minutes of daily moderate-to-vigorous physical activity (MVPA). The objective of the study was to describe the physical activity levels of these girls, determine the contribution of dance to total light, moderate, vigorous, and MVPA, and

lastly compared physical activity between the days with a dance class to days without a dance class.

A total of 149 participants were selected from Columbia, South Carolina. These participants were selected because they were involved in local dance classes. The protocol of the study was to measure the girl's activity using a ActiGraph accelerometer (Model 7146) over an eight-day period. The participants also filled out a self-report of their structured dance classes which allowed for determination of a program day (day with a dance class) and a non-program day (day without a dance class), for the comparison of physical activity levels.

This article's results suggested strong evidence that dance classes can contribute to girls' total physical activity. O'Neill et al. (2011) stated that these "dance classes can play a critical role by providing health-enhancing physical activity to adolescent girls, and can assist them in meeting the current physical activity guideline" (p. 6). Although the research conducted does not include the aspect of trauma, it did explore the benefits of a dance intervention for adolescents, which does relate to this thesis topic.

Chilton, Gerber, and Dreyer (2015) explored emotional expression through visual art-making and discussion in 5 co-researcher pairs. The article began by exploring and defining what a positive emotion is. The authors stated that "positive emotions can be defined as desirable and adaptive response tendencies that subjectively feel good, and both signal and produce optimal functioning, such as joy, gratitude, serenity, interest, hope, pride, amusement, inspiration, or awe" (Chilton et al., 2015, p. 3).

This article also described the methodology and how the participants were selected. The methodology of research was conducted through arts-based research which is "able to evoke, explore, and communicate shifting emotional intersubjective experience" (Chilton et al., 2015, p.

3). It is important to include this type of research when exploring the expressive arts, such as dance and movement therapy, so that the reader can have a well rounded experience. The authors stated that “potential conflicts of interest were avoided by excluding art therapy clients from the study” (Chilton et al., 2015, p. 4).

The results of the study were published and included five poetry examples from the intervention. The themes recognized in the poems described emotional meaning through the exploration of how these emotions were made visible. Throughout the study participants were made aware of their emotions by first creative meandering and then containment within artistic form. Another emerged theme that was found was on the notion of aesthetic emotion of awe or elevation. The last poetry example had the goal of having the reader feel wonder, awe, and gratitude.

The authors stated, “results included artwork and illustrated poems that demonstrate the expression of positive and other emotions within an interpersonal relationship. As part of multi-modal aesthetic exploration, poetry was used as a means of data analysis and as a vehicle for conveying findings” (Chilton et al., 2015, p. 2). Although the subject of this study differed from the subject of this capstone thesis, it is important that this study is included because the research was conducted through arts based research which is important to have a well rounded scope of current research.

Eke and Gent (2010) evaluated a community resourced project exploring the usefulness of group dance and movement psychotherapy within the school setting. The program explored in this article was called Dance Movement Psychotherapy. The authors stated, “the objective of this group project was that, using movement within a safe group environment, we might provide an early intervention through which the withdrawn young person could engage creatively in a

process of development and growth” (Eke & Gent, 2010, p. 45). The program was offered to schools from a community based counseling agency that typically supported individuals between the ages of 14 and 25, which does include the adolescent age range. This group addressed the growing need of help for psychological and mental issues within the school setting (Eke & Gent, 2010, p. 47).

Within the population of traumatized adolescents, individuals can be withdrawn socially, academically, and physically. Eke and Gent (2010) stated:

Adolescence is a process of tumultuous change and transition and whilst some young people engage in impulsive, aggressive behavior often considered as part of their normal development, others will protect their fragile sense of identity. They will withdraw from social interaction and isolate themselves as well as under-achieve academically. These adolescents, who may also become easy targets for bullying and victimization, could develop pathological self destructiveness undetected by the adults around them. (p. 45-46)

Within the established safety of the school structure this program promoted that adolescents have the opportunity to open up the conflicts, resistance, and emotions which would otherwise remain unexpressed or displaced into otherwise destructive behavior. Eke and Gent (2010) concluded by stating, “setting up group dance movement psychotherapy in all ability secondary schools is a crucial step towards recognition of the mind/body inter-connectedness, and its importance in the developmental process of the young person” (p. 55). Although this article did not directly address individual’s experiences of trauma, this research supported the positive impact of dance and movement therapy within the adolescent population in the school setting.

