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Essay

Puppets in Psychotherapy

An international web based study among clinicians

Psychotherapy Program (60 ECTS), Umeå University, Sweden

Eine internationale internetbasierte Studie „Puppen in der Psychotherapie“



“Among the most valuable yet, paradoxically, the least understood and utilized of these (play) materials are puppets. A random assortment of puppets is generally included in most playroom supplies, but the clinician is usually left to learn about their use (and misuse) in vivo, and thus often fail to explore their rich potential.”

Eleanor C Irwin (2002, p.101) Using puppets for assessment

Zu den wertvollsten, paradoxerweise am wenigsten verstandenen und genutzten Spielmaterialien gehören die Puppen. Einen zufälligen Bestand daran gibt es in jedem Spielzimmer. Dem Behandler bleibt meist nur, ihren Gebrauch im Tun zu erforschen und oftmals wird so das große Potential der Puppen verfehlt. (E.C. Irwin)



Background information

- **How and for whom** are puppets used in therapy?
- Can puppets be a useful tool in psychotherapy?
- Questionnaire with quantitative and qualitative answers
- Responses from 33 participants (n = 33) in 11 countries
- Thematic analysis resulting in six dimensions

Wie und für wen sind Puppen in der Therapie nützlich? Online-Fragebogen mit 33 Teilnehmern aus 11 Ländern. Thematische Analyse in sechs Dimensionen.

