

## Effect Of Art Therapy On Self-Esteem Among Children In A Selected Orphanage

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Children without parents are known as orphans. Being an orphan has a terrible psychological impact on children, which can lead to a decline in their sense of value and self-esteem. Enhancing self-esteem has been shown to be a successful outcome of art therapy. A range of techniques are used in art therapy, including theme painting, finger painting, clay modeling, and creating stuffed animals.

**Objectives:** The objectives of the study were to assess the pretest and post-test level of self-esteem; to find out the effect of art therapy on self-esteem among children in orphanage and to find out the association between the pretest level of self-esteem and selected demographic variables.

**Methods:** One group pretest posttest design was selected for the study. The sample composed of 40 children between the age group of 12 - 16 years residing in a selected orphanage. Simple Random sampling technique was used. The theoretical framework of the study was based on King's Goal Attainment Model.

**Tools and Techniques:** The tools used were demographic proforma and Rosenberg's self-esteem scale to assess the level of self-esteem. Art therapy was administered to the children in orphanage daily one hour for four weeks.

**Results:** The result revealed that the mean post test score of self-esteem after art therapy was 20.15 which were significantly higher than the mean pretest score of self-esteem 12.60. The calculated 't' value (12.67) was more than the table value (2.02) at 0.05 level of significance. Thus art therapy was effective in improving the self-esteem among children in orphanage. The results also showed that there was a significant association between the pretest level of self-esteem and gender of orphans and hobbies of orphans ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** The study concluded that, for the low self-esteem participants, art therapy can be an effective treatment intervention to raise self-esteem

**Key words:** Effect; children; orphanage; self-esteem; art therapy

### 1. Introduction

Throughout their upbringing, every child needs love, affection, praise, and care. Children feel abandoned, insecure, and unimportant when they are raised in an environment devoid of love and care and where their physical or emotional needs are not met. Their fear of being abandoned again makes it extremely difficult for them to trust people. Their capacity to socialize is then hampered, and this might result in asocial characteristics that may eventually contribute to poor self-esteem.<sup>[1]</sup> (Marici et al., 2023) . A child's poor self-esteem can be significantly influenced by the negative interactions and messages they receive from parents, peers, and other authoritative figures. A child's capacity to grow into a well-adjusted adult may be severely hampered by this consequence. A youngster has feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem when they are repeatedly told that they are unworthy. These incidents give people a sense of worthlessness, which makes them depressed and reluctant to take any constructive action.<sup>[2]</sup> (Nguyen et al., 2019) .

Early institutionalized children frequently have developmental delays in their emotional, social, and physical domains. Learning issues are common in affection-deprived orphans because one of the most affected regions is the hippocampus, which is involved in memory and learning.<sup>[3]</sup> (Bernard et al., 2015) Children and teenagers are often creative by nature, even though they may not always have words to express themselves. For this reason, art therapy interventions can be very beneficial to them. Children participate in a process that develops their sense of self-worth, problem-solving abilities, and life skills via innovative art therapy activities. Their imaginative faculties enable them to examine and release suppressed feelings.<sup>[4]</sup> (Waller, 2006)

The orphans often have low self-esteem. Additionally, the kids frequently start acting in antisocial ways, like stealing, cheating, and hazing. They are left without the support of family at the facility.<sup>[5]</sup> (Erango & Ayka, 2015). These children develop mental illness. The main significance of the study is Individuals can increase their sense of value and self-esteem

by using visual and symbolic expressions in art therapy. Studies says that different types of mental illnesses and psychological suffering can be treated using art therapy. It may frequently be used with other psychotherapy methods like cognitive-behavioral therapy or group therapy.<sup>[6]</sup> (Farokhi, 2011). Many studies<sup>[7]</sup> (Hartz & Thick, 2005), <sup>[8]</sup> (Bosgraaf et al., 2020) concluded that, for the low self-esteem participants, art therapy can be an effective treatment intervention to raise self-esteem.