Theoretical Orientations

Årdal, Holsen, Diseth, and Larsen (2018) explored the positive youth perspectives which were derived from a relational developmental system of human development. This theoretical orientation was also applied in a school context. Årdal et al., (2018) stated:

Although adolescence is a period of many challenges, it is also a period of significant opportunity for developing strengths and stimulating thriving. Adolescence is also a dynamic period with regard to brain development, which is profoundly influenced by environmental factors. As such, the potential for plasticity in human development may exist in mutual developmental regulations between the individual and their contextual systems. (p. 4)

The Five C's model used in this study has been established as one of the most supported approaches to impacting positive youth development. The authors described the Five C's model as being represented by caring, character, competence, confidence, and connection (Årdal et al., 2018, p. 5). Although this article does not directly interact with this capstone thesis topic, the Five C's model could have the potential to be implemented with the treatment of adolescents who have experienced trauma.

Jeong et al. (2005) discussed how dance and movement therapy can affect neurohormones in adolescent females who have mild depression, although this article did not directly address the implications of trauma. The study was conducted on 40 females in Korea, which had 20 individuals in the experimental group and 20 individuals in the control group. To measure the results, the subjects completed a self-report inventory of emotional distress, called the Symptom Check List-90-Revision. To measure the participants plasma serotonin and

dopamine concentrations the study conductors used a high performance liquid chromatography with electrochemical detection at 0.65 V (Jeong et al., 2005).

The treatment group participated in a 45-minute long dance and movement therapy sessions three times a week for a total of twelve weeks while the control group did not receive any type of treatment. The treatment sessions were focused around the following four main themes: (a) awareness; (b) expressions and symbolic quality; (c) movement, feeling, images, and words; and (d) differentiation and integration of feelings (Jeong et al., 2005). The results were analyzed using a repeated measure of analysis of variance.

The results showed that there were significant changes in the modulation of serotonin and dopamine levels as well as a reduction in negative psychological symptoms in the experimental group while the control group remained unchanged. The results corroborated with previous studies that showed dance and movement therapy reducing emotional disturbance, relieving tension, and improving self-esteem (Jeong et al., 2005). To conclude, the article discussed the limitations of a small sample size and the lack of an equivalent exercise control group to estimate an expectation effect. Although this article does not directly address trauma in adolescence, mild depression can be a comorbid diagnosis for a multitude of individuals who have experienced trauma.

Cristobal (2018) explored the power of touch in the dance and movement therapy context when working with survivors of sexual abuse. The article suggested that touch is a healing aspect in psychotherapy particularly when working with individuals looking to reclaim and relearn their relationship with their bodies (Cristobal, 2018, p. 68). The role of touch can be controversial in dance and movement therapy theories. Touch can positively impact the psychotherapeutic relationship but is a topic that needs further exploration and research.

Cristobal (2018) stated, “touch between people can be confusing due to the fact that touch has the potential to bring up a variety of issues such as boundaries, sexuality, contact, and nurturing” (p. 69).

When an individual experiences sexual abuse they can be left “in a speechless condition; there is a shared understanding that sexual abuse is hard to put into words, which may leave a survivor with no language or frame of reference with which they can make sense of their experiences” (Cristobal, 2018, p. 69). According to Cristobal (2018), touch is a basic form of communication and can play an important role between relationships and information regarding the environment where an individual exists. In this way touch “provides a means through which communication can occur nonverbally” (Cristobal, 2018, p. 69). In the dance and movement therapy construct, touch can be an integral form of communication in trauma-informed treatment.

