



BEAUTY WITH PURPOSE: EMOTIONAL BENEFITS OF NAIL SERVICES IN FEMALE CLIENTS FACING ANXIETY AND FATIGUE

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Abstract. *The article explores the psycho-emotional effects of manicure procedures on women experiencing heightened anxiety and fatigue. The aim of the study is to analyze the psychological factors that indirectly contribute to the reduction of anxiety and fatigue in women during nail care services, as well as to substantiate the role of nail technicians as agents of emotional support within this aesthetic practice. The study employed general scientific methods of cognition: observation, analysis, synthesis, generalization, interpretation of empirical data, and analysis of scientific sources. The findings reveal that based on empirical observations and the analysis of existing academic research, nine key factors were identified that collectively reduce anxiety and background fatigue in women during nail service appointments. These factors include: self-disclosure in a safe social context; escapism as a form of psychological pause; ritualized planning of procedures; increased self-confidence; sensory relaxation; social activation; constant visibility of aesthetic results; delegation of control during the procedure; and optimal communicative dynamics. These factors interact with each other, creating a cumulative effect that positively influences clients' emotional well-being. The study also concludes that the realization of these effects largely depends on the soft skills of nail technicians – their ability to offer empathic presence, sensitivity to the client's mood, skill in maintaining unobtrusive social interaction, responsiveness to nonverbal cues, and capacity to foster a sense of psychological safety. It was found that these specific skills significantly determine the therapeutic quality of the interaction and enhance the emotional effectiveness of the service. The research highlights the need for systematic development of soft skills in the professional training of nail technicians through the implementation of specialized training modules, emotional intelligence workshops, and reflective practices. It is proposed that nail care services should be viewed not only as aesthetic procedures but also as informal tools of psychological support in the context of urban life. The practical significance of the study lies in the development of recommendations aimed at improving the training of beauty industry specialists by incorporating the psychological dimension of their work.*

Keywords: *anxiety, emotional well-being, nail care services, soft skills, psychological support.*

Introduction

Within the growing interest in self-care practices amid an urbanized and emotionally demanding lifestyle, aesthetic procedures are becoming not only cosmetic but also psycho-emotional in nature. For many women, nail services are increasingly seen as a way to restore emotional resources – a kind of “silent therapy” that helps reduce stress, escape daily pressure, receive support, and experience physical care. The focus has shifted from the aesthetic outcome alone to the emotional process as well, which includes interaction with the technician, the atmosphere of the salon, and the ritualistic aspect of the procedure. Despite this, the scientific understanding of such experiences has not yet formed a distinct research niche. Most studies concentrate on



cosmetology, the neuropsychology of pleasure, or consumer behavior, while lacking systematic analyses of the psycho-emotional potential of manicure services in terms of alleviating anxiety and fatigue.

One particularly important issue is the lack of research offering structured recommendations for nail technicians on how to interact with clients in a psychologically sensitive manner. There is little information on how the client-technician connection should be built, which specific stages of the procedure are critical for stress reduction, and in what sequence the positive-impact factors should be activated. In our study, based on content analysis of client reviews and interdisciplinary sources, we propose for the first time a step-by-step model outlining the influence of nail services on psycho-emotional well-being. This model not only helps to better understand clients' emotional experiences but also offers practical guidelines for professionals aiming to provide psychologically comfortable, stress-reducing services.

The purpose of the article is to analyze the psychological factors that indirectly contribute to reducing anxiety and fatigue in women during nail care procedures, as well as to substantiate the role of nail technicians as agents of emotional support within this aesthetic practice. In order to achieve this purpose, the study addresses the following tasks: summarize empirical evidence on the emotional effects of visiting a nail salon; identify key psychosocial mechanisms through which the procedure impacts emotional well-being; examine the significance of client-technician interaction as a source of emotional relief; develop practical recommendations for improving soft skills among nail professionals to enhance the quality of client experience.

Research Results

Although the therapeutic potential of aesthetic practices, including manicures, is widely acknowledged, it is important to clarify that nail services do not have a direct clinical impact on a woman's psycho-emotional state. A manicure is not a form of psychotherapy and should not be regarded as a targeted method for reducing anxiety or managing chronic fatigue. Its influence is indirect, shaped by psychological, social, and aesthetic factors. Therefore, a phenomenological approach to studying the emotional experience of clients becomes essential, focusing on their personal



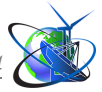
reflections and perceptions of themselves and their environment after visiting a salon.