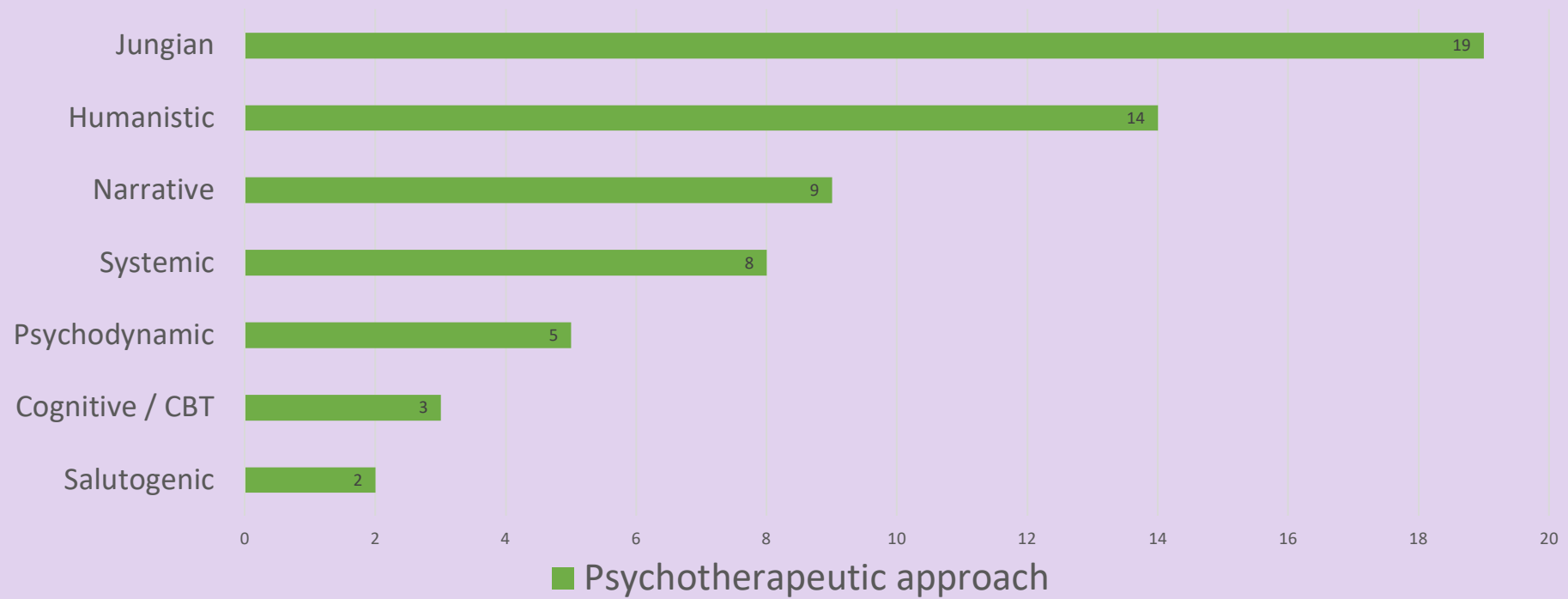


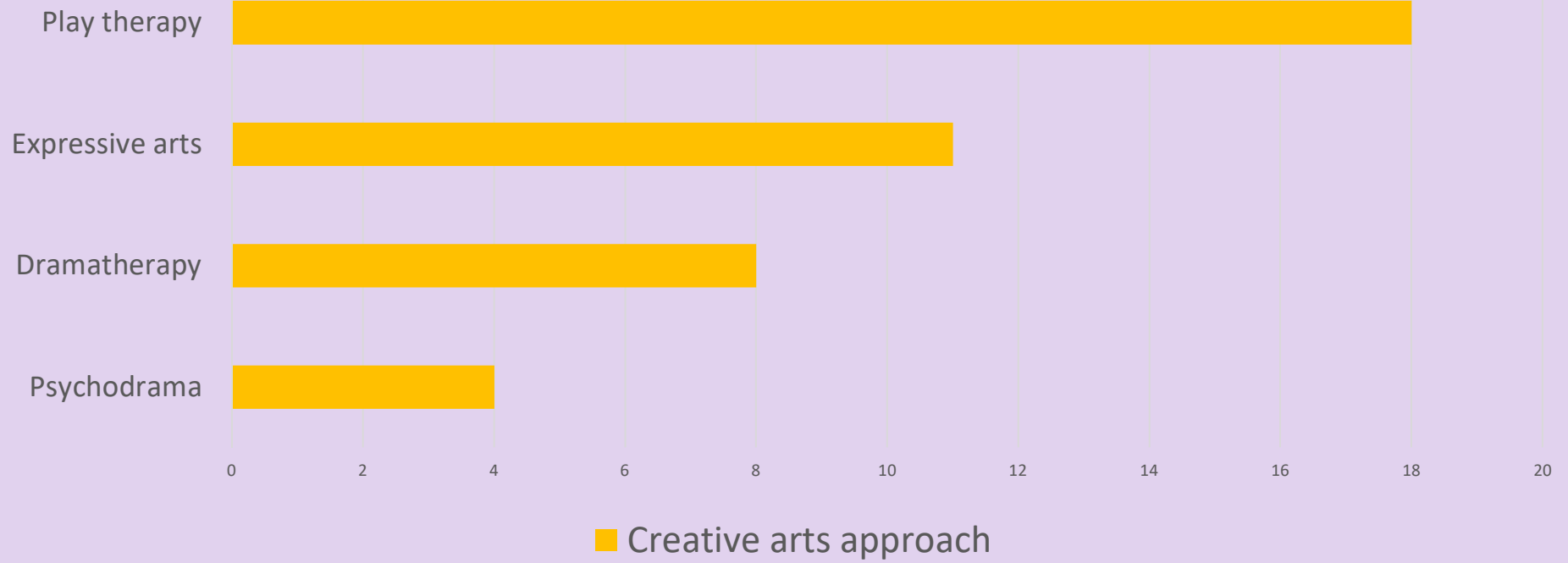
“Puppets offer a quicker way to access inner life than words alone or even other art processes such as drawing or painting. Animating the puppets leads to animating inner life and enhances interactions with the therapist or group members.

