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OUTCOME EVALUATION OF HIV/AIDS OUTREACH PROJECT  
AT MALMESBURY PRISON IN SOUTH AFRICA

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A Project  
Presented to the  
Faculty of  
California State University,  
San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Social Work

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by  
Heather Joyelle Fickas

June 2010

OUTCOME EVALUATION OF HIV/AIDS OUTREACH PROJECT  
AT MALMESBURY PRISON IN SOUTH AFRICA

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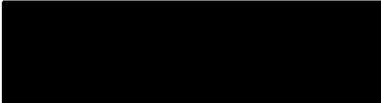
A Project  
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by  
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June 2010

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## ABSTRACT

The Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) pandemic has struck the prison system with exceptional voracity. While some prisons have attempted to address the problem with educational programming and case management, Malmesbury prison in South Africa has incorporated a restorative justice component to add to the offender's sense of efficacy and leadership skills once released back into the community. This project sought to examine the effectiveness of this particular approach to HIV/AIDS outreach in prisons using an outcome evaluation approach. Quantitative and qualitative data were gathered to assess the participant's and community member's perceptions of the effectiveness of this outreach approach. Findings of the study reveal an increase in offender knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS as well as an increase in their sense of self-efficacy to become productive citizens once released from prison.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Financial assistance was provided by Associated Students, Inc. as well as the School of Social Work at California State University, San Bernardino.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of the Group of Hope members who volunteered to participate in this study.

## DEDICATION

Dedicated to my husband, family, and friends whose undying love and unquestioning support provided me with the foundation I needed to take on such an ambitious project.

Thank you! I couldn't have done it without you! =)

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

This section will cover an overview of the breadth of the problem of HIV/AIDS in prisons. A unique model of prison intervention developed by Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) with Malmesbury prison inmates to help stem the tide of HIV/AIDS infections in the Cape Town region of South Africa is presented for its potential to be replicated in other regions as an evidence-based outreach model. Finally, there will be a discussion regarding the importance of examining this model of HIV/AIDS prison outreach and its impact on the field of social work.

#### Problem Statement

Early on in the evolution of the HIV/AIDS pandemic the continent of Africa was emerging as the global epicenter of this deadly disease. The 2008 Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) report highlights the severity of the epidemic in countries throughout the world and identifies South Africa as the most acutely affected in terms of absolute numbers, with an overall HIV infection prevalence rate of 18.1% of the population

(UNAIDS, 2008). This astounding figure represents the general population of South Africa; however, the prevalence of HIV infections in South African prisons has been estimated to be upwards of 40% (Goyer, 2003; UNAIDS, 2007). These figures highlight the very real and immediate need for effective intervention and outreach programs to be implemented in the prisons of South Africa.

Prison populations throughout the world are subject to disproportionately high HIV/AIDS infections, as well as other sexually transmitted infections (STI's). Worldwide prison populations have been found to have HIV infection rates ranging from "six to fifty times higher than that of the general adult population" in the surrounding region (UNAIDS, 2007, p. 7). This disparity is often due to high levels of risk behavior engaged in by inmates, both in and out of prison, such as unprotected sex, tattooing, and to a much lesser degree in South Africa, injection drug use [IDU] (Goyer, 2003; Robertson, 2003). Additionally, problems with prison overcrowding, gang violence, and corrupt prison wardens have served to exacerbate the problem further (UNAIDS, 1997). Public health concerns abound due to high

recidivism rates worldwide, as criminal populations are often released from prison into their communities only to return months or years later. When released offenders engage in high-risk activities while in their communities, such as unprotected sex or needle-sharing, the entire community is put at higher risk for the spread of HIV (Ehrmann, 2002). The disparity between regional HIV/AIDS prevalence rates and corresponding local prison population HIV/AIDS prevalence rates exerts itself as not only a significant public health concern, but as a social justice issue as well. The right to access quality HIV/AIDS care in prisons, as well as the provision of education on transmission, prevention, and treatment are among the guidelines established by the World Health Organization (WHO) on the management of HIV in prisons (HIV/AIDS Education in Prison Project [HEPP], 2000). The WHO recognizes the importance of prisons as a "key intervention site to prevent the advance of HIV" (HEPP, 2000, p. 4).

Central to the debate on implementation of innovative programs in prisons, is determining the extent to which prisons are intended to serve as rehabilitation centers as opposed to simply a method of retribution.

Offenders often face intense stigmatization from their communities upon their release (Owens, 2009). This effect can be exacerbated by the released offender's diagnosis of HIV/AIDS. Released offenders are often unable to find work due to this stigma and often revert back to their previous criminal behavior as a result (Henry & Jacobs, 2007). Innovative programs are needed to address offenders before they are released to educate them about the pernicious effects of not properly treating HIV/AIDS, in addition to preparing them for reintegration back into their communities through skill building, empowerment, and resource identification.

#### Purpose of the Study

This study examined the outcomes of Ithemba Project, also referred to as the Group of Hope, an HIV/AIDS Community Outreach Project in Malmesbury Prison in Cape Town, South Africa. This project has three stated objectives:

- prevent, manage, and control the pandemic within the confines of the correctional services facility

- facilitate the impact of the program to filter out into the broader community
- equip and empower offenders with the necessary life skills to enable them to become agents of restorative justice

The first objective of preventing, managing, and controlling the pandemic within the correctional facility is achieved through the implementation of ongoing HIV/AIDS/STI & TB projects by the HIV/AIDS Unit of CPUT in collaboration with Malmesbury Prison authorities. One of these projects has come in the form of the development of an incarcerated offender organization called Group of Hope. This organization provides offenders with an outlet to utilize their leadership skills by conducting HIV/AIDS workshops for other offenders, initiating a support group for HIV infected and affected inmates, negotiating with wardens for access to antiretroviral (ARV) medication, and empowering and equipping selected offenders to serve as peer educators and mentors for other inmates. This study used interviews and surveys to determine the effectiveness of this component of the program in empowering the prison population to take the necessary

steps to protect themselves and/or their community from HIV/AIDS.

Equally important to the creation of a long-term program aimed at controlling the pandemic within the confines of the prison is creating a strong partnership between the warders and the offenders. The participation of prison authorities is vital to any effective prison outreach program. Additionally, the promotion of a respectful collaboration between prison authorities and offenders is imperative to sustaining a program in a transient environment such as a prison. As the offenders are released back into the community, it is up to the warders to support the new leadership identified by Group of Hope members to ensure that the peer support groups and workshops are poised to continue in an ongoing manner. This component was measured through interviews with offenders as well as warder questionnaires to elicit their perceptions of the productive partnerships they have formed and how those have contributed to the overall success of the program.

The second objective of the Ithemba Project is to facilitate the impact of the program to filter out into the broader community. The objective is achieved by

working with offenders individually to develop their unique talents. The Ithemba Project has implemented several courses in the prison setting to help prepare inmates for reintegration on their release, including HIV/AIDS education, team building, vegetable farming, listening skills, a sewing workshop, as well as career guidance. As a catalyst for individual development, the program has initiated a farming project which helps offenders gain self-esteem and practice leadership skills imperative to their successful reintegration back into the community. This component of the program was analyzed through the use of interviews and surveys designed to measure the perceived benefit of completing the courses and participating in the farming project.

The third objective of the Ithemba Project is to equip and empower offenders with the necessary life skills to enable them to become agents of restorative justice. Restorative justice is a criminal justice approach that focuses on providing mediation between the victim and the offender to develop a plan for the offender to meaningfully redress their crime through community service (McCold & Wachtel, 2003). This aim is achieved through the farming project as well as

contributing to the local community. The farming project is utilized by the inmates as a tool with which to provide for their community. The offenders donate food harvested from the garden to local needy families infected and/or affected by HIV/AIDS. Additionally, the inmates have pooled money together in order to foster several local youth, including those orphaned by AIDS. Thus far, nine children have benefitted from this approach to restorative justice, as the Group of Hope members have provided these youth with school uniforms, books, food and toys. The effectiveness of this goal was measured in two ways; a questionnaire measuring the offenders' perceptions of how they have benefitted from this component of the program, and the other asking community members whether their perceptions of the inmates have changed as a result of the offender's efforts to support their community.

This study utilized a mixed quantitative and qualitative survey that was disseminated to currently incarcerated offenders and released offenders to measure their perceptions of the effectiveness of the Ithemba Project. A qualitative questionnaire was distributed to prison warders to gain their perspectives on the

effectiveness of the program. Qualitative interviews were conducted with released offenders to ascertain the positive and negative effects these individuals feel the program has contributed to their lives. Qualitative interviews with community members were conducted to measure the community's perception of the restorative justice component of the program and the offenders. Additionally, the recidivism rate of prisoners who have participated in the program was examined.

#### Significance of the Project for Social Work

As the AIDS pandemic continues to grow in tandem with increased numbers of people being imprisoned, the need for effective HIV/AIDS outreach programs in prisons is of paramount importance to any disease reduction strategy. Effective prison outreach strategies have been shown to produce high levels of volunteers for HIV testing and have helped reduce high-risk behavior of offenders following release from prison (Ehrmann, 2002). By evaluating HIV/AIDS prison outreach programs in myriad locations with varying population groups, empirically based practices can be implemented in prisons for specified groups to increase the probability of success.

