

Methodologies in Art Therapy Research

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Assumptions

- * Art is a window to the soul – people reveal more of themselves through the expressive arts therapies than they do in words
- * Basic media properties and their effects on therapeutic processes are well understood and documented
- * The expressive arts therapies are effective, evidence-based treatments

Basic Assumptions Cause us to **QUESTION**

- * WHAT DOES ART SAY?
- * WHAT DOES ART DO?
- * HOW WELL DOES ART DO IT?

- * How do we best provide the
ANSWERS?

The Use of the Arts in Assessment

- * Basic Research Questions
 - * *Do our assessment methods in the art therapists have a solid foundation?*
- * Basic Research Methods
 - * Defining the formal elements of arts therapies
 - * Nonclinical samples
 - * Clinical samples
 - * Descriptive studies, Correlational Analyses, Simple t-tests, or more elaborate methods
 - * Personalities of Shapes (McManus & Wu)

Underlying Therapeutic Properties

- * Basic Research Questions
 - * Documenting media properties and their effects on clients during therapeutic processes
- * Basic Research Methods
 - * What is *therapeutic* about the use of various arts therapies? Underlying therapeutic mechanisms
 - * Surveys of use (Descriptive statistics, ANOVA)
 - * Nonclinical Samples; more Clinical Samples Needed
 - * Snir & Regev (2013a; 2013b) and the ABI

Evidence-Based Effectiveness

- * Basic Research Questions
 - * Are arts-based therapies as effective as other forms of psychotherapy?
- * Basic Research Methods
 - * Random Control Trials (RCTs): Gold Standard
 - * Outcome Studies
 - * Test one method at a time
 - * Replication of Previous Studies
 - * Precise descriptions of methods to allow replication
 - * Stinley, Norris and Hinds (2015) Mandala Coloring & Pain Symptom Management

Integrating Arts Research into Educational Programs

- * Basic research on formal elements of arts therapies can be conducted by students earning the bachelors degree
- * Research focused on examining the effectiveness of various artistic techniques can be carried out by master's level researchers with more more time and knowledge in the field
- * Outcome Studies and Random Controlled can be conducted by master's or doctoral level students with the ability to spend time on outcome studies and the sophisticated research methodology and statistical analyses required.
- * Replication is needed; students do not have to work alone

References

McManus, I. C., & Wu, W. (2013). 'The square is bulky, heavy, contented, plain, good-natured, stupid ...': A cross-cultural study of the aesthetics and meanings of rectangles. *Psychology Of Aesthetics, Creativity, And The Arts*, 7(2), 130-139.

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Stinley, N. E., Norris, D. O., & Hinds, P. S. (2015). Creating mandalas for the management of acute pain symptoms in pediatric patients. *Art Therapy*, 32(2), 46-53.