

**ALTERNATIVE PATHWAYS: EXPRESSIVE ARTS IN PRISION****Caminos alternativos: artes expresivas en prisión**

Authors: Graça Duarte Santos & Mafalda Barreiros

Universidade de Évora. Contact.: gracaduartesantos@gmail.com

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Abstract

Numerous pathways of social maladjustment culminate in punitive and restrictive measures. Often these measures do not focus on the possibility of listening to the internal expression or in alternative to the development of these individuals. Often the close doors of prisons are also darkness without doors.

The experience of the arts (based on principles of expressive arts therapy) can function in these individuals as a guide leading to the discovery of the origins of anger, and enables them to be active and creative in their own recovery process.

In this text the authors intend to reflect on the applications of different artistic forms in institutional settings that are intended to rehabilitation of young people and adults whose behaviors were typed as dangerous in a legal framework.

They present 11 projects carried out in these contexts in Portugal. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interview conducted with project coordinators. Subsequently these data were processed using the methodology of content analysis. Results highlight important positive changes in participants' assets in these projects.

Keywords: expressive arts, prison, teens, adults, maladaptive behaviors

Resumen

Numerosas veces la inadaptación social culmina en medidas punitivas y restrictivas. A menudo, estas no se centran en la posibilidad de escuchar a la expresión interna o en alternativa al

desarrollo de estos individuos. A menudo, las estrechas puertas de las cárceles se convierten también en una oscuridad sin puertas.

La experiencia de las artes (basado en los principios de la terapia de las artes expresivas) puede funcionar en estas personas como guía que conduzca al descubrimiento de los orígenes de la ira, y permitiéndoles ser activos y creativos en su propio proceso de recuperación.

En este texto los autores tienen la intención de reflexionar sobre las aplicaciones de las diferentes formas artísticas en contextos institucionales que están destinados a la rehabilitación de los jóvenes y adultos cuyos comportamientos se tipificaron como peligrosos en el marco legal.

Se presentan 11 proyectos llevados a cabo en estos contextos en Portugal. La recolección de datos se realizó mediante entrevista semiestructurada realizada con los coordinadores del proyecto. Posteriormente estos datos fueron procesados utilizando la metodología de análisis de contenido. Los resultados destacan importantes cambios positivos en los participantes en estos proyectos.

Palabras clave: artes expresivas, la cárcel, adolescentes, adultos, conductas desadaptativas

INTRODUCTION

Art is available to the man as a strategy of coping since ever. From ancestry it's used as a bridge between our inner self and the physical part of being. It has been a truly expansion of art while the interventionist element must, focussed, to free expression that this provides.

Expressive arts therapy allows the expression beyond words, resorting to image metaphors and the symbolic game (Ambridge, 2008), and in particular on intervention with youth and adult offenders through expressive arts therapy seems ideal once take the aggressiveness and anger as almost inexhaustible sources of energy that promotes creativity and while this is used in the creative process is neutralized (Kramer, 1972, cit. in Nissimov-Nahum, 2009). In addition to this direct action on the aggressiveness, the art as a form of intervention allows the reflection and a less invasive approach the problems in a controlled and secure environment where it becomes possible to arise from various thoughts and feelings even though conflicting (Liebman, 2008).

In the prison context art is something widely spread and that has direct implications on the dynamic and functioning of prison. The studies demonstrate that the connection to the arts is a form of statute that allows inmates to create relationships and having respect for others, which in turn have direct implications at the individual level – increased respect for yourself and your self-knowledge, decrease in depressive symptomatology feature of this population, and positive influence on tolerance to frustration, in resolution and capacity problems and cannot cause acting out behaviour; and the institutional level – improvements to the prison environment and the consequent decrease of the registration and disciplinary reports conflict about the inmates (Kornfeld, 1997, cit. in Liebman, 2008; Gussak, 2007; Gussak, 2007, cit. in Argue, Bennett Gussak, 2009).

Socially, the implications of expressive arts therapy in prison context points to a more successful reintegration resulting from the acquisition of problem-solving capabilities in a more alternative and creative, and it's easier for the surrounding community recognize capabilities in inmate who got out and was in a project that will have re-humanized (Liebman, 1994, cit. in Argue, Bennett Gussak, 2009; Gussak, 2007).

Thus, this study sought to understand that intervention by the expressive arts projects had been carried out in prison context in Portugal and what impact at various levels-personal, institutional and social.

SECTIONS

In order to understand how big of projects already carried out in Portugal having focus on intervention for art in prison context, what kind of projects are and what impact these to various levels of intervention, in short a global vision and understanding of this reality without taking out and allowing the verbalization and description of the process of its actors (Almeida Freire, 2008; Bogdan Biklen, 2010), we opted for a qualitative study.

