

DANCE MUSIC'S IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Dance music shapes our communities and our culture.
Clubs and festivals improve health, wellbeing, friendship and happiness.
They are positive, unifying and inspiring forces in an increasingly divided world.
And the creativity of the scene powers every corner of popular culture.

This report draws together the published academic research
on the depth and value of dance music.

FOREWORDS

ASSOCIATION FOR ELECTRONIC MUSIC FOREWORD

Those of us who live and breathe dance music have always known the incredible community value that club and rave culture has brought to our lives and our global audiences.

It is great to see the collection of academic evidence of these benefits outlined clearly in a report, which can contribute towards a broader understanding of the importance of our music and scene to millions of people, alongside the clearly defined commercial and economic benefits. The need to dance, to express, to commune and to build friendships that know no barriers of race, class, gender or creed are fundamental.

- Silvia Montello, AFEM

NIGHT TIME INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION FOREWORD

Dance music drives culture to the heart of communities - from the lone teenager listening to beats on a laptop in a bedroom, to groups of kids on an estate spitting lyrics and bars over an electro beat from the 1980s on a mobile phone, to the soul, jazz and funk instrumentals that underpin modern productions.

Dance music has inspired millions of people, and given them a hunger to dig deeper into music heritage to find new sounds, a new rhythm to listen to, create and produce. Reaching people from all walks of life, without prejudice or bias, crossing cultural boundaries and creating pathways for expression.

Aided by this report, wider society will grow to recognise this industry as one of the most important economic and cultural movements of the future."

- Michael Kill, NTIA

FOREWORDS

ARTIST FOREWORD

Dance music is the most significant cultural shift since the dawn of roll & roll. In the 1950s guitar heroes began blending black gospel, soul and juke joints, by the 1980s, DJs were blending disco with drum machines in warehouses, and both genres fought for their own expression beyond oppression.

In the subsequent decades, dance music has overtaken rock & roll as a popular form of youth culture, because it's more spontaneous, more economical, more accessible and available to everyone, whether as a dancer or a producer, a DJ or a promoter. Nothing in musical history has ever been as easily accessible to so many people, making it one of the more important new global industries of the 20th century.

- Yousef, Circus

BELIEVE FOREWORD

The contribution of electronic music to communities and the wider cultural landscape globally should not be underestimated. Powered by artists, DJs, labels, clubs, dancers, people of all ages and backgrounds, underpinned by shared values of togetherness, friendship and hope.

Electronic music broke down social and economic barriers, imbued with a future thinking spirit of innovation and it continues to do so.

This report, by collecting together peer reviewed academic research, showcases this impact on society across many different areas. The report illuminates cultural and economic benefits for both governmental institutions and wider society to give this sector the respect and support it deserves.

- Leigh Morgan, b:electronic

FOREWORDS

ACADEMIC FOREWORD

Scholarly interest in dance music culture is located in a range of disciplines including sociology, psychology, music, religious studies, cultural studies, anthropology and performance. These multi-disciplinary perspectives help us understand the dimensions of a cultural phenomenon that continues to play a significant role in people's lives and wider society.

This report draws on published research conducted by various academics and researchers around the world over the past two decades, and provides a compelling argument that dance music and nightclubs offer many benefits to individuals, wider society, and even governments, on a global scale.

This report provides the evidence to demonstrate that dance music is important and delivers benefits. Culture matters: clubbing matters.

This report has been conceived and compiled in the spirit of collaboration between academics and industry. It serves as an invitation to have bigger, better, bolder conversations about the value of club culture and its place in the world.

The recent pandemic has had a devastating effect on the nightclub and dance music industries. In many countries nightclubs were the first businesses to close and the last to re-open, often falling through the gaps when it came to qualifying for government support.

As a result, we have seen shrinkage in the sector and the closure of many established businesses. Furthermore, the legacy of debt and current economic climate continue to pose threats to nightclubs and associated activities. When the nightclub industry is undermined, this impacts the wider eco-system which includes other aspects of the night-time economy and the music industry.

As this report indicates, dance floors are places where communities converge, new music is incubated and shared, and social change is enacted. Nightclubs are well placed to impact positively on some of the social consequences of the pandemic. Ironically, they are under threat when they are arguably most needed. Nightclubs and dance music culture bring people together. They embody a form of democratised culture that is accessible, inclusive and responsive.

In everyday life, the value of the sector is not always consciously acknowledged, the greater benefits to individuals and society are often overlooked in favour of narratives about harm reduction, property prices and noise abatement. However nightclubs and dance music culture will be missed if they are not preserved and allowed to flourish.

