

GENDER AND REENTRY: INVESTIGATING CO-EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES IN A JAIL-
BASED RESIDENTIAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT (RSAT) SETTING

By Madison A. Young

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Approved:

Emily Schneider, Ph.D., Chair

Lisa Tichavsky, Ph.D.

Juliette Roddy, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

GENDER AND REENTRY: INVESTIGATING CO-EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES IN A JAIL-BASED RESIDENTIAL SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT (RSAT) SETTING

MADISON A. YOUNG

This thesis investigates men's and women's experiences within a co-educational, jail-based, residential substance abuse treatment (RSAT) program. Using a qualitative research design, this research examined secondary, semi-structured interviews with individuals experiencing incarceration from a Colorado residential substance abuse treatment program to understand how gender impacts participants' experiences in the program. This research aims to explain how heteronormative views reinforced by the jail determine the experiences of individuals within an RSAT program. Through this approach, this study explores themes such as the benefits of the co-educational environment, the replication of a community-based treatment environment within a jail, as well as participants' experiences of gender segregation and gender inequality. Participants expressed having positive experiences when they could replicate their lives prior to incarceration in environments that include a work program outside of the jail, having positive interactions with their fellow participants regardless of gender, and having positive experiences with the program staff. Participants expressed having negative experiences when they experienced gender segregation and gender inequality which included issues surrounding the division of genders, unequal privileges, lack of co-gender environments, and issues surrounding feminine hygiene. Overall, these findings reveal that participants feel dehumanized within the program and that there is a need to identify and adjust the program in a way that would create more engaging experiences for individuals within the program.

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Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature.....	3
Background.....	3
Types of Educational Environments.....	4
<i>Male Only Environments</i>	4
<i>Female Only Environments</i>	5
<i>Co-Educational Environments</i>	6
<i>Summary</i>	7
Current Study.....	8
<i>Statement of the Problem</i>	8
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	9
About this Project.....	9
Data.....	10
<i>Interviews</i>	10
<i>Interview Questions</i>	10
Analytical Approach.....	12
<i>Grounded Theory</i>	12
Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis.....	14
Dehumanization.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<i>Replication of the Outside World</i>	14
<i>Replication of the Outside World Conclusion</i>	24
<i>Gender Segregation and Gender Inequality</i>	25
<i>Gender Segregation and Gender Inequalities Conclusion</i>	37
Dehumanization within the Program.....	38
<i>Dehumanization Conclusion</i>	38
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	40
Conclusion.....	40
Future Research.....	43
References.....	44

Appendix A 49

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Residential substance abuse treatment (RSAT) programs aim to minimize the effects of using substances and eventually create abstinence through education, counseling, reducing risky behaviors, building healthy relationships, and introducing new recreational activities and lifestyle patterns (Sullivan & Fleming, 1997). According to the National Institute of Justice, inmates who abuse substances are less likely to recidivate if they complete an RSAT program (Gonzalez, Henke, & Herraiz, 2005). The Bureau of Justice Assistance (2022) reports that in the fiscal year of 2021 approximately 21,000 incarcerated individuals were able to be provided with treatment. The National Institute of Justice encourages local and state correctional and detention facilities include life skill development, vocational training, relapse prevention, and aftercare services in these programs (Gonzalez, Henke, & Herraiz, 2005). With the help of correctional and treatment staff, RSAT programs prepare inmates for a life without substance problems, reentry into society, and help foster strong, healthy relationships in a secure setting.

This study examines the differences between the experiences of men and women participating in in-jail residential substance abuse treatment (RSAT) program. Past research has not analyzed RSAT programs within a jail setting that are also co-educationally based. This research fills the gap in the literature by investigating how gender impacts the experiences of individuals participating in a co-educational program within a jail-based setting. Past literature examined the effectiveness of RSAT programs in light of desistance (Miller, & Miller, 2011; Olson et al., 2009; Stead, Rozytko, & Bernman, 1990), mindfulness habits developed by participants (Broome et al., 2006; Epstein et al., 2018; Greenfield et al., 2013; Kelly, & Welsh, 2016), and the educational content provided (Casarez-Lopez et al., 2012; Koons et al., 1997;

Sokoloff, & Schenck-Fontaine, 2017). However, none of these studies looked at these themes within a coeducational jail-based program. Additionally, past studies focused on post-release programs, single sex programs, or programs in prisons as opposed to jails. This study is the first to examine the experiences of individuals residing within a jail environment who are taking co-educational classes, in particular this study seeks to understand gendered experiences of RSAT programs.

My analysis is based on qualitative interviews conducted in a Colorado jail with incarcerated individuals enrolled in the RSAT program. I used grounded theory to analyze my data as this approach allows for an analysis of social relationships and group behavior between participants. Specifically, I focused on the role of gender in participants' social connections and group behavior during the program. Focusing on gender allows for an analysis of the gendered experiences, particularly the differences in men's versus women's experiences. The results show that men and women largely appreciate the co-educational aspect of the jail-based program. Specifically, both men and women reported liking a co-educational program because of the way the program replicates the outside world. Despite these positive feelings about co-educational learning, many participants also reported several issues related to gender segregation and gender inequality. Looking specifically at gender differences allows this research to present the issues surrounding the gendered issues along with an outlook on the engaging experiences for participants.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Past research has shown that different elements of reintegration and recovery programs have distinct impacts on men and women. Sokoloff and Schenck-Fontaine (2017) found, for example, that men and women had different experiences in these programs. These experiences depended on whether the classes were co-gender or single-gender, group sessions or individual sessions, and depended on the different types of course materials provided in the program.

Background

In 1994, the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act was established; which provided job opportunities for 100,000 new police officers, allocated \$9.7 billion for prisons, and \$6.1 billion for prevention programs (Office of Justice Programs, 2020). With the establishment of this act, RSAT programs emerged within prison and jail settings (Gonzales, Henke, & Herraiz, 2005). RSAT Programs can be implemented in one of four ways: 1) through state and local correctional facilities, 2) jail-based treatment programs, 3) aftercare programs that provide assistance for everyday life, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, or 4) post-release treatment. According to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (2005), programs must also coordinate with federal assistance for substance abuse treatment and aftercare services provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to coordinate substance abuse and mental health services for diagnosed offenders. The Bureau of Justice Assistance (2005) requires that in order for all jail-based RSAT programs to be eligible for funding, they must adhere to 5 requirements. These requirements include: 1) last at least three months, 2) make every effort possible to separate their participants from the general correctional population, 3) focus on the substance abuse problems of participants, 4) develop other skills that are related to substance abuse such as cognitive,

behavioral, social, and vocational skills, and 5) that the program is science-based and practical. In the 2021 fiscal year, \$31 million in grant funds are annually awarded to states for RSAT programs, and nearly 21,000 inmates receive treatment services (Bureau of Justice Assistance U.S. Department of Justice, 2022).

Types of Educational Environments

Male Only Environments

Most research focuses on male experiences in residential, prison-based programs with post-release care provided as part of the program completion. In examining the effectiveness of prison-based male-only residential substance abuse programs, Casares-Lopez et al. (2012) measured individuals' release and desistance within the program. They concluded that programs should measure the participants' steps toward achieving their goals before entering the program. The actions that participants need to take include acknowledging the problem causing their current situation, resolving ambivalence, and seeking ways to avoid the lifestyle choices that caused them to need the program (Casares-Lopez et al., 2012). Olson et al. (2009) added to these findings by concluding that desistance increased when the prison-based program's expectations and requirements were frequently and thoroughly discussed with the participants. The researchers also found that providing longer post-release supervision during the parole stages and appropriately placing the participants in beneficial post-release treatment sites were effective in raising desistance. These treatment sites included aftercare programs and other forms of treatment sites that provided jobs for the participants and ensured that they have a sober and healthy support system surrounding them upon release (Olson et al., 2009). Miller and Miller (2011) build upon this idea of a beneficial post-release placement site by demonstrating that increasing the frequency of drug testing also led to increased desistance rates.