Cristobal (2018) noted on the symptom of dissociation within the context of a traumatic experience and stated:

The dissociation between body and mind is a key aspect of the trauma that survivors suffer; there is a range of body-mind dissociation for survivors from the inability to describe physical sensations, to severe psychological disorders that may continue beyond the actual circumstances of their trauma... Dissociation is a coping skill used to separate the person from the traumatic event(s) and later from the memory of the traumatic event. (p. 70)

Within the dance and movement therapy therapeutic relationship, dance and movement therapists are trained in the technique of listening to their own bodies’ signals within the therapeutic

relationship. In this theory the dance and movement therapist could attune to their client's bodily needs and could assess when, how, or if touch should be used in the session.

Tourigny, Hébert, Daigneault, and Simoneau (2005) discussed the efficacy of group therapy for adolescent girls who have experienced sexual abuse, which is along similar theoretical topics regarding sexual abuse. The theoretical orientation and intervention being explored in this article is group therapy. The means of evaluation for this treatment modality was a pretest/post-test design with a control group. The intervention consisted of two hour meetings, once a week, for twenty minutes.

Tourigny et al. (2005) stated:

Results revealed a significant improvement in youth participating in the therapy when compared with the control group on measures of post-traumatic stress, internalizing and externalizing behavior problems, coping strategies, relationship with the mother, and sense of empowerment. The findings suggest that the group therapy was effective in reducing symptoms for sexually abused teenagers. (p. 72)

Group therapy is currently one of the most frequently used therapeutic modalities in the treatment of adolescents who have experienced sexual abuse and trauma (Tourigny et al., 2005, p. 73).

Tourigny et al. (2005) discussed the results and that there were significant improvements in adolescent girls who participated in the group therapy "mainly in terms of posttraumatic stress symptoms, attributions, coping strategies, internalizing and externalizing behavioral problems, and feelings of empowerment" (Tourigny et al., 2005, p. 86). This article suggested that the use of group therapy, as a theoretical orientation, for the treatment of adolescent girls who have experienced trauma can show positive results.

Research Support

Hagensen's (2015) explored how the relationship between an individual's overall wellness and quality of life is affected by the individual's participation in dance and movement therapy. The individual presented in this case study was an adolescent female. The dance and movement therapy intervention was based on a holistic wellness curriculum that focused on the following topics: nutrition, mindfulness, movement, body image, and friendships (Hagensen, 2015, p. 150).

This case study supported that through engagement with the dance and movement therapy curriculum the "participant increased knowledge about herself and how her body functioned, and that the use of dance and movement therapy was appropriate in this particular situation" (Hagensen, 2015, p. 150). The quantitative and qualitative data was gathered through utilizing the Youth Quality of Life-Research Version, as well as parent surveys and session transcriptions. Although this case study did not explore the dance and movement therapy curriculum's utility with adolescents who have experienced trauma, it offered a promising case study example of the potential of the curriculum improving the quality of life in the individual examined.

Parker, Bermúdez, & Neustifter (2007) article suggested that utilizing the Kite in Flight method will relieve the therapeutic concerns of young women. The Kite in Flight method is a metaphorical conception which explores interpersonal functioning according to contextual challenges that adolescents can face. The authors proposed that these challenges may be relieved "by increasing empowerment achieved through identity development and the strengthening of interpersonal boundaries" (p. 1).

The authors described the Kite in Flight method as “an approach for empowering young women through increased differentiation, as well as the strengthening of interpersonal boundaries within the context of romantic relationships. The authors have found the model beneficial in family, group, and individual therapeutic settings with adolescent girls” (Parker et al., 2007, p. 3). The article went on to discuss case studies when the method further supported the authors original hypothesis.

