

ABSTRACT

Today, art therapy is considered as one particularly helpful therapeutic modality for adolescents. It is, in fact, one treatment of choice to ensure that adolescents' self-esteem level does not experience a significant drop during this vulnerable, tumultuous developmental period. Given the various impacts that self-esteem may have on one's life outcomes, this study aims to find out the contributions which art therapy have on adolescents with unfavourable experiences that may have adverse effects on their self-esteem level. Five impoverished adolescents who reside at one public-owned shelter in DKI Jakarta and have experienced interpersonal loss were recruited to participate in five weekly one-on-one art therapy sessions. The pre-post intervention comparative analyses that were conducted on four adolescents' human figure drawings, RSES scores and observable behaviours indicate the existence of changes in their self-esteem level after the art therapy sessions. At least one difference, which indicates improved self-esteem level, is identifiable in every participant's human figure drawing at post-test. Three out of four participants acquired higher RSES score at post-test, whilst one participant's RSES score is 1-point lower at post-test. While all participants consistently display several behaviour indicators that reflect moderate self-esteem level, three participants displayed improvements in several behaviours at post-test. Together, these findings lead to the conclusion that art therapy does have an impact on the self-esteem level of sheltered adolescents with multiple adverse experiences. The hypothesis that art therapy has a positive contribution on the self-esteem level of sheltered adolescents with multiple adverse experiences is also supported.

Key Words: Art Therapy, Self-Esteem, Adolescents, Public-Owned Shelter, Poverty, Interpersonal Loss