## **2. Materials and methods**

### **2.1 Review of literature**

Using key databases like PubMed, the mental health database of the World Health Organization, Google, and Google Scholar, a thorough literature search was conducted. This review examines the literature on art therapy and its possible benefits for the treatment of mental health issues. It focuses on visual art therapy because it is essential to minimizing variation in the "creative arts" and describes the distinctive components and efficaciousness of art therapy as employed by mental health treatments. Participants mental health was found to improve when art therapy was used as an adjuvant treatment.<sup>[9]</sup> (Shukla et al., 2022)

A study was carried out by the research team to evaluate the impact of art therapy on the self-esteem of orphans residing in specific orphanages in Mangalore. Purposive sampling was used to choose a sample of the 42 orphan children in total, using a pre-experimental one group pre-post design. Children who were orphaned had their self-esteem evaluated using the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale. Before and after art therapy, the orphans' levels of self-esteem differed significantly (calculated value:  $t_{41}=8.40$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), surpassing the value found in the table ( $t_{41}=1.96$ ). Thus, it became evident that art therapy was useful in raising orphans' self-esteem levels.<sup>[10]</sup> (Devidas1 & Mendonca, 2017)

This study<sup>[11]</sup> (Ivanova, 2004) reports on therapeutic art activities that were done with sixty orphans in the northern Bulgarian village of Ugarchin. A diverse range of art-related activities was created for these kids by a team of educators and artists. In addition to the opening of five art workshops (fashion design, painting, ceramics, installation art, and art history), these events included two one-week visits. The group recognized that the children would be directly and immediately connected to the visual arts. The objectives were to increase their awareness of and interest in different cultures, to counteract harmful influences in their lives, and to enhance their general psychological and emotional well-being. The findings, which stem from firsthand observation, confirm the usefulness of therapeutic art techniques in challenging situations.

### **2.2 Objectives**

- To assess the pretest and post-test level of self-esteem among the children
- To find the effect of art therapy on self-esteem among the children in orphanage.
- To find out the association between pretest level of self-esteem and selected demographic variables.

### **2.3 Design**

The research design adopted for the study was Pre-experimental; one group pretest posttest design. One group pretest posttest experimental design judges the effects of the treatment by the differences between the pretest and post test score without comparing with a control group. The research approach used for the study was Quantitative approach. It is a recommended approach for research where the goal is testing of hypotheses, development of tools and methods for numerical measurement and assessment, control and manipulation of variables in an experimental settings.<sup>[12]</sup> (Polit, n.d.).

### **2.4 Sample**

The sample consisted of 40 children aged 12-16 years residing in a selected orphanage. Out of 100 children in orphanage, 80 were in the age group of 12-16 years who satisfies the inclusion criteria. Among them, 40 were selected randomly by using lottery method. Those are not willing to participate were excluded from the study.

### **2.5 Data collection**

The tool used in this study consisted of demographic proforma like age, gender, religion, education, hobbies, duration of stay in the orphanage, number of parents, number of siblings, achievements and peer group relationship of children in orphanage and Rosenberg's self-esteem scale was used to assess the self-esteem of the children, standardized scale which measures global self-esteem. Frequency and percentage distribution will be used for representation of demographic variables. Paired t-test will be used to compare pretest and posttest level of self-esteem. Chi-square will be used to determine the association between the pretest level of self-esteem and the selected demographic variables

For conducting the study, Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethical committee of Josco college and a formal written permission was obtained from the authorities of the orphanage prior to data collection. The purpose of the study was explained and confidentiality was assured to the participants. Informed consent was taken from all the subjects.

Pre test was done by administering Rosenberg’s Self-esteem Scale to the 40 participants those who were randomly selected for the study. The time taken by each candidate to answer the demographic proforma and the Rosenberg’s self-esteem scale was 15-20 minutes. Art therapy activities to enhance the self-esteem, was administered to the children in the orphanage daily one hour for four weeks. Then, post-test was done using the Rosenberg’s self-esteem scale on the 28<sup>th</sup> day.

