



The Significance of Oriental Art Therapy in Business Workers

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Abstract

Purpose – Several previous studies have been completed on oriental art therapy’s impact on problem-solving and innovation in business workers. However, there is a definite research gap in how it reduces stress within the impacts oriental art therapy on business workers. Therefore, this research will be significant in finding out what oriental art therapy has reduced work-related stress and increased satisfaction among business workers.

Research design, data, and methodology – For this research, the dependent variable was the significance of oriental art therapy, and the dependent variable was reducing work-related stress and increasing the satisfaction of business workers. The study's hypothesis was oriental art therapy reduces work-related stress and increases the satisfaction of business workers. A quantitative quasi-experimental pilot design was the most appropriate for this study.

Result – This research figured out that the art therapy affect significantly reducing work-related stress among business workers, removing the level of anxiety, improving employee’s feeling, and so leading to improvement in communication and collaboration each other in the organization.

Conclusion – The results of the investigation imply that oriental art therapy can significantly improve the workers' satisfaction in a business. The research shows how successfully some of the interventions introduced in the medical supply company fully transformed the workers' lives.

Keywords: Oriental Art Therapy, Human Resource Management (HRM), Qualitative Method Approach

JEL Classification Code: Z11, O15, M31, C25

1. Introduction

In the 21st century, workplaces are marked by the growing workload intensity, constant stress, competitive work cultures, and difficulties maintaining work-life balance. The result is mental health issues ranging from stress to deep depression (Blomdahl et al., 2013). The focus of well-being in workplaces is often on the physical aspect of health, i.e., ergonomic chairs, Fitbit and Apple watches, yoga classes, and gymnasiums (Austin, 2009). Mental health is now taking predominance, but what is neglected is the medium creative role at work to manage employee experience, well-being, and health (Jensen & Bonde, 2018). This is where art therapy comes in. Why art? Across millennia people have turned to art to express themselves. Think of the majestic caves of Ajanta and Ellora. The Buddhist monks make the mandala, the simple Kolam made by most South Indian households that beat on Baisakhi or drumming in Africa (Dilawari & Tripathi, 2014). Art allows us to express what cannot be expressed by speaking. Therefore, what could art possibly have to do with the workplace? Art can effectively enhance employee well-being, but many people need to be made aware of this (Abbing et al., 2018). As an expressive medium, visual arts play a valuable role in alleviating mental health illnesses. The employees can benefit by overcoming depression, reducing work-related stress, and exploring different aspects of a person (Wang et al., 2020). Overall, it is a means of helping people be expressive and increase their well-being. According to Wellbeing specialist Sara Binger, “This sort of anxiety and stress can be relieved through the active participation of employees in creative visual art forms, such as drawing, painting, coloring, sculpting or collage. Taking time to produce visual art reduces stress and promotes relaxation” (Levy et al., 2018). She continued, “Art therapy in the workplace is an approach to anxiety and stress that utilizes the process of creating art to improve mental, physical, and emotional wellness. It utilizes individual creative methods to help employees discover self-expression, find new ways to gain personal insight, and develop new coping skills at work.”

Ms. Binger confirms that “Art-making sessions promote camaraderie and help build connections, partnerships, and workplace morale. Group art therapy supports employees in better understanding and valuing their peers. It becomes a means of getting to know one another, identifying strengths, and building reciprocal relationships while respecting individuality”. In creating art, employees can consider their perceptions more. They should be encouraged to protect their feelings and emotions. Employees are encouraged to create art that speaks more about themselves. Art that tells the public who they are and that communicates better about the outer world. Creative art sessions are a great opportunity for building teamwork, socializing, having wine, eating cheese and olives, and making exciting work that participants can showcase to their colleagues (Kyaw et al., 2019). These art events will make your employees feel proud of their artistic achievements, more joyous, and less stressed out. They will also be primed for more productive working days, greater cohesion, and more efficient group functioning. The great concern about Asian art is how oriental art therapy can impact the level of stress and satisfaction among business workers (Nan et al., 2021, p. 432). Several research studies have been done on oriental art therapy’s impact on problem-solving and innovation in business workers (Fenner, 2021). Still, there is a gap in how it reduces stress. Research has also notified readers about the impacts oriental art therapy has on business workers, but they have not specified levels. Therefore, this research study will be significant in finding out what oriental art therapy has reduced work-related stress and increased satisfaction among business workers.

