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Can songwriting help people recover from alcohol addiction and grow emotionally?

Submission date
05/08/2025

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
09/08/2025

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
08/08/2025

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[ ] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[ ] Results
[ ] Individual participant data
[ ] Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol
Background and study aims
People recovering from alcohol addiction often face emotional challenges, such as shame, anxiety, and difficulty expressing themselves. This study aimed to explore whether writing and sharing songs could help individuals in recovery experience emotional healing and personal growth.

Who can participate?
Participants diagnosed with alcohol use disorder from eight community addiction centers and a residential facility in South Korea.

What does the study involve?
Participants in the experimental group joined a 10-week therapeutic songwriting program, where they listened to music, wrote lyrics, and shared their songs with others. The program was based on a psychological model that supports post-traumatic growth by helping people process difficult emotions and build self-understanding.

To measure the program's effectiveness, participants completed questionnaires before and after the sessions. These assessed changes in self-acceptance, emotional regulation, coping strategies, and psychological well-being after trauma. A control group continued with their usual support programs during the same period.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
It is expected that the songwriting program will help improve emotional awareness, increase positive coping skills, and support post-traumatic growth. This will suggest that songwriting could be a valuable therapeutic tool in addiction recovery, especially in community-based mental health settings.

There were no known physical risks. However, participants could experience temporary emotional discomfort when discussing personal trauma or reflecting on past experiences during songwriting sessions. Support was available throughout the sessions.

Where is the study run from?
Seoul National University, College of Nursing, South Korea

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
August 2022 to June 2023

Who is funding the study?
Investigator initiated and funded

Who is the main contact?
Mrs Jandi Kim, jandi109@gmail.com

Contact information

Type(s)
Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

Contact name
Mrs Jandi Kim

ORCID ID
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0582-6464

Contact details
Yangimaeul 2Ro 5-2 B 401
Gwacheon-SI
Korea, South
13713
+82 070-8019-0902
jandi109@gmail.com

Additional identifiers

Study information

Scientific Title
A quasi-experimental study of therapeutic songwriting for post-traumatic growth among individuals with alcohol use disorder

Study objectives
This study aimed to evaluate the effects of a 10-session therapeutic songwriting program on individuals recovering from alcohol addiction. The intervention was designed to enhance self-acceptance, emotional regulation, coping strategies, and post-traumatic growth. The study was conducted in community-based recovery centers in South Korea using a non-equivalent control group pretest–posttest design.

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)

Approved 02/08/2022, Seoul National University Bioethics Committee (103 Daehak-ro, Jongno-gu, Seoul, 03808, Korea, South; +82-2-880-5001; itsc@snu.ac.kr), ref: 2208/002-009

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Non-equivalent control group pretest–posttest design (quasi-experimental)

Study type(s)
Treatment

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Alcohol use disorder, trauma-related psychological distress, and post-traumatic stress addiction recovery

Interventions
A 10-session therapeutic songwriting program was delivered once a week for 90 minutes to individuals recovering from alcohol addiction. The intervention included music listening, lyric writing, and group sharing activities based on an affective–cognitive processing model of post-traumatic growth. Sessions were facilitated by a trained researcher with a professional music therapy background at community addiction centers in South Korea.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
Post-traumatic psychological well-being, measured using the Psychological Well-Being Post-Traumatic Changes Questionnaire (PWB-PTCQ), pre- and post-intervention

Key secondary outcome(s)
The following secondary outcome measures were assessed pre- and post-intervention:
1. Self-acceptance, measured using the Korean version of the Unconditional Positive Self-Regard Scale (KUPSR)
2. Positive and negative affect, measured using a modified version of the Intensity and Time Affect Survey (ITAS)
2. Positive coping, measured using the Clinical Short-Form Positive Resources Test (POREST)

Completion date
30/06/2023

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Adults aged 19 to 70 years
2. Diagnosed with alcohol use disorder (according to DSM-5 criteria)
3. Enrolled in a community-based addiction recovery program in South Korea
4. Provided written informed consent

Participant type(s)

Patient

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Mixed

Lower age limit
19 Years

Upper age limit
70 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
44

Key exclusion criteria
1. Presence of severe cognitive impairment or communication difficulties
2. Current psychiatric hospitalization or acute withdrawal symptoms
3. Inability to participate in group sessions regularly

Date of first enrolment
01/09/2022

Date of final enrolment
15/06/2023

Locations

Countries of recruitment
Korea, South

Study participating centre
Seongnam Addiction Management Integrated Center
Gyeonggido, Seongnamsi, Sujeonggu, Sujeongro218, 5th floor, Seongnam City Health Center
Seongnamsi
Korea, South
13346

Study participating centre
Ansan Addiction Management Integrated Center
Gyeonggido, Ansansi, Danwongu, Hwarangro387, 2nd floor, Danwon Public Health Center
Ansansi

Korea, South
15335

Study participating centre
Anyang Addiction Management Integrated Center
Gyeonggido, Anyangsi, Manangu, Anyangro119, 7th floor, Gyeongyang Building
Anyangsi
Korea, South
14093

Study participating centre
Gangbuk Addiction Management Integrated Center
Seoul, Gangbukgu, Samyangro19gil154, Gangbuk Public Health Center 2nd floor
Seoul
Korea, South
01197

Study participating centre
Dobong Addiction Management Integrated Center
Seoul, Dobonggu, Banghakro53, Baekyun Building 2nd floor
Seoul
Korea, South
01406

Study participating centre
Karf St. Mary's Hospital of the Catholic University of Korea
25, Jungbalsan-ro 67beon-gil, Ilsandong-gu, Goyang-si, Gyeonggi-do, Republic of Korea
Goyang-si
Korea, South
10450

Study participating centre
Hyangnamujip Residential Facility
50-15, Seongmisan-ro 5-gil, Mapo-gu, Seoul, South Korea
Seoul
Korea, South
03969

Study participating centre

Jongno-gu Mental Health Welfare Center
40 Dongsung 3-gil, Jongno-gu, Seoul, Republic of Korea
Seoul
Korea, South
03079

Sponsor information

Organisation
Seoul National University

ROR
https://ror.org/04h9pn542

Funder(s)

Funder type
Other

Funder Name
Investigator initiated and funded

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
No plans to share individual participant data at this time. The data may be made available upon reasonable request after publication, with proper ethical approvals.

IPD sharing plan summary
Not expected to be made available

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Participant information sheet			08/08/2025	No	Yes