### 3. Results

#### Demographic characteristics of children residing in orphanage

The major findings in this section are presented below:

- More than one-fourth (30%) of the children in orphanage were in the age group of 12 years, one-fourth (25%) of them were in the age group of 13 years, one-fifth (20%) were in the age group of 14 years, more than one-tenth (13%) of them were in the age group of 15 years and the remaining (12%) were in the age group of 16 years.
- More than half (53%) of the children residing in the orphanage were males and rest of them (47%) were females.
- More than one-fourth (28%) of the children in orphanage were studying in 6<sup>th</sup> standard, less than one-fourth (23%) of them were studying in 10<sup>th</sup> standard, more than one-fifth (22.5%) were studying in 8<sup>th</sup> standard, less than one-fifth (17.5%) were studying in 9<sup>th</sup> standard and rest of them (10%) were studying in 7<sup>th</sup> standard.
- Less than two-third (63%) of the children in orphanage belonged to Christian religion and rest of them (37%) belonged to Hindu religion.
- More than half (52.5%) of the children in orphanage were living in the orphanage for less than 5 years, less than one-third (32.5%) of the children were living in the orphanage for 5-10 years and the remaining (15%) were living in the orphanage for more than 10 years.
- Less than half (43%) of the children in orphanage have both father and mother, more than one-third (37%) of them have only mother, less than one-fifth (15%) of them have only father and remaining (5%) doesnot have parents.
- Vast majority (90%) of the children in orphanage had siblings, less than one-tenth (8%) of them doesn’t had siblings and a few (2%) doesn’t know about their siblings.
- Less than one-third (32.5%) of the children were interested in drawing, one-fourth (25%) of them were interested in playing, less than one-fifth (17.5%) of them were interested in reading, one-tenth (10%) of them were interested in music, and the remaining (8%) had other hobbies and (7%) of them doesn’t had any hobbies.
- Less than half (40%) of the children in orphanage achieved marks between 35 - 60% marks, one-fourth (25%) of them achieved marks between 60 – 80% marks, less than one-fourth (22%) of them achieved marks below 35% and the remaining (13%) achieved marks between 80 – 100%.
- Half (50%) of the children in orphanage were involved in sports, more than one-fourth (28%) of them were involved in arts and more than one-fifth (22%) of them doesn’t had any extracurricular activities.
- Less than half (47.5%) of the children in orphanage had excellent peer group relationship, one-fourth (25%) of them had good peer group relationship, more than one-fifth (22.5%) of them had fair peer group relationship and remaining (5%) had poor peer group relationship

#### The level of self esteem among children in orphanage

Data presented in Table 1 illustrates that the pretest score shows that more than half (67.5%) of the children in orphanage had low self-esteem and less than one third (32.5%) of the children in orphanage had moderate self-esteem. After the intervention, the post test score shows that majority (82.5%) of the children in orphanage had moderate self-esteem and less than one fifth (17.5%) of the children in orphanage had high self-esteem (n=40)

Self-esteem level	Score range	Pretest		Post test	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Low self esteem	<15 score	27	67.5	0	0.0
Moderate self esteem	15 – 25	13	32.5	33	82.5
High self esteem	26 – 30	0	0.0	7	17.5

**Table 1:** Frequency distribution and percentage of the children in orphanage based on pretest and post test scores of self-esteem

#### Analysis of the effect of art therapy on self-esteem among children in a selected orphanage

Table 2 shows that paired ‘t’ test was used to compare the scores obtained for self-esteem before and after art therapy. The mean post test score of self-esteem after art therapy was 20.15 which were significantly higher than the mean pretest

score of self-esteem 12.60. The calculated t value (12.67) was more than the table value (2.02) at 0.05 level of significance and so it was highly significant. Therefore it can be said that art therapy was found to be effective for the children in orphanage to improve their self-esteem.