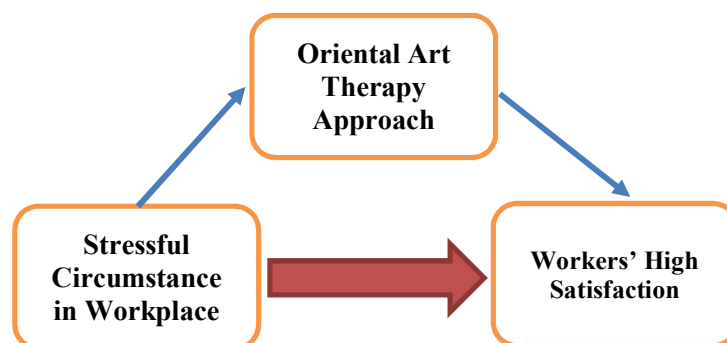


Figure 1: Research Framework of the Current Study

2. Literature Review

Studies of art therapy have been gradually and successfully used as a means of helping business workers to deal with their difficult moments. However, it is not certain how oriental art therapy has improved the well-being of business workers. Hu et al. (2021) suggest that art therapy is a recommendable non-pharmacological treatment for mental disorders. Business workers meet with various issues which cause them having stress and other related mental disorders. Different disorders include depression, anxiety, cognitive impairment, schizophrenia, and autism (Davidescu et al., 2020). All these disorders are complex to the condition of business workers, leading to inadequate fulfillment of the desired target or failure to satisfy their wishes. According to Hu, 413 pieces of literature were identified, giving positive results regarding the research question. Based on a review of what the studies entailed, people with mental disorders showed positive outcomes, and they had a reduction in suffering from mental symptoms (Han et al., 2019). The study indicates that it will be essential in the research study because it gives enough information about art therapy to treat mental disorders. The two most common arts recognized as an essential part of the therapeutic process in art therapy are painting and drawing.

Moreover, throughout the economy, several changes and crises have crossed the business sector. Such problems have been a threat and have exposed several workers to trauma, stress, and other mental health problems (Harvey et al., 2017). There are interventions required in that case to meet the business sector's target. Art-based interventions, in most cases, are preferable as they can transform the well-being of the workers (Dionigi & Gremigni, 2017). Art-based crisis intervention methods have been used in past decades, and they have shown great improvement. For instance, after the crisis of Covid-19, several people, including communities and care professionals within them, were devastated by the crisis. Since the art-based intervention crisis has been employed and revealed better results (Kaimal & Ray, 2017). However, there needs to be a systematic review concerning art-based interventions and whether their results are equally as good as advised. Havsteen-Franklin et al. (2020) conducted quantitative and qualitative analyses on the same, and they concluded. Their findings found that art was vital for the development of business workers (Huet & Holttum, 2016). For instance, art was used to facilitate communication and develop skills that would help the participants take care of their colleagues in the professional field (Ratka, 2018). As a result, there will be reduced cases of depreciation of businesses. Through art, people can reflect on events, express their emotions, and enhance community cohesion through participation in various events and offering solutions and alternative possibilities in case of a problem (Acai et al., 2017).

Stress and anxiety are considered the main ailment for many business workers. Visnola et al. (2010) say we are living in the era called "the era of anxiety." From his point of view, that is true because we live in an environment where everybody is looking for a way to maximize their income. Therefore, stress is considered problem number one. There is an overload in work which leads to the rise of psych emotional experiences related to the work. There are also other problems like uncooperative workers and incorrect work organization. All these are basic factors contributing to the existence of stress. The inclusion of art in such instances helps stimulate the brain of business workers, thus improving their mental status (Usiskin & Lloyd, 2020). If the workers remain silent and busy at work for a long time, they will likely lead to poor performance, resulting from increased stress and depression (Blomdahl et al., 2022). According to the research done by Dunphy and his associates, art therapy incorporation led to a reduction of stress and anxiety and also helped in the improvement of communication and collaboration with other people (Dunphy et al., 2019). From that instance it is clear how art therapy contributes to the development of better mental status.