James Cannon, Alinka Greasley,
Alice O'Grady, Tony Rigg

NIGHTCLUBS ARE SOCIO-CULTURAL SUPERCOLLIDERS

Whether they're gloomily-lit dark rooms or flamboyant, otherworldly fantasylands - nightclubs have become an increasingly fundamental part of modern social infrastructure.

Nightlife accounts for 1.6% of GDP – or £36.4 billion – and 425,000 jobs across the UK¹.

These quantified benefits are often presented when urging the wider public to tolerate what some only perceive as noise-polluting local venues. However, nightlife's contribution to the UK economy far exceeds the revenue it generates.

By focusing exclusively on their commercial value, we overlook both the roles individual clubs play within their local communities *and* the broader socioeconomic context within which nightlife operates.

1. <https://ntia.co.uk/late-night-economy-report-on-nightclubs-bringing-onto-agenda/> ("Late Night Economy Report puts Nightclubs on Government Agenda – Night Time Industries Association")

Clubs create culture, they revitalise neighbourhoods², and are a crucial component of the UK's creative industries.

Clubs create communities, helping to maintain mental wellbeing, providing opportunities for social serendipity and safe places for identity formation.

Nightclubs may seem like blackboxed utopias, but participants take the inspiration, positive attitudes, relationships and interpersonal skills forged within repurposed basements and warehouses back out into the wider world. People emerge from clubs inspired, happier, more tolerant, and more community-spirited.

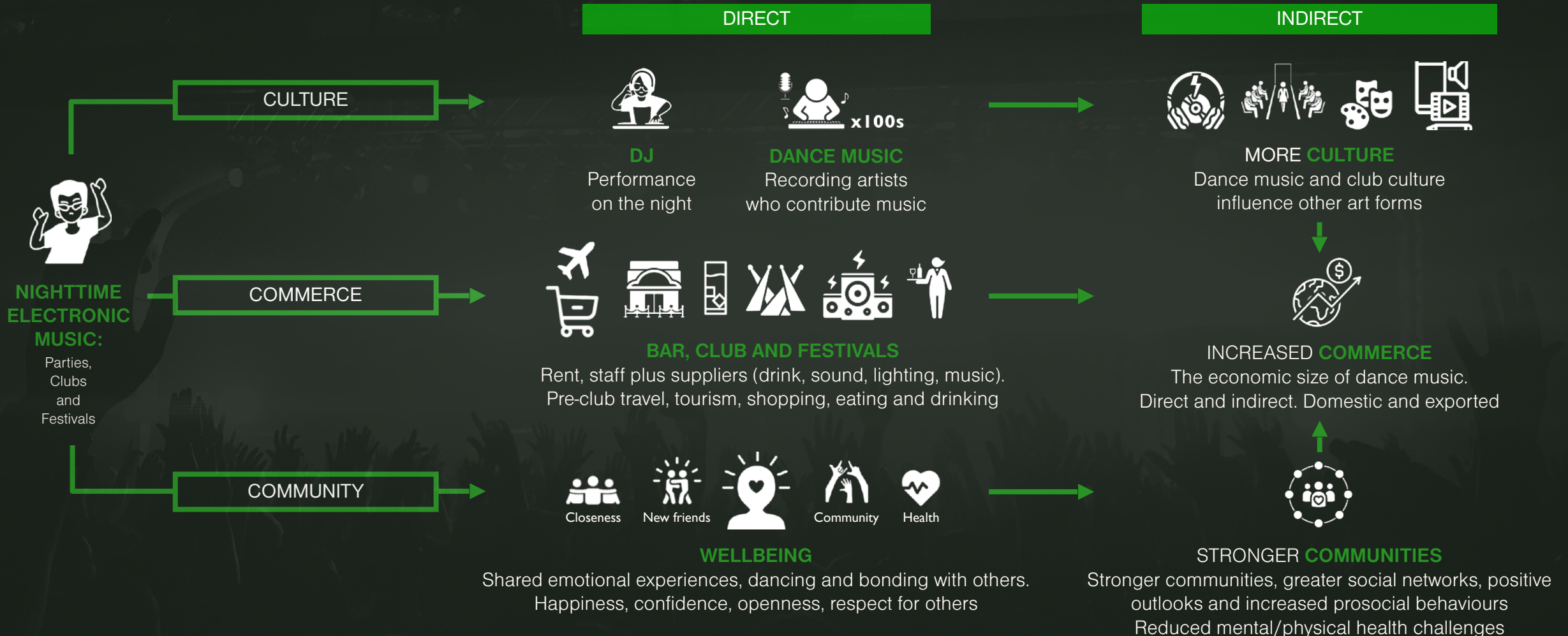
It's this humble, **everyday magic** which has made nightlife so vital, amid a mental health crisis and a loneliness epidemic, in which youth services are cut, health services are stretched and spiralling living costs further reduce opportunities for meaningful interaction, we've never needed nightclubs more.