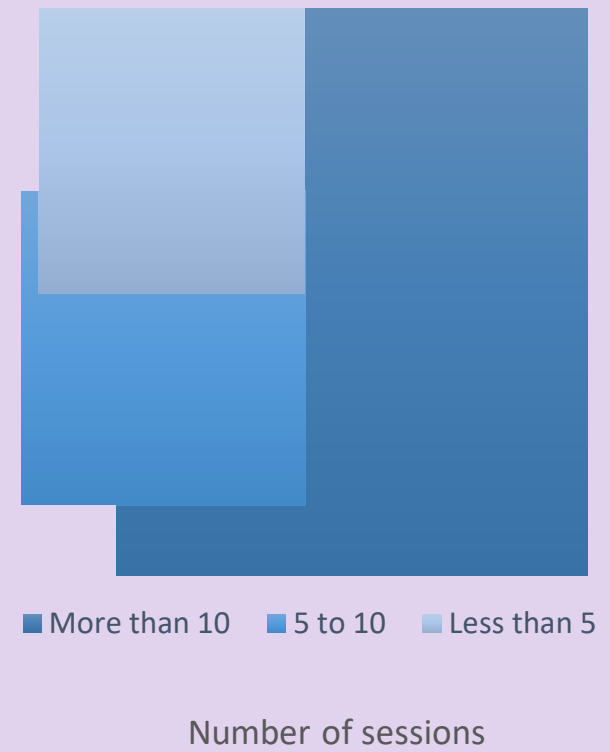
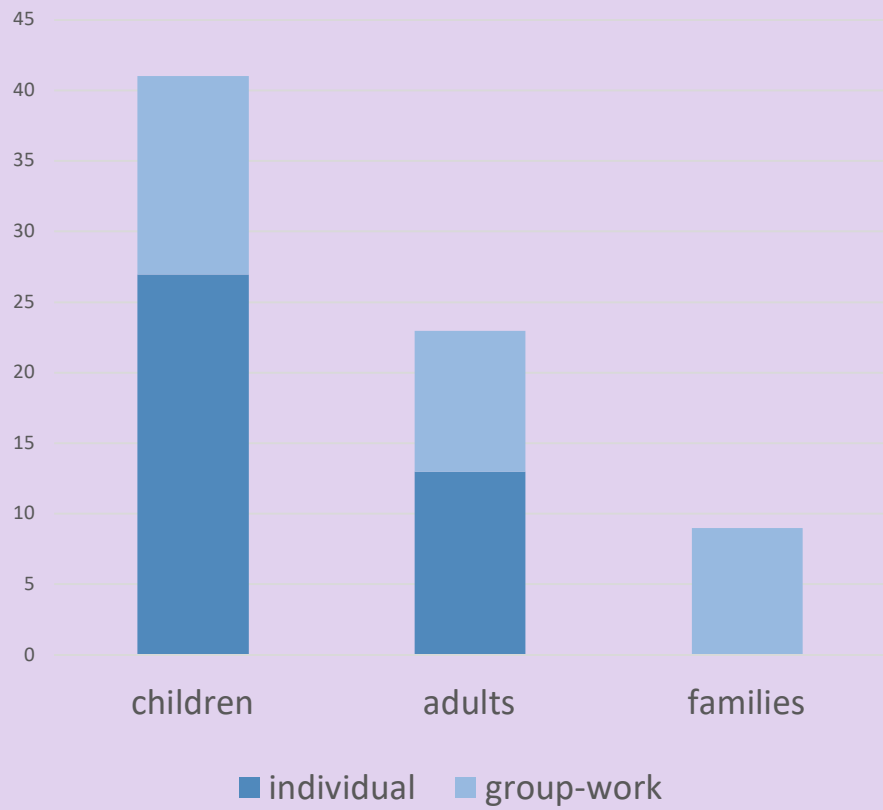
(Participant quote)

