Efficacy of Play Therapy and Art Therapy with Traumatized Children

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Abstract- This research has been based in the clinical settings in order to investigate the relative efficacy of the play therapy and art therapy in dealing with traumatized children. The traumatized children pose a specific challenge to mental health professionals and to psychotherapists. The various strategies to probe their experiences and the various modes of dealing with them are best achieved with the application of two strong therapeutic measures namely play therapy and art therapy. This research study targets to explore the relative efficacy of one therapeutic measure to the other. The sample for the current research consisted of 40 children enrolled in consultation groups either due to sexual abuse or due to posttraumatic stress etc. This research paper also aims the exploration of how art therapy is a creative and cathartic process through which children who have experienced trauma can communicate their thoughts, feelings, emotions, and trauma. The research presents a pragmatic look at trauma and children and also exposes how art therapy is utility-oriented as a therapeutic tool for such children. Some ethical concerns have been discussed and various clinical informal assessment procedures that have been developed for children within the area of children and trauma are suggested. A systematic attempt has also been made to understand the emotional content through indicators represented within children's art expressions and in play activities. An emphasis is placed on the use of specific indicators portrayed in the images of children who have been exposed to violence followed by a discussion of the art therapy and play therapy. The efficacy and preference of the therapy is highlighted when working with children who have been exposed to trauma. The implications of the current study have been discussed.

Keywords- Art-therapy, play-therapy, post-traumatic stress

Remark: The full paper may be found in www.inrit2011.com or www.ijcim.th.org.