

Use of arts as the strategic medium for restorative justice:

Restorative Function of Music

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This study purported to review the strategic use of arts for restorative justice programs and delineate the restorative nature of music activities as an executive method for actualizing the restorative justice. In addition, the study provided case studies of school violence victims and offenders who received conditional suspension of indictment and participated in the twelve weekly music psychotherapy sessions. The music program was formulated based on the restorative function of music at the personal, interpersonal, and communal levels.

At the personal level, through instrument playing and songwriting, participants showed changes in exploring complex emotions and expressing them nonverbally. Participants also wrote lyrics of regrets and remorse towards their behaviors. At the interpersonal and communal level, participants were able to nonverbally communicate apologies for reconciliation by writing song and rap lyrics. In conclusion, the results of this study imply that music bridged the victim and the offenders, offered opportunities to resolve negative emotions facilitating reconciliation, and further promote intrapersonal growth through gaining insights. Taken together, music can be an effective medium in restorative justice programs and moreover may contribute in reducing recidivism of juvenile crime.