This report draws together two decades of academic research on dance music and nightlife culture.

2. Drevenstedt, L. (2020). *Dimensions of Club Culture: Learning from Berlin*. In *The New Age of Electronic Dance Music and Club Culture*, ed. Anita Jóri and Martin Lücke, 9-20. Springer.

DANCE CLUBS AND FESTIVALS HAVE IMPACT ON COMMUNITY, CULTURE AND COMMERCE

In this report we focus on their impact on community and culture



CLUBS PROVIDE COMMUNITY AND BELONGING



In the sweat and in the dark, people dance together. They swap smiles and strike up conversation, they swap stories and discover things in common, they swap phone numbers, over the weeks and months they share experiences, and eventually become friends.

Clubs provide a break from the mundanity of daily life, but they do so much more than simply keeping people distracted or out of trouble³. Across the world, clubs are a case study in community building.

The opportunity to make friends is a major driver for participation in nightlife. In an increasingly isolated, digital world, this real-world bonding experience leads “individuals to feel a strong sense of unity and belonging.”⁴ Interactions provide nightlife participants with a sense of belonging to a unique and meaningful community, and feeling part of “something special.”⁵

During a loneliness epidemic, in which traditional social spaces have closed down or had their funding slashed, nightclubs have filled an important void; providing opportunities for social intimacy in an increasingly divided and atomised world.

3. Mazierska, E. H., & Rigg, T. (2021). Challenges to British Nightclubs During and After the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture*, 13(1), 69-87.
4. Little, N., Burger, B., & Croucher, S. M. (2018). EDM and Ecstasy: The lived experiences of electronic dance music festival attendees. *Journal of New Music Research*, 47(1), 78-95.
5. Riley, S., Morey, Y., & Griffin, C. (2010). The 'pleasure citizen' Analyzing partying as a form of social and political participation. *Young*, 18(1), 33-54.

CLUBS ARE SPACES FOR EXPRESSION AND IDENTITY



Ethnographic studies reveal that clubs promote tolerance and acceptance⁶ and that clubs have long been important spaces in which individuals can safely experiment with identity, question and shift social norms and challenge normality.

Historically, clubs have played significant roles in the history of LGBTQI, Black⁷ and Asian⁸ communities in Britain, clubs continue to provide safe spaces for these communities to congregate and drive their sense of collective identity forward.⁹

Increasingly we're seeing that club culture not only plays a role in identity formation in late adolescence and early adulthood, but continues to be part of identity throughout adulthood. Clubs serve much like concert halls or opera houses, providing a setting for a like-minded community to congregate.

6. Lynch, G., & Badger, E. (2006). The mainstream post-rave club scene as a secondary institution: A British perspective. *Culture and Religion*, 7(1), 27–40.

7. Quinn, S. (2002). Rumble in the jungle: The invisible history of drum'n'bass. *Transformations Journal*, 3(1), 1-12.

8. Ahmed, A. (2021) [How Clubbing Is Helping Young British South Asians Explore Their Creativity And Identity](#) *Mixmag*

9. Packer, J., & Ballantyne, J. (2011). The impact of music festival attendance on young people's psychological and social wellbeing. *Psychology of Music*, 39(2), 164–181.

CLUBS ARE SPACES FOR DANCING



Dancing is the physical activity at the epicentre of club culture. Dancing is fun, endorphin-releasing exercise¹⁰, it's been found to have neurological benefits, improving attention span¹¹, cognition, memory¹² and problem solving.

Dancing is also credited with staving off depression¹³, reducing feelings of anger, helping individuals handling trauma and coping with anxiety. Within a club context, the congregation of dancers loosely synchronise around the beat of the music, this fosters social bonding, reinforcing the sense of togetherness.¹⁴

Today, young people are drinking less, and placing increased emphasis on fitness and wellbeing than previous generations. Clubs remain a big part of these trends.

10. Tarr, B., Launay, J., & Dunbar, R. I. (2016). Silent disco: dancing in synchrony leads to elevated pain thresholds and social closeness. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 37(5), 343-349.

11. Alpert, P. T. (2011). The health benefits of dance. *Home Health Care Management & Practice*, 23(2), 155-157.

12. Meng, X., Li, G., Jia, Y., Liu, Y., Shang, B., Liu, P., ... & Chen, L. (2020). Effects of dance intervention on global cognition, executive function and memory of older adults: a meta-analysis and systematic review. *Aging clinical and experimental research*, 32(1), 7-19.

13. Koch, S. C., Morlinghaus, K., & Fuchs, T. (2007). The joy dance: Specific effects of a single dance intervention on psychiatric patients with depression. *The arts in Psychotherapy*, 34(4), 340-349.

