



Impact of Art Therapy Programmes on Psychological Wellbeing Among Congolese Refugees in Kinshasa, DR Congo: A Longitudinal Analysis

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Published: 20 October 2003 | **Received:** 23 June 2003 | **Accepted:** 16 September 2003

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18773850](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18773850)

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Abstract

Art therapy programmes have emerged as a promising intervention for addressing psychological distress among refugee populations. In the context of Congolese refugees in Kinshasa, DR Congo, there is limited empirical research exploring their effectiveness over time. A mixed-methods approach was employed, including pre- and post-programme surveys for quantitative data collection and qualitative interviews for deeper insights into participant experiences. Data were analysed using statistical software and thematic analysis. Participants reported a significant decrease in stress levels from baseline to follow-up ($p < 0.05$), with an average reduction of 23% in perceived stress scores. Themes emerged around the therapeutic benefits, including improved self-expression and coping strategies. Art therapy programmes appear effective in enhancing psychological wellbeing among Congolese refugees in Kinshasa. Further research should explore long-term effects and replication across different contexts. Given the positive findings, it is recommended that art therapy be integrated into mental health services for refugee populations as a cost-effective and accessible intervention.

Keywords: Congo, Refugee Studies, Art Therapy, Psychotherapy, Longitudinal Analysis, Community Mental Health, Cultural Competence

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