



The Effects of an Arts-Based Program on Mood and Quality of Life for Assisted Living Residents

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Introduction

Over 1 million Americans currently live in an assisted living facility, and this number is expected to rise as the aging population, specifically the “baby boomer” generation, continues to age and transition to needing more assistance with daily activities.^{1, 6} Rosalie Kane’s quality of life framework is devised of 12 domains: comfort, security, meaningful activity, relationships, enjoyment, dignity, autonomy, privacy, individuality, spiritual well-being, and functional competence.⁵ When transitioning to life in an assisted living facility, there may be many changes in the domains compared to life beforehand, and this could result in a quality of life decline. Participating in art-based activities has been shown to increase quality of life outcomes as well as lead to increased mood.^{3, 8} Given the possible quality of life decline seen in these facilities, engaging in purposeful and creative occupations could be beneficial for residents. This research study aimed to assess the impact that participating in weekly group sessions to complete artistic activities has on quality of life and mood for assisted living residents. Occupational therapy was created during the arts and crafts movement, and the profession incorporated many artistic mediums to help achieve goals with clients. Although the field has made many strides since its creation, returning to its roots could have many benefits. Engagement in meaningful occupation, through activities such as these, helps contribute to overall health and well-being.

Methods

Location:
Crowne Place Assisted Living, Mobile, AL

Inclusion Criteria:
English as primary language
Residence at Crowne Place

Participants:
10 total participants
All female

Baseline Data:
Older People’s Quality of Life Brief – QoL measurement
Craft Preference Survey - to aid in designing program to residents’ liking

6 Week Program:
Met 2x/week for creative occupations group (12 total sessions)
Crafts were chosen based on data collected from craft preference questionnaire
Mood check in completed pre- and post-session

Post-program Data:
Older People’s Quality of Life Brief readministered at conclusion of program

Program Outline – 6 Weeks Total

Session 1: Paint by Numbers

Session 2: Tissue Paper Flowers

Session 3: Tissue Paper Heart Hangers

Session 4: Coffee Filter Fall Leaves

Session 5: Paint by Numbers cont.

Session 6: Patchwork Pumpkins

Session 7: DIY Pinwheels

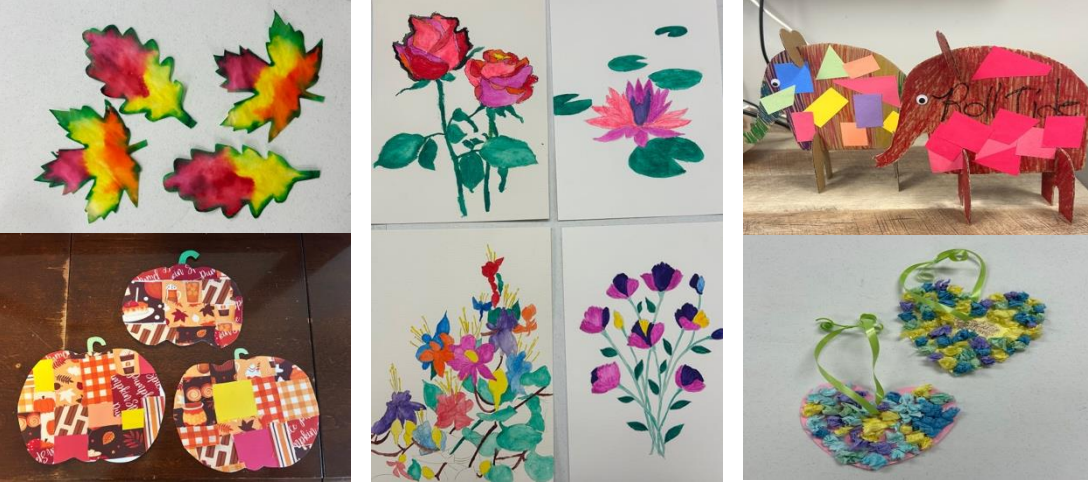
Session 8: Elephant Cardboard Figure

Session 9: Watercolor Flower Painting

Session 10: Watercolor Painting cont.

Session 11: Splatter-paint Ornaments

Session 12: Decoupage Vases



Results

Quality of Life
The results of a paired samples t-test show there was a significant increase in the quality of life scores at the end of the 6-week program ($M = 61.22$, $SD = 4.63$) compared to the baseline measurement ($M = 56.78$, $SD = 4.06$), $t(8) = -4.32$, $p = .001$. Pre- and post-test scores, along with number of sessions missed, are depicted in Figure 1.

Mood
Participants completed a mood check in at the beginning and end of each session. Moods were coded into three categories: positive (happy, excited), neutral (tired, nervous), and negative (angry, sad). Participants who reported a positive mood remained in a positive mood 100% of the time. Participants who reported a neutral mood improved to a positive mood 91.3% of the time and remained neutral 8.7% of the time. Participants who reported a negative mood increased to a positive mood 100% of the time.