As part of our study, we conducted a content analysis of numerous publicly available client reviews about their experience with nail services, collected from online platforms such as forums, social networks, and beauty salon websites. These reviews go beyond evaluating technical service quality, offering expressive emotional descriptions of women's states before and after the procedure. Most comments highlight such aspects as improved mood, a sense of self-care, enhanced self-esteem, and reduced tension associated with daily life. These verbal markers help identify potential mechanisms by which manicures indirectly influence emotional well-being.

In exploring the emotional benefits of nail services, it is important to analyze sources that investigate the impact of beauty treatments on women's psycho-emotional states. Several studies suggest that manicures can have a positive indirect effect on reducing anxiety and improving mood through mechanisms such as bodily attention, sensory gratification, social interaction, and symbolic image renewal. For example, A. Chuin explores the biochemical aspects of pleasure during nail care, particularly through the activation of the brain's dopaminergic system, which is linked to feelings of satisfaction and calm [3].

In their empirical research, A. Kawakubo and T. Oguchi demonstrate that informal self-disclosure during salon interactions plays the role of an emotional moderator, helping to reduce psychological tension and improve clients' moods [7]. In the study by H.-J. Lee and K.-H. Kwon, emotional value is considered a key factor in shaping a positive perception of nail services, alongside financial feasibility [8].

Additionally, review-style and popular publications, including works by E.W. Dolan [4], A.W. Doyle [5], and a feature on mother.ly [6], provide broad subjective validation of the positive experiences reported by women who regularly receive manicures. These materials emphasize the therapeutic effect of the nail care ritual, which helps women feel more confident, attractive, and emotionally stable. From the perspective of interpersonal psychology, the work of I. Altman and D.A. Taylor is conceptually important as it models the process of social penetration through gradual self-disclosure, which may explain the depth of the positive effect arising from a



trusting conversation with a technician [2].

Based on the analysis of sources [4-6; 10], several key psychosocial factors can be identified that indirectly contribute to reducing anxiety and fatigue in women using nail services. These factors are interrelated and collectively shape a positive emotional effect on clients. Their systematization allows for a more precise description of the mechanisms through which nail services function as an element of psycho-emotional self-regulation.

Self-disclosure in a comfortable social environment. As demonstrated in the works of E.W. Dolan [4] and A.W. Doyle [5], the context of social interaction during the procedure serves as an important source of psychological relief. Light, casual conversation in the salon creates a space for limited self-disclosure – sharing thoughts, impressions, and everyday observations. This contributes to emotional release and a sense of social support. However, as noted by A. Kawakubo and T. Oguchi [7], deep self-disclosure or discussions of emotionally traumatic topics can have the opposite effect. Therefore, light self-disclosure appears to be the optimal level, promoting a sense of inclusion and emotional safety. This idea is supported by Fisher, who views salon interaction as a form of “escapist self-disclosure” – a brief escape from daily worries through trusting, yet unburdened communication [4].

Escapism as a psychological pause. The manicure procedure functions as a form of controlled escapism, allowing for a micro-escape from external stimuli, especially digital overload. According to Doyle, a manicure represents a “conscious pause” – a moment of meditative focus on bodily experience that relieves tension by temporarily stepping away from the constant flow of obligations [5]. This aligns with psychophysiological data highlighting the need for periodic attention shifts and sensory load reduction to maintain mental stability. The escapist function of a manicure is not an escape from reality, but a necessary break for resource recovery.

Planning and ritual as a stabilizing factor. According to Doyle, regular manicure appointments act as an important psychoregulatory practice for individuals prone to anxiety. The structured nature – a scheduled procedure, anticipation, and preparation – fosters a sense of predictability that offsets the uncertainty typical of anxious states [5].



Regular visits become a ritual that strengthens one's sense of control over their personal space and reflects a belief in self-worth: "I deserve care." In this context, ritual is not a mechanical action but a form of symbolic mental stabilization.

