

Exploring Childhood Memories Through Photography and Arts: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

This systematic literature review explores the interaction of photography, childhood memories, and the arts, emphasising their significance in self-awareness, emotional healing, and personal development. Childhood memories, essential for the formation of identity and personality, can be re-evaluated through artistic practices, providing insights into prior experiences and promoting emotional healing. Photography, unlike conventional art forms, offers a distinctive combination of realism and abstraction, functioning as an effective medium for examining memory, identity, and trauma. This review integrates theoretical frameworks and research findings, highlighting the capacity of creative involvement to stimulate human inquiry and self-discovery. Prominent themes discerned in the literature are historical and cultural viewpoints on memory, the representation of invisible elements of childhood, the sensory and emotional aspects of memory recall, and the function of art in confronting childhood trauma. The work of artists like Frida Kahlo and Paul Klee illustrates the impact of formative events on artistic expression, providing deep emotional understanding. The review also identifies deficiencies in current research, specifically the insufficient examination of the incorporation of art and photography into therapy methodologies for trauma and memory. The article finishes by suggesting avenues for future research, emphasising the application of new media and sensory engagement to augment the therapeutic efficacy of photography and art in memory exploration.

Keywords: photography, childhood memories, arts, trauma.

INTRODUCTION

Art serves as a profound medium that connects individuals to their inner world, facilitating self-awareness and exploration through photography. Through artistic expression, people can explore and reinterpret childhood memories, which are pivotal in shaping their identities. This intersection of photography, childhood memories, and the arts has garnered increasing interest due to its potential for emotional healing and personal growth. The connection between photography, childhood memories, and the arts has attracted growing interest for its ability to support emotional healing and personal development. Despite increasing recognition of the value of self-reflection and mental wellness, there is still a notable gap in understanding how photography can reveal hidden memories and encourage self-discovery (Barthes, 1981; Sontag, 2001). Esteemed artists across history have illustrated the connection between their creative processes and their formative experiences. Paul Klee, a significant figure in contemporary art, frequently derived inspiration from his early interest with colour and form, merging innocence and complexity in his creations. Likewise, Frida Kahlo's striking selfportraits convey both her physical suffering and the mental wounds from a turbulent childhood. These artists illustrate how reliving early experiences through art may produce significant insights, both for the creator and the audience. This systematic literature review aims to bridge this gap by examining how artistic activities inspire photography, particularly in the context of childhood memories, while offering transformative benefits (Pennebaker & Seagal, 1999). A recent study by Hansen et al. (2020) emphasises that "artistic engagement functions as a mirror, reflecting not only our identity but also the environments and experiences that have

influenced us." This reflecting process is especially powerful when centred on childhood, a period marked by increased emotional intensity and developmental importance.

Photography, as an art form, holds a distinctive role in the creative world, integrating technical accuracy with artistic expression. Unlike traditional art forms such as painting or sculpture, photography captures light and time, allowing for both realism and abstraction, thus offering endless possibilities for interpretation and creativity. Within the realm of art, photography interrogates the limits of representation, functioning as a medium to examine issues including identity, memory, and social critique (Cotton, 2020). Artistic photography frequently surpasses simple recording, employing composition, lighting, and post-processing methods to elicit emotions and stimulate contemplation, so serving as a vital element of modern art movements (Clarke, 2017). The digital era has broadened the artistic possibilities of photography, allowing producers to explore multimedia integrations and computational aesthetics, therefore changing the concept of art in a technologically evolved culture (Bate, 2016). Photography, by merging reality with imaginative vision, persistently influences and redefines the conversation surrounding visual art.

Childhood memories represent recollections from early life, generally spanning from birth to adolescence, and include sensory, emotional, and narrative events. These memories are essential in forming personality, worldview, and identity (Tulving, 1983). They include both consciously accessible events and those retained in the subconscious, gradually affecting behaviours and feelings. The artistic study of childhood memories aids individuals in contextualising past events, especially emotional ones, in order offering insights into current attitudes and behaviours. This method may produce both happy and awful experiences, each increasing the comprehension of an individual's life narrative (McAdams, 1993). Additionally, childhood memories are essential to the formation of identity. Conway and Pleydell-Pearce's (2000) self-memory system model argues that memories from formative years are crucial in constructing an individual's sense of self and life narrative.

Art comprises several forms of creative expression, such as visual arts, writing, music, photography, and performance. It functions as a universal medium for understanding and expressing human experiences. Artistic mediums allow individuals to explore complex emotions and memories, transforming them into solid expressions that promote and healing (Bernadac, 1998). Art therapy emphasises the transforming capacity of creativity in enhancing emotional resilience, self-awareness, and psychological well-being, making it an invaluable instrument for personal growth (Malchiodi, 2012).

