

Art Therapy, Art Psychotherapy and the thoughts of Thai people in Thailand 2024

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Abstract: Today, people often face disappointment, sadness and sorrow that arise from many situations encountered in their daily lives. As these situations are unpredictable, it is important for everyone to prepare to handle the situations. The disappointment, sadness and sorrow could lead to stress, which can occur to anyone at any age. The accumulated stress could lead to depression if there is no stress management being taken. Nowadays, psychological knowledge being used in the arts as a tool to explore the flaws and abnormalities of mental states is used as a part of the treatment process for people with behavioral and mental disorders. The principle of art therapy is a science of knowing the human mind by using artistic activities to search for hidden emotions and thoughts. Humans will be able to acknowledge their thoughts, feelings, understand the causes of problems, and even find the solutions to manage the accumulated stress and prevent abnormal mental states. As the researcher has considered the mental problems of humans in today's world, therefore, interested in exploring the level of importance and awareness Thai people have regarding various mental states through a survey from a sample group of 75 people and analyzing the survey results.

Keywords: Health promotion, Mental Health, Art Therapy, Art Psychotherapy, Art and Science, Mood disorders.

1. INTRODUCTION

The disappointment, sadness and sorrow usually occurs from the unpredictable situations encountered in daily lives. Therefore, it is important for humans to be able to manage emotions and feelings to prevent humans from holding on to those feelings too long as it could easily cause negative impacts physically and mentally. Prolonged attachment to these feelings may result in stress, which can lead to behavioral and psychological problems. Those experiencing stress may be prone to slowed behavior, absent-mindedness and even inability to make a decision. Also, if stress accumulates overtime, this may increase the risk of depression in the near future. The country is currently having a 1-2% increase in depression rates with a continuous growing trend. This number has not yet included those unaware of their depressive symptoms. Thus, it indicates that the stress has effects on daily life as the lives would potentially be altered due to these conditions. Additionally, the stress can be a cause of several physical and mental illnesses such as anxiety disorders, migraines, insomnia and others. It may increase the risk of depression and anxiety as a result of unstable mental states.

Art therapy is a psychological knowledge commonly used in treatment plans for people with behavioral and mental disorders resulting from accumulated stress that leads to depression. Art can represent the identity of each individual and also help them to relax from stress, allowing them to develop cognitive thinking and giving a feeling of freedom, thus preventing stress. As individuals feel free, they are more likely to express their thoughts and feelings without limitations. This means art serves as a tool to search the human mind. Art therefore aims to treat, cure and rehabilitate behavior and mental disorders. Psychiatrist use psychological knowledge to assess patients and develop suitable treatment plans. Therefore, individuals with depression or abnormal mental states should consult with psychiatrist in order to receive the most suitable and appropriate treatment plans. Most importantly, individuals must strictly attend appointments and follow the psychiatrist's advice to ensure that the treatments are taken as planned.

2. METHODOLOGY

The survey consists of 13 questions in a Google Form format and distributed to each age group, totaling 75 respondents. The survey is divided into 4 sections; Section 1 consists of 2 questions about identification of age group and gender, Section 2 consists of 5 questions on opinions on depression, Section 3 consists of 5 questions on the opinions toward art therapy and Section 4 consists of 1 question asking for suggestions. There will be only 2 opinions, Yes and No, in Section 2, while there will be 3 opinions, High, Medium and Low, in Section 3. As all responses from 75 respondents are received, the research will analyze the data in percentage before summarizing the findings by discussing the results from the survey summary table.

3. RESULTS

Question 1 ‘Do you think depression can happen at any age?’

Yes	No
75 people	0 people
100%	0%

From the survey across all age found that 100% choose ‘Yes’ as their answer for ‘Do you think depression can happen at any age?’, meaning that 0% choose ‘No’ in this question. Therefore, the survey results indicate that everyone in the sample group agrees with this question in section 1.

Question 2 ‘Do you think depression rate is likely to increase?’

Yes	No
75 people	0 people
100%	0%

From the survey across all age groups 75 respondents, it is found that 100% choose ‘Yes’ as their answer for ‘Do you think depression rate is likely to increase?’ , meaning that 0% choose ‘No’ in this question. The survey results indicate that this results the same as the first question. Therefore, the result obtained from survey indicates that the sample group agree with this question.

Question 3 ‘In your opinion, do you think humans can live happily if they learn to understand and manage their thinking, feelings and emotions?’

Yes	No
72 people	3 people
96%	4%

From the survey across all age groups of 75 respondents, It is found that 96% choose the option ‘Yes’ and 4% choose ‘No’ as their answer for the question ‘In your opinion, do you think humans can live happily if they learn to understand and manage their thinking, feelings and emotions?’. According to the survey, the 96% of choosing option ‘Yes’ is quite high, therefore, can be concluded that most people in the sample of each age group agreed with this question.

Question 4 ‘Do you think depression can be cured if treatment processes given by psychiatrist is strictly followed?’

Yes	No
61 people	14 people
81.3%	18.7%

From the survey across all age groups of 75 respondents, it is found that 81.3% choose the option ‘Yes’ and 18.7% choose ‘No’ as their answer for the question ‘Do you think depression can be if treatment processes given by psychiatrist is strictly followed?’. According to the survey, the 81.3% of choosing option ‘Yes’ is quite high, therefore, can be concluded that most people in the sample of each age group agreed with this question.

Question 5 ‘Do you think that depression have a wide-ranging negative impact from individual to national level?’