Additionally, incarcerated offenders represent a historically disenfranchised population that necessitates an outside advocate to ensure their rights are being safeguarded. Prison inmates are often poor, undereducated, underemployed, and have a history of substance use (Goyer & Gow, 2001b). The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) defines the profession of social work as composed of the following ideals:

The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilizing theories of human behavior and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments.

Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work. (IFSW, 2004, p. 2)

The moral imperative is clear for the social work profession to strive to amass a body of research to guide policy regarding HIV/AIDS care and intervention in prisons, as well as in the development of programs to reintegrate offenders into society upon their release.

Finally, there are numerous provisions in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics which assert the importance of social workers striving for evidence-based practices to best serve the needs of clients. While the goal of providing HIV/AIDS/Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) & Tuberculosis (TB) outreach services to incarcerated offenders is commendable in nature, there is little benefit to the implementation of programs without proper follow-up to determine the program's effectiveness.

The Ithemba Project of Malmesbury Prison in Cape Town, South Africa has been in operation for four years without the benefit of a formal evaluation to determine its effectiveness with the targeted population. By determining the effectiveness of this model for HIV/AIDS outreach in prisons, the model can then be replicated and implemented at additional prison sites, thereby reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS in local communities and empowering offenders to take control of their health and the health of their communities.

An outcome evaluation of the existing HIV/AIDS/STI & TB outreach program, the Ithemba Project in Malmesbury Prison in Cape Town, South Africa, will provide guidance

for future program implementation in myriad prisons  
worldwide.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This section will cover relevant research regarding the topic of outreach programs in prisons. The discussion will include common risk factors among incarcerated individuals as well as an examination of prison outreach programs currently in place. Special attention is paid to the unique intersection of cultural, historical, and socioeconomic circumstances relevant to the prison population in South Africa. Finally, there will be an overview of the theories that have guided conceptualization of this program evaluation.

#### Common Risk Factors Among Prisoners

Prison inmates comprise a crucial target population for efforts aimed at reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS. Prison populations worldwide are noted for presenting with HIV/AIDS infection rates higher than that of the local general population (Jurgens, 2007). This phenomenon is due to the higher rate of risk behaviors engaged in by the prison population compared with the general population (Moseley & Tewksbury, 2006). These high risk

behaviors are engaged in both inside and outside of the prison setting and include behaviors such as having unprotected sex, drinking alcohol, using illicit drugs, exchanging money for sex, fighting, tattooing, intravenous drug use, and anal sex (Goyer & Gow, 2001a). Within prison dynamics offer even more challenges, as consensual anal sex as well as male-male rape is common in prisons worldwide (Hammett, 2006; Robertson, 2003). Unprotected anal sex has been determined to be the riskiest behavior in terms of transmission of HIV, especially when co-occurring with the presence of another STI, which are also more prevalent among prison populations than in the general population (Centers for Disease Control [CDC], 2007; Sifunda, Reddy, Braithwaite, Stephens, Bhengu, Ruiter, & Van Den Borne, 2007).

The World Health Organization (WHO) has put forth a set of guidelines aimed at effectively managing the public health crisis of HIV/AIDS within the prison system. Among their recommendations are access to quality care, the dissemination of HIV/AIDS education to correctional staff as well as inmates, and the provision of condoms to inmates (HEPP, 2000). Unfortunately, many prisons have not adopted the practice of providing

condoms to inmates due in large part to "political and ethical debates" between public health officials and prison officials (Moseley & Tewksbury, 2006, p. 133). Many wardens chose not to provide condoms out of fear it will appear as though prohibited sexual activities are being condoned. Additionally, many prison officials view prisons as an institution of retribution and consequently are not willing to provide what could be considered a reward to prisoners for engaging in forbidden activities.

Another major leading cause for HIV infection in inmates is through injection drug use (IDU) (Moseley & Tewkesbury, 2006; Hammett, 2006). While new infections are occurring in prison due to contact with contaminated needles, only a handful of prisons worldwide offer needle-sharing programs. These programs have been found to be effective at reducing transmission of blood-borne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis B and C without increasing the incidence of drug use (Hammett, 2006). The WHO Guidelines on HIV Infection and AIDS in Prisons recommends prison staff educate prisoners on the dangers of sharing injecting equipment, allow prisoners to continue methadone maintenance programs, and make available to prisoners bleach and clean syringes in

communities where these are regularly made available to injecting drug users (UNAIDS, 1999, p. 6). While the prevalence of injection drug use remains statistically low in the country of South Africa, research is showing a rise in this type of drug use among incarcerated juveniles, indicating a need for the development of education efforts aimed at combating this mode of transmission (Goyer & Gow, 2001b).

#### Current Prison Outreach Programs

Several models have been utilized in an effort to establish evidence-based practice in interventions targeted to prison inmates. Among those utilized are cognitive-behavioral models of treatment which incorporate social skill development, as well as cognitive skills training to reduce HIV/AIDS transmission and decrease the rate of recidivism (Golder, Ivanoff, Cloud, Besel, McKiernan, Bratt, & Bledsoe, 2005; Coates, Richter, & Caceres, 2008). Specific to addressing the issue of HIV/AIDS prevention, Golder et al. (2005) point to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) who have put extensive effort into researching and publishing evidence-based prevention practices, which the

CDC has named Replicating Effective Programs. One such program, Project Start, is aimed specifically to target incarcerated men about to be released from prison and reintegrated back into their communities (Wolitski, 2006). Project Start utilizes incremental risk reduction education and skill building to help prisoners carry out their specific risk reduction plan.

Further studies have been conducted to determine the effectiveness of HIV/AIDS outreach programs in prisons within the United States (Ehrmann, 2002; Ross, Harzke, Scott, McCann, & Kelley, 2006). Prevention programs have been implemented by Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in many United States prisons with the result of three main types of interventions being identified as particularly effective (Ehrmann, 2002). These interventions include peer-led education and outreach groups, discharge planning, and transitional case management (Ehrmann, 2002; Myers, Zack, Kramer, Gardner, Rucobo, & Costa-Taylor, 2005).

Peer educators have been found to be advantageous in that they are more readily accepted by the incarcerated population and have more opportunities for interaction than outside counselors (Ross, Harzke, Scott, McCann, &

Kelley, 2006). Peer education methods are also cost-effective and provide inmates with employable skills for when they are released. Unfortunately, peer-based HIV/AIDS outreach programs are not present in many prison facilities. While peer education programs have been shown to be one of the most effective methods of prison-based outreach, only 20% of United States prisons reported utilizing such a program (Collica, 2007).

Additionally, discharge planning helps newly diagnosed HIV-infected individuals set up services with outside agencies in preparation for their release (Myers et al., 2005). Newly-diagnosed individuals may not be familiar with resources available to them outside of prison and may need assistance seeking out these services and agencies before their release to ensure proper follow-up with HIV medical care and other support services.

Finally, transitional case management replaces the discharge planner once the inmate has been released. The transitional case manager helps the offender locate housing, financial support, medical care, and counseling services to help ensure permanent reduction of high-risk

behaviors that put the rest of the community at risk (Ehrmann, 2002).

Another study evaluated the effectiveness of an HIV outreach program with Maryland inmates. The program consisted of individual counseling and case management services, providing individualized education and attention as well as the development of post-release plans for participants (Bauserman, Richardson, Ward, Shea, Bowlin, Tomoyasu, & Solomon, 2003). Results of the study indicated that significant positive changes occurred in prisoner perceptions of condom use, increases in self-efficacy to reduce injection drug use, and increased awareness of past personal risk of HIV exposure. Increases in awareness of potential past exposure are likely to drive inmates to volunteer for HIV testing. Many program participants also reported increased intention to participate in safer sex practices in the future once they return to their communities (Bauserman et al., 2003).

Additionally, proper follow-up after the release of the inmate is imperative to ensure that the offender is accessing treatment and has help avoiding high-risk behaviors. Comparisons of viral loads of those who left

prison and returned versus those who remained in prison have shown that the returning prisoner often has a much higher viral load, indicating a lack of proper treatment once released into their communities (HEPP, 2000).

#### Issues Specific to South Africa

While the limited amount of research conducted in the field of outreach programs in prisons can be used to guide future programming, one must be cognizant of the applicability of outside research in the region of South Africa. South Africa has unique cultural beliefs and practices that are not always in sync with Western values (Shuster, Sterk, Frew, & del Rio, 2009; Ross, 2008). Additionally, the legacy that Apartheid has left South Africans fosters mistrust among black South Africans towards whites and Western values (Schneider & Stein, 2001; Mbali, 2002).