14. Reddish, P., Fischer, R., & Bulbulia, J. (2013). Let's dance together: synchrony, shared intentionality and cooperation. *PloS one*, 8(8), e71182.

CLUBS PROMOTE MENTAL WELLBEING



At a societal level, the COVID-19 pandemic unearthed and accelerated underlying mental health issues. We're often encouraged to think of nightlife in terms of its costs; the strain it places upon healthcare services.

Rarely do we think of our clubs as multi-value assets, with young people drinking less than previous generations, we often overlook the benefits to wellbeing and esteem that clubs provide, and the ways they consequently alleviate our public health services.

It's difficult to place a value on this invisible labour conducted by nightclubs.

CLUBS CULTURE'S INTERTWINED WITH WIDER CULTURE



At the very forefront of clubbing's avant garde, interior designers and architects experiment with new VR and AR equipment, light shows push AV limits and musicians innovate sonically, collectively conjuring sensorily spectacular environments.¹⁵

While not every venue exists at this bleeding edge, or has the cultural significance of New York's Mudd Club or Manchester's Hacienda, clubs still play an important role in their city or town's creative scene¹⁶, as well as being places for creative people to congregate, the clubs themselves operate like participatory theatre productions, amid the synthetic sounds and under artificial lights, grassroots creativity thrives.

Today's club photographers become tomorrow's high fashion photographers, club flyer designers become creative directors, video makers become directors, fanzine writers become culture journalists. For a generation paying off student loans, often required to take unpaid internships, clubs provide de facto creative apprenticeships for those who will go on to shape the next generation of mainstream culture.

¹⁵. Drevenstedt, L. (2020). Dimensions of Club Culture: Learning from Berlin. In Jóri, A. and Lücke, M. (Eds.) *The New Age of Electronic Dance Music and Club Culture*, (pp. 9-20). Springer..

¹⁶. Mazierska, E. H., & Rigg, T. (2021). Challenges to British Nightclubs During and After the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture*, 13(1), 69-87.

CLUBS SHOULD BE CELEBRATED FOR SHAPING COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

This is all taking place in a context of public and political opposition, gentrification and escalating business rates. Clubs are being forced out of business at an alarming rate, since 2005 the number of UK nightclubs has fallen from just over 3000 to just 960.

Clubs are often disregarded and seen as frivolous, but they've come to provide a politically and economically shortchanged generation with much needed structure, fulfilling many of the roles historically played by other institutions.

In a modern context, clubs make broad contributions to both the local and national economies, taking on the role of traditional public services, and helping to produce tolerant, skilful, confident, socially-bonded people. If we're to let them continue to close, it'll be at vast expense. Clubs should be celebrated, not just for their impact on commerce, but for their impact on communities and culture as well.

BACKGROUND

WE STUDIED MORE THAN 45 PEER-REVIEWED ACADEMIC PAPERS AND ARTICLES SPANNING OVER 20 YEARS OF RESEARCH

Here are the common themes in academic studies on the impact of dance music and club culture:



We studied more than 45 peer-reviewed academic papers and articles spanning over 20 years of research:

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...and used insights from articles including:

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TOPIC 1:

COMMUNITY & BELONGING

CLUBS CREATE COMMUNITY

Numerous studies have shown that attendees see dance music events as idealised communities and individuals feel a strong sense of belonging within these communities.



TOPIC 1: COMMUNITY & BELONGING



An interview study with attendees of Electric Daisy Carnival (EDC) found **community** to be one of three main themes participants spoke about on reflection of the event. This community was underpinned by the values of **peace, love, unity and respect** leading individuals to feel a strong sense of **unity and belonging**.

Little, N., Burger, B., & Croucher, S. M. (2018). EDM and Ecstasy: The lived experiences of electronic dance music festival attendees. *Journal of New Music Research*, 47(1), 78–95.

A study which interviewed and observed people in the UK drum and bass and free party scenes showed attendees felt a deep **sense of belonging** to a **unique and meaningful community**, feeling **part of “something special.”**

Riley, S., Morey, Y., & Griffin, C. (2010). The ‘pleasure citizen’ Analyzing partying as a form of social and political participation. *Young*, 18(1), 33-54.

Interviews with people in Canadian dance music scenes reveal how attendees view these communities as tribal **celebrations**, leading to a **strong sense of connectedness with others** and providing **meaningful, often spiritual experiences**.

Takahashi, M., & Olaveson, T. (2003). Music, dance and raving bodies: Raving as spirituality in the central Canadian rave scene. *Journal of Ritual Studies*, 17(2), 72-96.

TOPIC 1: COMMUNITY & BELONGING



Much like community centres and youth clubs, dance venues “**provide distraction and respite from youth unemployment** and the other cultural traps” - they are also **important for the economy** of local communities with an estimated £17 spent in the local community for every £10 spent in a nightlife venue.