Studies have found that, when asked, men reported having better experiences in a program where they can physically work for pay rather than emotional work through therapy (Stead, Rosynko, & Berman, 1990). For example, substance abuse rehabilitation programs outside of jail saw greater outcomes when they offered hands-on work like earning money through a carwash business (Stead, Rosynko, & Berman, 1990). Work programs have also showed to increase desistance rates when there were repercussions for breaking the rules of the program also provides more compelling experiences for male participants (Miller & Miller, 2011). An example of the repercussion that are recommended for breaking rules includes providing frequent testing for drug use and having repercussions and discipline, such as increasing the frequency or adding more time to sentencing increased desistance rates (Miller & Miller, 2011).

Female Only Environments

While examining the benefits provided through female-only residential substance abuse programs, Koons et al. (1997) concluded that staffing characteristics, acquisition of needed skills, motivation, and positive peer influences assisted in the participants having positive attitudes towards the program. Female participants described having positive experiences and more support in educationally-based programs as compared to programs that are not educationally based (Greenfield et al., 2013; Epstein et al., 2018). The participants enjoy these programs more because they felt it met their therapeutic needs, allowed for more emotional conversations, and allowed them to embrace all aspects of themselves throughout the course (Greenfield et al., 2013; Epstein et al., 2018). According to the participants, embracing all aspects of oneself includes the freedom to discuss their perceptions and present their authentic selves among the group atmosphere (Greenfield et al., 2018).

Past literature demonstrates that educationally-based lesson plans were beneficial for women, allowing women to have better experiences (Sokoloff & Schenck-Fontaine, 2017). Another study found that women appreciated single-sex programs where they were able to address issues such as intimacy in relationships, empathy, honesty about their circumstances, group cohesion among peers in the session, and gender-specific support (Greenfield et al., 2013). Gender specific support includes being able to relate to a situation based on one's gender, as compared to co-educational environments where men were present for these conversations (Greenfield et al., 2013). Women tend to enjoy classes that speak to the emotional aspects of their progress, such as building rapport within the treatment group (Greenfield et al., 2013; Kelley & Welsh, 2006). Similarly, Koons et al. (1997) found that women benefited from classes that incorporated life issues such as healthy relationships, raising children, emotions, feelings, and vulnerability, compared to programs focusing on vocational or substance abuse skills.

Co-Educational Environments

Research has shown that participants in co-educational environments preferred to have discussion about gender-neutral topics and tended to have significantly fewer negative feelings toward what the other participants were saying based on group interactions and self-reporting (Greenfield et al., 2013). However, Epstein et al. (2018) found that within co-gendered environments, participants reported that they did not always agree with the opinions of those of the opposite gender and did not feel as comfortable discussing complex topics.

In both single gender and co-educational programs, allowing individuals to address the benefits of incorporating positive recommendations from these experiences provided the participants with the ability to have better overall feelings about their programs because they feel that their opinions and experiences within the program matter (Greenfield et al., 2013; Epstein et

al., 2018). Both genders stated that they felt heard when they were included in the recommendation process for future classes and when they were allowed to incorporate what helped them in other courses within the programs (Greenfield et al., 2013; Epstein et al., 2018). Participants felt a direct connection with the curriculum and were more motivated to complete the courses and make the change within themselves when they had a say in the curriculum of the program (Epstein et al., 2018).

Summary

While there are benefits to a co-educational environment, most research supports the idea that gender-specific environments would benefit participants within these programs. Past research demonstrates that men tend to prefer more vocational and work-related programs that involve applying skills to a work environment (Casares-Lopez et al., 2012; Miller and Miller, 2011; Olson et al., 2009; Stead, Rosynko, & Berman, 1990). Past research validates that women prefer educational class-based domains that include discussing healthy relationships and family-building skills so they can return to their lives and support their families (Epstein et al., 2018; Greenfield et al., 2013; Kelley & Welsh, 2006; Koons et al., 1997; Sokoloff & Schenck-Fontaine, 2017). However, what is not known is how gender affects the experiences of those in a co-educational RSAT program in jail. This research will address whether there may be specific benefits to a co-educational approach within a jail setting. While other scholarships, such as that above, have looked at RSAT programs, they have either looked at single-gender programs, programs within a prison, or non-residential post-release programs. This research will evaluate how co-educational rehabilitation and recovery programs inside a jail environment impact participants' experiences and if these experiences have gendered differences.

Current Study

Statement of the Problem

The main research questions posed within this study are:

- 1. How do men's and women's experiences of the rehabilitation and recovery program differ in a jail-based co-education program?*
- 2. What does this tell us about the role of gender in the effectiveness of these programs?*

When looking at the gaps in the literature, it becomes apparent that previous research has yet to look at co-educational RSAT programs within a jail setting. This research will analyze the experiences of men and women in a co-educational program to determine if there are differences in experience based on the gender of the individual enrolled in the program. All participants were interviewed while still taking part in the program. Due to the fact that participants enter these programs with gendered roles and responsibilities, according to heteronormative beliefs enforced through the nature of jails (Bačak et al., 2018), it is assumed that men and women need different approaches in the program to gain tools and achieve goals (Epstein et al., 2018). Past research has shown that gender is an important consideration when designing RSAT programs, and inmates thrive in classes that account for gender-specific needs (Greenfield et al., 2013; Epstein et al., 2018; Sokoloff & Schenck-Fontaine, 2017). As previously discussed, women appear to benefit from emotional and internal work-based classes, while men prefer physical and non-emotionally based classes (Sokoloff & Schenck-Fontaine, 2017). Through my analysis, I will be able to address whether these findings are true within a specific co-educational jail-based settings.

Chapter 3: Methodology

About this Project

The study participants were members of the RSAT program in a Colorado jail. Men were housed in the all-male ward called “the Hotel,” while the women were housed with general population. Since majority of the program participants were men and they resided in the hotel, the program was funded. “The Hotel” had a communal living environment, with classrooms, a “library,” and workout equipment for the residents. The women and men both participated in the program and the classes offered. All of the participants who were interviewed volunteered to be interviewed. However, not everyone taking the program was interviewed.

The data for this project is secondary data collected through interviews that were conducted between November 2018 and January 2019. All data was collected by a research team comprised of a faculty member who supervised five undergraduate students. The data includes 26 interviews with 19 male and 7 female incarcerated individuals between the ages of 18 and 64, which is proportionate to the overall population of this and other RSAT programs. The researchers asked the participants via an in-person announcement, accompanied by flyers, who would like to be interviewed inside of the jail’s common area. Participants then self-selected whether they wanted to participate or not. Interviews took place without supervision from deputies or counselors, allowing participants to speak openly about their experiences within the program. This approach created an environment where the interviewees felt comfortable sharing about themselves and the agenda.

The data was collected from interviews, participant observation, and a paper survey. The secondary data was de-identified before being used in this study. The data for this research only includes interviews. Qualitative interviews allowed for an in-depth description of topics and

experiences from the respondent's point of view. Qualitative methodology allowed the development of detailed and personalized descriptions. Additionally, this methodology allowed an integration of multiple perspectives and narratives from the participants as well as a look at the process and experiences of the participants. This analysis will highlight how the participants experience the program and how the program can adjust to meet the needs of the participants.

Data

Interviews

The researchers followed a semi-structured interview guide. The researchers prepared a research discussion guide before the interviews to help guide the conversation with the inmates. A copy of this interview guide can be viewed in Appendix A. This approach allowed for flexibility during the interview so the inmates could guide the conversation and discuss the aspects of the program that were important to them. All the interviews were recorded, later transcribed, and de-identified prior to my analysis. Interviews lasted, on average, 50 minutes, and there was no incentive for participation.

Informed Consent. The researchers obtained full informed consent before conducting the interviews and received IRB approval for the project. Before the discussion started, the participants were presented with a consent form, and the consent form contents were discussed between the participant and researcher. All respondents agreed to be recorded after they said they consented to the interview. All identifying information was removed from the transcriptions.

Interview Questions

The 35-question interview guide primarily covered four topics: classes, skills, relationships, and future recommendations. Specific questions were asked about topics such as teaching styles, relationships with counselors, and skills. These questions were asked to

understand how the inmates understood their experiences. Interview questions were designed to ensure that the responses would provide insight into which aspects of the program that the participants felt provided the best experience. The questions were formatted using an open-ended interview style. Questions did not directly ask about gender, in regard to visual estimation, but instead sought answers that could be used to analyze how men and women experienced the program differently. In other words, the researchers asked the participants about their experiences in general and made gender-based comparisons.