Furthermore, this approach addresses an essential gap in the existing literature. While numerous studies explore memory, photography, and art therapy as separate domains, few examine their intersection with a specific focus on childhood memories as a tool for selfdiscovery. Christian Boltanski's body of work exemplifies how art can evoke powerful memories and emotions, yet it primarily operates within the realm of conceptual art, leaving practical applications for individual self-discovery relatively unexplored. Similarly, while art therapy emphasizes the therapeutic benefits of creativity, its broader implications for personal growth through childhood memory remain underdeveloped in research.

By integrating photography, childhood memories, and the arts, individuals can access a powerful pathway for self-exploration and personal growth. This review synthesizes theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence to examine how art helps people reflect on their childhood memories, promoting self-awareness and emotional healing. The objectives are two: (1) to explore how art supports personal growth through in childhood memories and (2) to analyze studies showcasing the benefits of art as a tool for self-reflection.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

PRISMA Statement (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses).

The PRISMA statement comprises guidelines to enhance the reporting of systematic reviews and meta-analyses. It has been expanded and modified to accommodate particular categories of reviews, including living systematic reviews (LSRs). These extensions improve transparency, comprehensiveness, and precision in reporting, thus promoting enhanced understanding and repeatability of systematic reviews. A study examining the influence of the PRISMA 2020 statement on systematic reviews in regeneration journals found minimal enhancements in

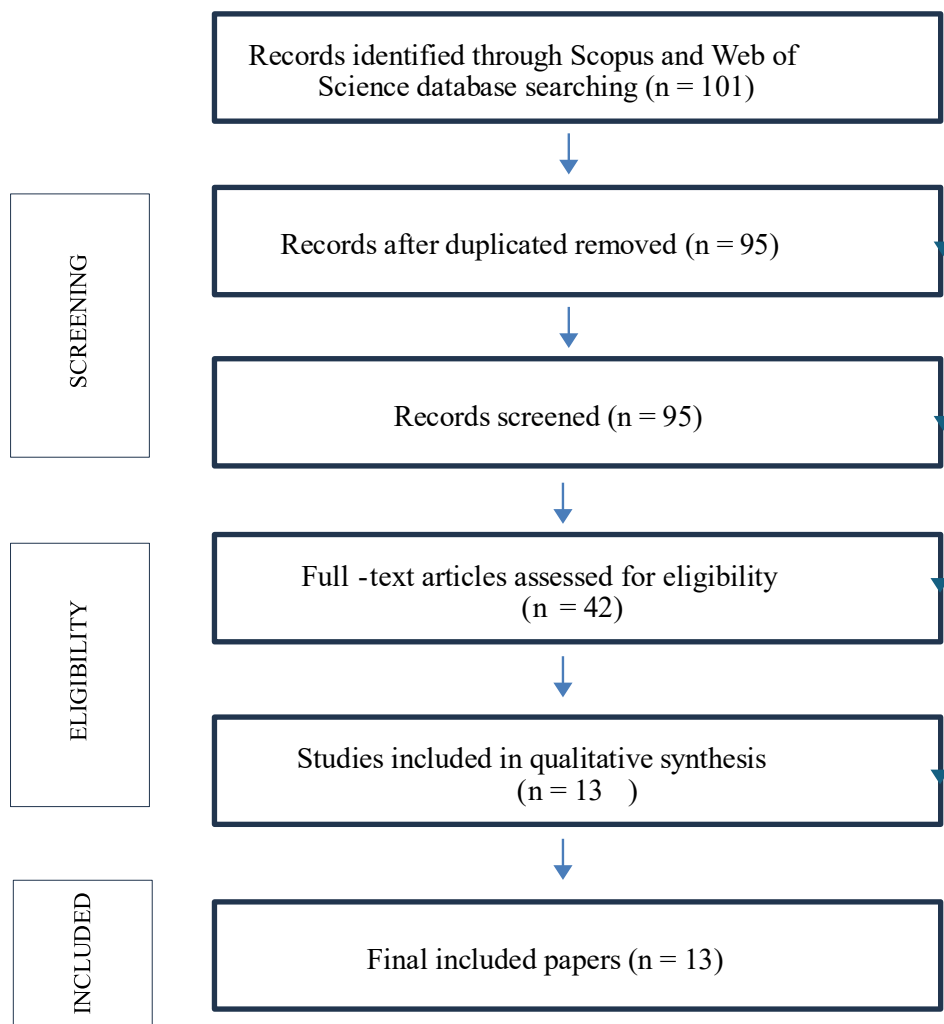
reporting quality. This indicates that although the PRISMA standards offer a framework, compliance with each item is essential for significant improvements (Tsuge et al., 2024).