Results continued

Figure 1: Quality of Life Analysis Pre- and Post-test

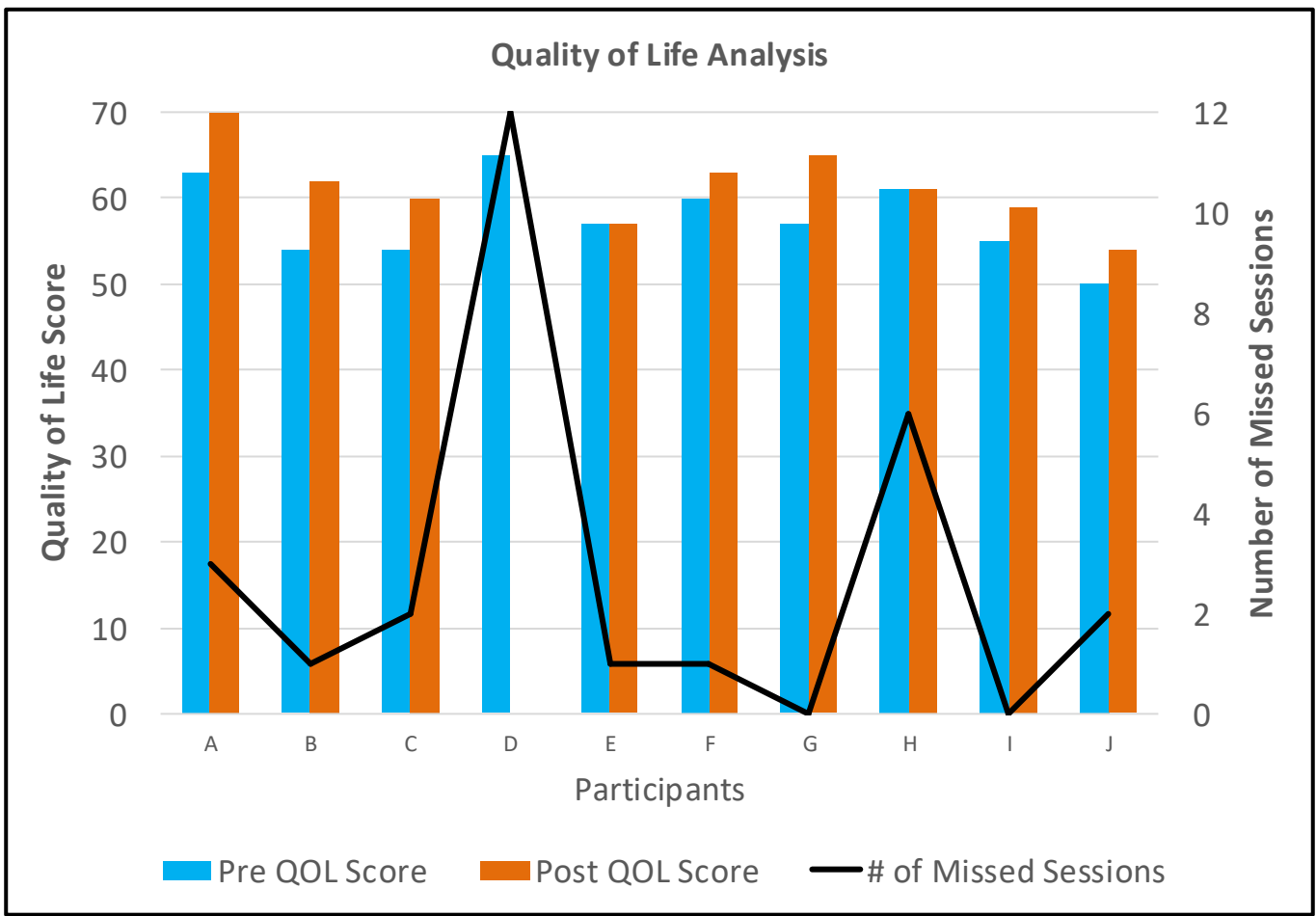
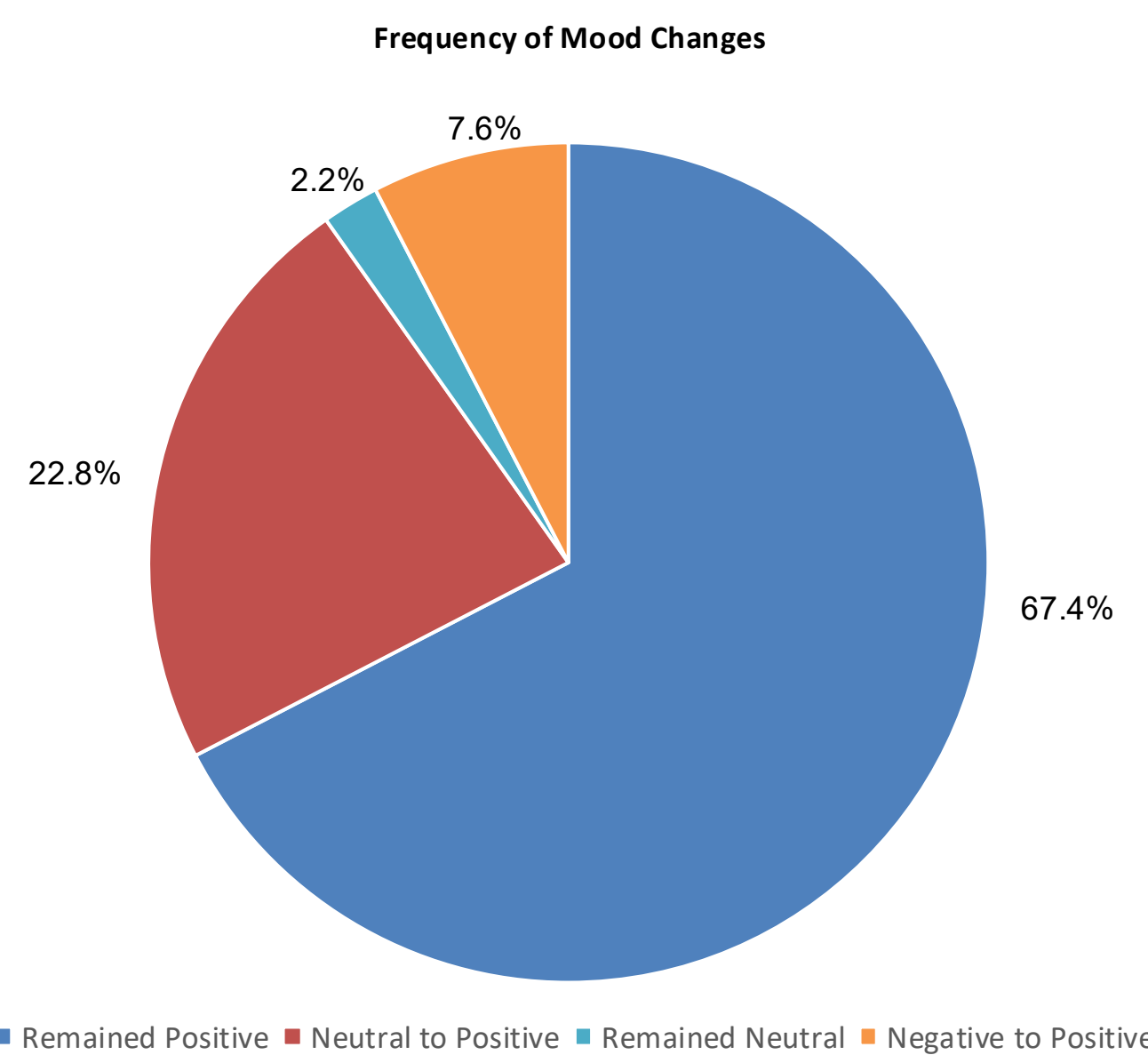