Yes	No
59 people	16 people
78.7%	21.3%

From the survey across all age groups 75 respondents, it is found that 78.7% choose the option ‘Yes’ and 21.3% choose ‘No’ as their answer for the question ‘Do you think that depression have a wide-ranging negative impact from individual to national level?’. According to the survey, the 78.7% of choosing option ‘Yes’ is quite high, therefore, can be concluded that most people in the sample of each age group agree with this question.

Question 6 ‘Do you think principles of Art Therapy are principles that help humans to have a better understanding of themselves?’

High	Medium	Low
41 people	33 people	1 people
54.6%	44%	1.3%

From the survey across all age groups of 75 respondents, it is found that 54.6% choose the option ‘High’, 44% choose ‘Medium’ and 1.3% choose ‘Low’ respectively, according to the table above, as their answer for the question ‘Do you think principles of Art Therapy are principles that help humans to have a better understanding of themselves?’. The results of 54.6% choosing ‘High’ is considerably high. The percentage of other options in the results gradually reduce as shown in the table summarizing the survey results above. Therefore, it can be concluded that most people in the sample of each age group agree that the principles of Art Therapy and principles that help humans to have a better understanding of themselves.

Question 7 ‘Do you think humans do not prioritize their mental health care with a close supervision form psychiatrist?’

High	Medium	Low
29 people	38 people	8 people
38.6%	50.6%	10.6%

From the survey across all age groups of 75 respondents, it is found that 38.6% choose the option ‘High’, 50.6% choose ‘Medium’ and 10.6% choose ‘Low’ respectively, according to the table above, as their answer for the question ‘Do you think humans do not prioritize their mental health care with a close supervision form psychiatrists’. The survey results show that the option ‘Medium’ at 50.6% is considerably high, therefore, can be concluded that there still are people in the sample group who think that humans prioritize the mental health care with a close supervision from psychiatrist.

Question 8 ‘Do you think if humans have better understanding of themselves, they will be able to find appropriate solutions in coping or managing their own thoughts and emotions?’

High	Medium	Low
59 people	15 people	1 people
78.6%	20%	1.3%

From the survey across all age groups of 75 respondents, it is found that 78.6% choose the option ‘High’, 20% choose ‘Medium’ and 1.3% choose ‘Low’ respectively, according to the table above, as their answer for the question ‘Do you think if humans have better understanding of themselves, they will be able to find appropriate solutions in coping or managing their own thoughts and emotions’. The survey results show that the option ‘High’ at 78.6% is considerably high and the percentage of other options in the survey results above. Therefore, it can be concluded that most people in the sample of each age group agreed that if humans have better understanding of themselves, they will be able to find appropriate and effective solutions in coping or managing their own thoughts and emotions.

Question 9 ‘Do you think that, in Thailand, there are people with depression who do not want to consult with psychiatrists because they are scared to accept the truth?’

High	Medium	Low
51 people	22 people	2 people
68%	29.3	2.6%

From the survey groups of 75 respondents, it is found that 68% choose the option ‘High’, 29.3% choose ‘Medium’ and 2.6% choose ‘Low’ respectively, according to the table above, as their answer for the question ‘Do you think that, in Thailand, there are people with depression who do not want to consult with psychiatrists because they are scared to accept the truth?’. The survey results show that the option ‘High’ at 68% is considerably high and the percentage of other options in the survey results gradually reduce as shown in the table summarizing the survey results above. Therefore, it can be concluded that most people in the sample of each age group agreed that people with depression in Thailand do not want to consult with psychiatrists because they are scared to accept the truth.

Question 10 ‘Do you think that if humans admit that they need psychological help and visit a psychiatrist, there would be a reduction in the rate of depression?’

High	Medium	Low
57 people	16 people	2 people
76%	21.3%	2.6%

From the survey across all age groups of 75 respondents, it is found that 76% choose the option ‘High’, 21.3% choose ‘Medium’ and 2.6% choose ‘Low’ respectively, according to the table above, as their answer for the question ‘Do you think that if humans admit that they need psychological help and visit a psychiatrist, there would be a reduction in the rate of depression?’. The survey results show that the option ‘High’ at 76% is considerably high and the percentage of other options in the survey results gradually reduce as shown in the table summarizing the survey results above. Therefore, it can be concluded that most people in the sample of each age group agreed that if humans admit that they need psychological help and visit a psychiatrist, the rate of depression would be reduced.

4. DISCUSSION

From a survey of the sample group totaling 75 respondents across all age groups, the results consistently lie in the same direction. Everyone agreed that depression can occur at any age and the trend is likely to increase. As summarizing survey results, it found that the increase in depression rate could lead to widespread negative effects on individual, society, and nation level, respectively. Most people acknowledge that having the ability to manage thoughts, feelings and emotions would allow them to live a happier life. In contrast, if humans do not have the ability to manage their thoughts and emotions, it can lead to depression. In such cases, seeking help from a psychiatrist would be the best solution. Psychiatrists can assess the mental state of patients using the principles of Art Therapy, which is widely recognized as part of treatment plans. However, there are still many Thai people who are hesitant to seek help from a psychiatrist when needed. If these Thai people become more open-minded and have a better understanding that consulting with a psychiatrist is not embarrassing, it could reduce the potential rate of depression.

5. CONCLUSION

The survey on Art Therapy from the sample group totaling 75 respondents across all age groups revealed that the majority of respondents acknowledge that depression can occur at any age and the depression rate is continuously increasing. This results in many of them aware of the potential consequences as well as understanding that seeking help from a psychiatrist for assessment and treatment planning could lead to recovery from these conditions. In such cases, this means that most people accept the principles of Art Therapy that psychiatrists use in treatment plans as they understand the benefits of Art Therapy or the science of healing the human mind. However, related agencies are currently unable to effectively solve the increasing rate of depression.

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