The Kite in Flight method offered a template for each session and has been found to be useful in a variety of settings and scenarios. Further research needs to be conducted to make these findings more concrete. The authors surmised the findings and stated, “We suggest the need of young women in therapy to identify and maintain their interpersonal boundaries as a means for establishing their identity, resulting in greater personal empowerment” (Parker et al., 2007, p. 2). Although this article did not directly relate to this thesis topic, it it included because it involves empowering young women in an effort to relieve different potential therapeutic concerns.

Christensen and Mikkelsen (2013) explored the mobility patterns of 10- to 13-year-old children. The study was conducted through mixed-method design in effort to combine ethnographic methods with GPS technology. The methods that were used in this article were: family and child interviews, participant observation and guided-tour interviews a mobile phone survey to generate an in-depth understanding of the children’s experiences of and movements in their neighborhoods (Christensen & Mikkelsen, 2013, p. 198). The authors stated:

The human body is always emplaced, always physically situated and integrated in its immediate environment. Whether, we lie in bed, run for the bus or sit in an

airplane we always find ourselves in place. Thus the body is not a stationary object but a lived and sensuous subject in motion. (Christensen & Mikkelsen, 2013, p. 198)

The data reported in this article supported that the participants placed importance in creating places of their own in their environment. The participants actively sought and created spaces that held meaning for them. Although this research does not involve the aspect of trauma, it suggests that individuals between 10- to 13-years old will move themselves to create spaces of meaning.

Querimit and Conner (2003) explored cultural aspects of empowerment psychotherapy which previous articles have not discussed:

Little research has addressed racially, culturally, and ethnically inclusive psychotherapy with adolescent populations. There are few guidelines and virtually no controlled research on existing approaches (including our own) regarding how psychotherapists deal with race and ethnicity in psychotherapy with adolescents of color. As a response to the growing numbers of youth of color among our nation's population, psychotherapists have sought to develop their knowledge and skills in treating adolescents of color. (Querimit & Conner, 2003, p. 1216)

Querimit and Conner (2013) shared that there are protective strengths for adolescent females of color such as a strong identity and flexible coping. First, case illustrations explored external aspects, such as, support, empowerment, boundaries/expectations, and constructive use of time. Secondly, internal assets explored a commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity (Querimit & Conner, 2003, p. 1216).

Although this article did not explicitly explore trauma, it is suggested that the approach of empowerment psychotherapy could help transform contextual vulnerabilities into strengths

(Querimit & Conner, 2003, p. 1222). Lastly, Querimit and Conner (2013) suggested that empowerment models of psychotherapy should be researched among wider ranges of individuals to further support their hypothesis.

Designs and Methods of Current Research

Two articles were found that related to the topic of adolescents but they did not include the aspect of trauma or dance and movement therapy. The first of these articles by LeCroy, Cosgrove, Cotter, and Fordney (2018) is a randomized controlled trial to reduce sexual risk factors in middle school females. The second article, by LeCroy (2004), explored an evaluation of the program implemented from LeCroy, Cosgrove, Cotter, and Fordney (2018).

The program was developed as a universal prevention program that is organized around tasks considered critical for healthy psychosocial development of early adolescent girls. The program focused on the unique tasks early adolescent girls need to master in order to successfully transition to adulthood. The program was developed and pilot tested over a period of 15 years and includes preliminary outcome studies (LeCroy et al., 2018, p. 288). The program included eight sessions which encompassed gender role identification, body image, self-acceptance, sexuality, STI/HIV education, responsible decision making (skills training), and planning for the future. Results showed that the gender-specific programs increased measures of female empowerment.

In LeCroy's (2004) evaluation of the empowerment program, it is stated that, "adolescence is an ideal age group for preventive interventions to avert or delay the onset of problem behaviors. Indeed, too often preventive interventions target older youth when it is too late because problem behaviors have already started" (LeCroy, 2004, p. 428). LeCroy (2004) shared that the results of the evaluation provided some encouragement for continued study but a

more rigorous design would be needed with a larger randomized experiment, and a more extensive set of dependent measure (LeCroy, 2004, p. 438).

