

# ACADEMIC RESEARCH POSTER

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## Pain, Paint and Healing: A Study of the Effectiveness of Facilitative Arts Interventions with Women Survivors of Violence in Kerala by Reena Merin Cherian

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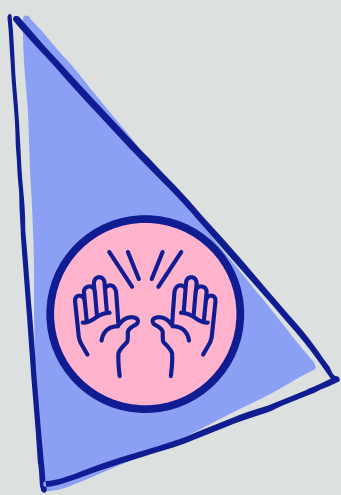
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### Introduction

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) captures a spectrum of violations of the rights of gender groups. Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in a micro-space invites the attention of development practitioners to intervene at the micro to macro-level, especially in the case of marginalised women. Here, Visual Arts Therapy is a culturally located instrument to impact and mobilise individuals; for constructing resilience and deconstructing stress. The paper analyses such an intervention and the resultant change in 204 women violated by GBV. It employs mixed-method using structured interviewing through DASS-21 and Focused Group Discussions. The findings reveal reduced anxiety, stress, and depression in the women after interventions; emergent themes include enhanced self-esteem, body positivity, reduced fear, resilience, and mutual aid. The implications affirm Women-Centered development practice and the resilience is an exemplar for global connectedness and therefore for ubuntu social work practitioners.  
Keywords: Facilitative Arts Therapy, Visual Arts, Women, Violence, Expression, Healing, Resilience, Mixed Method, Body

### Objective

1. To study the psycho-social implications of IPV on women in Kerala
2. To study the effect of Facilitative Arts Therapies on psycho-social well being of women survivors of IPV



### RELATED LITERATURE

Art therapy uses artistic and creative expressions of a spectrum of emotions that are otherwise conflicting or difficult for individuals to encounter and express (Malchiodi, 2002). She asserts that artistic expression has the inherent capacity to resolve issues. McGregor (1989) Malchiodi (2002, 2008), located art therapy historically through landmark writings such as The Discovery of the Art of the Insane and The Soul's Palette, connecting theories of psychology and art. Although in the rehabilitation literature, the impact of Art Therapy is unclear and systematic reviews were unable to establish a significant correlation (Regev & Cohen-Yatziv, 2018; Lith, 2016) due to lack of RCTs and large sample studies; the qualitative studies and case controls gave an insight into long term and gradual impact art expression in healing.

### Results

H1: The women experienced reduced levels of depression after participating in Facilitative Expressive Arts Sessions  
H2: The women experienced reduced levels of anxiety after participating in Facilitative Expressive Arts Sessions  
H3: The women experienced significantly reduced levels of stress after participating in Facilitative Expressive Arts Sessions.

Categories	Themes
Physical harassment	Beatings
Psychological harassment	Violation of Consent Profanities and verbal abuses
Building resilience	Expressing and speaking-up Assertiveness and confidence Resilience and recovery Mutual-aid Motivation
Effects of Intimate Partner violence	Void and vacuum Self-doubt Fear

### Analysis

#### Statistical analysis

An independent sample t-test was used to check if there is any difference between the scores in the Depression, Stress, and Anxiety after and the Art Therapeutic intervention. The significant level was measured at 0.05. The p-value is found to be significant at  $p < 0.05$  for all the three categories post the interventions, while the value is significant for Depression and Anxiety, it is significantly higher for stress scores post the intervention.

#### Thematic analysis

The narratives were subjected to thematic analysis through codes, and the grouped codes were reduced to themes such as beatings, fear, profanities, colour, speaking up etc

### Methodology

**Ontology:**  
Social  
**Constructivist**  
**Epistemology:**  
Interpretivist  
and pragmatic

**Sequential Exploratory Mixed Method Design**

Theoretical engagement  
Theory of Social Control  
Feminist theories

**Quantitative-**  
DASS 21 administered to women (n=204)

**Qualitative-**  
Thematic Analysis of verbatim from 5 FGDs (n=50)

### Conclusion

The study reviews the interventions from the perspective of women facing the trauma of violence and is an outcome of the gestation of thoughts on its effectiveness from the first day of the project. The intervention with 204 women with the 'alternative' mediums are an effective tool for helping the pulverised women, the subaltern to speak. The art forms and outputs conceived by the women links to folklore, narratives and visual discourses that capture and release the fears and anxiety entrapped in the silence.