Table 2: Frequency Responses for Selected Quality of Life Questions

Question	Survey	Very Good	Good	Alright	Bad	Very Bad
Your quality of life as a whole is...	Pre	50% (n=5)	40% (n=4)	10% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)
	Post	55.56% (n=5)	44.44% (n=4)	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)

Question	Survey	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have social or leisure activities/hobbies that I enjoy doing...	Pre	10% (n=1)	50% (n=5)	30% (n=3)	10% (n=1)	0% (n=0)
	Post	33.33% (n=3)	55.56% (n=5)	11.11% (n=1)	0% (n=0)	0% (n=0)

Figure 3: Frequency of Mood Changes Throughout Duration of Study



Discussion

Participating in the 6-week program was shown to significantly increase quality of life scores on the OPQOL measure for participants. Participants identified higher overall quality of life scores at the conclusion of the program, but they also stated they had more hobbies or leisure activities that they enjoy participating in compared to the beginning of the program.

Discussion continued

Quality of life is a topic that has proven to need attention in the assisted living population as general and health-related quality of life is known to decline with increasing age.^{4, 7} Participating in the art sessions also led to increased mood or the maintenance of a positive mood. Artistic activities have been shown as a reliable way to address mood, and this is important as mood can go onto affect overall health and well-being.⁹ Thus, artistic programs like this should be implemented in facilities to address quality of life and mood, increasing overall well-being for residents.
Implications:

- Creative activities are a valuable method to address quality of life, which is a goal of the field of occupational therapy as stated in the practice framework²
- Help address leisure and participation, especially in a group setting

Limitations:

- All female population, only from one facility
- Attendance throughout sessions, short duration of study

Future Directions:

- Implementing a control group, longer duration of study
- Incorporate creative activities into typical OT treatment
- OT-led group sessions for those who may not be receiving “typical” OT services, like assisted living residents

Conclusion

Creating arts and crafts programs for the assisted living population can have many benefits, such as improving quality of life and mood. Incorporating their preferences helps establish a sense of autonomy. Group activities like this can also help promote social engagement and participation which is beneficial for all ages. Assisted living facilities, and similar facilities such as rehabilitation or skilled nursing facilities, should incorporate these activities for residents.

References

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