Classes and Skills. Questions about the classes are essential to this study because they allowed for a comparison between men and women who took the same courses. Classes were given for credit towards participants' parole. These classes tried to provide the individuals with skills and positive changes from the behaviors that led them to jail in the first place. Questions focused on how participants felt about the classes and the skills they learned in the classes. In particular the questions asked if participants think they have used, learned, or will use the skills emphasized in each course.

Relationships. The second major category of questions were about types of relationships within the program including relationships between the same and opposite genders. The questions were designed to examine whether the gender dynamics within this program are helping the participants pass the courses or whether they need to be addressed for improvement. These questions were posed in ways such as whether one's counselors or teachers are helpful, whether the people in the program understand each other, whether one enjoys the co-ed environment, and whether there is a community in the classrooms. These questions provided data on how individuals relate to their social environment within the program.

Future Recommendations. Questions about future recommendations asked interviewees their opinions on changes to the program. Data on participants' recommendations allowed for an analysis of what each gender feels is needed within the program to help them succeed. The data allowed for an analysis of how men and women differ regarding their needs and recommendations for the future.

Analytical Approach

Grounded Theory

I used grounded theory to analyze the data. Grounded theory allows data analysis to construct a tailored, or 'grounded,' view of the data (Khan, 2014; Glazer, 2022; Charmaz, 2006). This approach allowed for coding and analysis to occur while continuously developing the theory based on the findings. Grounded theory allowed for the analysis of social relationships and an analysis of gendered experiences in the RSAT program. This approach also allowed for a better understanding of gendered behavior and how those behaviors potentially differ within the RSAT classes.

The data was analyzed through thematic coding using NVivo. Thematic coding allowed for an analysis that included participants' own words and the development of interpretations based on the experiences provided by the participants. The codes were picked based on the experiences described by the participants (Warren & Karner, 2010). This coding method assisted in the analysis of any issues or incidents that occurred in relation to the participants' genders, or any differences caused by their gender, based on the experiences of the participants. The data included phrases directly from the participants' interviews. The process that was used for coding consisted of four steps which are discussed below.

First, all interviews were coded according to the most prevalent themes. This process was based on LaRossa's (2021) description of coding and analyzing. Themes and patterns were then categorized systematically using a deductive coding style where codes are based on relevant quotes in the interviews. The relevancy of the quotes was based on their discussion of gender. All similar words or phrases under one pattern or theme were coded during this process. Second, the codes were organized by categories and subcodes while removing codes that did not portray significant themes or ideas. Third, a second round of coding of all interviews occurred to narrow down the relevant codes and make connections between them. Finally, the categories and subcodes were analyzed to finalize their themes. The concepts developed from these codes were then turned into the final narrative used in the analysis. This process helped accurately represent the participants and the courses taught. This analytical approach allowed for transparency since other researchers could follow the methodology to systematically review the data analysis. Reflexivity was incorporated into the study by examining personal judgments, practices, and belief systems that may affect the research process during data analysis.

Chapter 4: Findings and Analysis

Replication of the Outside World

Participants described enjoying aspects of the program that replicated the outside world. These experiences included the work program, platonic conversations with the opposite gender, meaningful interactions with staff, and other experiences that more closely mimic everyday life outside of jail. This is different than the typical day-to-day inside a prison. By replicating the outside world, participants could apply the skills from the program to their daily interactions.

Work Programs

Both men and women described having positive experiences within the work program portion, otherwise known as Gateway. Both genders expressed that the program provided worth and value to their experience by replicating life outside of jail, giving them responsibility, and allowing them to do more within the program than they would if they were only in jail. Participants described the Gateway program as giving them freedom, something to look forward to, holding them accountable, and as an outlet for them to use the tools they learned in the program. As one male participant explains, motivation is a crucial factor when it comes to the importance of Gateway:

[Gateway] gives you something to look forward to, so when you get frustrated, you know you look forward to that like, 'Ah, I'm about to sit down and relax.' You know, like visits, you look forward to holidays and stuff. And that makes you think twice, like, I better reevaluate myself. But I believe that Gateway is a good thing they got going here.

As this participant explains, having a program such as Gateway incentivized them. Looking forward to something increased their involvement in the recovery process. The above quote also describes how the program holds them accountable by replicating a reward. This means they

must reevaluate their actions to remain eligible for Gateway. In this way, Gateway motivates participants to succeed in the program because they want to take advantage of the opportunity to participate. A female participant further demonstrates how Gateway is a motivator by stating:

[Gateway] gives you more privileges because this is, it is separate than the jail. So, it is like a rehab. They don't, you know, let us go outside and play, but you know, um, we have more, more privileges. It's, it's the better we do, the more engaged I think that we are, um, or they feel that we're doing with the program, the more benefits we get. Um, like with best way comes the trip to work every day you get to... they even take to 7/11... You can pull up \$50 every two weeks and buy anything from 7/11, pretty much. Like, even now, they sell makeup, you know what I mean? So, I can buy makeup or a coffee or, you know, hot food or, um, so that's a perk. Yeah. And just getting out. Exactly. So, it's motivation and, and that's, that's contingent on how well you're doing.

This participant describes how the RSAT program provides motivation by providing access to items like makeup. Participants can learn to navigate an environment of freedom while they are in the program. This quote also demonstrates how they can utilize motivation and motivating aspects of the program to make decisions in the real world, which would be assumed to assist in preventing them from re-entering the jail environment post-release. When the program uses motivators that make the participants feel like they are replicating life outside of jail, they feel motivated to succeed within the program.

Most of the literature on prison work programs emphasizes their benefits for men (Stead, Rosynko, & Berman, 1990), while most research on programming for women focuses on post-release educational programs (Sokoloff & Schenck-Fontaine, 2017). Sokoloff and Schenck-Fontaine (2017) found that women in programs that offered educational courses, such as college courses or therapy programs that resemble educational environments, were a significant turning point in women's lives preventing criminal offending and reoffending. Stead, Rosynko, and Berman (1990) found that men in work-related programs, such as a rehab program where alcoholic and drug patients would run a carwash for income and rehabilitation purposes,

appreciated the opportunity to be productive members of society by building skills such as money regulation and practical intrapersonal relationship skills with other people in and out of the workplace. Miller and Miller (2011) found that work programs that implement accountability reinforcement, which includes drug testing, increasing sentencing as a punishment, or other discipline repercussions, increased desistance rates among male participants.

Whereas most of the past research has focused on how work-study programs increase desistance among men (Casares-Lopez et al., 2012; Olson et al., 2009), this study demonstrated how a-work-based program is beneficially used in a co-gendered environment. Men and women both expressed positive experiences with the work program and stated that work programs are one of the factors that contribute to their success in the program. Many participants attributed this to the fact that work programs create an environment that replicates the outside world. This in turn motivates participants by giving them something to look forward to, providing a place to apply newly learned skills, giving them supervised freedom, and holding them accountable for behaviors and actions. As such, while most research on work programs has focused on their benefits for men (Miller and Miller, 2011; Stead, Rosynko, & Berman, 1990), this study demonstrates that women also derive important benefits. Past research emphasizes the importance of work programs for men only (Casares-Lopez et al., 2012; Miller and Miller, 2011; Olson et al., 2009; Stead, Rosynko, & Berman, 1990), however, the women in this study also showed enthusiasm for the work program.

Relationships with Other Participants

Participants describe the relationships they build with each other as especially important. While these relationships varied in closeness, participants developed supportive relationships with other participants, which helped them work towards their goals. Ilieva-Petkova (2016) states

that relationships built during the prison experience between opposing gendered inmates impact the experience or desistance rates of the participants in negative ways. Ilieva-Petkova looked at multiple female-only prisons in Idaho and Illinois that provided gender-based educational RSAT programs that required 180 days of participation. Their study found that RSAT programs should be tailored to the gender in order to address the socially defined gender differences that occur, therefore, jails should enact gender-specific programming for their participants (Ilieva-Petkova, 2016). In contrast, Koons et al. (1997) found that both men and women reported positive peer influences throughout the program and that these peer interactions pressured the individuals to live up to specific standards such as prosocial standards. Epstein et al. (2018) supports this finding by comparing the female-only group and non-group programs that demonstrated that positive peer interactions within the group setting increase the participant's engagement within their therapeutic conditions.