Development of the Research Question

The PICO framework is a modification of the conventional PICO framework, designed for qualitative research in the social sciences. PICO is advantageous for formulating research questions, particularly in qualitative systematic reviews, as it assists authors in precisely delineating the population, phenomena of interest, and context, which are crucial for crafting targeted and pertinent questions. PICO is an acronym representing the three fundamental components of a research question: Problem, Interest, and Context. Within this framework, researchers articulate the problem they intend to tackle, distinctly identifying the principal issues or challenges. Interest pertains to particular facets of the subject that captivate the researcher and justify further inquiry. Context encompasses the overarching elements related to the research, including the environment, cultural influences, and pertinent social interactions. The PICO framework offers a systematic method for qualitative researchers to develop precise research questions, facilitating the investigation of intricate problems within a specified area of study. This study includes three main components in the review: Childhood Memories (Context), Photography (Interest), and Arts (Problem). This systematic review presents the following questions: 1) How do artistic activities help individuals reflect on their childhood memories and contribute to their personal growth? 2) What evidence exists to demonstrate the effectiveness of art as a tool for self-reflection and its potential benefits?

Systematic Searching Strategies

The systematic search strategies included three main methods: identification, screening, and eligibility appraisal.



Identification

Database	Search Strings
Scopus	(TITLE-ABS-KEY (childhood AND memory) AND PUBYEAR > 2019 AND PUBYEAR < 2025) AND (art OR photography) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA , "ARTS")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (OA , "all"))
WoS	Refine results for childhood memory (All Fields) and Art Or Photography (Search within all fields) and 2024 or 2023 or 2022 or 2021 or 2020 (Publication Years) and Article (Document Types) and English (Languages) and All Open Access (Open Access)

Screening

The eligibility phase entails a thorough evaluation by the authors to confirm that all articles retained post-screening meet the specified criteria. Engaging in the process necessitated the analysis of the titles and abstracts of the articles. The researcher examined a total of 101 articles. Six articles have been removed from this database due to similarities identified between two search platforms: WoS and Scopus. Of those, 95 were in the next phase. The selection of articles published from 2019 to 2024 is based on the aim of documenting the latest and pertinent advancements in this multidisciplinary domain.

Eligibility

The eligibility stage involves a comprehensive assessment by the authors of the accepted papers to ensure that all remaining articles, following the screening procedure, fulfil the established criteria. Participating in the process entailed reviewing the titles and abstracts of the articles. The researcher examined 95 papers in all. 52 studies were removed from the research as they were irrelevant to the topics related to childhood memory, photography, or the arts. Consequently, the quantity of articles was diminished to 43 after this phase.

Quality Appraisal

Quality appraisal in systematic literature reviews involves evaluating individual aspects of a study's design, conduct, and analysis to identify potential biases. Various published quality assessment checklists exist, but not all are scientifically rigorous. Reviewers must consider generic biases and ensure that the quality items included in checklists are relevant to bias assessment (Khan & Zamora, 2022). This method helps reviewers in assessing the significance of each study within the comprehensive synthesis, enhancing the review's reliability and validity. Only the things classified as high were assessed. The experts evaluated the approach of the papers to determine their quality ranking. Both authors concurred that the paper's quality must meet a minimum level for inclusion in the research. Subsequent to this method, 13 articles were classified as high-ranking and 27 as moderate-ranking. As a result, 13 papers met the criteria for inclusion in the review.

Data Abstraction and Analysis

Thematic analysis serves as a systematic approach to identifying, organising, and interpreting patterns of meaning within a dataset, enabling the emergence of coherent themes that reflect underlying conceptual structures. Beyond organising data, this method facilitates comparative interpretation, allowing researchers to trace convergences and divergences in perspectives, thus revealing not only recurring patterns but also unexpected insights and conceptual tensions within the literature (Sandhiya & Bhuvaneswari, 2024). In the context of this review, thematic analysis enabled the classification of scholarly discourse into five dominant

thematic formations, while also exposing deeper theoretical contradictions in how memory and photography are conceptualised across different studies.

RESULTS

3.1 *Spatial analysis of selected articles and published by year*

This study utilised a comprehensive and systematic selection approach, examining a total of thirteen distinct papers. Figure 1 illustrates that eight (8) countries contribute to this specific topic under consideration. The United Kingdom possesses six (6) articles, while Germany has two (2) articles. The countries displayed on the list are as follows: Turkey, Australia, Switzerland, Romania, and Colombia—possesses only one article in their respective collections.

