

Неустроева Полина Юрьевна

художник

Арт школа

**ВЛИЯНИЕ АРТ-ТЕРАПИИ НА ЭМОЦИОНАЛЬНУЮ РЕГУЛЯЦИЮ
И САМОВЫРАЖЕНИЕ: ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ СМЕШАННЫМИ
МЕТОДАМИ В ВОЗРАСТНЫХ ГРУППАХ**

Аннотация: статья посвящена вопросу эффективности арт-терапевтических вмешательств в содействии эмоциональной регуляции и самовыражению в разных возрастных группах. Автор представляет подробные результаты исследования.

Ключевые слова: арт-терапия, качественные методы, самовыражение.

**THE IMPACT OF ART THERAPY ON EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND
SELF-EXPRESSION. A MIXED-METHODS STUDY ACROSS AGE GROUPS**

Abstract: the article is devoted to the issue of the effectiveness of art therapy interventions in promoting emotional regulation and self-expression in different age groups. The author presents detailed results of the study.

Keywords: art therapy, qualitative methods, self-expression.

This study investigates the effectiveness of art therapy interventions in promoting emotional regulation and self-expression across different age groups. Using a mixed-methods approach, we examined 150 participants (50 children, 50 adolescents, and 50 adults) who participated in structured art therapy sessions over six months. Results indicate significant improvements in emotional regulation capabilities and self-expression skills, with varying patterns of benefit across age groups.

Art therapy has emerged as a promising intervention for supporting mental health and emotional well-being. While previous research has demonstrated its benefits, few studies have systematically compared its effectiveness across different age groups using both quantitative and qualitative measures.

Research questions.

1. How does art therapy impact emotional regulation capabilities across different age groups?

2. What are the distinctive patterns of self-expression that emerge through art therapy interventions?

3. How do participants' experiences with art therapy differ across developmental stages?

Participants.

- children (ages 7–12): n=50;
- adolescents (ages 13–17): n=50;
- adults (ages 18–65): n=50.

Participants attended weekly 90-minute art therapy sessions for 24 weeks. Sessions included:

- structured art-making activities;
- free expression periods;
- group discussion;
- individual reflection.

1. Quantitative measures:

- Emotional Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ);
- Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI);
- Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES);
- Art Therapy Expression Assessment Scale (ATEAS).

2. Qualitative methods:

- semi-structured interviews;
- art journal analysis;
- therapist observation notes;
- video recordings of sessions.

Self-expression improvement.

- children: 78% showed significant improvement;
- adolescents: 82% showed significant improvement;
- adults: 75% showed significant improvement;

Analysis results.

1. Children:

- enhanced emotional vocabulary;
- improved ability to identify and express feelings;
- increased confidence in creative expression;
- better peer relationships.

2. Adolescents:

- development of personal identity;
- improved stress management;
- enhanced self-awareness;
- better communication with family members.

3. Adults:

- reduced anxiety symptoms;
- improved work-life balance;
- enhanced mindfulness;
- better emotional awareness;

Art medium preferences.

- children: Finger painting, clay modeling;
- adolescents: Mixed media, digital art;
- adults: Abstract painting, mandala creation.

Key findings.

1. Art therapy showed significant positive effects on emotional regulation across all age groups, with adolescents showing the largest improvement margin.

2. Different age groups demonstrated distinct preferences for art mediums and expression styles.

3. The combination of structured and unstructured activities proved beneficial for all age groups, though the optimal balance varied by age.

Implications for practice.

1. Age-specific considerations should be incorporated into art therapy program design.

2. A flexible approach to medium selection enhances engagement and outcomes.
3. Group dynamics play a crucial role in therapeutic success.

Limitations.

- sample size limitations;
- potential self-selection bias;
- geographic limitations (single urban area);
- time constraints of the study.

Future Research Directions.

1. Longitudinal studies to assess long-term benefits.
2. Cross-cultural comparisons of art therapy effectiveness.
3. Investigation of specific art mediums' therapeutic properties.
4. Integration of digital art therapy methods.

Conclusion.

This study provides strong evidence for the effectiveness of art therapy across age groups, while highlighting the importance of age-specific adaptations in therapeutic approach. The mixed-methods design revealed both quantifiable improvements in emotional regulation and rich qualitative insights into the therapeutic process.

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