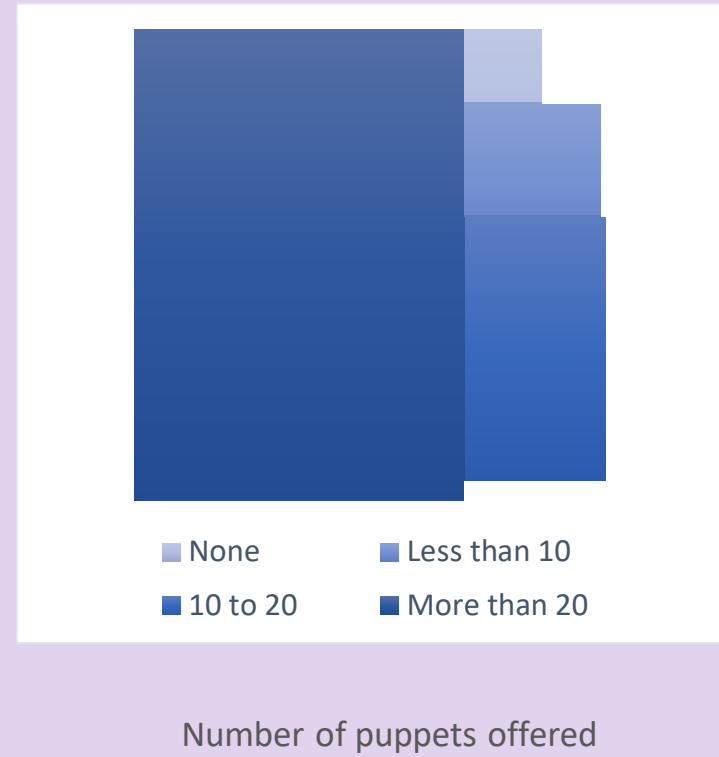
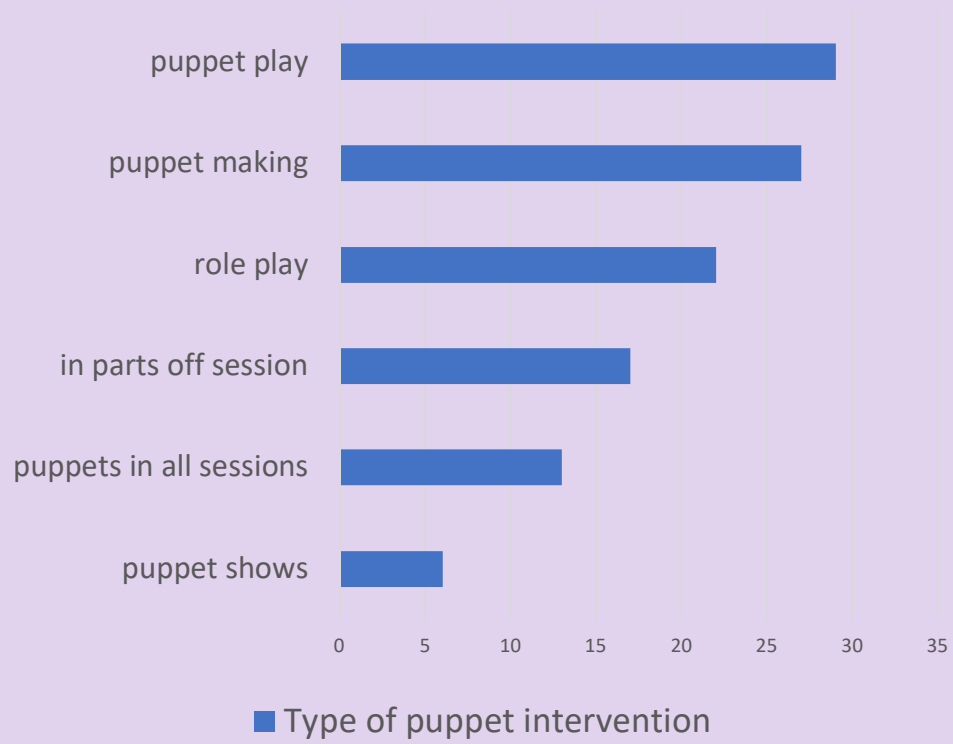
Puppen eröffnen einen schnelleren Zugang zum Inneren als Worte oder andere Medien wie Malen. Eine Puppe zu animieren, animiert auch das innere Leben und verbessert die Interaktion mit dem Therapeuten oder der Gruppe. (Teilnehmer)

Results - quantitative information – How?