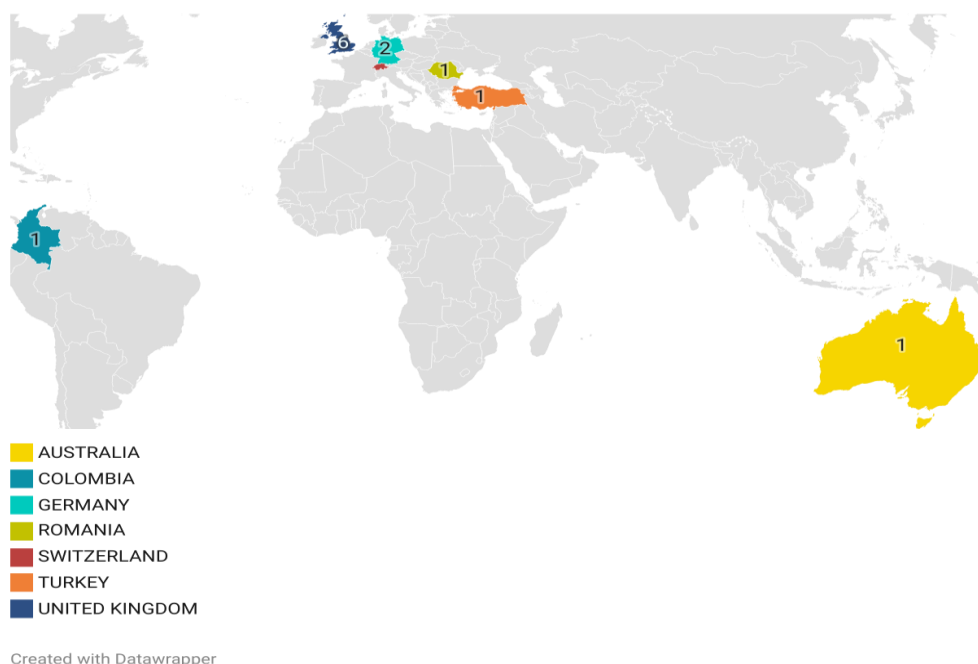


Figure 1: Spatial Distribution of Selected Articles

The time range covered by these articles is from 2020 to 2024, which is four years. Figure 2, which has been constructed, is a representation of the distribution of publications.

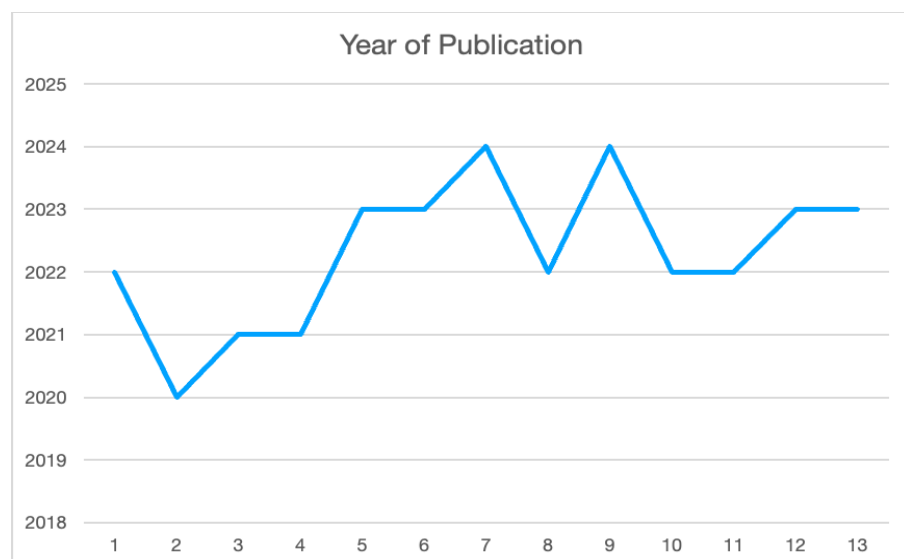


Figure 2: Year of Publication

Thematic Analysis

After completing a comprehensive analysis of all 13 articles, five distinct thematic formations emerged in relation to childhood memories as expressed through photography and the arts: (1) historical and cultural perspectives; (2) childhood and trauma; (3) sensory and emotional dimensions; (4) representing the invisible; and (5) education and representation. While these categories offer a structured overview of recurring motifs, a deeper comparative examination reveals that scholars position the relationship between memory and photography in contrasting epistemological ways. Some studies frame photography as a mnemonic archive, a passive repository that preserves traces of lived experience, suggesting that memory exists prior to its visual documentation. In contrast, other scholarship approaches photography as a reconstructive and performative act, proposing that memory is not merely retrieved but actively re-authored through artistic intervention. This tension between photography as evidence of memory and photography as aesthetic reconfiguration of memory signals a shift from representational discourse to interpretive construction, where images do not just record past events but participate in shaping emotional, cultural, and therapeutic narratives.

