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**A Cross-Sectional Study on the Impact of the Ardhamandalam (Aramandi) Practice in Classical Bharatanatyam Dancers During Labour**

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**Abstract**

**Introduction:**

Classical Indian dance forms such as *Bharatanatyam*, *Kuchipudi*, and *Mohiniattam* are culturally significant, characterized by intricate movements and postures essential for their practice. Among these, "*Aramandi*" or "*Ardhamandalam*" is a foundational posture known for enhancing hip flexor flexibility, strengthening the pelvic floor, thigh adductors, and core muscles. These physical benefits extend beyond dance, potentially aiding in preparing the body for childbirth by improving muscular endurance and flexibility. Ayurveda emphasizes maintaining a balanced *Apanavata* to facilitate smooth labor, aligning with the benefits attributed to practicing "*Aramandi*." Globally, integrating practices like *Yogasana*, *Pranayama*, and dance

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during pregnancy has shown positive effects on childbirth outcomes, including increased chances of normal vaginal delivery.

**Materials & Methods:**

This study involved pregnant *Bharatanatyam* dancers proficient in "*Aramandi*." Assessments included measuring hip flexor flexibility, pelvic floor strength, and core endurance using standardized protocols. Qualitative data on participants' experiences with "*Aramandi*" during pregnancy and its perceived impact on labor were collected through interviews and questionnaires.

**Results:**

Regular practice of "*Aramandi*" during pregnancy improved hip flexor flexibility, enhanced pelvic floor strength, and increased core endurance among participants. Dancers reported feeling physically prepared for labor with reduced discomfort during pregnancy. Integration of "*Aramandi*" into prenatal routines correlated with shorter labor durations and higher rates of natural delivery.

**Discussion & Conclusion:**

Integrating classical dance practices like "*Aramandi*" into prenatal care shows promise in enhancing maternal physical fitness and potentially improving childbirth outcomes. *Ayurveda* principles support the role of practices that maintain *Apanavata* in facilitating smoother labor. Further research should explore broader applications and long-term benefits of cultural dance forms in maternal health programs, highlighting their holistic advantages for expectant mothers worldwide.

**Keywords:** *Aramandi*, *Bharatanatyam*, pregnancy, childbirth, *Ayurveda*

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