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**A STUDY OF PERSON-CENTERED EXPRESSIVE ARTSTHERAPY IN
GROUP PSYCHOEDUCATION TO REDUCEACADEMIC BURNOUT
AMONG HIGHER VOCATIONALCOLLEGE STUDENTS**

ZHANG BO



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Awang Had Salleh
Graduate School
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Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aslina Ahmad

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Pemeriksa Dalam:
(Internal Examiner)

Dr. Nor Asikhin Ishak

Tandatangan
(Signature)

Nama Penyelia/Penyelia-penyelia:
(Name of Supervisor/Supervisors)

Dr. Azizah Abdullah

Tandatangan
(Signature)

Nama Penyelia/Penyelia-penyelia:
(Name of Supervisor/Supervisors)

Dr. Mohd Aliff Mohd Nawi

Tandatangan
(Signature)

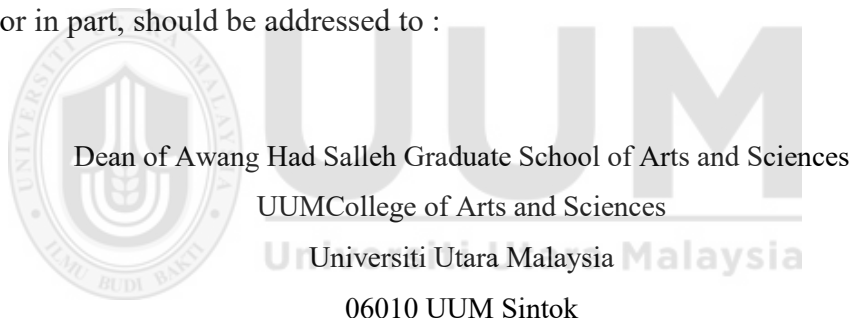
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Abstrak

Kelesuan akademik merupakan kebimbangan yang semakin meningkat dalam kalangan pelajar di kolej vokasional tinggi Cina. Namun, intervensi berpusatkan pelajar yang disahkan secara empirikal masih terhad. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menilai keberkesanan Terapi Seni Ekspresif Berpusatkan Orang (*PCEAT*) dalam psikopendidikan berkumpulan untuk mengurangkan kelesuan akademik dalam kalangan pelajar kolej vokasional tinggi Cina. Hipotesis menyatakan bahawa *PCEAT* akan menghasilkan pengurangan yang ketara dalam tahap keletihan pelajar. Reka bentuk kuasi eksperimen telah diterima pakai melibatkan kumpulan eksperimen yang menerima psikopendidikan berasaskan *PCEAT* dan kumpulan kawalan yang tidak menerima rawatan. Intervensi ini berlangsung selama empat minggu dan melibatkan seramai 52 orang peserta. Skala Kelesuan Akademik untuk Pelajar Kolej digunakan untuk menilai tahap kelesuan data dianalisis menggunakan SPSS 23.0. Dapatan menunjukkan terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan dalam markah kelesuan merentas gred, jurusan dan jantina. Kumpulan eksperimen menunjukkan pengurangan ketara dalam kelesuan keseluruhan dan dimensinya selepas intervensi, dengan kesan yang berterusan selama tiga bulan susulan. Secara teorinya, kajian ini memperkayakan pemahaman tentang kelesuan akademik dan meluaskan aplikasi *PCEAT* dalam pendidikan vokasional. Kajian itu juga mewujudkan model empirikal yang menunjukkan bagaimana *PCEAT* boleh mengurangkan kelesuan akademik secara berkesan melalui psikopendidikan kumpulan. Secara praktikal, ia menawarkan pendekatan inovatif kepada sokongan kesihatan mental dalam tetapan vokasional yang lebih tinggi. Penyelidikan masa depan harus menggunakan reka bentuk terkawal rawak, susulan lanjutan, dan pendekatan kaedah campuran untuk meneroka lebih lanjut kesan dan mekanisme jangka panjang *PCEAT*.

Kata kunci: Kelesuan akademik, *PCEAT*, Psikopendidikan berkumpulan, Pelajar kolej vokasional tinggi

Abstract

Academic burnout is a growing concern among students in Chinese higher vocational colleges, yet empirically validated, student-centered interventions remain limited. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of Person-Centered Expressive Art Therapy (PCEAT) in group psychoeducation to reduce academic burnout among Chinese higher vocational college students. It was hypothesized that PCEAT would lead to significant reductions in students' burnout levels. A quasi-experimental design was adopted, involving an experimental group receiving PCEAT-based psychoeducation and a control group receiving no treatment. The intervention lasted for four weeks and included a total of 52 participants. The Academic Burnout Scale for College Students was used to assess burnout levels, and data was analyzed using SPSS 23.0. Results showed significant differences in burnout scores across grades, majors, and genders. The experimental group demonstrated marked reductions in overall burnout and its dimensions post-intervention, with effects sustained at a three-month follow-up. Theoretically, the study enriches understanding of academic burnout and broadens the application of PCEAT in vocational education. The study also establishes an empirical model demonstrating how PCEAT can effectively reduce academic burnout through group psychoeducation. Practically, it offers an innovative approach to mental health support in higher vocational settings. Future research should employ randomized controlled designs, extended follow-ups, and mixed method approaches to further explore the long-term effects and mechanisms of PCEAT.