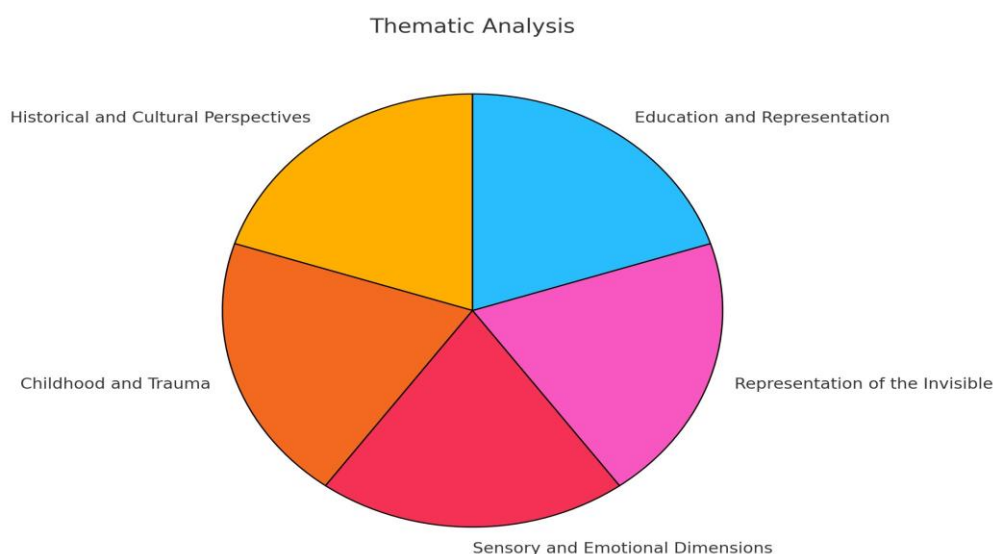


Figure 3: Thematic Analysis

Historical and Cultural Perspectives

To understand childhood memories, some individuals attempt to recall past events in their lives. Recollection methods will facilitate the recall of historical events. Historical and cultural perspectives on childhood memories, especially in the context of institutionalisation, involve the complex interplay of acknowledging past traumas, integrating multiple narratives, and fostering inclusive and empathetic interpretations. According to McGinnis et al. (2024), the concept of post-memory, as discussed by Marianne Hirsch, is relevant here. The concept of post-memory pertains to the transmission and ongoing influence of traumatic memories from past generations, particularly those of children in institutions, on subsequent generations. This highlights the importance of recognising and integrating these memories in historical narratives. Tinkler (2020) also supports this statement, highlighting the significant influence of historical and cultural perspectives on the construction and understanding of childhood memories. Cultural frameworks, memories of place, and the role of photography all contribute to the process of memory construction, providing context and meaning to personal narratives. In the context of art, Toprak (2020) explains that naïve art provides a rich tapestry of historical and cultural perspectives, closely linked to the artist's personal memories and cultural background, offering a unique lens through which to view the world. Naïve art often draws on the artist's childhood memories and everyday scenes from their surroundings. This connection to personal history and cultural background is a defining characteristic of naïve art, as artists use their own experiences and memories as a source of inspiration. History and cultural perspectives are processes of remembering childhood, and the translation can occur in a variety of mediums, including art. In the present era, photography stands as the most fundamental and fastest technique from the past.

Representing the Invisible

To explore the details of childhood memories, we try to understand the Ferrier's work. Fabien Arribert-Nerce (2023) analyses how photography and art represent invisible aspects of childhood memories, emphasising their spectral, timeless, and embodied nature. The absence of photographs and the narrative's structure highlight the complex interplay between memory, art, and the passage of time. For instance, the absence of the scene depicting Ferrier playing Scrabble with his brother signifies the frequent failure of cameras to capture significant life events. This absence emphasizes the role of memory in preserving these moments, which are not just visuals but embodied experiences. The concept of absent photographs is central to Ferrier's work and the most significant process in photography.