In this study, participants described the importance of the relationships they have built. One female participant described the types of relationships that she made within the program by stating:

Interviewer: And you feel like you've made friends who were in the program?

Female Participant: Yes.

Interviewer: Are they like your primary support system?

Female Participant: Yes, they're in the same bay as me, and we have most of the classes together.

To explain this support system, another male participant describes the shared experiences and beliefs that create these bonds. He states:

I read one time before that when you're in jail your, the people that you spend the time within the jail, you probably spend more time with them then anybody in your life because you're with each other 24/7, you know what I mean, we're all locked up in the

cell together, you know, or in this tent together. So, we get to know each other really well. So, I would say that just us getting to know each other and be comfortable around each other helps out with being able to express ourselves in class.

The nature of the jail environments creates an atmosphere where participants quickly build bonds and connections with other participants. Not only do these relationships provide support, but they help the participants feel more comfortable during the program. Providing an environment where the participants can build these relationships creates positive experiences.

Gender Differences in Relationships

While men and women valued their relationships with other participants, they described them differently. Women spoke about relationships with other participants as friendships. However, men described their relationships as important but tended not to use the word “friendship” to explain those relationships. Although there were differences in the language used between male and female participants, both described the relationships as vital to their recovery process. As one male participant describes:

When I come to jail, I really don't get really close like that with anybody, or prison, you know. I mean there's a couple people that I know from the streets. You know, we've come closer, from being in here and doing time together and really getting to know each other. You know, but a total stranger, I really don't, I'll communicate with them and stuff, but I don't give them the time a day to become friends, close friends or nothing you know.

Men often describe being bonded through doing time together and getting to know each other on personal levels. However, this differs from what the women describe as a close relationship.

Women experience similar bonds but describe relationships with deeper level connections such as close friendships or kinship. Another female participant further describes this type of bond by stating “the girls, though, the girls, some of them you get close to, and they're like an extended family type thing, you know, and then we have to encourage each other”. When looking at the quote, the participant describes those whom she builds relationships with as extended family.

This demonstrates that while the men and women are building bonds and creating relationships with the participants around them, the men use language that suggests close bonds with fellow participants while women would describe this relationship as closer to familial bonds.

Discussing Difficult Topics in Co-Gender Spaces

In a study that compared a substance abuse therapy coeducational program with a female only program, Greenfield et al. (2013) found that men rarely participated in the discussion portion of the co-educational classes. Additionally, both genders experienced difficulty exploring uncomfortable conversations in these co-gendered groups such as issues that are socially defined to one gender (Greenfield et al., 2013). They also found that women had no difficulty discussing gender-neutral topics but did have trouble discussing intimate issues, such as family relationships and feminine hygiene, in co-educational settings. Similarly, in a study of men and women from non-jail substance abuse group, Broome et al. (2007) found that participants of both genders expressed a desire for longer class times and greater availability to have intimate discussions with same-sex participants during the designated class time. Finally, in a study of a female-only program, Epstein et al. (2018) similarly found that women felt more comfortable discussing topics with other women. In summary, these studies, among others such as Koons et al. (1997), all found that individuals appear to benefit from gender specific programming. In particular, they consistently show that RSAT programs need gender-specific spaces to feel comfortable discussing emotionally complex topics. While these studies suggest a need to prioritize same-sex programming, my research found that both male and female participants found value in co-educational programming, especially in terms of being able to discuss intimate topics. This suggests that jail-based programs may uniquely benefit from the implementation of co-gender spaces compared to other RSAT settings.

I argue that these co-educational programs were uniquely useful in the jail setting because participants could regularly interact with the opposing gender. Incarcerated individuals are denied this aspect of daily life within jail environments and are often subjected to stereotypical and reductionist approaches to gender. The co-gendered environment of the classes creates a space where individuals are not reduced to their genders and can instead be treated as complex human beings with important personal relationships. A female participant emphasizes this by stating:

That's like a fine line because we can't engage, but if we're engaging about the therapy, then we can talk, you know, but I liked that it's not just women because obviously there's, there's more people on different points of views and um, it makes it a more normal setting.

As stated above, interacting with the opposing gender during the programs allows individuals to feel humanized. The participants in this study expressed an overall need for interactions with the opposite gender. They described positive experiences with the opposite gender during the emotional and vulnerable discussions in contrast to past studies that emphasized the need for single-gender spaces to have more intimate conversations. One male participant expressed this by stating:

I appreciate the co-ed environment. It's a different perspective. And women are more about companionship and getting through their time together. And with men there's a whole different psychology behind being incarcerated.

The participant above describes their appreciation for different perspectives and the comfort from interacting with both genders during the program. Not only do the participants describe needing interaction with the opposing gender, but they also describe enjoying those experiences with the opposing gender. The majority of participants discussed enjoying seeing the

other perspective, and that they needed to know this perspective to change their responses to the other gender in the future. For example, one male participant discusses:

There's gonna be men and women in this facility right here together working as a team so that we can get both sides of, you know, so we can get different opinions. It's different, it's good to have a woman's opinion, you got a man's opinion. I like to have a woman's opinion that way I know where I'm going wrong that way, I can see both sides of the fence. I feel like it's important for me to be able to do that so that I can know what to do and what not to do.

Discussions with opposite-gender participants allow participants to develop skills and new perspectives that can be applied to interactions with individuals once they are released from the program.

Experiences and Relationships with Staff

One of the program's most essential elements for both men and women was respect from the staff. Participants often felt disrespected by staff, especially the deputies, as opposed to counselors and non-law enforcement staff. In describing the deputies who work in the RSAT program, one participant explained:

They put specific police in the R&R program like you're the R&R deputy. Well, the R&R deputy, I feel like he's just trying to get the R&R job to look better, to get the Sargent's position. Cause they say, 'oh we don't get no pay raise for this.' In all reality, they don't want to fucking do it. They don't want to do the R&R program, they don't care. They just want to look good for the Sargent to get Sargent or to get higher up, you know. So just people that actually care!

As this participant explains, participants in the RSAT program often felt that deputies were not invested in their reintegration and recovery. Instead, they felt that these officers took the job for other reasons and did not care about the individuals in the program.

While most participants felt the deputies needed to be more invested in their success, there were several noted exceptions. As the same participant above continues:

Or even people that's been through the situation, people that might've had a drug problem, or had family that's had drug problems, or, you know, somebody that actually knows what people are going through on an everyday basis. Like this guy that's working right now, the dep that's working right now, he's decent. He's pretty cool, he'll come up to me, he knows me pretty good. Like today he made me feel good, you know he was talking to me about what was going on, he's like 'since you been here, since I've known you, you've been coming here, you've been doing good, you don't get in no trouble,' and he's like, 'I just want to thank you for that.' He shook my hand. And you know, you don't see him going around doing that to everybody. But you know he actually notices people that are doing good, and he'll let you know that you are doing good. And then it just makes you feel good about yourself, and it makes you feel like, 'yeah, I can do this program.' And other depts, it's just like, they just come in here, and they're running their mouth and fucking just doing all this extra stuff, unnecessary stuff. It's just like, you know, you're like maaan. I mean, the administration can see, you know, they see that. They know what's going on here. They see him, you know, he walks around and talks to people and sees how they're doing, it makes you feel good, it makes you want to complete the program."

As seen in the quote above, when the staff validated the participants' experiences and feelings it meant a lot to them and motivated them. While most participants' issues with disrespect related to the deputies, many of these problems were seen in inmates' relationships with their counselors. When participants had hostile relationships with their counselors, they became frustrated with the program, confused, and/or lost the motivation to succeed. A female participant described her feelings about the negative interaction with the counselors, who administer the RSAT classes, by stating:

They're [the staff] forgetting that this is here to help us, not to punish us, and if you're doing the work and putting it in, you shouldn't be punished, and if you want to punish us, come to us and have us give us a chance to explain ourselves... It has, it has significance or value in terms, of rehabilitation, but somewhere just like this jail. They're forgetting that it's for us, it affects us, and if we have depression, anxiety, self-esteem issues, self-esteem issues come with being told you're not good enough and we're in the self-esteem class because we're an addict and we self-harm with drugs.

