

# The Impact of Postmodernism Thought on The Development of Needs for Therapeutic Arts

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**Abstract.** The postmodernism idea is a form of improvement over modernism in various fields of life, including science and art. Postmodernism was a reaction to the modernist movement, which he considered to have failed. The failure of modernism is characterized by rationalism, materialism, and capitalism supported by science, technology, and art, resulting in the emergence of religious moral disorientation, especially the collapse of human dignity. The condition is where conflicts hit humans socially, spiritually, and psychologically. The existence of this conflict and the psychological symptoms that hinder the potential of human life require therapy. However, existing psychological therapy is considered to have not been successful; therefore, the need for "therapeutic art" can be accommodated by the birth of the postmodernist idea, which is characterized by pluralistic thinking and open democracy in all aspects of life.

**Keywords:** postmodernism; impact; therapeutic arts.

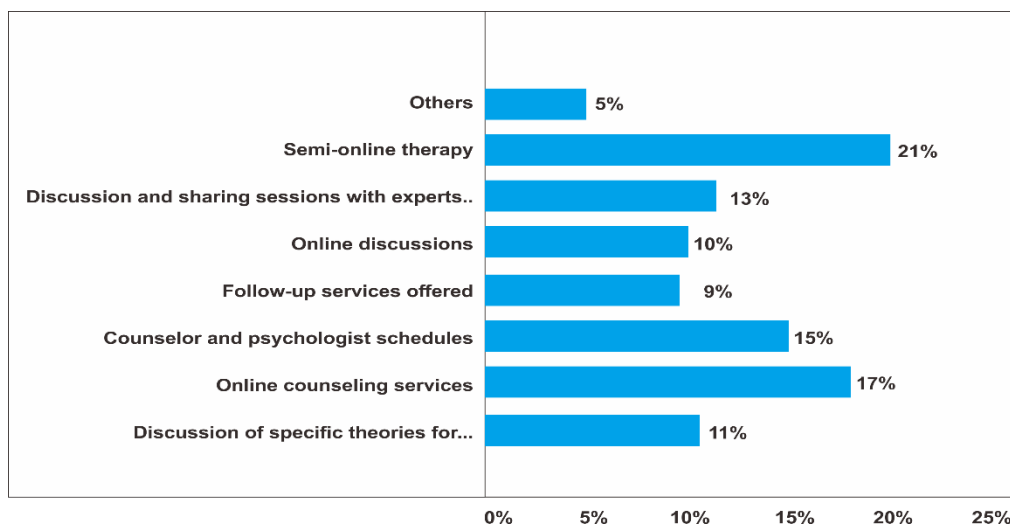
## 1 Introduction

The development of thought from time to time continues to change in various ways; of course, this cannot be separated from the desire of humans who always want change because of increasing problems and needs. If we go back to the past, it would certainly not be surprising to see developments in various domains of life, especially in scientific matters. Life continues to evolve and develop as people grow older, giving birth to thoughts and striving to build their lives in various ways.

Likewise, in the field of art, which, of course, always experiences developments from year to year or from century to century. Because of the nature of humans who are constantly dissatisfied, especially in creating art that adapts to the needs of the times. As a result of existing thoughts, they will think about being able to develop and even re-test findings regarding products and artistic activities and artistic creation. Then, humans will experience change and development. From these changes and developments, humans will experience various conflicts. These conflicts are, of course, to move towards something more perfect along with the

development and progress of human thought. The increasing number of disputes in humans, both individually and in groups, triggers various mental disorders such as anxiety, depression, and others, which will be dangerous if therapy is not immediately obtained.

This has all become inevitable with Postmodernism, which emerged due to the failure of modernism to elevate human dignity. For Postmodernism, modernism has failed to keep its promise to bring better human life and the absence of violence. The development of science and technology during modernism brought destruction to humans, and wars occurred everywhere, resulting in human suffering. The view of modernism assumes that the truth of science must be absolute and objective, without human value. This is where Postmodernism emerges, a continuation, discontinuity and correction of modernism to provide new thinking and solutions in living this increasingly complex life. In postmodernist thought, science is not objective but subjective, and it is the interpretation of humans themselves so that truth is relative. Therefore, phenomena related to the importance of therapeutic art are issues that need to be raised in line with postmodernist thinking. It is said that this postmodernism era has impacted society's need for therapeutic arts. Data on community needs for therapeutic arts is presented below.