Mazierska, E. H., & Rigg, T. (2021). Challenges to British Nightclubs During and After the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture*, 13(1), 69-87.

Fieldwork conducted in Canadian dance scenes highlights the **intense interpersonal connection** shared between attendees on the dancefloor. This is often interpreted as a spiritual experience and may be seen as a form of **socio-cultural revitalisation**.

Olaveson, T. (2004) “Connectedness’ and the rave experience: rave as new religious movement?’, in G. St John (ed.), *Rave Culture and Religion* (pp. 83–104). Routledge,

It has been argued dance culture provides people with an experience of **collective communion and transcendence**. The LGBT dance scene offers this **in lieu of organised religion**, of which members of the LGBT community (and other communities) may feel alienated from.

Reynolds, S. (1999). *Generation Ecstasy: Into the World of Techno and Rave Culture*. New York: Routledge

TOPIC 2:

SOCIAL BONDING & TOGETHERNESS

CLUBS BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER

Research has found dance music events provide optimal opportunities to develop stronger bonds with friends and meet new people.



TOPIC 2: SOCIAL BONDING & TOGETHERNESS



A UK interview study found that **meeting new people** and **developing friendships** were key aspects of the social experience of dance music events. The **bonds developed** between people are viewed as **profoundly deep and meaningful**.

Cannon, J. W., & Greasley, A. E. (2021). Exploring Relationships Between Electronic Dance Music Event Participation and Well-being. *Music & Science*, 4(1), 1-17..

Survey research investigating personal transformation in dance music events with over 500 individuals found **strong, enduring bonds** are formed with others through **shared intensely emotional, awe-inspiring experiences**.

Newson, M., Khurana, R., Cazorla, F., & van Mulukom, V. (2021). 'I get high with a little help from my friends'-how raves can invoke identity fusion and lasting co-operation via transformative experiences. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4303.

A study investigating how structural features of dance music make people move on the dancefloor found that dance music **promotes social bonding** through engendering **synchronised dancing within a group**.

Solberg, R. T., & Jensenius, A. R. (2017). Group behaviour and interpersonal synchronization to electronic dance music. *Musicae Scientiae*, 23(1), 111-134.

TOPIC 2: SOCIAL BONDING & TOGETHERNESS



Virtual dance music events enable a shared musical experience between people online, importantly providing **confirmation of group membership** during the pandemic. However, they lacked the physical engagement with others necessary to establish strong feelings of social solidarity that in-person events provide.

Vandenberg, F., Berghman, M., & Schaap, J. (2021). The 'lonely raver': music livestreams during COVID-19 as a hotline to collective consciousness?. *European Societies*, 23(S1), S141-S152.

Fieldwork conducted within the dance music scenes of Paris, Chicago and Berlin outlines the importance of dance music in producing a **sense of collectivity** that creates moments of **intense intimacy** with others that **transcend socio-political differences** that may typically act as social barriers.

Garcia, L. M. (2011). 'Can you feel it, too?': *Intimacy and affect at electronic dance music events in Paris, Chicago, and Berlin* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses A&I. (Order no. 3472850)

During the pandemic, live streamed dance music concerts were found to be important platforms for to **facilitate social ties** within communities. However, the lack of **physical proximity to others** inherent within live events was missed, as with this, individuals feel more profoundly connected with each-other.

Vandenberg, F., Berghman, M., & Schaap, J. (2021). The 'lonely raver': music livestreams during COVID-19 as a hotline to collective consciousness?. *European Societies*, 23(S1), S141-S152.

TOPIC 3:

IDENTITY EXPRESSION & CURATION

CLUBS SHAPE IDENTITY

Research shows dance music events provide contexts in which individuals are able to express themselves freely. Meaningful constructions of identity are facilitated through dance music scenes.



TOPIC 3: IDENTITY EXPRESSION & CURATION



Interview research shows how **solidarity** formed between others at dance music events forms a sustained part of one's **identity** that is reinforced through social interaction in event attendance and in online dance music communities.

Kavanaugh, P. R., & Anderson, T. L. (2008). Solidarity and drug use in the electronic dance music scene. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 49(1), 181-208.

Ethnographic research with UK attendees suggests the **culture of tolerance and acceptance** inherent within dance music events facilitates **self-expression and self-realisation**, providing the context for the development of individual identity to flourish.

Lynch, G., & Badger, E. (2006). The mainstream post-rave club scene as a secondary institution: A British perspective. *Culture and Religion*, 7(1), 27-40.

Festival research in Australia shows that the festival context provides **a safe environment** for attendees to **explore new and different aspects of their identity** and allows **opportunities for personal growth through self-acceptance**.

Packer, J., & Ballantyne, J. (2011). The impact of music festival attendance on young people's psychological and social wellbeing. *Psychology of Music*, 39(2), 164-181.