Self-esteem	Mean	SD	Mean%	SD%	Mean difference	't' value
Pretest self-esteem	12.60	2.58	42	8.6	7.55	12.67**
Post test self-esteem	20.15	3.88	67.16	12.9		

**Table 2:** Mean, Standard deviation, mean difference and calculated paired 't' value of pretest and post test self-esteem scores of the children in orphanage

#### Association between pretest level of self-esteem and selected demographic variables

- There was a significant association between the pretest level of self-esteem and the gender of the children at 0.05 level of significance. The calculated chi-square value ( $\chi^2 = 4.60$ ) was greater than the table value (3.84) at 0.05 level of significance. So there was significant association between self-esteem and gender.
- There was a significant association between the pretest level of self-esteem and the hobbies of the children at 0.05 level of significance. The calculated chi-square value ( $\chi^2 = 18.94$ ) is greater than the table value (11.07) at 0.05 level of significance. So there was significant association between self-esteem and hobbies of children.
- There was no significant association between the pretest level of self-esteem and the age, educational status, duration of stay, parents, siblings, scholastic achievements, extracurricular activities and peer group relationship of the children in orphanage.

#### 4. Discussion

In the present study, assessment of the pretest level of self-esteem among the children in orphanage showed that more than half (67.5%) of the children in orphanage had low self-esteem and less than one-third (32.5%) of the children in orphanage had moderate self-esteem. The findings of the study were supported by an epidemiological study conducted on psychosocial and developmental status of orphanage children in Egypt by <sup>[13]</sup>(Fawzy & Fouad, 2010), which concluded that 23% of them had low self-esteem and 77% of the orphan children had moderate self-esteem.

In the present study, assessment of the posttest level of self-esteem among the children in orphanage showed that majority (82.5%) of the children in orphanage had moderate self-esteem and less than one-fifth (17.5%) of the children in orphanage had high self-esteem after art therapy. The mean pretest score was 12.60 and the mean post test score was 20.15 after art therapy.. there is a significant difference between pretest and posttest level of self-esteem among the children in orphanage. Therefore it can be concluded that art therapy was effective for the children in orphanage to improve their self-esteem The findings was supported by a study conducted by to assess the effects of art therapy on promotion of well-being and a better quality of life among older adults in Korea by <sup>[14]</sup>(Kim, 2013), which concluded that the pretest score of self-esteem was 16.52 and the post test score of self-esteem was 20.76 and therefore art therapy was effective in improving the self-esteem. The findings were also supported by a study conducted on the helpfulness of holistic arts-based group work with children living in foster care in Ontario by<sup>[15]</sup>(Coholic et al., 2009). The findings showed the art-based group work used in the study helped to improve self-esteem among participants. The study concluded that art therapy helped the children to cope with their feelings in a more constructive manner.

#### Limitations of the study

Generalizations of the finding were not possible because of the small sample size. Long term effect of art therapy was not assessed due to limited time. The study was limited to the orphanage.

#### 5. Conclusion

The conclusions drawn from the studies are, there lies a major level of stress, anxiety, and burnout among children at orphanage that have to be addressed. Anxiety, stress, and burnout are positively correlated with each other. The study explored the helpfulness of holistic arts-based group work for the development of self-awareness and self-esteem in children living in foster care. Findings indicate that children learned new skills, improved coping abilities, connected with

feelings, and felt more positive, therefore it can be said that art therapy was found to be effective for the children in orphanage to improve their self-esteem. Children at the orphanage or foster care are to be encouraged for arts-based group work which can help children in improving their self- self-esteem.

**6. Ethical approval :** from the college ethical board

**7. Acknowledgements:** Funding: none

**8. Conflicts of interest:** No conflict of interest was reported in the study

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