A woman in a blue dress is performing a circus-style aerial act on a wire. She is suspended in the air, with her arms and legs outstretched. The background is a vibrant, abstract scene with large, colorful spheres and a soft, glowing light. The overall mood is artistic and dynamic.

Participants working mainly

- 57 % non-directive (child-centered)
- 0 % directive
- 36 % mixed

Arbeitsweisen



Many types of puppets

- human-like puppets
- animal puppets
- symbolic puppets

Puppenarten: menschenähnliche – Tiere – symbolische



Qualitative result - six dimensions

1. Projective dimension
2. Symbolic dimension
3. Relational dimension
4. Empowering dimension
5. Evocative dimension
6. Transformative dimension

Auswertungsdimensionen: projektiv, symbolisch, beziehungsmaßig, befähigend, erweckend, verändernd



Examples – focusing For whom?

“Children who are to some extent capable of using language and who are to some extent able to communicate with me as a therapist.”

Antwortbeispiele: Für wen? „Kinder, die halbwegs der Sprache mächtig sind und mit mir als Therapeuten kommunizieren können.“



“I find that people of all ages can benefit greatly from puppet-therapy. For children between 3 and 8 years, however, it is a very helpful method for them to express themselves...”

„Alle Alter profitieren. Kinder zwischen 3 und 8 Jahren hilft es, sich selbst auszudrücken.“



“Children with low confidence and low self esteem, aggressive children, children needing to make sense of a challenge in their lives.”

„Kinder mit niedrigem Selbstvertrauen. Aggressive Kinder. Kinder, die Lebensereignissen einen Sinn geben müssen.“



“Children who are inhibited, those who refuse to be received individually, hyperactive children, psychosocial problems, psychic trauma...”

“Clients with a strong "inner child", without serious childhood trauma.”

„Gehemmte oder verweigernde Kinder, Hyperaktivität, Psychosoziale Problematiken, Psychotraumata. Klienten mit einem starken „Inneren Kind“ ohne ernsthaftes Kindheitstrauma.“



“All children who suffer from emotional instability and children who have problems in social behaving.”

“Clients who are not able to speak about what they feel in their inner mind.”

“Adult persons without speak (e.g. after a stroke) or mentally disabled persons.”

„Emotionale Instabilität und Verhaltensprobleme. Schwierigkeiten, innere Bewegungen zu besprechen. Nicht sprechende Erwachsene und psychisch Kranke.“



Less beneficial to work with

- Psychotic, delusional clients, severe autism
- Clients with profound identity disorders
- Children who get scared of the puppet
- Very shy clients
- Highly intellectual or cognitively orientated
- Customers with a strong "controlling parent" or rigid psychological defenses

Antwortbeispiele: Weniger geeignet für: Psychosen, Wahnvorstellungen, starker Autismus, ausgeprägte Identitätsstörungen, sehr ängstliche Kinder, stark rational oder Kontroll-Orientierte, starre Schutzmuster



- Angered who destroy the puppet and do not take responsibility for its actions
- Children who continue to live in instabile circumstances
- People with negative preconceptions
- Children not able to play
- Specific age groups (teenagers, young adults, adults and children aged less than 2½)

Puppen zerstörende und missachtende Klienten, fortbestehende unsichere Lebensverhältnisse, negative Vorurteile, Unfähigkeit zu spielen, spez. Altersgruppen (Teenager, junge Erwachsene, Erwachsene, Kinder unter 2,6)

A woman in a blue dress is performing a circus act on a wire. She is upside down, with her arms and legs spread out. The background is a vibrant, colorful space scene with various planets and stars. The colors are a mix of purple, blue, and green. The woman's shadow is cast on the ground below her.

Thank You for listening!

For questions or full text essay e-mail: info@asaviklund.se

Danke für die Aufmerksamkeit!