It was initially made a survey of projects carried out using the information available on the internet, in the media, along the general direction of Reinsertion and prison services, this being the administrative organ that protect these institutions and contacts with professionals who had already been involved in the coordination and implementation of these same projects.

Broke to the study with a total number of eight artistic/expressive projects developed in prison context, and a project developed in three smaller educational centres, to which they added, later, two more projects in prisons. Of the eleven total projects to which they had arrived, it was only possible to perform eight interviews, one of which serves two projects. Of the eight elements that comprised the Group of participants in this study three have academic training in the field of psychology, two are art therapists, two have academic training in Arts (a musician and composer, another choreographer and dancer), and the latter has a background in art history and culture.

Given the qualitative nature of this study, we chose to use the interview as a tool for data collection, which is a quintessential method in data collection through communication between individuals because, these same data, are described in the language of these, enabling intuitive development on the part of the investigator of an idea about how they interpret the middle (Anderson Kanuka, 2003; Bogdan Biklen, 2010). We opted for the semi-structured interview since this, as mentioned, allows greater openness so that the caller express your opinion on the subject in question, which assumes that this include your most personal testimony (feelings and attitudes vis-à-vis events) that refer to the theme under study (Minayo, 2007). So, this was built in such a way that their questions reflect the issues underlying the research study. Later, proceeded to the full transcript of the interviews so that these were analyzed.

Regarding the methodology of analysis, content analysis was performed in which they didn't the encoding of material, transforming the raw data from the text through the cutout, aggregation and the enumeration, which allows you to create a presentation of content that clarifies who analyses on the characteristics of the text. That is, categories have been created to represent the central themes addressed in the interviews and, eventually, subcategories

corresponding to issues addressed in each theme and, subsequently, analysed the interview and were taken into account three units: units of registration – content segments that are considered base unit; units of context – the questions posed and the respective responses obtained; and numbering units – speech records accounting of the interviewee.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

Content analysis conducted interviews allowed us to identify five central issues in the study, namely: the origin and development of the project, the completion of the project, the Constitution of the Working Group, the project evaluation and follow-up. In turn, these problem find dimensions in study that gave us to know what the most important aspects in general characterization of the project. These were the following: motivation for the creation of the project, project objectives, allies and barriers in the implementation of the same, team player, space and work methods, characterisation of the Group of participants of the projects and their membership, subjective evaluation of the project impact perceived us project participants, in the institution and in the community, the impact of the project comprehensiveness in the lives of participants after termination of the same, other projects. For each of the dimensions found it was possible to find several categories and, in some cases, sub-categories in which if reached the concrete results of the study.

In the first issue identified the results obtained enabled us to arrive at the conclusion that in 44.4% (N=4) of projects under study had origin in participants ' personal desire to make this type of intervention and 33.3% (N=3) projects have emerged on the basis of proposals of the prisons (N=2; 22.2%) or institution whose work is Community intervention (N=1; 11.1%). As for the initial objectives of the projects, were referred to various even if it is important to stress that in 56.1 of the cases was enunciated the need of working skills and also the training of actors (N=4 12.9%).

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In relation to the perceived gains with the realisation of the projects the results show that the main changes occurred in terms of gain consciousness of participants in projects for effective

change (N=7; 46.7%) and in the development of socio-relational skills, emotional and personal (N=6; 40%). In institutions data demonstrates that in 36.4% (N=4) of the projects was the lack of a positive acknowledgement and transformer of the approaches by the artistic expressions and the impact of this on the subject. In addition to this recognition, recognized the positive impact of the entire project in aspects such as the breaking of one's own prejudices and preconceptions that may exist about the fellow inmate and who happens to be recognized.

In the last issue we examined unfortunately this wasn't projects contemplated the need to do a follow-up of the participants of the projects to verify that there was maintenance of earnings (N=6; 66.7%). On balance, most projects assumes the nonexistence of an accompaniment of groups at a later stage at the end of the activities, leaving unanswered the question of whether the personal gain acquired throughout the project remained and leaving space for emerging new vulnerabilities in participants (Taylor, 2004, cit. in Quintãns, 2009). This seems to occur because of the lack of a strategy of planned projects ending with submission, usually during the final presentations of artistic product that arrives. In summary, this study has enabled us to conclude not only that there is a growing use of expressive arts as a method of Community intervention, in particular with risk populations, like confirm that even though this feature has in fact benefits for direct and indirect actors. There is also the need to explain the gains that this type of intervention allows institutions and raise awareness for them, as well as the need for more adequate practice, especially as regards the end of the projects.

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