Increased self-confidence and improved emotional tone. As shown in source [10], external aesthetic transformation through manicure activates internal mechanisms that enhance self-esteem. The subjective feeling of being attractive and well-groomed is linked to psychological confidence, while visual self-presentation through nail art strengthens personal identity. This is particularly relevant for women whose professional or social roles involve public exposure. Aesthetic satisfaction with one's appearance correlates with improved mood and reduced feelings of fatigue. At the same time, as emphasized in [10], this effect is not universal: for some clients, aesthetic perfectionism may cause additional stress, requiring an individualized approach to self-evaluation.

Sensory pleasure and physical relaxation. Research by A. Kawakubo [7] shows that manicures, like cosmetic treatments, trigger an immediate psychophysiological response accompanied by mood improvement, relaxation, and a sense of vitality. The procedure's elements – touch, warmth, rhythm, and focused attention on the body – have a calming effect comparable to massage. This bodily relaxation lays the groundwork for emotional recovery and becomes a key resource in managing mental overload.

Social activation effect. After undergoing a manicure, clients often show greater openness to social interaction [7,9]. Positive emotions associated with a well-groomed appearance stimulate a desire for communication, which can, in turn, help compensate for emotional exhaustion and enhance subjective well-being. This effect mirrors the phenomenon described in C. Sato's research on the emotional and integrative impact of cosmetics [9].

Visibility of the result and visual reinforcement effect. According to sources [1, 8], manicure has a unique psychological advantage – its result remains constantly visible to the client. Hands are one of the most exposed parts of the body in everyday life, so the aesthetic outcome is consistently present. This creates a visual



reinforcement effect that continuously strengthens self-evaluation and motivates productive action (self-efficacy).

Contrast between salon and self-care. Studies [3, 8] indicate that clients who receive professional salon services exhibit higher levels of positive emotions compared to those who care for their nails at home. Professional manicure offers not only better aesthetic results but also an emotional ritual involving care from another person, the absence of responsibility for the process, and the ability to delegate – all of which positively influence emotional release.

Communicative dynamics of surface-level self-disclosure. As outlined in the classic social penetration model by I. Altman and D.A. Taylor [2], initial-level self-disclosure – discussing light, emotionally neutral topics – is optimal for emotional well-being. Contemporary empirical data [3], [8] confirm that conversations about hobbies, plans, and daily routines have more emotional value than deep discussions of personal difficulties. This type of communication fosters a sense of psychological comfort and safety in the interaction with the technician.

A comprehensive analysis of empirical and review-based sources reveals that nail services create a multifaceted psychosocial ecosystem where sensory, cognitive, emotional, and social mechanisms synchronize to generate a cumulative effect of reduced anxiety and mental fatigue. At its core is positive bodily-sensory stimulation, which triggers an immediate relaxation response and mood elevation [7]. On this foundation, higher regulatory levels are formed: escapist pauses that interrupt cognitive overload [5], and ritual planning that restores a sense of control over time and the body [5].

The social dimension of the procedure contributes two critically important resources. First, measured, “surface-level” self-disclosure within the client – technician dyad ensures emotional relief without reactivating negative experiences [4-5, 7]. Second, the positive external transformation initiates social activation and reinforces self-efficacy through the constant visual visibility of the result [1, 8]. These socio-cognitive effects merge with changes in self-esteem and identity (increased confidence, symbolic self-presentation) [10], forming a lateral channel for reducing background



anxiety.

The alignment of sensory (“bottom-up”) and cognitive-social (“top-down”) processes creates a kind of buffer between the individual and chronic stressors. Delegating control to a specialist, maintaining ritual regularity, receiving ongoing visual feedback, and engaging in supportive communication all work as a mutually reinforcing network. The outcome is a stable reduction in physiological markers of stress and subjective fatigue, along with improved mood, as supported by related studies in the field of cosmetology [9].

Thus, the identified set of factors not only explains the popularity of professional manicures but also conceptually complements modern models of self-care as a tool for emotional regulation. Promising directions for further research include quantitative modeling of factor interactions (for example, through structural equation modeling) and comparisons with other aesthetic practices to clarify the relative contribution of each mechanism in reducing anxiety and fatigue.

The results of the analysis indicate that the effectiveness of nail services in lowering anxiety and fatigue depends not only on the technicians’ technical skills (hard skills) but also on the development of their social and communicative abilities (soft skills). Nail artists serve not only as providers of aesthetic procedures but also – albeit informally – as emotional facilitators. They create an environment in which the client can relax, feel cared for, safe, accepted, and temporarily step away from a stress-inducing space.

