

BUILDING A PRISON ARTS PROGRAM
THROUGH THE EYES OF THE FACILITATOR

A Master's Project
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ABSTRACT:

The purpose of this study is to examine *how* current prison arts programmers organize, fund, develop, execute and maintain an arts program in prison. After answering these questions, the researcher will summarize the data retrieved from prison arts facilitators in order *to develop* a prison arts programming model to be utilized by arts programmers in both prison and non-prison settings.

Objectives of this project include:

- identifying how arts facilitators in prisons define ‘prison arts programming’, identifying the perceived benefits for inmates
- the institution and the community if arts programming is supported and implemented in a prison setting
- What prison arts programs are offered? Why?
- Identifying if collaborations occur between the prison and outside community arts agencies? How are they initiated? Frequency?

Potential benefits of this study is the ability to more accurately define and interpret the current state of the arts in prison by interviewing key facilitators on their experiences and knowledge. The study will also benefit the field of arts administration and prison arts programming by building a model prison arts program based on these interviews, literature and researcher knowledge.

The researcher does not foresee any potential risks due to the nature of the interviewees and their role in the prison arts programming process. The research should prove beneficial, positive and a tool to be utilized by both the prison and arts communities.

INSTRUMENTS: Face-to-Face/Email Interview Format

Administrative Questions (2 subjects)

Q: How long have you been involved in prison arts programs?

Probe: What is your defined role in the prison, currently?

Probe: Why do you participate in this activity?

Probe: What is your title? Relevant career and educational background?

Q: How does the institution's mission statement address the need of inmate rehabilitative programs?

Probe: Examples of such programming?

Q: What noticeable benefits do rehabilitative programs have on inmate orderliness, general health and overall condition?

Probe: Which programs are most effective for this purpose?

Q: Define 'Prison Arts Programming'.

Probe: Has the definition changed or evolved since your experience in the field began?

Q: What arts programming exists within this institution currently?

Probes: In the past? In the future?

Q: Who runs, coordinates and supervises inmate arts program activities?

Probe: If various types of people have administered programs – which type of person seems to work the best?

Q: How long is/was your arts program sustained for?

Probes: What (if anything) caused this interruption or closure?

Q: What is your perception of inmate involvement and desire for arts programming?

Probe: Relative to other programs?

Probe: How did you ascertain this knowledge?

Q: How would you describe a “successful” rehabilitative program?

Probe: Describe a “successful” arts program –

Q: What concerns do administration and officers have regarding security and contraband issues relating to arts materials?

Probe: What is the most common problem?

Probe: What privileges are given to inmates enrolled in arts programs?

Q: Do you currently have adequate space in your facility for an arts program?

Probe: What other purposes does the space serve?

Q: Do you have adequate time in an inmate’s daily routine for arts programming to exist?

Probe: Describe the average daily routine –

Q: What benefits do you see an arts program having on your institution?

Probe: How do you advocate for arts programming?

Q: Has your institution ever worked in conjunction with outside arts organizations to provide arts programming?

Probe: Was a grant involved?

Probe: How was it initiated?

Probe: How was it evaluated?

Q: Would you support community partnerships with arts organizations to bring arts programming to this institution?

Q: Is there anything further you would like to talk about that is relevant to this study?