Traditional healers are widely accepted in South Africa as a means of maintaining good health. Research has shown that up to 80% of South Africans will consult a traditional healer for their healthcare, sometimes in addition to seeking help in clinics (Shuster, Sterk, Frew, & del Rio, 2009). Due to the lack of acceptance of

traditional health practices among Western-based health care practitioners, many patients will hide the fact that they are seeking dual treatment from the medical practitioner (Ross, 2008). Many HIV/AIDS outreach programs focus on the educational component of how HIV is transmitted, stressing the biological method with which HIV infects another person. Without taking into account the widespread indigenous belief that witchcraft and curses are the "ultimate cause" of HIV illness, Western based outreach programs are doomed to fail for their lack of effort to integrate traditional belief systems with Western models (Shuster, Sterk, Frew, & del Rio, 2009, p 17; Ashforth, 2001; Ross, 2008).

Of equal importance to address when implementing programs in South Africa, is the need to overcome the distrust of power, especially White power, in a post-Apartheid country. The legacy of Apartheid has left many South Africans with a potent skepticism of the intentions of Whites. Ashforth (2001) describes the response to AIDS prevention campaigns being launched in the black township of Soweto:

My friends in Soweto at the time, however, used to joke that AIDS stood for 'American Intervention to

Discourage Sex.' Doubting that the 'Apartheid regime' would ever act in the true interests of black people, they insisted that the free condoms were really intended to reduce the black birth rate in order to secure white domination (p. 4-5).

The fight to overcome the anti-black legacy of Apartheid is exemplified by efforts to discredit Western medicine and the scientific process. In a misguided effort to protect the citizens of his country from being seen as "natural-born promiscuous carriers of germs," former South African President Thabo Mbeki launched a government-wide campaign of AIDS denialism, promoting the scientifically unsound theory that HIV does not cause AIDS (Mbali, 2002, p. 1). Mbeki's new conceptualization of the symptoms of AIDS as being caused by poverty rather than a virus lead to widespread confusion and infighting about the disease (Mbali, 2002). As a result, widespread distribution of Antiretroviral (ARV) medication was delayed for years, and traditional healers still present a reluctance to refer patients to obtain ARV's as opposed to utilizing traditional treatments (Shuster, Sterk, Frew, & del Rio, 2009).

## Theories Guiding Conceptualization

The majority of current research on the topic of implementing HIV/AIDS outreach programs in prisons is borne from the public health perspective (Moseley & Tewkesbury, 2006; Robertson, 2003; HEPP, 2000; Hammett, 2006; Collica, 2007; Myers et al., 2005; Ross, Harzke, Scott, McCann, & Kelley, 2006). Researchers have shown a propensity to focus their efforts almost entirely on helping prisoners reduce their risk behaviors both inside and outside of prison by providing HIV education as well as providing case management services to help with ongoing disease management. This perspective is helpful at targeting one component of the overall problem, but does not address the importance of eliciting a cognitive shift in the prisoner to help them avoid future prison terms.

Additional research focuses on social learning theory, using Cognitive Behavioral Therapy treatments targeted at helping the prison population develop concrete plans for avoiding risk behaviors (Coates, Richter, & Caceres, 2008; Wolitski, 2006). Through the use of skill-building and education, prisoners have been shown to reduce risk behaviors once released back into

their communities. However, a more holistic approach is useful in creating long-term change in reducing risk behaviors, as well as reducing the likelihood of recidivism.

Empowerment theory emphasizes the importance of utilizing the client's knowledge base to guide any intervention (Payne, 2005). Particularly important when working with marginalized or disenfranchised populations, this theory highlights the oppressive nature of the worker intervening as the expert in situations that they have not experienced and do not fully understand. The empowerment process leads to personal transformations by promoting the individual's sense of self-efficacy in making critical changes in their lives (Payne, 2005). Using empowerment theory as a lens to guide one's evaluation of a program such as the Ithemba project is crucial to achieving a representative outcome of the implicit benefits of the program.

Restorative justice is the model implemented by South Africa in 2005 when the Department of Corrections issued the White Paper on Corrections (Prinsloo & Ladikos, 2007). The White Paper declares that the intent of the Corrections system in South Africa is

characterized by offender rehabilitation and reintegration (Muntingh, 2005). This theory is a community centered approach which seeks to facilitate a process for the offender to reconcile with the community as well as to enhance the productive capacity of offenders.

Gilbert and Settles define the concept of restorative justice as seeking to "promote peace and order for the community" and assert that justice is served "to the extent to which harms have been repaired and future harms prevented" (as cited in Clark, 2008, p. 340). The values implicit in restorative justice include "repair, inclusiveness, dignity, responsibility, honesty, equality, healing, transformation [and] fairness" (Ward & Langlands, 2008, p. 358).

It is the expectation of restorative justice approaches that the offender's choice to rehabilitate himself and make amends to his victim or community promotes internalization of the desired change. Robinson and Shapland (2008) found that participants in restorative justice programs "strongly supported [the model] as a vehicle for reducing reoffending" (p. 341). The promise of this model to reduce recidivism,

accentuates the need for an HIV/AIDS outreach component. As prisoners develop skills, restore self-confidence, and begin to feel accepted by their communities through their participation in restorative justice programs, they will be more likely to become active participants in their communities for longer periods of time. Their ability to manage their own disease once released and to be a role model for their communities by speaking out about HIV/AIDS is an extension of the restorative justice promise of true reintegration back into the community.

#### Summary

This section provided an overview of the current literature involving HIV/AIDS outreach in prisons. First, the common risk factors prevalent among prisoners were examined, followed by a discussion of current HIV/AIDS outreach programs in prisons. Issues specific to South Africa were covered as important considerations when implementing programs in the region. Finally, an overview of the theories that have historically guided HIV/AIDS programming were covered in addition to the benefits of using the restorative justice model as a guide to implementing HIV/AIDS outreach programs in prisons.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODS

#### Introduction

This section will cover an overview of the study design, including quantitative and qualitative variables that were measured. Additionally, the sampling method will be explained, followed by a description of the data collection methods and instruments used. The procedures that were utilized for collecting the data are explained in detail. This will be followed by a discussion regarding how human subjects were protected in this study, paying special attention to the concerns related to interviewing a prison population and conducting research in a foreign country. Finally, there will be a description of the procedures that will be utilized to analyze the data.

#### Study Design

This study consisted of an outcome evaluation of the HIV/AIDS/STI & TB outreach program being conducted by incarcerated offenders in conjunction with Cape Peninsula University of Technology at Malmesbury Prison in Cape Town, South Africa. The study consisted of a mixture of

quantitative and qualitative data collection methods in order to ensure a comprehensive evaluation. A mixed quantitative and qualitative survey was distributed to past and present participants in the Ithemba project to measure their perceived effectiveness of the approach and content of the program. Quantitative and qualitative data was collected from currently incarcerated offenders and released offenders who have participated in the program, current prison guards, as well as local community members to ascertain from varying perspectives the effectiveness of the program. This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of California State University, San Bernardino as well as the Department of Correctional Services in the Republic of South Africa.

Several limitations exist regarding the study including language barriers between the researcher and the research subjects, the non-random sample that may result in bias regarding those who volunteer to participate, the potential for misreporting behavior is high due to evaluation of multiple taboo behaviors, as well as confidentiality issues inherent in conducting research within a prison setting. The study aimed to determine whether the three stated objectives of the

HIV/AIDS/STI & TB outreach project in Malmesbury prison were being adequately addressed through current programming methods.

### Sampling

The sample for this study consisted largely of incarcerated offenders and released offenders who have participated in the Group of Hope outreach program. This sample provided both quantitative data regarding their perception of the effectiveness of the program, as well as qualitative data gathering their opinions regarding what aspects of the program were most beneficial and least beneficial in relation to the goals of the program. Offenders were recruited in the prison setting through invitation by CPUT staff after a regularly scheduled educational workshop. Offenders who were interested in participating in the study were invited to remain in the prison classroom where the workshop took place to fill out a survey in which they were asked to rate their perceived effectiveness of the program. Offenders were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and all participants signed an Informed Consent document (Appendix A).

Released offenders were recruited by phone from contact information provided by the prison. Released offenders were invited to meet the researcher for an interview to discuss whether they feel they have benefitted in any way from the program. The researcher informed participants that they had the freedom to end the interview at any time without repercussion if they choose to participate. All participants were provided with a copy of the Informed Consent document.

Additional qualitative data was gathered from prison warders who have witnessed offender participation in the outreach program, as well as from community members who have been impacted by the efforts of the restorative justice component of the program. The sample size for the evaluation is 17 surveys from currently incarcerated offenders, 8 surveys and 8 interviews with released offenders, 6 guard questionnaires, and two interviews with community members.

#### Data Collection and Instruments

The data collected consisted of a survey which collected demographic data and perceptions of program effectiveness from participants in the outreach program

(Appendix B). Additionally, prison warders were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding their perceptions of offender receptiveness to the outreach program (Appendix C). Community members were interviewed to ascertain if there have been any changes in their feelings towards the prisoner population with respect to the restorative justice efforts of the program.

