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Effectiveness of Group Art Therapy on Quality of Life in Paediatric Patients with Cancer: A Randomized Controlled Trial

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Highlights

- Cancer children experience adverse effects.
- Investigators use Art therapy for symptoms severity.
- Art therapy improved the overall QoL.

Abstract

Objectives: Children with cancer undergoing chemotherapy experience many adverse effects. The effectiveness of painting- and handcrafting-based art therapy on the various dimensions of health-related quality of life in paediatric outpatients previously diagnosed with heterogeneity of malignancy was evaluated in the present study.

Design: In an experimental randomized controlled trial, a total of 60 children aged 7–13 years previously diagnosed with malignancy together with their parents were assigned randomly either to an experimental (30 patients) or a control group (30 patients) in 2017 in Iraq. The patients in the experimental group participated in painting and handcrafting group art therapy (creative art therapy) conducted by a professional fine artist for a one-month period. The dimensions of health-related quality of life in both study groups were measured through the KIDSCREEN-10 Index after project completion.

Results: The patients in the experimental group were significantly more physically active and energetic ($P < 0.001$), were less depressed and emotional, and had fewer stressful feelings ($P = 0.004$). Moreover, they enjoyed their social and leisure time more and participated more in social activities ($P = 0.003$) in addition to an improvement in their relationships with other children ($P = 0.043$) and had better overall health status ($P < 0.001$). However, the children's overall interaction with other children,

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