Sensory and Emotional Dimensions

Schintl (2022) divided the senses into two dimensions, namely the sensory modality and the emotional salience of the memory cues. The study also examined how emotional responses to sensory cues influence memory retrieval. Researchers found that olfactory imagery primarily evoked emotions like disgust and happiness, while visual imagery evoked a broader range of emotions like joy, sadness, anxiety, and anger. Although the study did not directly address photography and art, the findings suggest that incorporating olfactory elements into artistic expression can enhance the retrieval of childhood memories. This may be particularly useful in therapeutic settings where accessing early memories is beneficial. Collectively, these elements demonstrate the intricate weaving of sensory and emotional dimensions into the exploration of childhood memories through photography and art, resulting in a powerful and immersive experience (Grittner, 2021). Childhood reflections, which involve engaging participants' internal sensory experiences like breathing and heartbeat, further intensify this, fostering a reflective state. The dramaturgy of the piece invites participants to reflect on their childhood and the passage of time, ultimately leading to reflections on death.

Childhood and Trauma

Pells et al. (2021) explain art and photography as tools for young people to express and process their memories and experiences of trauma. This approach not only provides a platform for alternative narratives but also challenges existing frameworks that may not fully capture the complexities of childhood and trauma in specific cultural contexts. By using arts-based methods, the research aims to rework understandings of childhood, trauma, and intergenerational trauma (ITT) from the perspectives of children and young people, offering a more culturally and contextually relevant approach to these issues. Using the same method, Sela et al. (2023) investigate how art and photography provide valuable avenues for exploring childhood trauma, allowing individuals to express and integrate fragmented memories and emotions. Through metaphorical work and the use of various materials, these mediums facilitate a deeper understanding of one's past and its impact on the present. Even though the study primarily focuses on art, photography can also serve as a powerful tool for exploring childhood memories. Both mediums allow individuals to externalize and process their experiences, providing a visual representation of their inner world. Childhood memories, particularly those associated with trauma, can be intricate and deeply influential. Art and photography provide distinct means for examining and articulating these experiences. Cainelli et al. (2022) summarize that expression and healing are parts of art and photography. It provides a non-verbal means of expression, which can be particularly beneficial for children who may struggle to articulate their experiences verbally. Creating artwork allows them to externalize their feelings and memories, which can be a therapeutic process. Lyon et al. (2022) investigate the use of writing and boxing as therapeutic procedures for childhood trauma, highlighting the effective application of creative expression, empowerment, and therapeutic release in art and photography. These mediums provide survivors with extra channels to examine, express, and convey their experiences, aiding in their healing process. Therefore, childhood and trauma are processes for humans who realize life is so short. Whatever happened in life, everyone can recall it and adapt in another medium, like art and photography, for awareness.

Education and Representation

Childhood memories and adult art are two long-term processes that provide a meaningful connection to individuals. This is a comprehensive study of representation in holistic development. Reshetnyak et al. (2022)

concluded that the integration of the arts, including photography, in education supports the holistic development of children by enhancing their cognitive, emotional, and social skills. This approach not only aids in academic learning but also in the representation and preservation of childhood memories, contributing to a holistic educational experience. Kallioharju et al. (2023) provided an illustration of photography serving as a versatile instrument for mothers to document childhood memories, express personal and cultural values, and participate in educational activities. Social media shapes the resulting images, reflecting broader societal norms while considering the privacy and enjoyment of the young people involved. For example,

We often look at pictures together; they [the children] really like looking at pictures and videos

[. . .] and remember what has been done to them [. . .]

[. . .] and therefore we remember the beautiful moments that come together. (P8)

Based on this example, every parent values their children's growth because it is an experience that no human being can replicate. Despite the cycle of life, we must periodically refine holistic development. Adriano (2022) illustrates this by reading Lucy's narrative, emphasizing the influence of her mother and her childhood as fundamental elements in her understanding of society and history. Personal history shapes a person's sociohistorical identity, metaphorically connecting these memories to love and family bonds. Childhood memories play a significant role in human narratives.

DISCUSSION

The connection between photography, childhood memories, and the arts provides a significant means for examining identity, emotions, and human development. The systematic literature review identifies five primary themes that clarify the interaction between these domains. This discourse examines each concept, integrating pertinent examples in emphasising the artistic contributions of Paul Klee and Frida Kahlo to illustrate the themes' importance.

Historical and Cultural Perspectives

Historical and cultural perspectives influence our comprehension of childhood memories, combining individual and society narratives. Tinkler (2020) argues that documentary photography, exemplified by Shirley Baker's images of Manchester and Salford, captures cultural frameworks and the mnemonic capacity of everyday scenes. Marianne Hirsch's notion of post-memory, examined by McGinnis et al. (2024), highlights the intergenerational transmission of traumatic childhood events, accentuating the significance of art in depicting these complex memories.