TOPIC 3: IDENTITY EXPRESSION & CURATION



Dance music events provide opportunities to **let go of the pressures of ordinary life**, providing the space to engage in **self-expressive dance movements** and strip back to a carnal state, facilitated by a collective of other attendees letting go and being free.

Phillips, M. (2021). Dancing with Dumont: Individualism at an early morning Melbourne rave. *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture*, 13(1), 88–100.

The nightclub context provides a platform for young women to **experiment with their feminine identity** through their dancing style and **reaffirm their individual identity** through expressing to others that one is “free and sensual”. This is argued to be important for affirming one’s status as an independent adult.

Northcote, J. (2006). Nightclubbing and the search for identity: Making the transition from childhood to adulthood in an urban milieu. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 9(1), 1–16.

Historically, dance music scenes have given rise to **new notions of cultural identity**. In the UK, the emergence of drum and bass in the 1990s represented a “black” population and countered its experience of marginality while attesting to the existence of an emerging British identity. In the US, early Detroit techno represented an idealistic future free from limitations and prejudice. The influence of European and African musical styles facilitated a **re-imagination of identity that transcended racial categorisation** and ethnic narratives.

Quinn, S. (2002). Rumble in the jungle: The invisible history of drum’n’bass. *Transformations Journal*, 3(1), 1–12.

Schaub, C. (2009). Beyond the Hood? Detroit Techno, Underground Resistance, and African American Metropolitan Identity Politics. *Forum for Inter-American Research*, 2(2).

TOPIC 4:

INDIVIDUAL WELLBEING & PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION

CLUBS PROMOTE WELLBEING

An increasing amount of research suggests participation in electronic dance music events may promote well-being, improve people's outlook on life and lead to positive behavioural changes.



TOPIC 4: INDIVIDUAL WELLBEING & PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION



Research on Electric Daisy Carnival attendees found that participants adopted **peace, love, unity and respect** ('PLUR') values, had **greater faith in humanity** and reflected on the festival as a **highly significant, “mystical like” life event** that may lead to lasting benefits in their life following attendance.

Little, N., Burger, B., & Croucher, S. M. (2018). EDM and Ecstasy: The lived experiences of electronic dance music festival attendees. *Journal of New Music Research*, 47(1), 78–95.

Survey research with over 100 UK attendees found that four key aspects of electronic dance music events (the **social, musical, emotional experience and shared values**) had a positive relationship with measures of attendees **psychological wellbeing**.

Cannon, J. W., & Greasley, A. E. (2021). Exploring Relationships Between Electronic Dance Music Event Participation and Well-being. *Music & Science*, 4(1), 1-17..

Interview research with US attendees found participants had **spiritual, transpersonal experiences** during raves and that these experiences had a **transformative, therapeutic impact on their lives**; implying **enhanced well-being in daily life**.

Redfield, A. (2017). An Analysis of the Experiences and Integration of Transpersonal Phenomena Induced by Electronic Dance Music. *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*, 36(1). 67-80.

TOPIC 4: INDIVIDUAL WELLBEING & PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION



Drawing from research that shows active participation in musical activities promotes wellbeing and health through the course of one's life, it has been argued that key activities associated with dance music may contribute to an **appropriate work-life balance** and contribute to **national prosperity**; offering an escape from the routine treadmill of daily life.

Mazierska, E. H., & Rigg, T. (2021). Challenges to British Nightclubs During and After the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture*, 13(1), 69-87.

The **pandemic burdened DJs** with feelings of **cultural irrelevance** and financial insecurity, negatively affecting their mental health. DJs curate an **identity shaped by their audience** and lead the musical experience on the dancefloor. A flourishing industry is subsequently important for the mental health for both DJs and audience members.

Formilan, G., & Stark, D. (2021). Moments of identity: dynamics of artist, persona, and audience in electronic music. *Theory and Society*, 1-30.

Ptatscheck, M. (2021). Never Waste a Crisis!?—The Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis on the Mental Health of EDM DJs. *IASPM Journal*, 11(1), 38-55.

Participation in dance music events forms is a inherently meaningful part of the lives of those involved in the culture; an interviewee in one academic study states - “**it makes me feel alive** and part of something special... **if you took it away I’d have nothing.**”

Riley, S., More, Y., & Griffin, C. (2010). The 'pleasure citizen': Analyzing partying as a form of social and political participation. *Young*, 18(1), 33-54

TOPIC 5:

FASHION

CLUBS INFLUENCE FASHION

Fashion is a form of a creative expression that contributes to identity formation.
Dance music contexts facilitate this expression and influence fashion trends.