The independent variables in this study consist of the three objectives of the Ithemba Project. The first objective is to prevent, manage, and control the HIV/AIDS pandemic within the confines of the correctional facility by introducing ongoing HIV/AIDS/STI & TB Projects. The independent variables in this objective are the HIV/AIDS/STI & TB education and awareness projects that the offenders have participated in. The dependent variable being measured are offenders' levels of knowledge regarding transmission of and protection against STI's as well as offenders' sense of efficacy to prevent future transmission. These data were collected through surveys and interviews and were measured as ordinal data where the participants rate their level of knowledge before and after the program on a 4-point Likert scale.

The second objective of the program is to facilitate the impact of the program to filter out into the broader community. The independent variables in this objective are the workshops and classes that are held for the offenders. The dependent variable for this objective is the sense of efficacy the participants in the workshops and classes feel they have to lead responsible and productive lives after being released from the prison. This objective was measured through qualitative interviews with released offenders in which they were asked to discuss how their participation in the workshops and classes has been impacting them since their release. Participants were asked to rate quantitatively their sense of efficacy to be a productive citizen as well as a community leader through the use of 4-point Likert scales.

The third objective of the program is to equip and empower offenders with the necessary life skills to enable them to become agents of restorative justice. The independent variables for this objective are a farming project and a sewing project which were designed to provide the offenders with an opportunity to develop skills and as a method of giving back to the community,

in line with the principles of restorative justice. The dependent variables for this objective are the offender's perception of the benefits they have received from participating in the farming project and the sewing project. Offenders are afforded the opportunity to learn the skills of farming and sewing as well as to develop relationships with the local community through donating food and clothing. Participants were asked to identify skills they have acquired by participating in the Ithemba Project and to explain how they feel they have benefitted from these skills on an ordinal scale. Participants were asked how they have been able to integrate these skills into their life once released.

#### Procedures

Some data were gathered through a standardized survey that was distributed to willing participants who are current prison inmates. These surveys were administered in a group setting in a private atmosphere within the prison setting to ensure confidentiality. Willing participants in the prison were identified by informing offenders participating in a Group of Hope workshop of the purpose of the study. Offenders were

given the survey in a classroom in a group setting. A researcher was available to help answer offender questions and concerns, or to assist in filling out the survey. Released offenders were contacted by phone with an invitation to participate in the study. Willing participants were met by the researcher in a semi-public place such as a University office or coffee shop for the interview. A semi-public place has been chosen by the researcher to reduce safety concerns. There is a reasonable expectation of privacy associated with meetings in some public places and great care was taken to ensure conversations were held out of earshot of other citizens.

Prison warders were informed of the researcher's desire to include their perspective in the study and were invited to volunteer to participate. Warders were given a questionnaire to complete and asked to return it to the researcher. Local community members were identified through past participation with the restorative justice component of the program. The researcher contacted potential community member participants by phone to ask for participation. Interviews were conducted in the community members' homes and places of employment.

## Protection of Human Subjects

All participants were provided with a description of the study before participating. Surveys included a description of the project and reiterated the absolute right of all participants to drop out of the study at any time. Surveys did not collect any personally identifying information, such as name, address, or date of birth. Data collected during interviews included demographic data but did not include names, addresses, or any other personally identifying information. Informed consent documents were obtained from each participant. All participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without repercussion.

## Data Analysis

Survey data was coded and entered into SPSS for analysis. Frequencies were run on the demographic data to provide an overview of the responders. Paired-sample t-tests were run on before and after Likert-scale questions to determine statistical significance of the programming on offender responses.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed. Qualitative data analysis was conducted by identifying

common themes in the participant responses. In this first-level coding, categories were extrapolated until all common themes are accounted for. Each category included several representative verbatim quotes to support the category. Second-level coding identified patterns among the categories. Finally, data analysis resulted in the development of a conceptual framework from which to understand the participant answers.

#### Summary

This section covered the design of this research study. The sampling procedure was explained, as well as the data collection methods and the instruments that were utilized. The procedures used to collect the information were enumerated followed by a discussion of the measures that were taken to ensure protection of human subjects in this study. Finally, the procedure for analyzing the data was explained.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

This section covers the results of the study evaluating the Group of Hope project at Malmesbury prison in South Africa. Demographic data as well as univariate findings will be reported as well as statistical data obtained from surveys asking offenders to measure their perceived level of the program's effectiveness. Qualitative data analysis will follow, showing patterns of responses to survey questions as well as interview questions by the offenders. Qualitative data collected from prison warders as well as community members are also presented in this section.

#### Presentation of the Findings

The data sample includes responses from 25 male offenders who have participated in the Group of Hope at Malmesbury prison. Eight participants are released offenders who completed the survey as well as an interview which was transcribed. Additionally, 17 currently incarcerated offenders completed the survey. All quantitative survey data was entered into SPSS

version 17.0 and analyzed for frequency data as well as comparative means. Additionally, six prison warders completed a questionnaire, and two interviews were conducted with community members.

The demographic data collected from offenders revealed that the average age was 35.52 years, with a minimum reported age of 23 and a maximum reported age of 53. Thirteen respondents self-identified their Tribe or Ethnic group as Xhosa, nine self-identified as Coloured, two responded as Black, and one offender self-identified as Sotho. Their prison terms ranged from 22 months to life sentences, with an average sentence of 133.75 months. Four offenders were incarcerated for armed robbery, eight for murder, two for theft, eight for robbery, and three for rape. Twenty-one respondents indicated they considered themselves to be a member of Group of Hope, three did not answer the question, and one reported that he was not a member because he had only recently begun attending Group of Hope.

Respondents were asked to indicate which workshops they had participated in (Results summarized in Table 1) as well as how many workshops they participated in (See Table 2). While 1 respondent indicated he had

participated in no workshops and 5 respondents answered that they had participated in 1 workshop, the majority of respondents attended multiple workshops.

Table 1. Group of Hope Workshops Attended by Offenders

Name of Workshop	Number of Offenders who Attended
Beyond HIV/AIDS/STI & TB	21
Team Building	10
Voluntary Counseling and Testing	11
Basic Introduction to Vegetable Farming	10
Men as Partners Peer Education	6
Basic Counseling and Listening Skills	8
Introductory Workshop to Death and Grief Counseling	5
Introduction to Computers and PowerPoint	7
Art Therapy Workshop	8
Career Guidance Workshop	8
Sewing and Clothing Design Workshop	6
Portfolio Workshop	13

Table 2. Number of Workshops Attended by Offenders

Number of Workshops Attended	Number of Offenders
0	1
1	5
2	4
3	1
4	2
5	4
6	1
7	2
8	1
9	2
10	0
11	1
12	1

Due to the restorative justice significance of the vegetable farming and sewing aspects of the Group of Hope program, respondents were asked to rate on a 1 to 4 scale, with 1 meaning "Not Beneficial" and 4 meaning "Very Beneficial" their perceptions of these two components of the program. Out of seventeen responses to the farming project question, fourteen rated it as a 4, two respondents gave it a 3, while one respondent rated it at a 2. Out of eight responses to the sewing project question, seven respondents rated it as a 4, while one

respondent rated it as a 3. This data indicates that the majority of respondents found both of these projects to be "Very Beneficial."

Survey respondents were asked to rate whether they felt their participation in the Group of Hope project would make it easier to reintegrate into society after their release, on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 meaning "Not At All" and 4 meaning "Very Much So." All twenty five respondents answered this question, with eighteen choosing 4, six respondents choosing 3, and one respondent choosing 2.

Three 4-point Likert scale questions were included in the survey asking respondents to rate certain knowledge and behaviors before and after their participation in the Group of Hope program. A paired-sample t-test was run for each of these three questions to determine their significance. The first of these questions asked respondents to rate their level of knowledge of HIV/AIDS before participation in the Group of Hope project compared to after their participation in the Group of Hope project. Participants could rate their knowledge from 1 to 4, with 1 meaning "Least Knowledge" and 4 meaning "Most Knowledge." Data analysis suggested

that there was a statistically significant difference in the level of knowledge of HIV/AIDS before participating in the Group of Hope project ( $m = 1.84$ ) compared to after participating in the Group of Hope program ( $m = 3.80$ ) [ $t(24) = -10.487, p < .0005$ ].

The second Likert scale before and after question asked respondents to rate their knowledge of how to prevent HIV transmission before participating in the Group of Hope program compared to after having participated in the program. Participants could rate their responses from 1 meaning "Least Knowledge" to 4 meaning "Most Knowledge." The paired samples t-test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference before participating in the Group of Hope program in the respondent's perceived level of knowledge of how to prevent HIV transmission ( $m = 1.84$ ) compared to after participation in the Group of Hope program ( $m = 3.88$ ) [ $t(24) = -.9624, p < .0005$ ]. The final Likert scale before and after question asked respondents to rate their interest in teaching their community members about HIV/AIDS before participating in the Group of Hope program and after participating in the Group of Hope program. Respondents were asked to rate their responses

from 1 meaning "Not Interested" to 4 meaning "Very Interested." The paired sample t-test indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in the level of interest in teaching their community members about HIV/AIDS before participating in the Group of Hope program ( $m = 1.92$ ) compared to after participation in the Group of Hope program ( $m = 3.60$ ) [ $t(24) = -7.116$ ,  $p < .0005$ ].