Paul Klee's abstract artworks frequently allude to his infancy, particularly through his employment of whimsical shapes and vivid colours inspired by an early interest with form (Bernadac, 1998). Likewise, the naive art examined by Toprak (2020) is profoundly influenced by cultural and historical contexts, emphasising the interplay between individual and collective memory. Photography functions as a contemporary medium to chronicle and contemplate these narratives, providing a connection between historical occurrences and individual memories. The importance of naive art and photography is in their capacity to capture cultural essence and reflect personal recollection, rendering them essential for comprehending both individual and collective histories.

In modern situations, photography's incorporation into social media enhances the documentation and reinterpretation of childhood experiences. Platforms facilitate the dissemination of personal narratives, as articulated by Kallioharju et al. (2023), integrating individual representation with societal conventions. This combination converts photography into an artistic and cultural phenomena, safeguarding childhood memories within extensive historical and cultural contexts.

Representing the Invisible

Photography and art proficiently capture the elusive elements of memory, as noted by Fabien Arribert-Narce (2023) in relation to Michaël Ferrier's art. Ferrier's emphasis on absent photographs—instances too fleeting or emotionally intense to document—underscores how memory compensates for the voids created by visual absences. This corresponds with the overarching notion that art can make the unseen apparent, providing alternate interpretations of experiences that resist simple portrayal.

Frida Kahlo's *What the Water Gave Me* (1938) illustrates this concept. The surrealist imagery of the painting—levitating objects in bathwater—symbolizes fractured memories and subconscious connections, illustrating how art manifests the unarticulated and invisible aspects of memory. Likewise, photography's capacity to abstract moments, via lighting or composition, facilitates the representation of temporary emotions and undetectable connections. Artists frequently utilise symbols to express profound personal or societal storylines. Christian Boltanski's art often employs everyday items—such as garments or images—to elicit the essence of missing persons, forging a physical link to the intangible. These symbolic representations enable viewers to connect with experiences that surpass the visible, linking personal reflection with collective remembering.

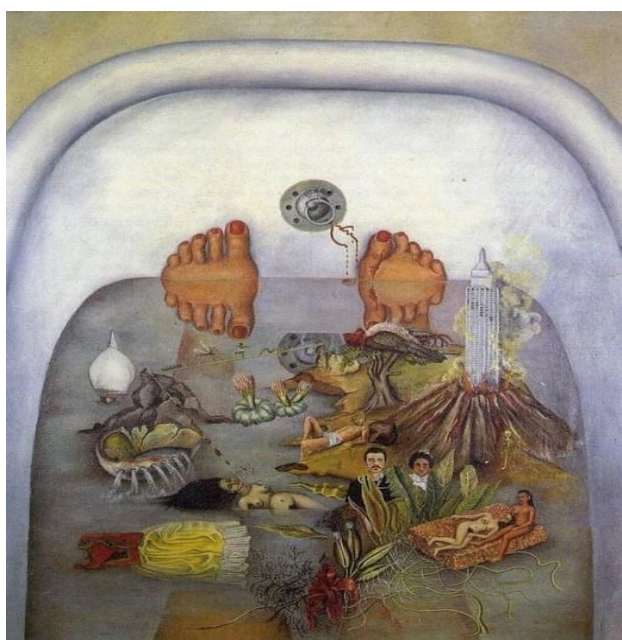


Figure 5: *What the Water Gave Me* by Frida Kahlo (1938) Oil Painting

Source: <https://www.fridakahlo.org/the-two-fridas.jsp>

Sensory and Emotional Dimensions

Childhood memories are intimately connected to sensory and emotional aspects, as emphasised by Schintl et al. (2022). Sensory stimuli elicit distinct emotions associated with memories, such as joy or melancholy, hence augmenting the curative effect of sensory-oriented artistic practices. Christian Boltanski's installations frequently incorporate sensory components, such as subdued lighting and ambient sounds, that invoke feelings of loss and nostalgia (Garb, 1997). Grittner, (2021) examination of interoceptive dramaturgies in virtual reality illustrates how involving participants' internal sensory experiences promotes introspection. Through the integration of sensory and emotional cues, photography and art engage viewers in deeply intimate and transforming experiences, enabling emotional inquiry and a link to childhood memories.

Integrating sensory components into photography enhances its power to attract viewers on various levels. Methods like layering textures or highlighting vibrant colour schemes elicit emotional reactions that connect with viewers' childhood memories. This sensory involvement not only enhances memory retrieval but also cultivates empathy and understanding across varied audiences, so augmenting the collective significance of childhood-oriented art.