**Fig. 1.** Society's Need for Therapeutic Arts (Source: Career Development Center Data, October 2023)

The data above shows that therapeutic arts or therapy to overcome psychological disorders is needed and is the most common choice. Therefore, in writing the paper, the discussion focuses on Postmodernism, which is the development of thinking about science, characterized by shifts, stories, and even continuations of modernism. This will influence works in the field of design science, especially the need for therapeutic art, which is urgent in this era of Postmodernism. This is the fact that the presence of Postmodernism brings changes and problems that must be resolved.

Based on the background above, problems are identified related to (1) how Postmodernism thought was born, (2) what are the advantages and disadvantages of

Postmodernism; and (3) what is the need for therapeutic art in the postmodern era. An explanation of each point is presented as follows.

## **2 Research Methods**

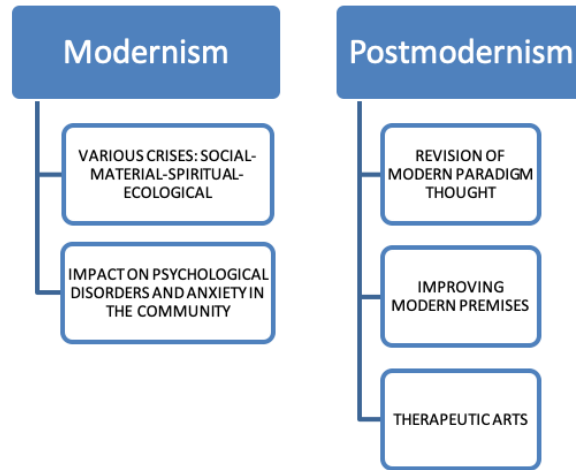
This research uses the systematic literature review (SLR) method. In this study, SLR refers to Mallett, Hagen-Zanker, Slater, & Duvendack [8]. The research implementation implemented a systematic review and used the following steps: (1) identification of topics and development of inclusion and exclusion; (2) filtration and extraction; and (3) analysis and synthesis [3]. Data was collected by tracking scientific articles and sourcebooks discussing the postmodernism paradigm and therapeutic arts. Data was collected using the Mendeley scientific article search page via <https://www.mendeley.com/search/>. Researchers use these keywords to focus searches. Relevant source articles and books are obtained in pdf format. It is synchronized in reference management in the form of a research information system (RIS). Data validation uses theoretical triangulation. Next, to focus the research, researchers carried out several filters. Data analysis using fixed comparisons follows [3]. The research results are presented in the form of statements surrounded by diagrams.

## **3 Result and Discussion**

### **3.1 The Urgency Of Postmodernism Thought And Its Application In The Therapeutic Arts**

Postmodernist thinking gave birth to a relatively new art form already known to many people, even though people only see the term or designation. The concrete manifestation of Postmodernism in art certainly concerns the meaning or concept of postmodern art. Before interpreting what the tangible form of postmodernist art looks like using the images put forward in this paper, it is necessary to first trace the beginnings of the emergence of the postmodernist movement. The emergence of Postmodernism was triggered by modernism. The dominance of science became the main characteristic of modernism, and as a result, the social order changed utterly.

Changes in the social order are only sometimes felt to be good and considered profitable. As a result, it also gives rise to various dire consequences for human life and nature in general. What exists in modernism, according to Sugiharto [10], is 1) a view that divides all reality into subject and object, spiritual-material and so on which results in excessive objectivization of nature and excessive destruction of nature and results in an ecological crisis, 2) a view that is objectivity and positivity which results in humans being equated with objects and ultimately society is engineered like a machine, 3) positive-empirical sciences are used as the highest standard of truth, 4) materialism becomes the prima donna, religion is no longer the basis for guiding life, 5) because moral and religious values were ignored, militarism emerged. Power is protected by violence. This violence is to regulate humans, and 6) the resurgence of tribalism or favouring extreme tribal groups. The urgency of postmodernist thinking and its application to support the need for therapeutic art is visualized in the following picture.