Art therapy is also crucial not only for mental improvement but also for physical and social levels. Kim (2009) supports the earlier statement on how art therapy helps people overcome their temper through the reduction of depression and improves their ability to communicate effectively with others. Most people living with Neurocognitive Disorder (ND) have their memory impacted. They cannot be sharp thinkers and fail to be productive in business effectively. As a result, they need some art therapy, a better non-pharmacological method of improving their health status (Kim et al., 2022). Some businesses do not involve much communication with people. In that instance, someone may keep shut for a long time. That increases the chances of having more stress and depression due to overthinking. People with ND live in public facilities away from their families. There is limited interaction between them and their relatives, which can lead to increased cases of stress and depression as well as becoming emotional (Wang & Li, 2016). In that case, having something that can stimulate your brain and keep your mind fresh and free from overwhelming stress becomes important. Kim et al. (2014) talk about Korean adults with Neurocognitive Disorders (ND). Such individuals live poor life with limited interactions with their people (Lee et al., 2022). They are in danger of developing mentally related problems. Art therapy helps such members of society in erasing accumulated depression. This happens when such members indulge in activities like drawing or creating artwork creating an effect called the sublimation of feeling (Iacob et al., 2017). The author assigned participants to different groups (experimental and

control groups). He then conducted data which later showed that the older adults who had ND and were subjected to art therapy showed positive results. Applying the same case in a business worker where many people, some of whom go for a day without interacting with their members, can give positive results. The case is less different from the one discussed in the article, implying that the study conducted to investigate the significance of art therapy in business workers will generate similar positive results.

3. Research Design and Results

The research study was based on the research question; the significance of oriental art therapy in reducing work-related stress and increasing the satisfaction of business workers. Based on this, the independent variable was the significance of oriental art therapy, and the dependent variable was reducing work-related stress and increasing the satisfaction of business workers. The study's hypothesis was oriental art therapy reduces work-related stress and increases the satisfaction of business workers. Using the most famous literature warehouses (SCOPUS, Google Scholar, and Research Gate), the current author searched all relevant topics to collect prior studies to achieve the purpose of the current study so that the author could identify adequate previous works that are made up of various methodology such as quantitative studies, qualitative studies, mixed methods, and case studies. And then, the author conducted the screening process to eliminate some conference papers and practical research papers which do not show the high quality of the instrument. For this reason, this research finally could obtain the relevant past studies as a resource to use in the 'Results Section' of the current study.

3.1. Reducing Stress among Business Workers

The study showed a decrease in the level of stress among the participants in the experiment group. There were changes in the mean values of the stress hormone cortisol before and after art therapy times in the experiment group, indicating an effect of art therapy treatment. The prior study showed that the cortisol level of the study group during the mean rose to a high value. The value, when compared to the mean of the group, is high. From the workers' performance, there was a discovery of painful, lasting feelings, all related to work. Still, they were eventually sorted by finding an effective solution to the quest (Visnola et al., 2010).

The cortisol level went low during the other part of the day significantly for the two groups indicating how the effect of art therapy was essential in the case. The cortisol level rose high for the control group, most probably during the noon and afternoon. In numerous research studies, it has been demonstrated that Cortisol level reduces post an art therapy session (González-Zamar & Abad-Segura, 2021). These findings suggest that art therapy for employees is a preventive measure for a person to understand stressful situations, manage anxiety and cope with stress, thus improving the quality of life by creative means. The same happened during the research study, and it is an indication of how accurate the results obtained were. Art therapy can thus be attributed to reducing work-related stress and anxiety, especially in people between 20 and 70. The changes in cortisol levels do great work to indicate that. Therefore, oriental art therapy is significant in reducing the level of stress in business workers.

3.2. Art Therapy is the Reduction of Anxiety among Business Workers.

The data collected by changes in indicators of bodily reactions, which was applied together with the cortisol indicator, showed a significant change in the level of anxiety among the workers. The most anticipated change was the change in the level of a heartbeat. The workers who had increased heart rhythm indicated that there were high levels of anxiety. Before the research began, several workers were checked on, and 45 of them, mostly from the study group, had high levels of anxiety, which was shown by an increment in heart rhythm. The majority of the control group came, and they possessed normal heartbeats (Han, 2023).

The results indicated that among the 45 members reported earlier to experience increased heart rhythm, 37 were experiencing normal heart rhythm after the study period of three months was complete. On the same note, most of them had shown cooperation in the work, which had led to an improvement in the production level compared to the initial stages. The production level improved because many workers were now free and untied to anxiety after they were exposed to art therapy as a mode of non-pharmacological treatment (Zuch, 2015). The improvement in the level of work was associated with a high rate of cooperation among the individuals and increased positive faces that were seen in each of them. Art therapy's effectiveness in reducing anxiety was enhanced by the worker's motivation and improvement in cooperation. The same was related to self-conception, which includes self-efficiency, self-esteem, and self-confidence. Changes in self-conception are great indicators of stress reduction (Martin et al., 2018). Supported

by various other studies, the research study effectively demonstrated how anxiety level was reduced among business workers due to exposure to art therapy.