The program significantly impacted participants when the staff was cheerful, validating, and respectful towards them. When the team demonstrated respect, they were able to build positive relationships with inmates. Both genders describe a relationship where they give the staff, such

as the counselors and officers, respect that they are due if the participants also receive respect in return.

Relating to Staff. Not only do the participants describe wanting an environment where they are respected, but they also describe wanting an environment where they are able to relate to the staff they are working with. A female participant supported the above expression by adding:

They [the staff] don't talk to us in that kind of setting, and it was all about what they want to teach. They don't ever come in here [into the program] and ask what you're doing. Find out what's going on... They're just here to do their job, and their job is to teach us about self-esteem or whatever their classes are. It's not about morals about what's going on in jail because I'm pretty sure everybody knows what goes on in jail. You know, it's not a cupcake island, but as I said, if you're running a program. You shouldn't be running the program if it is just about incentives.

As the quote above shows, participants describe not wanting staff to make them feel as though they have to prove they earned the privilege of being in the program. Participants want to feel heard and essential throughout the program by the staff. They want to build connections with the staff rather than just engaging with them within the classroom setting. Participants describe how the program itself is an incentive and that they do not need staff continuously reminding them how grateful and lucky they should feel. The participants said they need respect and support to feel the program is giving them the benefits they need to succeed outside of the jail environment.

Olson et al. (2009) found that when the staff treated the participants as adults in ways such as discussing their treatment plan and expectations, participants felt more included and were more likely to have positive attitudes and experiences within the program, which led to raise desistence rates. In addition, past research also found that when participants have the availability to voice their opinions on the program including feedback, new ideas, important concepts to their recovery, participants were more likely to have positive relationships with the staff leading to a increase in desistence rates (Epstein et al., 2018; Greenfield et al., 2013). Broome et al. (2007)

and Koons et al. (1997) found that staffing characteristics, such as having professional staff, are essential to building positive relationships. A professional staff includes having articulate counselors, a positive work environment, sharing of the best learning practices with participants, and sustaining professional community practices such as in-depth social interaction and shared goals and values with participants (Broome et al., 2007). Other beneficial staff characteristics described by participants included a caring attitude, dedication to their work, parenting or life skills that related to the participants, having nontraditional vocations that related to the participant's jobs upon release, and maintaining physical and social environments where the participants expressed that they felt the most comfortable (Koons et al., 1997).

The findings of this study reinforce previous research about the importance of respect and care from staff members to participants' success. In particular, participants emphasized the importance of respect in the form of validation and encouragement. For the participants in this study, this meant that the staff invested in the participants and provided validation for their hard work. As other studies also suggested, when respect is given to the participants, they feel the program is more like a recovery process rather than a privilege. This in turn generates greater investment, which leads to improved outcomes such as higher desistance rates.

Replication of the Outside World Conclusion

This section discussed how situations that replicated the outside world helped make participants feel less dehumanized within the jail residential substance abuse treatment program. Participants had positive experiences when they could replicate their lives prior to incarceration and anticipate applying those skills to their release. Examples include participants working outside of the jail in a program such as Gateway, having personal and intimate conversations with their fellow participants, especially those of the opposite gender, and having positive

experiences with the staff who assisted them through finishing the program. Through these aspects of the program, participants were able to develop skills that they could actively use in their post-treatment life by practicing the tools they learned throughout the program. This research demonstrates the positive impacts on the participants' experiences in jail-based RSAT programs that result from creating an atmosphere replicating outside life. This suggests that one of the ways the program can have a positive impact on the participants' life is by creating an environment where the participants can practice the application of their newly developed skills before release. Not only did the majority of participants in this study express the positive impacts from these types of experiences during the program, but they also expressed how even if they were in other programs prior, they feel as though this program has had more of a substantial impact on them and allows for them to truly practice and use these skills in the future to change their lives once they have been released. Providing an environment where participants are held accountable for their actions and can practice applying newly developed skills, participants are likely to gain more from the RSAT program.

Gender Segregation and Gender Inequality

While the co-educational environment provided clear benefits to participants, there were many practical aspects of implementing a co-gender program that were problematic. In particular, many participants expressed concerns around gender inequality and segregation within the program. Both men and women in the program identified gender segregation as a major problem in the program. Based on this, women are expected to join the male program with little to no budget, leading them not to have the same resources, amenities, and privileges as males. The findings in this study demonstrate issues that include transportation issues, housing

issues, a need for different classroom environments, a continuous lack of feminine hygiene product accessibility, and other segregation issues that are based on gender.

Female participants within the program continuously discussed the different disadvantages that female participants had experienced regarding the privileges that were given to men, including but not limited to transportation from housing to classrooms, having to go extended periods without eating or eating meals exceptionally late due to having two different housing wards throughout the program, experiencing unfair treatment by staff, and having additional amenities included within their experience. The issues that arise when there is unfair treatment between the genders is that it creates an environment where one gender is favored over another in a program where they are supposed to be treated the same. An example of the issue of unfair treatment among the genders is the division of gender within the program included only being able to talk to men inside the classroom and having to physically respond differently when passing opposite genders between the classes, such as turning around and facing back-to-back.

More issues that only surround gender-based experiences would be the issue of feminine hygiene. When female participants did need feminine hygiene products, they expressed the difficulty it took to receive those products, being uncomfortable and having problems receiving products from deputies, and not being allowed to have as many products as they needed, such as getting only two per day, and feeling as though it is their fault that they are dealing with such issues. Since gender segregation was a prevalent issue in the program, this type of treatment demonstrates an understanding that women and men are not treated equally within the program. Therefore, segregation issues between members occur, hindering the participants' ability to have positive experiences within the program across genders.

Division of Genders

When looking at the division of genders in the program, it becomes apparent that women and men are treated differently everywhere except inside the classrooms. Most women made it a point to discuss how women and men are being divided within the program. This includes not being able to have any discussions with the men outside of classrooms, the staff assuming the men and women have romantic or sexual relationships, and how the men and women must physically respond to each other when they interact outside of classes. One female participant discusses the issues she has had with building relationships with men by saying “and you feel like you have made kind of long-lasting friendships? As far as the males go, we aren't allowed. So, no, like personal conversations, really. Yeah. We can't get personal information.” As suggested in the quote, many women were frustrated by the fact that they cannot build relationships with men outside of the classroom. As several interviewees noted, they believed that this was due to the assumption from staff that the genders would only want to start romantic relationships with one another. One female participant addresses this concern by stating:

I've even seen grown men cry, you know, that their emotions are touched, you know, so that's why I kind of laugh when I say, oh, you guys think there's relationships going on, no. They're, they're having some hard times themselves as well as us, you know, plus half the ladies here see half the ladies here so.

The quote above demonstrates that the relationships being built between the participants is platonic. The participant even goes as far as stating that women in the program have same-sex partners with other female participants. The participants want to keep the relationships platonic for two reasons: they are all working on themselves and can recognize that they are not in a place to start a romantic relationship, or because they are not heterosexual. The participants within the program are being policed in a way that forces heteronormativity onto them throughout the

program. The gender and sexual identity of participants is being assumed within the program and therefore is being used to police their actions while in the program.

Finally, women continued to mention that they could not even look at the men when passing each other to classes. Based on the interview data, it appears that the deputies make only the women turn away from the men to show them the women's backside to avoid eye contact between genders. As one participant discussed:

I was surprised that we were in the hotel with the dudes. That surprised me because they worked so hard to keep us separate. Like, I mean, they go overboard with it, they'll make us, they'll make us turn and face the wall. I've only seen the women turned around. I've never seen the dudes. It depends on the specialist. Depends on transport. That's what that depends on. But the majority of them make the females turn a little bit. I think it's weird. Why would you want to put our butts, which is what guys look at, towards that and not trying to be rude, but I mean, it is what it is.