**Fig. 2.** The Urgency of Postmodernist Thought and Its Application in Therapeutic Arts

From these conditions, postmodernist thinking emerged, which is still part of modernism but is against modernism. The advantage of Postmodernism is in its rejection of the universal conception of human nature or the meaning of human life, as well as the rejection of the Western assumption as a representative of cultures to live side by side without the need to disturb each other's freedom, without interfering with each other's conception and moral goodness. In terms of the negative consequences of modernism, it ultimately triggered various postmodern movements that wanted to revise the modern paradigm. In this condition, Postmodernism emerges, which is still part of modernism but is against modernism.

The virtue of Postmodernism is its rejection of the universal conception of human nature or the meaning of human life, as well as its rejection of the assumption that the West is a representative of cultures to live side by side without the need to disturb each other's freedom, without interfering with each other's conception and moral goodness. In terms of the negative consequences of modernism, it ultimately triggered various postmodernist movements which wanted to revise the modern paradigm.

First, thoughts in the context of revising modernity tend to return to premodern thinking patterns. Second, studies related to literature and many dealing with linguistic issues. Third, accept modernism altogether but renew parts of modernism. Here, Postmodernism tends to appreciate the dynamicity of science and is 'anti-' stagnant understanding and meaning in developing science. This is where postmodernist thinking is embraced by "Psychology", which is used in an interdisciplinary manner in the application of "Therapeutic Arts" to overcome the problems of mental disorders starting from the lowest, namely anxiety. This is because Postmodernism does not want stagnant thinking but dynamic thinking

### **3.2 The Birth Of Postmodernism Thought**

The birth of Postmodernism cannot be separated from modernism itself. The word modernism means being advanced, sparkling, and progressive. Modernism always promises audiences to bring change to a more established world. From here, all needs will be met. Rationality will help audiences face baseless traditional beliefs, which make humans helpless in facing this world [2].

Postmodernism has become a buzzword in contemporary society over the last decade. Butler [1] explains the main ideas of the founders of Postmodernism. In the explanation, their involvement with various theories of social humanities, such as visual arts, film, architecture and music, is stated. In this case, artists, intellectuals, critics and social scientists are treated as supporters of the development of Postmodernism.

According to Anthony Giddens, modernism has created a proliferation of disasters for humanity. First, the use of violence to resolve disputes. Second, oppression by the strong over the weak. Third, social inequality is getting worse. Fourth, the damage to life is increasingly worrying [7].

We can understand the fall of modernism and the emergence of Postmodernism from the philosophical thoughts of Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), as quoted by Ali Maksum, who opposed rational and reasonable reconstructions that determine the validity of the truth of something. Something is said to be confirmed by the consensus or rules that apply in the modern world, namely rational and objective. However, this differs from Kierkegaard, who argued that truth is subjective [5]. Truth is subjectivity, meaning that the opinion about personal truth emphasizes the importance of the experiences experienced by an individual, which is considered relative.

Symptoms of Postmodernism have spread to various areas of life, including science. This was a reaction to the modernist movement, which he considered to have failed. The developing modernism characterized by rationalism, materialism and capitalism, supported by technological developments, gives rise to religious moral disorientation with the collapse of human dignity [5].

He presented a new idea called Postmodernism from these opinions, figures and thinkers. The birth of Postmodernism was in the context of deconstructing paradigms in various scientific fields. This deconstruction appears as an attempt to correct or create and even discover a new paradigm. Derrida and Lyotard [4] state that Postmodernism is the antithesis of modernism. Almost all the terms proposed by Postmodernism are the antithesis of modernism. The birth of Postmodernism created a new term and resulted in differences from modernism.