3.3. Improved Employee Feeling

During the study, various stress questionnaires were used. They were used in the two groups, and they contained questions that indicated how the employees' feelings changed. The results were also checked to see if outside factors like greater family support or assessment of colleagues altered them. The improved psychological environment was also thought to impact the level of stress. Most of the answers in the stress questionnaire fell on a scale of 1 to 3 at the end of the experiment. The scale showed that many people were showing better and positive results regarding the changes that had been made to the business. The interaction with the family for family support was related to the changes in the level of stress before the introduction of art therapy. Several individuals showed that they had a relaxed level of interaction with their family members, and as a result, they developed some stress and depression. However, in this case, the interaction was improved by incorporating art therapy, which kept most of the workers busy and improved their communication with the fellows (Han, 2023).

The results agreed with the research conducted by Kim et al. (2016), which indicated that people who had poor interaction with family members were in danger of developing stress. Still, art therapy would help transform them. Art therapy led to improvement because the workers had the time to think about their feelings (Koirala et al., 2017). On the same note, in the psychotherapeutic process, therapeutic has some significant role in changing the level of stress of the person. The same case happened during this study. Therefore, oriental art therapy was vital in improving the employees' feelings.

3.4. Art Therapy led to Improvement in Communication and Collaboration.

Following the interview that was done with several workers, there was a significant improvement in communication with each other. Most of the interview questions were to gather information on how the employees felt after the induction of art therapy in the business. As one of the administrators asked one of the workers what he had felt to have improved in his perspective, the worker said he now feels motivated to communicate. He can exchange information with other workers easily because the existence of art therapy has changed them. His facial expression spoke more about the change he had undergone, which was a great inspiration for the change art therapy had brought. As per the International Art + Mind lab at John Hopkins University, because the brain is agile, exposure to arts of all kinds fosters interconnectivity across a vast and complex network populated by hundreds of billions of neurons, influencing how we process and perceive creative experiences (Zubala et al., 2017).

The brain systems that engage with reward, motor activity, perception, and the senses are stimulated by art in ways unmatched by anything else. The same was seen among the employees. On the improvement in the level of collaboration, the workers showed immense change and willingness to work together and in a coordinated system. Most of the workers who were older ages felt it was insignificant to chat with those at the age of 20 and 30s. However, as they were subjected to art therapy, it became normal for them to communicate. Art therapy stimulated their brains and seemed a great achievement for the company, as now the channel was interconnected (Vaartio-Rajalin et al., 2021).

Table 1: Previous Works to Use

Identifying Research Gap	Used Prior Resources
Studies of art therapy have been gradually and successfully used as a means of helping business workers to deal with their difficult moments.	Hu et al., (2021), Davidescu et al., (2020), Han et al. (2019), Dionigi and Gremigni, (2017), Kaimal and Ray, (2017), Franklin et al., (2020), Huet and Holttum, (2016), Ratka (2018), Acai et al. (2017), Visnola et al. (2010), Usiskin and Lloyd (2020), Blomdahl et al. (2022), Dunphy et al. (2019), Kim (2009), Kim et al. (2022), Kim et al. (2014), Lee et al. (2022), Iacob et al. (2017)
Current Theme	Used Prior Resources
Reducing Stress and Anxiety via Art Therapy could Lead to the Improvement for Collaboration and Communication.	Vaartio-Rajalin et al. (2021), Zubala et al. (2017), Koirala et al. (2017), Kim et al. (2016), Han (2023), Martin et al. (2018), Zuch (2015), González-Zamar and Abad-Segura (2021), Visnola et al. (2010)