While men and women are expected to be able to be vulnerable with each other within private spaces such as the classrooms; when it comes to mixing outside of the classroom, it is strictly prohibited. This includes being unable to intermingle outside the classroom, looking at each other outside the classroom, being expected to live and interact in entirely different manners, and many other examples. In other words, the participants are expected to be able to have vulnerable conversations when they are not even allowed to have platonic friendships outside of the class. One frustration expressed by participants within the program is the question of how they are supposed to be able to share vulnerable sides and get to deeper levels of why they are experiencing and reacting this way based on the circumstances within their life. These experiences demonstrate the ways staff assume men and women are only interested in sexual or romantic relationships with each other. This treatment causes participants to feel dehumanized and as if the staff only see them as sexual beings rather than full, complex humans.

Past research on the process of dehumanization within jail and prison environments argues that such dehumanization is due to individuals within power positions, such as the staff of prisons, needing to establish dominance and power over inmates (Cloud et al., 2023). Based on the findings of this research, it is reasonable to expect that this could also apply to individuals within residential substance abuse treatment programs who are incarcerated. Therefore, to regain power, the deputies in the RSAT use their power to dehumanize participants in the program. This can be seen through measures such as making individuals turn their backs when facing each other, taking away their ability to interact outside of the classroom, and assuming that individuals who participated in the program only want sexualized relationships. The program uses heteronormative ideals to police and run the program for participants, which has created issues when it comes to building relationships across genders.

Privileges

When looking at the gender differences within the program, female participants continued to mention how the privileges of men and women differ. The differences are so apparent that many women noticed how much more effort they must put in to participate and succeed in the same program as men. This would include being late to classes due to transport, missing meals, or going extended periods without meals, different treatment, and different living quarters. All these privileges, given to men and not women, have been described as detrimental to the completion and progression of women within the program. One female participant states:

There is, there's some flaws. You know what I mean? No, my dinners brought here (her cell), and then once I get back, at 8:30 at night, that I eat and my food's cold. They served dinner at 4:30 here. And the men over there, they have their food, they have a lot more privileges in the men's ward, um, which is frustrating, you know what I mean? But at the same time, I'm still grateful, but it's frustrating that I can't eat, and they can't bring me food because it's not allowed.

Another female participant discusses the difficulties of knowing the differences in privileges.

She describes how hard it is to know that men have better amenities and that there is nothing the women can do about it but be jealous. She adds:

The guys get a lot more because there's probably, there's a lot more of them, but they get a lot more of the perks of being in the program, and we are kinda just like inmates that are being um, you know, uh, in classes, you know, so the guys are more like a little up there where they get to, you know, okay, it's extra. They get different games, and different libraries are better... Well, they're talking. There was some rumor about, um, getting the other building out there, the detox and turning it into a women's ward for R&R, but I don't think that's anytime in the near future.”

Not only are the amenities issue, but multiple women have discussed how not having living quarters within the hotel has become an issue. Some of these issues include being transported, being late to class, and needing more time between their classes and work to participate in the courses fully. One female participant emphasizes this by discussing:

“The women are always late because we're the ones who have to be transported because we're not, we're not where the program is. Like I don't see why they can't have hotel as part male and part female. I think that's what R&R is. If that's what it's for, then why not separate it? Because there's a way you can, like, you got the dudes separated in there. So why can't they have the women?”

Not only is it essential to keep the men and women segregated in different living quarters, men and women in the program discussed how some staff members went so overboard in ensuring that there was segregation between the two genders that they would implement policies such as not even being able to look at each other when they were not in the classroom. A female participant discusses an event where staff members were trying to segregate the two genders by saying:

Interviewer: Because women can't look at the men at all, even when passing?

Female Participant: No, no. They'll make us; they'll make us turn and face the wall.

Another issue that many of the women raised is they were living in general population where the other women were not taking classes. This became a detriment to the women taking courses because it became more difficult for them to behave, work on their behavior changes, work on their classwork, and build meaningful relationships with people in the program since they are surrounded by people who are not in the program. One female participant addressed this by adding:

Another E2 ward just for us for classes so we can study and go to work because some of us, some of them have to go to work at, you know, a late-night hour, and these guys are up clowning around, laughing, giggling, doing hair, you know, talking, whispering, you know what I'm saying?

Many participants also commented on the fact that men had less interaction with the deputies, and that the men were more frequently supervised by R&R staff as opposed to general population staff. This then increases the men's ability to stay out of trouble because they are around more staff that wants to see them succeed within the programs. Whereas the deputies in the general population are not motivated to see the program participants grow, those who are working specifically in the R&R program were often more invested in participants' success. One female participant discusses how this has impacted her and other program participants by stating:

Not a single female who's gotten regressed [removed from the program] since we've been over here for the R&R class has been able to come back. Not even when it's a misunderstanding or not. Even when it's the dep, just feeling like they want to be a dick.

These privileges include but are not limited to an increased ability to stay out of trouble, not having to live in the general population, not having to be transported to and from all program requirements, getting better amenities such as games and libraries, and getting all of their meals and enough sleep. The women in the program wish they were valued enough to receive the same resources as men. The women feel that if they could receive the same amenities and privileges as men, they would be more successful within the program.

One suggestion that the women offered to address these issues of gender inequality was to create a women's ward. If this were to occur, women would then have the ability to be allotted the same privileges and amenities that men have. While there will always be gender differences and disparities within programs such as the RSAT program, these programs should strive to provide equal amenities to the best of their ability to both genders. Creating greater gender equality would help to ensure success within the program and increase the positive experiences that participants have. When women are not provided with the same privileges and opportunities as men, women do not feel equal to their male counterparts. Therefore, an environment where women feel segregated and like they cannot be successful can occur.

Based on the fact that there are fewer women in jail than men, there are fewer programs or activities designed for women. Therefore, women must have other programs or activities separate from men, but the financial budgets already went towards the men leaving women with little to nothing (Collins et al., 1996). These gender differences also relate to the facilities, systems, programs, and activities offered to female inmates (Clark, 2009). An example of these gender differences includes that women are rarely allowed to participate in programs or activities with male inmates (Clark, 2009).

Co-Education Environments

It was unanimous across genders that the program's co-education environment was beneficial and added a different support aspect within the classroom. Both genders enjoyed the diversity, inclusion, and perspective differences provided throughout their experience. One female participant supported this by stating:

I liked that they are co-ed. Um, now we can't, that's like a fine line because we can't really engage, but if we're engaging about the therapy, then we can talk, you know. However, I

liked that it's not just women because obviously there's, there's more people on different points of views and um, it makes it a more normal setting.

While discomfort issues were still prevalent, the participants easily navigated these issues and environments. It can be assumed that the participants can navigate these complicated relationships that cross genders because the participants are not focused on the gender of the individual that is placed before them. Another female participant addresses concerns about co-education environments by adding:

Yes. Yeah. It's not weird or strange or like, like, but it's not like, like some would portray like, oh, boys and girls don't let that happen. So sexual or whatnot, but it's not like that, you know, you're both going through things. We're all going through things. That was the last thing we all want in their minds. A relationship.

The women did not even think the co-education environment was weird; they seemed to enjoy the different environment and the addition of men into their classes. One female participant supported this by saying:

No, it wasn't weird for me. It just, I think it's actually nice because then you get to hear the guy's perspective. So, um, you know, because guys and girls' perspectives are always a little different, you know, so.

Finally, some men rely on the advice and opinions of the women. These individuals feel as though they can use the opinions and experiences of women to work on their issues and feel like they can learn from their past by listening to the women and getting advice from them. One of the male participants discusses this when he states:

Having that ability to interact or even talk with other women, or like, that's like, that's huge. Cuz I've only had interactions with my sister and my brother, and just having that open communication with both genders, having both sides, being able to communicate with one another, in a constructive way, it's helpful.

While the two genders have many differences, the genders can use the differences to succeed in their healing.