The survey also included several qualitative questions aimed at gathering offender opinions on various aspects of the program and how they have benefitted from them. The first such question asked responders to describe how the farming project has benefitted them. Sixteen participants provided a response to this question. Respondent answers fit into two distinct categories. The first category was that offenders believed that they had learned an important skill in farming and that they would personally benefit from this knowledge. Twelve respondents indicated that they felt that they would personally benefit from this knowledge. One individual evaluated this skill in terms of potential employment upon release and said: "I know a lot more about farming now and believe that I will be able to do

some work on my own when I get outside" (personal communication, survey #17, November 2009). Several respondents indicated a sense of empowerment through the acquisition of this knowledge, as one respondent indicated when he said:

It has benefitted me due to the fact that I could learn a lot more about how to cultivate and how to look after the plants, in other words, that experience has equipped me. I can now work with the soil and seeds in a proper manner (personal communication, survey #23, November 2009).

Other respondents indicated they would continue utilizing the knowledge gained. For example, one said "It has benefitted me so much even I can start a small farming project" (personal communication, survey #19, November 2009).

The second pattern of responses was characterized by offender appreciation for a chance to give back to their community. Nine of the 16 responses included an element which proclaimed that giving back to the community was how they have benefitted from the farming project. One respondent indicated, "It provided nutrition for the children and for some community members. GOHM [Group of

Hope members] could distribute some of the vegetables to the most needy in the surrounding areas of Malmesbury" (personal communication, survey #4, August 2009). Another offender responded, "The farming project has taught me a lot about giving back to the community, in a way that you don't spend much money, but you get a lot out of what you put in the soil" (personal communication, survey #13, November 2009).

Seven of the respondents indicated a mixture of the two patterns of responses; that they benefitted personally, as well as benefitted by giving back to the community. One individual responded, "It equipped me with basic farming skills as well as enabled me to reach out to other less fortunate people" (personal communication, survey #5, August 2009). Others noted that they feel it can serve as a tool for community organization. For example, one formerly incarcerated respondent said, "It opened my mind, saw farming as a good thing to help with orphans. I am currently looking for a place to do farming now. I would like to teach others about farming" (personal communication, survey #8, August 2009) and another responded, "Yes, it has learned me a lot on how to do your own farming projects when you are out of

prison and how to organize your community to start gardening projects and farming" (personal communication, survey #7, August 2009).

The next qualitative question asked respondents to discuss how they feel they have benefitted from the sewing project. There were 9 responses to this question, which reflects the fact that only a few of the respondents had actually taken part in the Sewing and Clothing Design workshop (n=6). The respondents who had not directly participated in the workshop indicated that they had learned the skills from others who had participated and one respondent stated, "I would ask them to come again and teach us this powerful skill to empower ourselves for the future" (personal communication, survey #15, November 2009). 6 of the responses indicated that the main benefit from the program was the knowledge gained of how to design and sew one's own clothing. One participant said "I can now make clothing for me and my family out of material that I bought for a less price" (personal communication, survey #13, November 2009), and another respondent remarked, "It was beneficial to me so much that I can start manufacturing my own clothes" (personal communication, survey #19, November 2009).

Another respondent reflected on the benefit of using the skill to give to the community, "Seeing young children/orphans getting their school uniforms and winter clothing from the group [GOH] and the old people getting sleepwear gives me a good feeling and encourages me to do more" (personal communication, survey #17, November 2009).

The next question asked respondents to list what skills they had learned in the Ithemba project that they did not have before coming to prison. Twenty-two responses were provided for this question. Most responses indicated that participants had learned specific knowledge and skills from the workshops. Both HIV/AIDS knowledge and communication and counseling skills received 8 offender responses. With regard to the HIV/AIDS responses, one participant indicated that he had "learned how to use a condom" (personal communication, survey #6, August 2009), and another stated "I learned how to take better care of myself and listen to others, but don't judge them on these diseases. These diseases affect human beings and spread easy" (personal communication, survey #15, November 2009). Other HIV/AIDS related responses indicated "There is a lot of things

that I didn't understand about HIV and AIDS, but today I understand them much better than before" (personal communication, survey #18, November 2009), and "It made me more aware of HIV and AIDS and I gained a lot of knowledge" (personal communication, survey #25, November 2009). Many participants indicated that they had learned communication and listening skills which one respondent expressed he would use to "reach out to help where possible" (personal communication, survey #7, August 2009). Additionally, 5 respondents noted their acquisition of gardening skills, 5 mentioned the sewing skills, and 4 respondents indicated that they had learned computer skills through the Introduction to Computers and PowerPoint workshop.

The next question asked respondents to state what they would change about the program if they could. Out of the 23 responses provided for this question, 8 offenders indicated that there was "nothing" they would like to change about the program. 4 respondents suggested expanding program outreach to assist Group of Hope members once they are released from prison back into the community. 2 respondents indicated that more involvement and assistance from warders would be beneficial. 2

respondents suggested the program be expanded to other prisons and 2 other respondents suggested that the Group of Hope members be allowed to interact more with the community. 2 respondents requested that workshops were offered on a more regular basis to teach them more skills.

The final qualitative question on the survey asked respondents to discuss whether they felt that their cultural beliefs were respected in the Ithemba project. Out of 24 responses, 16 responses indicated "Yes." 2 respondents indicated that they didn't believe the group had anything to do with cultural beliefs, as one offender stated, "The group has nothing to do with someone's cultural beliefs. It is just equipping each and every individual with knowledge concerning his/her own health and being" (personal communication, survey #24, November 2009). 2 others responded that they didn't see any problems and that "We were different ethnic groups, Muslim, Xhosa, and Coloured and we all respected each other" (personal communication, survey #7, August 2009) and "I had an opportunity to learn from other cultures as well" (personal communication, survey #22, November 2009). 1 member noted that culture was important in that

they were taught "that HIV is not a European problem and it is not witchcraft" (personal communication, survey #8, August 2009). Only 1 respondent indicated that he thought the group "needs to be more multi-cultural" (personal communication, survey #1, August 2009).

Interviews were conducted with 8 Group of Hope members who had been released from prison and were living in the community. Of the 10 total released offenders who had been involved with Group of Hope, current contact information was only available for 8, resulting in a 100% response rate of released offenders among those contacted and asked to participate in the study. There were no reports of any offender who had been through the program having had to return to prison, a 0% recidivism rate. Of these 8 released offenders, all but 1 was currently employed at the time of the interview. Interviews were conducted by the researcher from a list of 6 standard questions aimed at eliciting participant opinions on the usefulness of the group as well as difficulties the participants faced in coordinating the activities of the group.

Participants were initially asked to describe their experience with the Group of Hope while at Malmesbury

prison. 6 of the participants identified themselves as one of the founding members of the group. Their responses show a pattern of identifying a problem within the prison in regards to the treatment and stigma of people with HIV. One respondent described the impetus as such:

We didn't know each other from the outside, but we started to get to know each other on the inside. A few months later, you don't see each other anymore, only to find out that he came to prison not knowing that he is positive, and a few months into prison he gets sick. So you don't see him... and you are trying to reach out and you can't get vital information... They were angry for the situation they were in and some were embarrassed for others to know their HIV status... We felt like there was a need for us to help each other (personal communication, interview #5, August 2009).

One HIV positive group member described the impact the HIV awareness workshops had on him: "I was the first inmate to disclose to the group...and they were 100% standing by me...Disclosing inside...actually made me stronger" (personal communication, interview #6, August 2009). Participants discussed the evolution of this

program, from inviting CPUT instructors to come teach them about HIV so they could teach other inmates as peer educators, to working to provide condoms for the inmates in the prison units.

Responses also detailed the evolution of the adoption project and the gardening and sewing projects:

We also came up with the idea of adopting children who were affected because their parents had HIV/AIDS. Because we had a sewing project, we are going to make clothes for these kids, and we are going to help them with their schoolwork, and we are going to try and get a gardening project so we can have some food, something, for them (personal communication, interview #3, August 2009).

Group of Hope members were put in charge of various projects and were able to teach others new skills, which provided some with a sense of pride and accomplishment. As one member stated, "We teach each other, so Group of Hope made me what I am today, that I can be proud of myself, because I have learned a lot" (personal communication, interview #7, August 2009).

Some released offenders described the difficulty they had getting some of their projects off the ground,

"We were saying we wanted to adopt kids, and they would say; Who the hell are you? Some of us are here for...very serious crimes and no one wanted to believe us. No one trusted us" (personal communication, interview #4, August 2009). Lack of trust was a prevalent issue with respect to the barriers the offenders faced in accomplishing some of the goals of Group of Hope.

