

Sensory Processing and Emotional Regulation in Middle-aged Adults: A Narrative Review

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ABSTRACT

Sensory processing has considerable effects on both the development of emotions and behaviour. Problems with sensory processing have the potential to cause problems associated with emotional regulation, anxiety, stress, and problematic reactions to stressors. Middle adulthood is known to involve more occupational and parental responsibilities, which can make individuals susceptible to behavioural problems. This paper aims to gain an understanding of the association between sensory processing, emotion regulation, and behavioural well-being among middle-aged people using the approach of occupational therapy via the literature review technique. Literature review was carried out using search engines like PubMed, Google Scholar, Scopus and Research Gate. Literature related to sensory processing, emotion regulation, self-regulation, behavioural well-being, and occupational therapy was collected within the

range of 1995 to 2026. The literature has found strong links between unusual sensory processes and issues such as emotional dysregulation, anxiety, stress response, and social problems. Sensitivities related to auditory stimuli, touch, and movement have been linked to poor emotional regulation and quality of life. Occupational therapy that incorporates sensory integration therapy was shown to enhance adaptive behaviours and mental well-being. Sensory processing impacts emotional regulation and behavioural functioning in adults. This review emphasises the significance of sensory-based evaluation and intervention strategies in the field of occupational therapy. There is little evidence on the subject within India's middle-aged population, necessitating further research into adult-oriented occupational therapy practices.

Keywords: Behavioural health, Emotional regulation, Occupational therapy, Self-regulation, Sensory processing.

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