Identifying Gaps in Literature

Earlier studies moderately addressed this thesis capstone topic. The articles that made a significant impact to this topic were from Cristobal (2018), Jeong et al. (2005), and Levine and Land (2016). These three articles specifically related to this thesis topic through the exploration of how dance and movement therapy impacts the individuals in the studies. Other than these three articles, the other articles moderately related to the topic of this capstone thesis. Although only moderately related, it was imperative to include these articles as they explored the following related topics of adolescent, trauma, or dance and movement therapy. Each of the articles did make an impact in the field of research which has been highlighted and explored in the literature review.

There seemed to be gaps in the research of this capstone thesis topic specifically related to the impacts of cultural considerations. Only one article, by Querimit and Conner (2003), specifically addressed the use of empowerment psychotherapy with an adolescent female of color. This article did acknowledge that this is a current gap in the research and explored where further research in this field should be conducted in effort to achieve more concrete results with a larger sample population. This needs to be highlighted as a large gap in the current research that currently exists in this topic as oppressed populations are consistently overlooked in the United States.

There were also gaps in the field of dance and movement therapy and how the intervention interacts with adolescents. Based on the literature that was found there was a gap in general regarding treatment of adolescents within the context of any modality treatment. It

seems like the entirety of this capstone thesis topic is currently not receiving much research. It is detrimental to the field of dance and movement therapy that practitioners move forward with developing research on the effects of utilizing dance and movement therapy to treat adolescents who have experienced trauma.

Discussion

This literature review discussed articles that engaged with the following topics: dance and movement therapy and trauma, general dance interventions for the adolescent population, empowerment models as a way to cope with trauma symptoms, and cultural considerations of treating adolescent females of color. The literature review took the reader through historical context of the topic, theoretical orientations, research support, and designs and methods of published research. There was discussion on how dance and movement therapy interacts with the target population of adolescents who have experienced trauma. It was acknowledged where there are significant gaps in current research.

In this literature review it was explored where there is published research and where there are gaps in the research of this capstone thesis topic. There were a few articles that related directly to the topic and most articles moderately correlated with this capstone thesis topic. It was found that utilizing the body and arts for expression in trauma treatment resulted in positive outcomes for the population that the specific articles engaged with. The current research supports that the use of dance and movement therapy can positively impact adolescents who have experienced trauma. It was also learned that there are significant gaps in the research of how the capstone thesis topic interweaves with cultural considerations. This capstone thesis topic would benefit from additional research across multiple platforms and a variety of populations.

It is recommended that future research hones in on the specific results of utilizing the intervention of dance and movement therapy with adolescents who have experienced trauma. It would be beneficial to the population for future research to investigate how dance and movement therapy effects adolescents who have experienced trauma in both individual and group therapy contexts. Dance and movement therapies can be effective in a plethora of settings and locations. This is why more research needs to fill in the gaps the the current published research leaves behind. Dance and movement therapist are specifically trained to meet each client where they are at and then utilize the client's strengths to overcome what they are having difficulty with.

This literature review can be utilized by dance and movement therapists to evaluate the current treatment options for this capstone thesis topic population. Current dance and movement therapists can also utilize this capstone thesis to explore where there are current gaps in the research of dance and movement therapy, trauma, and adolescents. In this way dance and movement therapists can make sure they are implementing best practices for their clients. This capstone thesis may also point dance and movement therapists towards where more research needs to be conducted.

In conclusion, through this research it is clear that utilizing a body-based intervention such as dance and movement therapy can positively impact individuals seeking mental health treatment. Going forward it will be detrimental for dance and movement therapist to continue to develop and implement research. As stated previously, dance and movement therapy can be easily researched through a case study research method. It is recommended that future research should include qualitative, quantitative, and art-based research to continue to expand in diversity of research for this population.

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In the judgment of the following signatory this thesis meets the academic standards that have been established for the above degree.

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