



## Letter to the Editor

# Moderating role of CBT-based art and expressive eclectic nursing interventions on anger and assertiveness: An interventional study: Letter on mahire olcay çam et al.

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### Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to the recently published article by Çam et al.<sup>[1]</sup> "Moderating role of CBT-based art and expressive eclectic nursing interventions on anger and assertiveness: An interventional study" in the Journal of Psychiatric Nursing. This study represents an important contribution to the growing body of evidence on the integration of cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) principles with art-based and expressive modalities in psychiatric nursing education. The authors' focus on undergraduate nursing students, a population often overlooked in intervention research, underscores the critical need to equip future nurses with emotional regulation and communication skills that are foundational to both professional resilience and patient care quality.

Several aspects of this research deserve commendation. By combining CBT techniques with psychodrama warm-up games and expressive art therapy, the authors created a truly eclectic intervention. This hybrid approach reflects the multi-dimensional nature of anger and assertiveness, which cannot be adequately addressed by cognitive restructuring alone. The inclusion of creative expression allowed participants to externalize emotions, while CBT provided structured strategies for reframing and regulating them. Despite the small sample size, the study employed a robust pretest-posttest-follow-up design, with validated instruments (STAXI and RAI) and appropriate statistical analyses.<sup>[2-5]</sup> The use of repeated measures ANOVA, Friedman tests, and regression analyses ensured that

both short- and long-term effects were carefully examined. The intervention was embedded within the context of nursing education, aligning with the second-year curriculum when students first encounter patient care.<sup>[3,4]</sup> This timing is strategic, as emotional regulation and assertiveness are particularly critical during the transition from theoretical learning to clinical practice. Moreover, the program was short-term, cost-effective, and delivered by psychiatric nursing specialists with expertise in CBT, psychodrama, and art therapy. Such feasibility enhances the potential for replication across nursing faculties globally.

While the study is laudable, several points merit further discussion. The intervention was tested on a small group of 16 students, predominantly female, from a single institution. Although the achieved statistical power was high, the findings may not be generalizable to broader nursing populations, including male students, students from diverse cultural backgrounds, or those in different stages of training. Future research should consider multi-site trials with larger, more heterogeneous samples. Another important issue is the sustainability of anger regulation outcomes. The study found that reductions in anger (Trait Anger, Anger-In, Anger-Out) were significant in the short term but not sustained at follow-up. This raises important questions about the durability of CBT-art interventions.<sup>[6]</sup> Assertiveness gains persisted, but anger regulation appeared to require reinforcement. This suggests that booster sessions, ongoing reflective practice, or integration into routine coursework may be necessary to maintain long-term benefits.

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Interestingly, short-term changes in anger and assertiveness did not predict each other, but a significant long-term relationship emerged between RAI scores and STAXI Anger-In scores. This finding highlights the complexity of emotional regulation: while assertiveness training may not immediately alter anger expression, over time it may reduce the tendency to suppress anger. This delayed effect warrants deeper exploration, perhaps through qualitative interviews or longitudinal mixed-methods designs. Cultural considerations also deserve attention. The study was conducted in Türkiye, where cultural norms around anger expression and assertiveness may differ from those in other contexts. For example, collectivist cultures often discourage overt anger expression, while assertiveness may be perceived differently across gender roles. Cross-cultural replication would enrich understanding of how eclectic interventions interact with sociocultural expectations. Although STAXI and RAI are validated tools, their reliance on self-report may introduce bias. Incorporating observational measures, peer evaluations, or physiological indicators such as heart rate variability during anger episodes could provide a more comprehensive assessment of intervention outcomes.

The findings of Çam et al.<sup>[1]</sup> have several practical implications. Nursing faculties should consider embedding CBT-based art and expressive interventions into communication skills courses. Doing so would not only enhance students' emotional regulation but also foster resilience against burnout, a pressing issue in nursing worldwide. The eclectic nature of the intervention underscores the value of collaboration between psychiatric nurses, art therapists, and psychodramatists. Such partnerships enrich the educational experience and expose students to diverse therapeutic modalities. By equipping nursing students with anger regulation and assertiveness skills early in their training, institutions can proactively reduce the risk of future mental health challenges, interpersonal conflicts, and professional attrition. Given the cost-effectiveness of the program, it could be adapted for online or hybrid delivery, particularly in resource-limited settings. Digital platforms could incorporate guided art exercises, CBT modules, and virtual group discussions to reach wider audiences.

Building on this study, I propose several directions for future inquiry. Longitudinal studies tracking nursing students across their academic journey and into professional practice would clarify whether early interventions translate into sustained resilience and improved patient care outcomes. Randomized controlled trials comparing eclectic interventions with standard communication skills training would strengthen causal claims and highlight relative effectiveness. Incorporating qualitative methods such as focus groups or reflective journals would capture the nuanced ex-

periences of participants, particularly how they perceive the role of art and expression in emotional regulation. Future studies could examine whether students trained in eclectic interventions demonstrate improved communication with patients, reduced conflict in clinical settings, and enhanced therapeutic relationships. Extending such interventions to other health professions, including medicine, social work, and psychology, could foster interprofessional education and collaborative practice.

Çam et al.'s<sup>[1]</sup> study is a timely and valuable contribution to psychiatric nursing education. By demonstrating that CBT-based art and expressive eclectic interventions can enhance assertiveness and, at least in the short term, regulate anger among nursing students, the authors highlight a promising pathway for integrating creative and cognitive approaches into curricula. While questions remain about sustainability, generalizability, and cultural applicability, the study provides a strong foundation for future research and practice. As nursing education continues to grapple with the challenges of burnout, emotional regulation, and communication barriers, innovative interventions such as this one are essential. I commend the authors for their pioneering work and encourage further exploration of eclectic, art-integrated approaches to foster resilience and well-being among the next generation of nurses.

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