Next, released offenders were asked if they felt that the presence of Group of Hope was able to reduce the stigma of HIV, even for those who had not participated in the Group. All 8 respondents asserted that they believed that the work of Group of Hope was effective at reducing the stigma for those with HIV. One respondent described the transformation this way:

We discovered that people started becoming sensitive to what it is to be HIV positive and not to talk about it. Because if I were to talk about HIV, and I am around people who have HIV, then I am aware that I am talking about you and being insensitive to you. And the language started changing (personal communication, interview #1, August 2009).

Another participant described the advantage of using the peer education approach:

You must understand that there is a certain psychological concept of prison. If the warden comes to you and tells you something, it's totally different than if the next inmate comes and tells you the same thing. The other inmates will actually believe you as an inmate more than they believe the prison member. So we were actually quite impactful in Malmesbury (personal communication, interview #2, August 2009).

Interview participants were asked to identify what they had learned through participation in the Ithemba project. Responses to this question varied greatly, with the most common answers being listening, counseling and leadership skills. One respondent remarked, "I was a shy person, I couldn't speak more than 3 words in front of people. But now, if you put me on the stand, I could speak for more than 2 hours" (personal communication, interview #6, August 2009). Listening, patience, and leadership skills were identified by respondents as having a positive impact on the way they interact with others at work. One respondent stated, "If someone is yelling at me, I can't just yell at him back. I just leave him alone. So it helped me learn how to deal with

people" (personal communication, interview #4, August 2009), while another respondent expressed, "the counseling skills help you tune in, to empathize, or sympathize with people, to see where they are coming from. I used to think people...were lazy and didn't want to come to work" (personal communication, interview #1, August 2009).

Participants were then asked to identify what they felt was the best part of the Ithemba project. Responses to this question varied greatly as well. The opportunity to help others emerged as a pattern in this response set, with 4 respondents indicating some variation of this response. Respondents expressed a sense of empowerment in being able to help others, as identified by one respondent:

Group of Hope was established to reach out to the community out there as well as to empower the offender at the end of the day. You don't need to be the same person you were when you came into prison, you need to be more skillful, more empowered, more knowledgeable (personal communication, interview #2, August 2009).

When asked to identify their least favorite part of the Ithemba project, 6 of the 8 respondents indicated that there was nothing that they did not like about the project. The 2 responses that identified a problem both cited interference from the warders while trying to accomplish some of the goals of the group. One respondent suggested that arranging meetings and reaching out to outside of the prison "was like a circus" because the authorities were "prevent[ing] us from doing things we really needed to do" (personal communication, interview #10, August 2009).

The next question asked respondents to discuss how supportive the guards were of the Ithemba project. Responses to this question were largely characterized by the offender's perception of a lack of trust from the guards at the beginning of the project which changed over time. Respondents indicated that the warders tended to think that the Group "was a smokescreen for something else" (personal communication, interview #2, August 2009) or that "they were up to something" (personal communication, interview #3, August 2009). Two respondents asserted that support from the Head of the prison was present and was the catalyst for increased

support on the part of the prison guards. Respondents indicated that some guards were more supportive of the Group than others, and that some even brought in teddy bears and supplies for functions for the adopted children.

Finally, participants were asked to discuss how they feel the skills they learned in the Ithemba project helped them with the transition back into society when they were released from prison. Responses indicated that released offenders felt an increased sense of self-worth due to their participation in the Ithemba program. Respondents indicated improved communication skills, increased ability to seek out and find employment, and some expressed that they feel they are leaders in their communities. One respondent shared, "I am where I am now because of those skills. If I didn't go to prison...and get involved with Group of Hope, I would at this time be back in prison again now" (personal communication, interview #10, August 2009). Another proclaimed, "Group of Hope empowers you...Look at me, I got out of prison and not even three weeks later I found a job based on the stuff that I picked up" (personal communication, interview #2, August 2009). In contrast, one respondent

described the difficulty he has had in obtaining work, suggesting that the skills are useful but without some kind of support, there is very little one can do with these skills.

Malmesbury prison warders were also provided with an opportunity to share their perceptions of the Ithemba project. Warders were provided with a short questionnaire in which they were asked to share their perceptions of offenders who participate in the Group of Hope. 6 warders responded to the request and completed the questionnaire.

The first question asked respondents to briefly describe their experience with the Ithemba project. The majority of responses described the group in terms of its function and benefit to the Group of Hope members. One respondent described the group as:

A group of people who look after orphans and supply those who are in need with daily fresh vegetables, spreading the message of HIV/AIDS. It also help[ed] the children who are affected by [the] HIV virus with clothes...I think Group of Hope will expand to become [a household name] in the future (personal communication, warder survey #1, November 2009).

Other responses described the benefit the offenders received as a result of being part of the group, such as "they became self-assured and responsible" (personal communication, warder survey #5, November 2009) and "the members empower themselves in building relationships with the community..." (personal communication, warder survey #3, November 2009). All responses indicated a positive perception of the Group of Hope.

Warders were then asked to describe any differences they saw between prisoners who participate in the Ithemba project and those who do not. Five of the responses indicated that they saw a difference in those that participate in Group of Hope versus those who do not. Warders described Group of Hope members as "dedicated, hard-working offenders...[who] are well-disciplined" (personal communication, warder survey #1, November 2009) and that they are "more open to talk[ing] about the disease [HIV/AIDS]. They are more open to engage with other people and assist them" (personal communication, warder survey #3, November 2009). Two respondents indicated that they would like the Group to be open to more offenders than just Group of Hope members because "the programmes have changed the members...and make them

more responsible..." (personal communication, warder survey #2, November 2009).

Warders were then asked to share their opinions regarding whether they had seen any differences in how community members are viewing prisoners as a result of the Group of Hope activities. All 6 respondents indicated that they believed the community had a better perception of prisoners as a result of the activities of Group of Hope. One respondent described the relationship thusly:

They have won the hearts and trust of many people in the community. They adopted some of the children who were affected by HIV/AIDS in the community of Ilinseletu, providing them with support emotionally and mentally. Sometimes they organize birthday bashes for their adopted children and give them presents (personal communication, warder survey #1, November 2009).

Other warders noted that community members "change their attitudes toward the inmate when they see how caring the inmates are" (personal communication, warder survey #4, November 2009) and "due to the fact that they have reached out to the schools and community here, the community do[es] have a better perception of the

offenders" (personal communication, warder survey #2, November 2009).

Warders were then asked to describe and changes they had seen in the behavior or attitudes of inmates after they joined the Group of Hope. All 6 responses indicated that offenders made positive changes in their behavior after joining Group of Hope, as one warder stated "They are more career-driven and focused..." (personal communication, warder survey #1, November 2009). Other warders described the changes as "the offenders have become more relaxed and self-assured" (personal communication, warder survey #2, November 2009) and that they "have shown a mind change in behavior, responsibility and self-assuredness" (personal communication, warder survey #5, November 2009).

Finally, warders were asked to discuss if they had noticed any difference between inmates who participate in Group of Hope returning to prison versus those offenders who had not participated. Three respondents indicated that none of the Group of Hope members had returned to prison after being released, while the other three respondents discussed the qualities gained from the program that are serving as protective factors to keep

Group of Hope members from recidivating. Responses included, "they are busy in the HIV field..." (personal communication, warder survey #6, November 2009) and "The participants in the program are more skilled which give them assurance to strive to do better and either work as counselors in the community" (personal communication, warder survey #2, November 2009).

In addition to the information collected from offenders who had participated in Group of Hope and the prison warders, some information was collected from community members who had been involved with or affected by the outreach efforts of the Group of Hope. One interview was conducted with a woman who is raising her nephew who was orphaned when his mother died of AIDS, who is one of the children adopted by Group of Hope. The interview questions were translated into Xhosa and participant answers were translated back to English by a CPUT HIV/AIDS Unit intern who volunteered to assist. The second interview was with the Executive Director of Elkana Childcare, one of the beneficiaries of the outreach efforts of the Group of Hope members.

The aunt of the child who was adopted by Group of Hope indicated that she had been introduced to Group of

Hope by the child's teacher. She asserted that Group of Hope has helped by providing school uniforms and food for the child. When asked if her perception of prisoners has changed as a result of the program, she explained that she used to see prisoners "as violent people" (personal communication, interview #8, August 2009) but now has met with them and eaten with the Group of Hope members and has a different perception. She further indicated that she "is very thankful" for the Group's efforts, believes the Group of Hope program is "a beautiful thing" and should be copied at other prisons (personal communication, interview #8, August 2009).

The second community member interview elicited information from a childcare agency that Group of Hope has reached out to. The Executive Director explained that her agency was contacted by the Group of Hope because they wanted to provide the children with food, "especially the street children" (personal communication, interview #9, August 2009). She further indicated that the soup brought by the Group of Hope "helps a lot" (personal communication, interview #9, August 2009) because they do not have the funding to feed all of the children every day. In regard to her perception of

prisoners after interacting with them in this way, she indicated that her "whole outlook towards them did change" and she "sees them different" (personal communication, interview #9, August 2009) as a result of their outreach. She went on to affirm that she believes that the Group of Hope program benefits the community.