Childhood and Trauma

Art and photography serve as therapeutic modalities for the processing of childhood trauma. Pells et al. (2021) emphasise their effectiveness in promoting alternate narratives and offering avenues for emotional expression. Frida Kahlo's self-portraits, notably *The Two Fridas* (1939) in Figure 4, emotionally depict her anguish stemming from physical afflictions and traumatic relationships, illustrating the profound trauma etched throughout her formative years.

Photography similarly preserves fractured memories, providing folks a method to externalise and comprehend unpleasant experiences. Sela and Bat-Or (2023) underscore the significance of figurative and mixed media. Art facilitates the integration of disjointed memories, which is crucial for healing. Photography and art, by incorporating symbolic aspects, construct a narrative framework that facilitates the processing of complex emotions associated with trauma.



Figure 5: *The Two Fridas* by Frida Kahlo (1939) Oil Painting

Source: <https://www.fridakahlo.org/the-two-fridas.jsp>

Childhood trauma frequently leads to repressed memories, and art offers a secure environment for their resurgence and comprehension. Cainelli et al. (2022) examine how visual art and photography serve as non-verbal forms of expression, allowing youngsters to convey their emotions when verbal communication is inadequate. This therapeutic potential underscores art's distinctive ability to serve as both a reflective and transformative instrument for those addressing previous trauma.

Education and Representation

Incorporating art into education promotes comprehensive development and safeguards childhood memories, as highlighted by Reshetnyak et al. (2022). Photography functions as a medium for recording and contemplating development, facilitating both intellectual and emotional learning. Kallioharju et al. (2023) demonstrate how mothers utilise photography to document and disseminate children experiences on social media, merging personal representation with societal conventions.

The educational applications of art and photography facilitate self-expression and identity development. Through these educational interactions, children develop an autobiographical self. This self is a narrative identity that helps them understand and evaluate their experiences, contributing to their overall education in understanding themselves and their place in the world (Fivush, 2019). Furthermore, art education promotes children's exploration of their creativity and emotional landscapes, enhancing self-awareness and resilience. Through engagement with art, children can reinterpret their memories, constructing visual narratives that facilitate the processing of their experiences. Photography projects, for example, offer students an opportunity to express their viewpoints and cultivate a sense of autonomy. These practices highlight the transformational influence of art and photography in shaping personal identities and bigger cultural narratives.

The findings of this review demonstrate significant potential for application across art therapy, arts education, and digital media-based memory reconstruction, extending beyond theoretical interpretation into practice-based innovation. Within the field of art therapy, the integration of photography and autobiographical image-making offers a non-verbal channel for emotional processing, particularly valuable in addressing unresolved childhood experiences and trauma through symbolic reconstruction. In pedagogical contexts, the use of photography as an educational tool not only enhances visual literacy but also cultivates reflective self-narration, allowing learners to articulate identity and memory through creative production rather than text-based reflection alone. Furthermore, the emerging field of digital and VR-based memory environments presents new possibilities for immersive therapeutic encounters, where memory is not merely recalled but re-experienced and re-scripted through interactive visual interfaces. These applications suggest that photography, when situated within therapeutic, educational, and digital frameworks, functions not just as a representational medium but as an active mechanism of self-construction, emotional regulation, and embodied learning.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

Future research could explore the integration of photography, childhood memories, and the arts into therapeutic practices, especially in underexplored areas, such as the practical application of these methods for emotional healing across diverse cultural contexts.

Furthermore, it may be beneficial to explore how digital photography and new media can further augment the representation and emotional resonance of childhood memories, particularly in relation to trauma. Future research may examine the incorporation of sensory and emotional aspects in art therapy, investigating how various artistic mediums, such as virtual reality or interactive installations, can enhance emotional involvement and memory recovery.

CONCLUSION

The combination of photography, childhood memories, and the arts provides profound understanding into identity, emotion, and healing. Historical and cultural viewpoints offer a framework for the formation of memory, whereas elements of trauma, sensory involvement, and invisibility highlight the complex nature and profundity of childhood memories. The art and photography of Frida Kahlo, Paul Klee, and Christian Boltanski exhibit an exceptional ability for self-expression and introspection. Integrating these practices into education and therapy enables individuals to utilise potent instruments for personal development and self-exploration. The changing realm of digital photography and multimedia expands the opportunities for examining childhood memories. As technology advances, the capacity to integrate sensory, emotional, and historical components increases, facilitating more profound narratives and enhanced self-awareness. The incorporation of these themes into wider cultural and educational contexts underscores their lasting significance and transformative capacity, guaranteeing that the relationship between childhood memories and the arts remains a source of inspiration and healing.

*Statement: During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used ChatGPT to cross-check the article used and improve my writing skills. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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