TOPIC 5: FASHION



Fashion is a form of **self-expression** and one's fashion choices may be considered a fragment of their **identity** that is centred around their involvement in dance music scenes. Popular DJs have the power to influence these fashion choices.

Elliot-Sheridan, N. (2020). *The Important Role of Sustainable Fashion in Electronic Music*. FourFourMag. <https://fourfourmag.com/the-important-role-of-sustainable-fashion-in-electronic-music/>

Mainstream fashion brands such as Givenchy have recently been drawing influence from dance music culture in their designs due to its associations with **escapism** and **nostalgia**. Their catwalk shows are set to techno music.

Turra, A. (2021, March 26). *Why are Fashion Designers so Drawn to Rave Culture?* WWD. <https://wwd.com/fashion-news/designer-luxury/fashion-designers-inspired-by-rave-culture-covid-1234787172/>

The 90s gave rise to an influx of fashion brands that began marketing **pragmatic clothing** designed purposely for use within dance music events. This saw brands such as *Snug*, *Geek Boutique*, *Fiction*, and *Mod Robes* achieve **international success**.

McCall. (2000). *Barbie's wearing" phat" pants: rave culture, emergence to convergence* [Master's Thesis, McGill University]. Montreal. <https://escholarship.mcgill.ca/downloads/5999n514m>

TOPIC 5: FASHION



Dance music is often an **intrinsic part of the fashion show experience**. This is exemplified by the appointment of renowned DJ, Benji B, as musical director for Louis Vuitton, who states “The music I do is not in the background, it’s part of the experience. It’s part of the clothes, it’s part of the art.”

Mahon, F. (2020, January 17). *Soundtracking fashion with Benji B*. Wallpaper. <https://www.wallpaper.com/fashion/soundtracking-fashion-with-dj-benji-b>

In 2020, techno pioneer Richie Hawtin began collaborating with Prada - hosting a rave at the Tate Modern in London. Highlighting how **fashion is used in dance music scenes to represent and curate an identity around one’s musical style**, Hawtin states “I stand for a certain style: minimalistic, reduced hypnotic. For me, there’s a look to that sound.”

Thomas, K. (2021, December 2). *Richie Hawtin on Collaborating with Prada*. The Face. <https://theface.com/music/richie-hawtin-prada-extends-interview-tate-modern-fashion-dj>

Dance **DJs are increasingly releasing their own fashion lines** and finding a place on the catwalk themselves. Peggy Gou’s fashion line, *Kirin*, debuted at Paris Fashion Week in 2019 and has become a **household name in the fashion industry**.

Smeaham, K. (2021, June 3). *The Top 5 DJs defining modern streetwear culture*. Costiero. <https://costiero.co.uk/blogs/streetwear/the-top-5-djs-defining-modern-streetwear-culture>

TOPIC 6:

VISUAL AESTHETICS

CLUBS INFLUENCE VISUAL CULTURE

Contemporary artists and creatives are directly influenced by their experiences in electronic dance music events. These creative works, such as club flyer art, often feed back into the scene.



TOPIC 6: VISUAL AESTHETICS



Clubs serve as a workshop, laboratory, and presentation space for multiple visual art forms, allowing audiences to experience different arts in conjunction with each other, providing a rich and **complex aesthetic experience**.

Drevenstedt, L. (2020). Dimensions of Club Culture: Learning from Berlin. In Jóri, A. and Lücke, M. (Eds.) *The New Age of Electronic Dance Music and Club Culture*, (pp. 9-20). Springer..

Mazierska, E. H., & Rigg, T. (2021). Challenges to British Nightclubs During and After the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Dancecult: Journal of Electronic Dance Music Culture*, 13(1), 69-87.

Rave flyer art is important in depicting a DJ's musical **style and personality**. Designers of rave flyers are considered some of the most innovative professionals in the industry and these flyers are considered collectable pieces and often used as personal wall decorations.

Herman, B. D. (2006). Scratching out authorship: Representations of the electronic music DJ at the turn of the 21st century. *Popular Communication*, 4(1), 21-38.

Photographers and video-creators that capture the aesthetic and energy of an event are utilised by DJs and club promoters in producing social media content that **promotes events and fuels fan interaction**.

Anaipakos, J. L. (2012). *Celebrity and fandom on Twitter: examining electronic dance music in the Digital Age* [Master's Thesis, University of Texas]. Austin. <https://tdl-ir.tdl.org/handle/2152/19664>

TOPIC 7:

ART & CULTURE

CLUBS INFLUENCE ART

Dance music has cultural importance and artistic influence in the cultures within which its scenes thrive.



TOPIC 7: ART & CULTURE



Art influenced by historic dance music scenes, such as the acclaimed installations of renowned artist Jeremy Deller and sculptures of Mark Leckey, are **inspiring a new generation of contemporary artists**.