#### Summary

This section detailed the results of the outcome evaluation study of the Group of Hope program at Malmesbury prison in South Africa. Demographic data of the participants was presented, followed by the quantitative data analysis obtained from the surveys completed by current inmates and released offenders. Qualitative data was then presented from the surveys, revealing patterns of responses. This information was followed by qualitative data results from the interviews conducted with released offenders. Finally, qualitative data from Malmesbury warders, as well as community members affected by the Group of Hope program were included.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

This chapter will include a discussion of what data analysis reveals about whether the Ithemba Project at Malmesbury prison in South Africa is effectively addressing the stated objectives of the program. This will be followed by a summary of the limitations present in the current study. Finally, recommendations for social work practice, policy and research will be put forth based on the outcomes of the data analysis.

#### Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the current programming efforts of the Ithemba Project are effectively addressing the stated objectives of the program. Participants are given a variety of opportunities to attend workshops to increase their knowledge and skills, attend groups to gain and provide support to others, as well as contribute to the community in a way that promotes restorative justice principles. Participant responses indicated increased knowledge of HIV/AIDS as well as an increased sense of empowerment and

self-efficacy in relation to the knowledge gained from the workshops.

The first objective of the program; to prevent, manage, and control the HIV pandemic within the confines of the correctional facility, was measured by asking participants to rate their knowledge of HIV before and after participating in the program. Responses indicated a statistically significant increase in knowledge about HIV after participating in the Ithemba project. Participants were also asked to rate their level of knowledge regarding how to prevent HIV transmission before and after participation in the program. This question yielded responses that also indicated a statistically significant increase in the level of knowledge of how to prevent HIV transmission due to participation in the Ithemba Project.

In addition to the general education provided by peer educators regarding HIV, the members of Group of Hope also advocated for condoms to be made available in the prison as well as the provision of ARV medication to HIV positive inmates. Furthermore, findings suggest that speaking openly about HIV and creating an atmosphere conducive to disclosure and communication about HIV has helped to reduce the stigma within the prison surrounding

HIV and AIDS. Empowered with information and armed with condoms to guard against STI's, including HIV, the inmates at Malmesbury prison are in a superior position to prevent, manage, and control HIV/AIDS within the confines of the prison.

The second objective of the Ithemba Project; to facilitate the impact of the program to filter out into the broader community, was measured by asking respondents to rate on a 4-point Likert scale how much they thought that the Ithemba project might make it easier for them to reintegrate into society after being released from prison. Results from this question indicated that 72% of participants (n=18) indicated "very much so" and 24% (n=6) indicated an additional affirmative response. No respondents indicated that they did not feel the program would help them at all after being released.

Equipped with knowledge and empowered by leadership skills, many also reported an intention to carry on the HIV/AIDS awareness work once out in their communities. Many respondents (n=8) indicated that they had learned skills and information related to HIV/AIDS, including one respondent who indicated he had "learned how to use a condom" (personal communication, survey #6, August 2009).

Knowledge about how to prevent HIV transmission is of paramount importance to preventing the future spread of HIV. Additionally, only 28% (n=7) of respondents indicated they would have been "interested" or "very interested" in teaching their community about HIV and AIDS before participation in the project, while 96% (n=24) indicated they were "interested" or "very interested" in teaching their community about HIV/AIDS after participation in the project. Participants in the Ithemba Project have indicated a number of ways in which they are bringing the message of Group of Hope to the broader community, by acting as community leaders and educators, as well as giving back to the community through service to others. In this way, the impact of the program is being filtered out into the broader community.

The third objective of the Ithemba project is to equip and empower offenders with the necessary life skills to enable them to become agents of restorative justice. This objective was measured by asking respondents to rate how beneficial they felt the farming project and sewing project were on a 4 point Likert scale. Responses indicated that 94.2% (n=16) found the farming project to be "beneficial" or "very beneficial"

and 100% (n=8) found the sewing project to be "beneficial" or "very beneficial."

Respondents were also asked to identify any skills they learned in the workshops that they did not have before participating in the project. Many of the participants responded that they felt they had gained communication and counseling skills in the program that enable them to positively impact their communities. Respondents indicated interest in "counseling the bereaved" (personal communication, survey #6, August 2009) and "reaching out to help where possible" (personal communication, survey #7, August 2009). The interest in reaching out to help the community is exemplified by the number of released offenders who were employed in fields of social service. Of the 8 interviewed released offenders, 3 held jobs in social services while another engaged in public speaking about HIV/AIDS to raise awareness.

The significance of these responses is two-fold; respondents were able to learn new skills which empowers them to grow their own food and/or sew their own clothing once released, creating job opportunities as well as serving as useful life skills, and the participants were

able to use these skills to give to the community in such a way as to symbolically make amends for the crimes they had committed against their communities. Responses indicated that many participants intended to use their new skills once released to start their own farming and sewing projects. This is significant because the availability of legitimate jobs increases the chance of successful reintegration, and conversely, the absence of these jobs, is highly correlated with reoffending (Henry & Jacobs, 2007). Additionally, participants often cited the benefits of feeling good about giving back to their communities and helping those less fortunate. The offender responses indicated that they felt more equipped and empowered with the life skills necessary to become agents of restorative justice.

Maintaining ties with the community and fostering a sense of responsibility to the community is imperative to successful reentry into the community (Mauer, 2007). Restorative justice principles can only be realized when an offender has the potential to make amends to the community for their crime and has access to the tools necessary to become an active and productive member of their community once released.

Sending offenders to prison to pay for their crimes often separates them from their communities in such a way that they never feel the impact of how their crime has hurt their community. Ross (in Burford, 2000) decries the relational distance between the offender and the community exemplified by traditional incarceration models and suggests it reinforces the disdain and fear the community feels toward the offender as well as the internalized sense of shame in the offender for dysfunctional behavior patterns. Offenders are far more likely to feel the incentive to change towards a more socially acceptable pattern of behavior when they are given a chance to fully understand the depth of hurt they have caused the community as a result of their crime as well as to feel empowered to make the necessary changes to prevent future harms.

Reference to the stages of change in the Transtheoretical Model of Change provides us with insight into the change process that is facilitated by the Group of Hope, and the restorative justice model in general (Day, Bryan, Davey, & Casey, 2006). The stages of change model incorporates the experiential processes that prepares the offender for change, followed by the

behavioral processes in which the offender demonstrates a change in behavior. In the experiential stage, the offender must experience increased awareness about the causes and effects of the problem behavior, conduct a re-appraisal of the impact their behavior has had on their community, observe an increase in opportunities or alternatives to the behavior, and finally conduct a self-reappraisal in which their self-image reflects the absence of the problem behavior (p. 477). Once these internal experiential conditions are met, the behavior processes begin to change.

The programming of the Ithemba Project incorporates all the components necessary to elicit this type of behavior change. The emphasis on skill building and education, as well as the internalized positive impact of serving the community, equips the Group of Hope members with the sense of efficacy and social responsibility that is necessary for internalized change. Importantly, the behavior change reflects not only the rejection of further criminal behavior, but also incorporates a strong educational component related to HIV/AIDS, which translates to reduced risk behavior and decreased stigma,

both of which are necessary for the reduction of new HIV infections.

#### Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. First, the sample size of this study was small and concentrated at one location, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Secondly, the researcher was unable to obtain interviews with currently incarcerated offenders, limiting the scope of the information evaluating the effectiveness of the program. Third, the majority of respondents did not speak English as a first language, causing a language barrier between the researcher and the respondent. Additionally, the researcher was from a different country and culture than the participants of the study, increasing the possibility of misinterpreting data due to a misunderstanding of cultural terms or norms. Fourth, the subject of sexually transmitted infections such as HIV can be embarrassing and uncomfortable for people to discuss, allowing for a greater possibility of misreporting information or providing information the researcher might be expected to want to hear.

Finally, a pre-test was not available to measure participant knowledge levels or interests before participating in the program. Therefore, participants were asked to rate their level of knowledge and skills before participating in the Ithemba project only after their participation, potentially resulting in biased information.

#### Recommendations for Social Work Practice, Policy and Research

Analysis of this comprehensive approach to prison outreach through skill building, support, education, and provision of opportunities to contribute in a meaningful way to one's community has powerful implications for social work. Notably, social work has taken a backseat to other professions in shaping policy related to criminal justice. American policy now reflects a punitive approach to criminal justice, which has led to astronomically high rates of incarceration and longer sentences for criminal acts with only marginal corresponding reductions in crime or recidivism rates to justify this approach (Lippke, 2002).

In the recent past, criminal justice approaches reflected the inherent values of social work, through a

conceptualization of deviant acts as the result of "complex interactions among diverse psychological, familial, economical, environmental, and biological factors," as well as emphasis on rehabilitation programs and individualized sentencing and treatment approaches (Reamer, 2004, p. 213; Garland, 2001). However, the "Nothing Works" movement of the 1970's, inspired by misinterpreted research and characterized by longer sentences and greater uniformity in sentencing, as well as a reduction in rehabilitative efforts towards offenders, has taken over the field of corrections and dominates American policy. This approach has been promoted despite the copious amounts of research that continues to find that some types of rehabilitation efforts, such as prison-based drug treatment, vocational programs, counseling, restorative justice, and offender-victim mediation are effective in ways that benefit the offender, the victim, and the community (Garland, 2001; Morrison & Ahmed, 2006; Welsh & Farrington, 2005; Tyler, Sherman, Strang, Barnes & Woods, 2007).