Some of the men reacted poorly because they were more focused on their healing and how they would complete the classes. Participants focus on how they can work on themselves within this process to decrease their chances of recidivating. One male participant supported this idea by saying:

This is a privilege to me, you know, so whether it's with guys, it's with females, whoever you know, it's a privilege, and I'm glad for it. You know what I mean because I'd rather be learning something than just be playing cards all day or something, you know, so whether- it doesn't really matter to me, guys or girls or whoever, you know. I mean, I'm a people person; I love people, you know. I love to talk; it's all just a life experience for me... I guess you get to see both sides of the world 'cuz, like, a lot of people are in here for like domestic violences and stuff, so you get to see kind of like, hey, a girl could be like, hey, you know what, I take it offensive when a male talks to me like this. And we can also be like, hey, well, we take it offensive to 'cuz it's kind of like we are, supposed to be taking care of the family, you know, so when you are whatever. So, you get to see both sides of the world, like how both people maintain their lifestyles through their own heads, you know what I mean, through the female and the male side.

Other men did not have issues with having women in the environment. However, they needed help building valuable relationships with the women in their groups since they had fewer and briefer interactions with them. The above statement can be supported by one of the statements made by a male participant who stated:

I don't feel like I can talk to the girl. That's like doing her testimony. I can't really, like, just talk to her, you know what I mean, then we might get in trouble, or it might be misconstrued, or something, I don't know. So it's like that- and I've never had a girl in a class when I'm in jail, you know what I mean, so it's like, this is kind of weird, but I think it works to get their feedback too, and we- some of the problems that like I've had are related to women, you know what I mean, so like getting their feedback is helpful.

The above quote demonstrates that relationships with the opposing gender are valuable within the co-educational environment.

Feminine Hygiene

When women in the program described needing feminine products, most participants discussed how difficult it was to ask for products and how much trouble they had to endure to

receive them. It is challenging to get them from the deputies because they make it difficult to ask them for the products. When the participants receive the products, it is limited, and they are expected to deal with the consequences. The participants wished for more accessibility and a decrease in discomfort. As one female participant stated:

She's a female (the deputy) who only gives you a 30-minute time period to get all of the hygiene that you need for the day, but yet the majority of the time, you can only get two to three tampons every time you go up there. So, you're supposed to make two to three tampons last.

Another female participant discusses this exact issue with the interviewer by adding:

Female Participant: I mean, some of them, you have to ask them for it, but some deputies just set it on the side. Yeah, it just depends on who it is. Yeah. They're not supposed to just set them out, though, because people just take advantage of them, and they use it for other stuff that they're not supposed to. Okay. But I, like, they'd never not given it to me when I asked."

Interviewer: Okay. And they limited; how many you can have?

Female Participant: Um, like, they give me like two at a time. But like you could come back and ask for more. They never told me no.

Interviewer: Okay. That's good. Good. Um, so do you feel like the staff supports you in your feminine needs?

Female Participant: Yes

This same issue is addressed by another female participant, where she supports the perspectives in this discussion by saying:

Female Participant: Oh yeah, that's degrading. We have to go up and ask every time, and they give you two at a time. Yeah, I know the girls for like that. Um, luckily, we only have to worry about it once a month. I try to remain optimistic of everything. So.

Interviewer: And do you think when the men are handing them out, are they usually more empathetic?

Female Participant: They are like lost. Sometimes they're like, uh, what? What do you need? Oh, a Tampon or a pad, you know?

Interviewer: I've heard that the women deputies are less empathetic

Female Participant: Some of them, I think it's on a deputy-by-deputy basis. There's some that, um, if they're having a bad day, you can tell. Yeah. Yeah. There's no consistency. So, so you really have to know them. Right. It's very annoying.

Women are expected to accept any conditions presented to them including the poor conditions surrounding their feminine hygiene. This includes not being able to use as many tampons or other feminine hygiene products as they need, not being able to change or wash clothes as frequently as they would like, having to pay excessive amounts if they do need extra products, and being degraded every time that they need feminine hygiene products to prevent these issues from becoming unsanitary. The participants discuss how it depends on whether the staff is willing to work with them, however, this should not be an ongoing issue among women within a program.

Feminine hygiene issues should be taken more seriously regardless of the gender of the deputy or staff member working with the inmates. A female participant should not be worried about her hygiene or the sanitarness of her clothes or feminine hygiene products. Worries about these issues prevent women from fully focusing on their improvement in the program. Women should have full body autonomy over their feminine hygiene issues. The fact that female participants are still dealing with these issues demonstrates how those in a higher power are using these issues to dehumanize the participants and use these situations to show that they are still inmates regardless of what they do to be removed from these identities, even if this includes working towards bettering themselves and remove themselves from the jail environment the program and staff continue to remind them that they will always be inmates period.

Past research has not directly examined feminine hygiene issues within residential substance abuse treatment programs. However, scholars have found that women consistently struggle with access to feminine hygiene products in jail and prison (Silverman, 2022; Raibu,

Sani, & Daneji, 2020). Additionally, women continuously suffer from feminine hygiene-related health issues and are continually deprived of bodily autonomy within the prison environment (Shaw, 2018; Silverman, 2022; Raibu, Sani, & Daneji, 2020). Based on the nature of this study and the relationship to the dehumanization factor, based on the need for staff to continually hold power over the participants and demonstrate that there will always be inmates, it is safe to assume that the reasoning for feminine hygiene issues within jails and prisons is the exact reason why there are issues with feminine hygiene within residential substance abuse treatment programs.

Gender Segregation and Gender Inequalities Conclusion

To address gender issues that arise, researchers should analyze gender segregation and how it plays a role in the impact of the program on participants. Additionally, researchers should analyze gendered experiences with jail staff and program staff that assist participants throughout the program. Women are to be treated differently based on their gender and are forced to spend time dealing with these issues instead of focusing on the program.

Women must take more time to travel to and from the location, lose the ability to eat meals at a designated time or spend valuable program time searching for feminine hygiene products. They cannot focus on their classwork, homework, or other program requirements because their attention and responsibilities lie elsewhere. To develop positive experiences for all genders across the board, these issues should be addressed within programs to see an increase in positive experiences among participants. Not only does experiencing gender segregation issues in the program harm the female participants, but it also leads to an environment where individuals within the program feel dehumanized. This is not only an issue that female

participants experience but also an issue experienced by male participants, the issue of dehumanization within the residential substance abuse treatment program.

Dehumanization within the Program

Dehumanization of participants was an overarching central theme expressed by participants. The process of dehumanization includes depriving individuals of dignity by creating an environment where the individual is subject to degrading or inhumane conditions or treatment. Putting the participants into the co-ed environment allows an exchange of ideas and reflects the outside world. Through reflection on the program, participants can apply what they learned within the jail environment to society when released.

Dehumanization of participants included not feeling respected, heard, or acknowledged. Participants felt as though they did not have a say in how they should be treated or what is important to them within the program. This also involved being treated as less than or below staff or other participants due to their gender, in the case of women. Finally, participants felt that they are not able to develop platonic relationships with other participants due to the assumption that individual participants cannot control their sexuality, leading staff to assume participants cannot interact without having sexualized thoughts, actions, or motives.

Dehumanization Conclusion

Dehumanization is a prevalent issue in jail and prison environments and often includes power dynamics between inmates and staff (Cloud et al., 2023). Dehumanization of women often includes removing female inmates' bodily autonomy (Shaw, 2018; Silverman, 2022; Raibu, Sani, & Daneji, 2020). Most of the research on dehumanization focuses on the power dynamic between staff and inmates (Cloud et al., 2023) or removing bodily autonomy from inmates (Shaw, 2018; Silverman, 2022; Raibu, Sani, & Daneji, 2020), however there has not been a study

that specifically looks at dehumanization in RSAT program that takes place in a jail. Even if these programs do not intentionally dehumanize participants, many still feel dehumanized in the everyday environments. The intent of a program, such as residential substance abuse treatment programs, is to remove the possibility of dehumanization, to the extent that they can, by providing individuals with a therapeutic environment where they can rehabilitate and re-enter society. This research demonstrates that individuals within these programs are still experiencing dehumanization through the treatment of staff. Therefore, despite being a treatment program, the dehumanizing setting of the jail overpowers the program's mandate to provide a more rehabilitative environment.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Conclusion

This thesis investigated how men and women experience a jail-based co-educational residential substance abuse treatment (RSAT) program. To further analyze the differences in experience between the genders, two research questions were analyzed, which are:

1. *How do men's and women's experiences of the rehabilitation and recovery program differ in a jail-based co-education program?*
2. *What does this tell us about the role of gender in the effectiveness of these programs?*

To answer these questions, interviews of male and female participants of a co-gendered in-jail RSAT program were analyzed. This chapter will address the main conclusions from my analysis as well as my suggestions for future research.