### **3.3 Advantages And Weaknesses Of Postmodernism**

The advantages of Postmodernism include that the postmodernist perspective can make people sensitive to the possibility that positive discourse and ethical principles can be twisted and used to oppress humans. Human dignity must be upheld, as freedom is a high value, but it could happen that the name of freedom for a group of people will be abolished. Postmodernism helps make people aware. From here, there is an awareness that all big stories need to be suspected

and need to be careful so that they do not turn into an imposition that only wants to listen to one's voice and requires different voices from outside [11]. Thus, postmodernism has a positive aspect, namely openness to the diversity of society, tolerance, resistance to monopoly, and dominance of certain religions, sects, and ideologies, to benefit democracy.

Apart from these advantages, Zapurkhan stated that there is at least a weakness in Postmodernism, namely the existence of groups that defend community traditions, then noted that many community traditions conflict with general rules. Moreover, Postmodernism does not distinguish between ideology, on the one hand, and universal principles of open ethics, on the other. Thirdly, Postmodernism demands that society accept contradictory things [11].

### **3.4 The Impact Of Postmodernism On The Need For The Therapeutic Arts**

Modernism views empirical positive sciences or science as inevitably being the highest standard of truth. This means an objective and positivist view of modernism. It is resulting in moral and religious values losing authority. Then, a moral-religious disorientation arises towards violence, alienation and disorientation in life [9].

Adherents of Postmodernism admit that there is an approach in science, including art and especially therapeutic art, which definitely uses a methodological approach, including anti-objective interpretation and deconstruction. Postmodernism is understood as unlimited interpretation. Thus, in the postmodernist view, the need for therapeutic art for society is subjective. The implication is that in this era of Postmodernism, there is turmoil which gives rise to various symptoms or conditions of mental disorders, both individually and in groups. Therefore, the birth of Postmodernism also gave rise to the world's need for therapeutic art.

From the thoughts above, postmodernists admit that there is only the relativity of plural existence. Therefore, it is necessary to change the general public's understanding from totalizing thinking to pluralistic and open democracy in all aspects of life. The postmodernist view emphasizes plurality, differences, heterogeneity, local/ethnic culture, and everyday life experiences. Such statements can bridge the need for therapeutic arts in this postmodern era.

### **3.5 The Relevance Of The Therapeutic Arts For Life In The Era Of Postmodernism**

The spirit of Postmodernism in the development of therapeutic art, which is an interdisciplinary study between art design and psychology, actually has a basic assumption of the existence of conflicts between humans. A perspective that assumes a contradiction between human nature and society. But it is more about looking at a 'healthy' self-concept in the dynamics of a 'healthy' society. Understanding mental health or illness does not only prioritize the analysis of individual factors but also the structure of society. A prosperous society and environment promote the individual's ability to love others, work creatively, develop reason and objectivity, and have a selfhood based on the development of the productive forces inherent in oneself. This is where the role of therapeutic art is needed by society in the postmodern era. Mental health cannot be limited to 'individual adjustment' to society or the surrounding environment. However, we must look more closely at the adjustments embodied in this Postmodernism era.

## 4 Conclusion

Postmodernism in philosophy and science is all criticism of universal knowledge, metaphysical traditions, foundationalism and modernism. Postmodernism is a movement of ideas that replaces the views of the modern era. The phenomenon of postmodernism, which has spread to various areas of life, including science and art, is a reaction to the modernist movement, which is considered to have failed.

The failure of modernism, which developed and was characterized by rationalism, materialism, and capitalism supported by science, technology, and art, resulted in religious moral disorientation, especially the collapse of human dignity. This is where conflicts hit humans socially, spiritually and psychologically.

The emergence of these conflicts ultimately gave rise to various psychiatric problems, which ultimately encouraged experts to create clinical therapy efforts. This clinical therapy refers to the ideology of modernism, which is considered to have failed. Therefore, in this era of Postmodernism, "Therapeutic Arts" can have the opportunity to develop because of this postmodernist understanding because postmodernist thinking has been supported by pluralistic thinking and open democracy in all aspects of life.

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