Social work practitioners employed within the field of corrections are compelled to work within a system that

often sets offenders up for future failure and provides no meaningful attempts at rehabilitation. The social work Code of Ethics requires social workers to strive to promote social justice (NASW, 1999). Allowing ineffective and inappropriate policies to dominate the field of criminal justice runs counter to the ethical principles the profession of social work claims to uphold.

In light of this professional imperative to act to shift current policy from retribution to rehabilitation, evaluation of the data collected in this study suggests the following recommendations for practice, policy, and research:

- 1) Implementation of peer-run groups such as the Group of Hope in additional prisons in South Africa as well as internationally to promote community healing, restorative justice, and reduced recidivism.
- 2) Provision of correctional officer training before implementation of this type of group to ensure the group has the required internal support to be successful.
- 3) Establishment of comprehensive supports for individuals once released back into the

community, including transitional housing, continued support groups with other released offenders and work programs.

Continued research into the effectiveness of these types of programs in differing population groups and regions is imperative to making the necessary adjustments to make this holistic, educational and restorative justice approach effective for a broad range of correctional facilities. Additionally, further study into the types of offenders that this program is most effective with as well as the best way to target the implementation process is critical to the success of replicating the apparent success of this program in other prisons and in other areas.

This study also highlights the importance of policy shifts in the area of correctional rehabilitation for countries that have not yet embraced the restorative justice model. Many countries, especially in the Western world, remain focused on retribution and the permanent or long-term separation of the offender from society. However, Ross (in Burford, 2000) reminds us that the healing process begins with communication and reconciliation, while traditional retribution does not

allow the victim to emotionally move beyond the offense. Further, the offender never fully comprehends the suffering they have caused and never learns to engage society in a healthy and productive capacity. A move toward restorative justice models of corrections provides both the victim and the offender with a path towards healing and enhances the safety of the entire community.

### Conclusions

This study evaluated a program that has been implemented by prisoners in conjunction with the HIV/AIDS Unit of Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town campus, to achieve three main objectives. These objectives are to prevent, manage, and control the HIV/AIDS pandemic within the confines of the correctional facility, to facilitate the impact of the program to filter out into the broader community, and to equip and empower prisoners with the necessary life skills to become agents of restorative justice. The current programming was found to be effective at addressing all three stated objectives of the program.

The current systems of incarceration as retribution are enormously expensive, ineffective at reducing or

detering crime, and create stigma towards offenders that promotes the revolving door nature of prisons. As offenders are released back into the community with no additional skills, their problems become exacerbated by the decrease in opportunities and support available to those with criminal backgrounds. A new, more holistic approach is required to address the variety of challenges that offenders face in order to reduce future criminal behavior. Only by engaging inmates with respect and utilizing the opportunity of incarceration to intervene and empower offenders to make positive life changes, can the cycle of criminal behavior be discontinued.

The Group of Hope model, which incorporates a peer-led support group, University-sponsored educational workshops, and community service activities, represents a comprehensive approach to offender rehabilitation that should be replicated at additional correctional facilities if we, as a society, are seriously attempting to promote offender rehabilitation, reduction in recidivism, and increase the safety of our communities. Through continued research and program evaluation, in conjunction with effective leadership to move us away from retributive models of criminal justice, we can

develop a variety of effective prison intervention programs that utilize restorative justice principles to target a diverse range of population groups to promote community healing and aid in offender and victim empowerment.

APPENDIX A  
INFORMED CONSENT



College of Social and Behavioral Sciences  
Department of Social Work

**Informed Consent**

This study is being done to measure the helpfulness of the Ithemba Project at Malmesbury prison. The researcher is Heather Flickas under the supervision of Dr. Ray Liles, Social Work Lecturer, California State University, San Bernardino and Dr. Ashraf Mohammed, Director of HIV/AIDS Research Unit of Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Cape Town. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino, USA as well as Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town, South Africa.

**Purpose:** We would like to see how useful the Ithemba Outreach project in Malmesbury Prison has been in helping prisoners fight HIV/AIDS/STI & TB and in helping with the transition when you go back home.

**Description:** This project will use prisoner and ex-prisoner opinions of the Ithemba project to help to figure out the program's usefulness. The study will also include opinions from guards and community members about how helpful the program has been.

**Participation:** Participation is completely voluntary. There are no consequences for choosing not to participate or for dropping out of the study early. There are no benefits from the prison or the court system for participating, nor are there any penalties from the prison or the courts for ending participation.

**Confidentiality:** The researcher will not collect your name or any other identifying information.

**Duration:** The verbal survey should take about 10 minutes to complete. The interview will take no longer than 30 minutes to complete.

**Risks:** There are no foreseeable risks to your participation in this project except that you may feel uncomfortable with some of the questions. If you become uncomfortable at any time, feel free to skip the question or to end your participation in the study.

**Benefits:** This study will see how helpful an HIV/AIDS/TB and STI program has been to prisoners at Malmesbury prison. If this program is shown to be useful, it can be copied at other prisons.

**Audio:** I understand that this interview will be audio recorded. Please circle one: Yes No

**Contact:** Feel free to ask the researcher any questions about the study during the interview. For questions related to this research, please contact the researcher's supervisor Dr. Ray Liles at rlliles@csusb.edu or Prof. De Wette Schutte at schutted@cput.ac.za.

**Results:** Results from this study can be obtained from Dr. Ashraf Mohammed, HIV/AIDS Research Unit Director at Cape Peninsula University of Technology in Cape Town. He can be reached at 021 4604252/3. The results will be available after September 2010.

I swear that I am at least 18 years old and I agree to participate in this study.

Circle one: Yes No

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APPENDIX B  
OFFENDER QUESTIONNAIRE

# Outreach Program Survey

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Tribe/Ethnic Group \_\_\_\_\_

Length of Prison Term \_\_\_\_\_ What crime were you convicted of? \_\_\_\_\_

Are/were you a member of the Group of Hope? YES NO

√	Name of Workshop	Duration	Year
<b>WHAT COMPONENTS OF THE ITHEMBA PROJECT DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN?</b>			
	Beyond HIV/AIDS/STI & TB Awareness	3 Days	ongoing
	Team Building Workshop	1 Day	2004
	Voluntary Counselling & Testing (VCT) Workshop	1 Day	ongoing
	Basic Introduction to Vegetable Farming	1 Day	2005
	Men As Partners Peer Education Programme	3 Days	ongoing
	Basic Counseling & Listening Skills	2 Days	ongoing
	Introductory Workshop to Death & Grief Counseling	1 Day	2005
	Introduction to Computers & PowerPoint Presentation Workshop	2 Days	2005
	Art Therapy Workshop	12 Days	2006
	Career Guidance Workshop	1 Day	2007
	Sewing & Clothing Design Workshop	12 Days	2007
	Portfolio Workshop	2 Days	2006

Statement	1	2	3	4
1 = LEAST KNOWLEDGE; 4 = MOST KNOWLEDGE				
Rate your level of knowledge of HIV before coming to prison.				
Rate your level of knowledge of HIV after participating in the project.				
Rate your level of knowledge on how to prevent HIV transmission before coming to prison.				
Rate your level of knowledge on how to prevent HIV transmission after participating in the Ithemba project.				
1 = NOT BENEFICIAL; 4 = VERY BENEFICIAL				
Do you feel the farming project has been beneficial?				
How has it benefitted you?				

Statement	1	2	3	4
<p>Do you feel the sewing project has been beneficial? How has it benefitted you?</p>				
<p>What skills have you learned in the project that you did not have before coming to prison?</p>				
1 = NOT AT ALL; 4 = VERY MUCH SO				
<p>Do you feel that this program will make it easier for you to reintegrate in to society after your release?</p>				
1 = NOT INTERESTED; 4 = VERY INTERESTED				
<p>Rate your interest in teaching your community members about HIV before participating in the program.</p>				
<p>Rate your interest in teaching your community members about HIV after participating in the program.</p>				
<p>What, if anything, would you change about the Ithemba/ Group of Hope project if you could?</p>				
<p>Do you feel that your cultural beliefs are respected in the Ithemba/Group of Hope project?</p>				

APPENDIX C  
GUARD QUESTIONNAIRE

## Guard Questionnaire

1) Please briefly describe your experience with the Ithemba Project and Group of Hope.

2) Do you see a difference in the prisoners who participate in this program compared to those who don't? Please describe.

3) Have you seen any difference in how community members are viewing prisoners as a result of this program? Please explain or provide an example.

4) Please describe any changes you have seen in the behavior or attitudes of inmates after they have joined Group of Hope.

5) Have you noticed any difference between inmates who participate in this program returning to prison versus those who don't participate?

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