It is therefore essential that technicians:

- understand the psychological function of their interaction with the client;
- remain sensitive to emotional cues from the client;
- know how to establish gentle, non-invasive communication;
- are trained to work with different behavioral types (introverted, anxious, quiet, etc.);
- maintain a balance between professional distance and emotional presence.

**Table 1** – Stages of client interaction aimed at reducing anxiety and fatigue

Stage	Functional purpose	Optimal actions by the technician
1. Initial contact	Building trust, reducing initial anxiety, establishing basic emotional connection	Greet with a smile; make eye contact; introduce yourself; offer the client a comfortable seat; ask a short neutral question (“How’s your day going?”).
2. Emotional state scanning	Identifying the client’s current communicative need: desire for conversation or silence	Observe facial expressions, tone of voice, posture; ask, “Would you prefer to chat or enjoy some quiet?”; avoid pushing dialogue.
3. Light conversation	Creating a sense of social support, reducing emotional isolation	Stick to emotionally neutral topics (hobbies, travel, movies); speak kindly, without criticism; listen attentively.
4. Physical presence	Providing sensory comfort and bodily relaxation	Explain each action before touching; work with a steady rhythm; pay attention to the client’s reactions; maintain gentle contact.
5. Positive reinforcement	Boosting self-esteem, fostering a sense of acceptance	Offer genuine compliments about design choices or appearance; encourage the client’s preferences without giving unsolicited advice.
6. Closing the interaction	Reinforcing a positive experience, creating a sense of trust post-visit	Thank the client for the visit; wish them a good day; suggest (without insisting on) a future appointment; say goodbye with respect.

The development of social and communicative skills (soft skills) among nail technicians is a critically important component in enhancing the quality of interaction with clients, particularly in relation to their psycho-emotional well-being. A technician should not only be a skilled specialist but also a sensitive communicator capable of creating a safe, friendly, and supportive environment. Therefore, it is advisable to undergo regular training focused on developing emotional intelligence, empathy, active listening, and verbal delicacy. Understanding the basics of nonverbal communication (posture, facial expressions, tone of voice) allows the technician to better recognize the client’s needs – for instance, whether she wants to talk or prefers silence and relaxation.

In addition, it is important to cultivate a reflective practice. Keeping a professional observation journal can be helpful, where typical situations are recorded: what worked well in communication with the client, what caused tension, and how the client’s emotional state changed during the session. Such notes help raise awareness of one’s interaction style and contribute to its gradual improvement. It is also worth emphasizing the value of introducing internal salon standards for “emotional hygiene”: shared rules of kindness, maintaining a positive tone in conversations, and avoiding



potentially conflict-inducing topics. This not only ensures a high-quality client experience but also fosters a professional environment oriented toward well-being – for both clients and staff.

Conclusions. Based on the gathered empirical material and analysis of numerous studies, nine key psychosocial factors were identified that indirectly contribute to reducing anxiety and fatigue in women who use nail services. These include: self-disclosure in a safe social context; escapism as a psychological pause; ritual planning; increased self-confidence; sensory relaxation; social activation; constant visibility of the aesthetic result; delegation of control during the procedure; and optimal communicative dynamics. All these elements are interconnected and produce a cumulative effect on clients' emotional well-being, helping to lower baseline anxiety and background fatigue.

In order for these positive effects to be fully realized, it is essential that nail technicians recognize not only the technical but also the psychological dimension of their professional role. As the data suggests, soft skills – the ability to be empathically present, communicate with sensitivity, and support light social interaction – largely determine the therapeutic quality of the experience. Technicians need not only to master professional techniques, but also to adapt their behavior to the client's mood, respond gently to nonverbal cues, and create a space of emotional safety and calm.

In the course of this study, a sequence of interactional stages between the nail technician and the client was proposed, which enables the reduction of anxiety and the achievement of emotional relaxation. The initial contact and gentle establishment of trust create a sense of psychological safety; assessing the client's emotional state allows the technician to adjust their behavior accordingly; maintaining light, neutral conversation helps to alleviate social tension; careful and rhythmic physical contact ensures sensory calm; positive reinforcement strengthens self-esteem; and a kind, respectful closing reinforces the emotionally favorable experience. The cumulative effect of these stages creates a psychologically supportive environment in which self-care becomes an effective resource for emotional regulation.



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