Keywords: Academic burnout, PCEAT, Group psychoeducation, Higher vocational college students

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my beloved husband and son for their blessings and inspiration which had spurred me on to achieve my goal. Thank you for being there for me. You are my sources of strength and inspiration.

To all my lecturers and friends

Thank you all for your love and support.



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I express my boundless gratitude to the educational institutions that allowed me to conduct research at their schools, providing me with a valuable platform for study. At the same time, I sincerely thank the students and colleagues who participated in the experiments and helped me collect data; without their active participation, my research would not have been possible.

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List of Abbreviations

ACT	<i>Acceptance and Commitment Training</i>
AATA	<i>American Art Therapy Association</i>
BDI	<i>Beck Depression Inventory</i>
CBT	<i>Cognitive Behavioral Therapy</i>
CNKI	<i>China National Knowledge Infrastructure</i>
COVID-19	<i>Corona Virus Disease 2019</i>
CI	<i>Confidence Interval</i>
ExAT	<i>Expressive Arts Therapy</i>
MBI	<i>Maslach Burnout Inventory</i>
M	<i>Mean</i>
MBI-HSS	<i>Maslach Burnout Inventory-Human Services Survey</i>
MBI-Form Ed.	<i>Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey</i>
NCEE	<i>National College Entrance Examination</i>
PCEAT	<i>Person-centered Expressive Arts Therapy</i>
PCT	<i>Person-centered Therapy</i>
RO	<i>Research Objective</i>
RQ	<i>Research Question</i>
REBT	<i>Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy</i>
SPSS	<i>Statistical Program for Social Sciences</i>
UNESCO	<i>United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization</i>

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter comprehensively covered the context, problem description, research topics, research goals, theoretical basis, conceptual structure, term explanations, and study boundaries of this research. First, this study discussed the problem of academic burnout faced by higher vocational students and its negative impact on their studies and development. The study's primary issues were then clarified, along with the study's goals and significance. Then, this study presented person-centered expressive arts therapy (PCEAT) as the theoretical framework and examines its potential to reduce academic burnout. In addition, this study also introduced the research framework, definitions, and limitations of this study. The information in this chapter provided readers with a thorough grasp of this study's context, purpose, and framework.

1.2 Background of the Study

Academic burnout is increasingly recognized as a major psychological challenge affecting students globally. Initially introduced by Freudenberg and Maslach in the 1970s to describe extreme exhaustion due to prolonged stress, the concept has since been applied to the academic context. Student burnout manifests as emotional exhaustion, behavioral disengagement, and a significant decline in academic efficacy. It has been linked to absenteeism, low academic performance, depression, physical illness, and even substance abuse (Schaufeli et al., 2002; May et al., 2015a, 2015b). It

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Appendix A
Research Questionnaire

Dear respondent,

I am a PhD candidate undergoing full time study at Universiti Utara Malaysia. As part of the requirements of the program, I am currently undertaking a survey research title: **A Study of Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy in Group Psychoeducation to Reduce Academic Burnout among Higher Vocational College Students.** In this regard, you have been duly selected as a member of the sample for the study.

You are kindly requested to spare your time and complete this questionnaire form. All the responses will be treated confidential and use for academic purpose only.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Zhang Bo

PhD Candidate

College of Arts and Sciences

Universiti Utara Malaysia

Dear students:

In order to better understand your situation regarding learning, we sincerely invite you to assist us in completing the following questionnaire. The content of this questionnaire will be kept confidential, please feel free to fill it out truthfully. There is no right or wrong answer to all questions, we look forward to your honest answer. Please do not miss any question, thank you for your cooperation!

Section A: Respondents Background

Please fill in the blank space or tick the appropriate box to show your background.

1. Gender:
2. Grade:
3. Major: A. Science and engineering class B.liberal arts class

Section B

Instruction to respondents: In order to give a response to the items of the questionnaires in Section B, Please, use the key below to select your options for each statement and tick ($\checkmark$) as appropriate in the answer options 1 to 5.

1	2	3	4	5
Completely disagree	Disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Completely agree

No	STATEMENTS	1	2	3	4	5

1	I have my own study methods and plans, and I can put them into practice.					
2	I feel that the knowledge I am learning is useless.					
3	It is easy for me to master professional knowledge.					
4	I feel exhausted when I think about facing a day of studying early in the morning.					
5	It is hard for me to maintain enthusiasm for studying for a long time.					
6	I can calmly deal with my emotional problems when studying.					
7	I feel drained after a whole day of studying.					
8	So far, college study has allowed me to fully demonstrate my abilities.					
9	I feel bored with studying.					
10	I rarely study after class.					
11	I am competent in my college courses.					
12	I often doze off while studying.					
13	I am very interested in my major.					
14	I feel I lack patience in studying.					
15	It is easy for me to obtain a					

	degree.					
16	I only read books when there is an exam.					
17	I want to study but find it boring.					
18	Studying makes me feel energetic.					
19	I rarely plan my study time.					
20	Exams always make me feel bored.					