Gavin, F. (2014). *How Rave is Influencing a New Generation of Artists*. Dazed. <https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/article/20110/1/how-rave-is-influencing-a-new-generation-of-artists4>

Clubs **breathe life into locations neglected by town planners** and architects. Warehouse halls, damaged buildings, empty sites, and derelict industrial areas offer ideal prerequisites for stimulating the visions for the creatives who co-opt these spaces.

Drevenstedt, L. (2020). *Dimensions of Club Culture: Learning from Berlin*. In *The New Age of Electronic Dance Music and Club Culture*, ed. Anita Jóri and Martin Lücke, 9-20. Springer.

The **cultural importance** and unique art styles of historical dance music scenes such as the acid house generation of the 90s is showcased in today's exhibitions. (e.g. the 2019 *Sweet Harmony* exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery and the 2022 *Sanctuary* exhibition at MK Gallery).

Saatchi Gallery. (2019). *Sweet Harmony: Rave | Today*. https://www.saatchigallery.com/exhibition/sweet_harmony_youth_of_today

MK Gallery. (2021). *Sanctuary: The Unlikely Home of British Rave*. <https://mkgallery.org/event/sanctuary-the-unlikely-home-of-british-rave/>

TOPIC 8:

WELLBEING & DANCE

DANCING PROMOTES WELLBEING

Dancing is central to dance music culture. It predates language and bridges social barriers - it's in our DNA. A wealth of academic research reveals the benefits of this evolutionarily entrenched behaviour.



TOPIC 8: WELLBEING & DANCE



Dance is distinct from other forms of exercise. Dance **increases flexibility and endurance**, is healthy for the ageing brain, **improves attention**, provides an outlet for **creativity, emotional expression** and socialisation with other dancers and brings about a general feeling of wellbeing.

Alpert, P. T. (2011). The health benefits of dance. *Home Health Care Management & Practice*, 23(2), 155-157.

A comparison study between exercise, music listening and dancing to music has shown that dance has the **greatest impact on reducing depression**. Motivation, coping, strength, energy and enjoyment significantly increased in individuals with depression as a result of dancing to music.

Koch, S. C., Morlinghaus, K., & Fuchs, T. (2007). The joy dance: Specific effects of a single dance intervention on psychiatric patients with depression. *The arts in Psychotherapy*, 34(4), 340-349.

Dance is **good for the brain**. A large-scale review of numerous scientific studies analysing the impact of dance on cognitive functions found that dance **benefits global cognition and memory function**, particularly in older adults.

Meng, X., Li, G., Jia, Y., Liu, Y., Shang, B., Liu, P., ... & Chen, L. (2020). Effects of dance intervention on global cognition, executive function and memory of older adults: a meta-analysis and systematic review. *Aging clinical and experimental research*, 32(1), 7-19.

TOPIC 8: WELLBEING & DANCE



Being a sociable form of exercise, dancing has been found have **psychological benefits for the elderly** and individuals with Parkinson's disease - it has been found to **increase positive mood**, reduce feelings of anger and **alleviate feelings of fatigue**.

Lewis, C., Annett, L. E., Davenport, S., Hall, A. A., & Lovatt, P. (2016). Mood changes following social dance sessions in people with Parkinson's disease. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 21(4), 483-492.

A New Zealand-based study found has found that **synchronised dancing galvanises cooperation** and encourages cooperative behaviours in a group. It concludes the act of dancing in sync is key to explaining the historical ability of collective music and dance to **bond people together**.

Reddish, P., Fischer, R., & Bulbulia, J. (2013). Let's dance together: synchrony, shared intentionality and cooperation. *PloS one*, 8(8), e71182.

Sonic and structural features of dance music (e.g. the break routine and “drop”) bring about synchronised group dancing. The act of dancing in sync with others **encourages social bonding** and brings people closer together through facilitating the **release of endorphins**.

Solberg, R. T., & Jensenius, A. R. (2017). Group behaviour and interpersonal synchronization to electronic dance music. *Musicae Scientiae*, 23(1), 111-134.

Tarr, B., Launay, J., & Dunbar, R. I. (2016). Silent disco: dancing in synchrony leads to elevated pain thresholds and social closeness. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 37(5), 343-349.

This report was researched and written by James Cannon and Thomas Theodore. Designed by Christian Kirch Knudsen.



ELECTRONIC IMPACT

Produced by the Electronic Impact Group, a group of academics and industry professionals interested in the impact of dance and electronic music on communities, culture and commerce.

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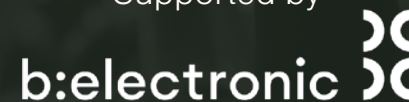
The group is led by David Boyle at Audience Strategies, a group that helps artists, labels, clubs, festivals and brands to understand their audiences

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