

Review of: "The Effect of Visual Arts Educative Practices on Social Functionality in Patients With Schizophrenia"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Thank you for the opportunity to read the manuscript (msc). By the title and inference about its application, the manuscript seemed quite interesting and full of potential to contribute to more practices evidence-based in Turkey. I think the issue of the article could be a good fit for this journal given its scope, but the article needs to be significantly restructured. The msc presents several shortcomings, and the article needs to be significantly restructured. Therefore, my decision is to reject. I hope that the following comments and suggestions are helpful for the authors if they want to improve the quality of this study.

A greater attention should be given to the background and theory supporting this research, strengthening the importance of such a study - provide a factual background, a clearly defined problem, a proposed solution, a brief literature survey, and the scope and justification of the work done. It is suggested that authors focus on the pertinence of the topic as well as on some evidence in the area. Maybe authors could re-arrange the presentation of schizophrenia, describing specifically, even if briefly, the social functional characteristics of persons with schizophrenia and its impact on daily life. Then, maybe a presentation of "visual art works (painting, sculpture, etc. - p. 2)" can be added. A valid conceptual model of visual arts educative practices should be briefly presented, justifying the organization of the study: Is there any evidence about the effects of such a program? At some point, it is mentioned that visual arts practices may have negative and positive effects. On which evidences are the authors based? Are arts and visual arts different? If so, may authors explain that difference? And why they justify their decision for visual arts practices? The justification of this study's pertinence should be reinforced. This section needs to be reinforced. Authors are encouraged to focus on the pertinence of the topic, explaining: a) why the need for this analysis? b) what are the limitations of previous research about the topic?; c) how does this study address these limitations?; d) how does it extend previous research?; and e) what is its main value/contribution to research and practice. I think it would be useful to also include an explanation of why this overview is particularly of interest on the international level, as this is not explicitly stated in the article. Relevant gaps should be identified and related to research questions.

Please avoid the use of stigmatizing writing: avoid adjectives (e.g., p. 2 – Schizophrenia is a ~~devastating~~ disease", "schizophrenic patients"). I suppose that for the purpose of the study, the history of terminology is not necessary, which means that half of page 2 can be re-structured.

The **method section** needs to be reorganized, presenting data in a clearer way. According to journal guidelines, it should be given adequate information to allow the experiment to be reproduced, and so further details on the methodology (e.g.,

sampling, procedures, instrument, data analysis...) will strengthen the study. The design of the study is quite weak relative to determining a cause-and-effect relationship between the intervention and outcomes. The lack of random assignment to groups raises the question of whether differences in post-test and retention test findings between the groups were due to characteristics of the participants.

Sample: Maybe you should consider introducing more information about participants (e.g., age, medication use, age of diagnosis, etc.). *Instrument:* How were the administration and classification guidelines established? What was the average duration of the application of the social functioning form and scale? Why did the authors feel the need to describe the independence performance sub-dimensions? I understand the tension between space and content, but it would be good to provide some brief information on (a) psychometric properties and b) systems of collecting data by the original authors. All these specific guidelines will help readers to understand the interview used... *Program:* A main concern in research methods is the inexistence of a clear and fully description of the program applied – imagine that another researcher wants to replicate the study – he/she/they have to know the program: how it is constituted? Only 4 weeks? Usually, studies tend to present a minimum of 12 weeks, with 2 sessions per week... Did the program have its intended effects? If so, who was helped and what activities or characteristics of the program created the impact? Did the program have any unintended consequences, positive or negative? How was the program operated? Which procedures and activities undertaken were facilitators? Were there any barriers and strategies for overcoming these problems? How do the outcomes relate to the inputs?

Results

Authors are encouraged to specify all procedures and analysis steps conducted. Hypotheses should be based on recent empirical studies, and this study still lacks theoretical rationales. You need to show the readers the logical premises based on theories that support the proposed relationships/theoretical. Results are based on frequencies, percents, and comparative tests. Multivariate analyses are recommended in order to check if there are differences between groups that may be related to or explaining results. Consider giving some reference to the limits used (e.g., correlations greater than .30 – reference). Please do not repeat information both at tables and in the text. Just synthesize the most specific and interesting results after tables. In comparative measures, please provide the effect size. Further, in this section, authors performed a comparative test by gender/marital status and other variables, and they were not mentioned/approached earlier.

Discussion: This section needs to be re-structured according to previous comments; with few results to work with, it is again hard to ascertain the discussion and how this study will impact future research. Further, discussion that does not focus clearly on the article's purpose and results, so authors should be cautious with generalizations. The study appears poorly supported by the data, and it lacks other evidence confrontation. Lacks of others evidences confront as well some deep in of this study results. It should also provide a detailed interpretation of data, interpreting the significance of the findings of the work. Citations should be given in support of the findings. The supportive literature supporting the findings is sparse. Strengthen the discussion about findings: what is the worth-value of such a study, and how findings could be “used” for teachers in other countries? The limitations section may be presented at the end of the MSC – please confirm

with journal guidelines.

Conclusions: I would have expected to see more emphasis on the broad contribution and importance of this study. Authors need to answer the so what question: what does the data substantively reveal to the field that was not already established? Authors are suggested to review their arguments that should be presented and evidence-supported based and to be cautious with generalizations. How do authors control other variables? How are authors able to state the project was sufficiently robust by itself? Usually, the findings highlighted here relate to the primary outcome measure; however, other important or unexpected findings should also be mentioned. It is also customary, but not essential, for the authors to express an opinion about the theoretical or practical implications of the findings, or the importance of their findings for the field. Thus, the conclusions may contain three elements: The primary take-home message; The additional findings of importance; The perspective. How are recommendations aligned with results?

Minor Editing:

- Please avoid schematic sentence organization as well as repetitions (sample is presented twice on page 5, the validity and reliability of the Social Functioning scale is mentioned twice on page 6 and again on p. 9 – proof throughout).
- Page 9 – it seems disorganized
- References should be updated