The findings of this research show that while men and women appreciated the co-educational program, offering a co-educational RSAT program in a jail comes with an array of logistical challenges. In particular, implementing a mixed gender program in a jail that is predominately housed with men appears to lead to a variety of issues around gender segregation and inequality. These issues include an obvious division of genders, unequal distribution of privileges, and issues surrounding feminine hygiene. Therefore, this study shows that jail populations may uniquely benefit from a co-education program. This occurs because of the ways it allows individuals to have conversations and experiences that mimic life outside the jail. Hence, running such a program can bring to light serious issues of inequality between men and women inside of the facility.

Past research predominately focuses on the benefits of single sex programs as opposed to mixed gender RSAT programs. Single gender programs provide a space where participants can

relate to individuals based off gender similarities (Casares-Lopez et al., 2012; Epstein et al., 2018; Greenfield et al., 2013; Miller, & Miller, 2011; Olson et al., 2009). This would include having educationally based classroom programs for women (Epstein et al., 2018; Greenfield et al., 2013) and work programs for men (Casares-Lopez et al., 2012; Miller, & Miller, 2011; Olson et al., 2009). In contrast to this past research, this study found that the co-gender aspect of the program was one of its most positive components. Some of the aspects that participants expressed enjoying about co-educational spaces include perspectives from across genders, replication of the outside world, and broadening the curriculum so that men and women can both have educationally-based classrooms and work programs.

It appears that rather than providing therapeutic benefits to individuals, what participants most appreciated about the co-gender program was it allowed to them to develop skills and have experiences that more closely mirrored their life outside of jail. Aspects of the program that mirrored life outside of jail included work programs, building relationships, recognizing and accepting gender differences, and relationships with staff. The Gateway work program allows participants to be motivated, have freedom, responsibility, accountability, something to look forward to, and a place where they can practice their learned skills from the program. In building relationships within the program, both men and women expressed a need to build healthy and supportive relationships with their fellow participants to work towards their goals collectively. In the gender differences in relationships, participants described the need to have positive peer interactions and build bonds with fellow participants. With experiences and relationships with staff, it was found that the participants express a need for respect from the staff they encounter to feel that the program is essential to their recovery and that there are people who support them in recovering and reentering into society. The replication of the outside world becomes an essential

factor when looking at the dehumanization of the program because the inmates want to be treated as though they are complex human beings with validating experiences.

Despite the fact that individuals in the jail appreciated that the program was mixed gender, having both men and women in the program revealed a number of shortcomings in terms of gender inequality inside of the jail. The ways in which participants experienced gender inequality would be through the division of genders within the program, the differences in privileges, the need for a co-educational environment, and issues surrounding feminine hygiene. Participants expressed that they want to build platonic relationships with others as well as being recognized as complex human beings. When it comes to the differences in privileges within the program, female participants recognize the quality and quantity of amenities given to the male participants that are not given to the female participants, such as a female ward, television sets, board games, gym equipment, meals delivered on time and frequently, and not needing transportation to and from the hotel. When looking at the co-educational environments, it was unanimous that both men and women experience and appreciate the different levels of support provided in a co-educational environment. When it comes to feminine hygiene, the participants expressed how difficult it was for them to receive and use the products and how this took away and created a discomfoting environment within the program. Therefore, while co-educational programs appear to provide particular benefits to populations in jails, it is clear that jails reproduce various elements of gender inequality that hinder the effectiveness of such programs and their ability to serve both male and female inmates.

Together these conclusions raise questions about the utility of providing substance abuse treatment in jails and whether the carceral setting can be an effective space for reintegration and recovery. More broadly, these conclusions suggest the need to provide therapy and RSAT

programming outside of the carceral setting in the first place. Many of the reasons why participants struggle with the program being within a jail environment is that they felt segregated and dehumanized by the staff. The staff enforced a policing environment where the participants were expected to conform to heteronormative ideals, rather than having the freedom to explore the complexity of the rehabilitation process. Not only did the participants have issues with the treatment provides by the jail staff, but there were issues with not being able to replicate the outside world and practice the skills they were using. These issues led to the feelings of dehumanization within the program which led to negative experiences within the program. The fact that such programs appear to perpetuate dehumanization and gender inequality shows that such treatment is in many ways incompatible with the abuse and lack of freedom that are inherent to incarceration.

Future Research

Future research should look further into RSAT programs that are co-educational and within the jail environment to understand how these types of programs impact the desistance rates of members once released. While this study provided a detailed examination of how inmates describe their experiences while they are in the program, this type of qualitative analysis does not allow for the measurement of whether these programs actually lead to higher desistance rates. One would suspect that if the inmate had a more positive experience within the program, that they are more likely to learn and practice these skills while they're in the program, which would likely lead them to not recidivate because they developed skills to avoid relapse and reoffending. Confirming this predication with quantitative data on desistance rates would help clarify this assumption.

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Appendix A

Thank you so much for joining me today! My name is _____. As you may know, I'm from Colorado College and I'm working with my teacher Emily Schneider to research the Reintegration & Recovery program here at the jail. We're interested in hearing about your experiences in this program and what feedback you might have. Everything you say will be confidential, meaning your name will never be tied to what you tell me. There are no right or wrong answers to questions, we are really just trying to learn what the program is like from your perspective. At the end of the day no one else can say how well this program is working besides the people participating in it, so what you have to say is really valuable to us. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask them at any point during the interview.

If interviewed previously/read the initial report:

1. Do you have any reactions to the paper?
2. Do you believe that the inmates of the R + R ward have been accurately depicted?
 - a. Which things resonated with you?
 - b. What stood out to you as being important?
3. What would you want to add?
4. Is there anything that you would like to be omitted?

Classes:

5. Could you walk me through a typical day here in this program?
6. What classes do you like the best? Can you describe them?
7. Which classes are you most engaged in? Why?
8. Which counselor's teaching style do you like the best?
9. What do you find your peers doing that makes the classroom dynamic most engaging
 - a. What are your thoughts on co-ed classrooms?
10. What changes have you seen in the classes during your time here?
 - a. How have those changes impacted your experience?
11. What is a moment in class that has stuck with you as being consequential?
12. On the other hand, what is a moment that comes to mind as having missed the mark?
13. Which classes do you like the least? Can you describe them.
14. What was the class selection process like for you?
 - a. How would you like to see that process improve?
15. Are there any classes you wish you were in? Why?
16. Are there any classes you wish you weren't in? Why?

Skills:

17. When you think of real life skills learned in here, what comes to mind?
18. Which skills do you find yourself practicing the most so far?

19. What skills do you wish were taught in class?

Relationships:

20. Who helped you during the different stages of the program?

21. Can you point to anyone in particular who you think of as the most important figure in your rehabilitation process?

22. How would you describe your relationship with the deputy?

23. How would you describe your relationship with the R + R Staff?

24. How are these relationships different from each other?

25. Can you tell me about your favorite counselor? What do you like about them?

26. Is there anything that you wish the counselors would do?

27. Is there anything you wish they didn't do?

28. We've heard that there is inconsistency within the R + R program, can you describe some of these inconsistencies?

a. How does this impact your motivation, learning, etc.

Future:

29. What kinds of challenges do you expect to face when you are out of jail?

30. What lessons from the program do you plan to use to deal with these challenges?

31. Do you think this program will help you with any of those concerns? In what ways?

32. When you think about the future, how do you see the skills that you learned here fitting into that?

33. What would you say is the most valuable thing that you have gotten out of the R + R program?

Closing Thoughts:

34. If you could design your ideal class, what would be taught?

35. Do you have any suggestions on how R+R can be changed?