4. Implications

The above findings imply that oriental art therapy can significantly improve the workers' satisfaction in a business. The research shows how successfully some of the interventions introduced in the medical supply company fully transformed the workers' lives. For instance, when people are exposed to a series of paintings, the brain has strong activity. "The blood flow increases for a beautiful painting just as it increases when you look at somebody you love. It tells us art induces a feel-good sensation directly to the brain." The art and how we perceive it also becomes a talking point of conversation and encourage communication (Shamri Zeevi, 2021). The overall production level of a company is determined by how members cooperate. Cooperation and collaboration are only possible in a state where workers are happy and communicate freely together (Snyder, 2021). Art therapy is a form of non-verbal communication that can easily bypass the human defense mechanism to allow the expression of true feelings and thoughts. In the work, it can be useful in emphasizing some actions. Better communication builds a strong bond among the workers as the level of cooperation is high. In that matter, it becomes easy to increase productivity levels. Kato (2018) argues that art therapy improves the ability to relate, socialize, and improve the joint attention skills of people. Therefore, the induction of art therapy in any business would give implications of improved performance and high scales of profit realized. For business individuals, it could be essential to use art therapy in their business.

Art therapy is also regarded as the medicine for mental health issues. Hu et al. (2021) call it a complementary treatment for mental disorders. It is worth noting that mental disorders are common in business and continue to rise every day. Based on the findings, art therapy has been seen to be an effective method for the business to reduce stress and anxiety among its members to impact the production level. A careful reading has shown how the painting and drawing have been significant as they gradually and successfully proved effective in reducing mental disorders. In developing countries, the level of mental disorders is high. For example, in China, it is 24.20%. Such a big level can be reduced when there is induction of oriental art therapy. According to Zhang et al. (2021), depression has occurred severally in most Chinese businesses. The managers have employed psychological counseling and traditional Western art therapy as a treatment, but there have been no better results. Psychological counseling and traditional Western art therapy were not completely accepted in China because of cultural differences, thus leading to poor results. Many businesses in China have used Chinese flower and bird painting, and the two have helped reduce the level of stress and anxiety among the workers (Hongtao, 2021).

Art therapy has also been significant in improving the feeling of the employees. Satisfaction is an essential factor in every aspect of improvement (Zubala et al., 2021). Since most of the population in Asia is overweight and obese, the induction of activities that aid in improving the feeling of the workers would be relevant (Sax et al., 2020). Numerous businesses are more interested in ensuring their workers are satisfied because a satisfied person is more productive than a fellow with bad feelings.

5. Limitations and Conclusions

The research was done perfectly with minimal limitations associated with the cost, a high number of unwilling people, and laxity in adherence to the time set for the experiment. The cost was relatively high because there were several tools that needed to be purchased. The cortisol indicator tools range between \$135 and \$ 199 (Kopytin & Lebedev, 2013). In the research, more than 10 such tools were required to obtain better results. Purchasing such tools was expensive. That was the main challenge of the research study. Had there been another option other than relying on the cortisol indicator, obtaining the results at a much cheaper cost would have been easy (Orr, 2012). The cost of printing questionnaire paper was also added to that budget as well as the motivational cost. That translated to the much bigger amount that was required for the research. A research study entails people who are willing to participate. Participants must be satisfied that the research will be confidential with their data, or in other cases, they will remain anonymous. Most business workers were only willing to be involved in the research study once some rewards enticed them. With many members unwilling to participate, it was a challenge, but glad enough, they agreed to cooperate. Another critical case occurred where people showed laxity and needed to adhere to the time given by the company for such activity. The company had allocated only two hours for the research study, which would occur daily. A significant number of the participants showed laxity, thus giving administrators a hard time as they collected the data. There were only three limitations in the study. A better improvement in them could have led to better results than expected.

The business sector in any country is vital because it determines the economy of such a state. The government and the responsible stakeholders should, by all means, take part to ensure the business works better. Several problems occur in business, and one of them is increased mental disorders among workers. Currently, there has been an

increment in mental disorders for business workers. Oriental art therapy could thus be employed as a complementary treatment for such disorders to maximize the business's productivity. Many businesspeople in China have resorted to using painting and drawing as art therapy in their businesses, and they have seen changes. Oriental art therapy reduces the stress level among the workers, instills better communication and collaboration in the business, and increases the level of satisfaction among the employees. The eventual results from such a scenario are an increment in a business's productivity level and an improvement in human well-being. The research was conducted among 70 members of the medical supply company in China for three months. The research showed how successfully some of the interventions introduced in the medical supply company fully transformed the workers' lives. According to the findings, art therapy has been seen to be an effective method for the business to reduce stress and anxiety among its members to impact the production level. Art therapy can thus be attributed to reducing work-related stress and anxiety, especially in people between 20 and 70. Business workers should use art therapy to treat the mental disorders they may experience.

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