

The Community Benefits of Arts and Culture Nonprofit Organizations

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Abstract

The main goal of this thesis is to identify and analyze some of the community benefits of arts and culture nonprofit organizations. Oftentimes, people view these organizations as entertaining but frivolous. In reality, these organizations are vital for a community, and they deserve more support. In this thesis, I will specifically focus on the economic, social, and therapeutic benefits of these organizations. In order to analyze this subject, I read and analyzed a variety of scholarly resources. After conducting research, it is evident that supporting and investing in the arts is a smart economic decision for any community. They generate a great deal of economic activity and benefit other local businesses. In addition, arts organizations attract businesses, residents, and visitors to a community, and they improve the quality of life in the area. Also, art has many therapeutic effects, and art therapy organizations help those with physical disabilities or emotional challenges to boost their confidence, build a support system, and cope with their emotions. All of these benefits have a great impact on the community, and could have a positive influence on education, business, and health fields in the area. Therefore, arts and culture nonprofit organizations are a powerful force in a community, and they require the support and investment of their communities.

Keywords: arts and culture nonprofit organizations, benefits, community

The Community Benefits of Arts and Culture Nonprofit Organizations

Introduction

In today's society, many people do not realize how many businesses are considered nonprofit organizations. Instead of using its surplus income as profit, nonprofit organizations use it to further develop their mission and purpose. These organizations are vital to society because they perform many instrumental services, provide important products, and present cultural experiences. Their main goals are to help or benefit the community in some way. For instance, the Red Cross assists with disaster relief and health services, and the YMCA works for youth development, social responsibility, and healthy living. While most people immediately recognize the benefits health and community service nonprofits have on the community, they might not think of the benefits of other nonprofit sectors, like the arts and culture sector.

Arts and culture nonprofit organizations range from art museums, theaters, and orchestra halls to art therapy organizations and art schools. Many people might view these types of organizations as frivolous and superfluous, which is reflected in the budget cuts that many arts organizations and programs faced during the recent recession. They actually have an important role in society and greatly benefit the community, and due to my passion for the arts, I became interested in this sector. I am working on earning the Nonprofit Leadership Alliance Certificate at Indiana State University, and I aspire to work at an arts or culture nonprofit organization once I graduate. I have a strong interest in the arts, and I believe they are a vital part of any community. Most people just think the benefits of arts nonprofits are creativity, aesthetics, and entertainment, which are accurate, but there are many more benefits beyond these few. People do not realize how large of an impact these organizations have on the community's economy, psychology, etc. It is important that society learns more about the benefits of the nonprofit arts

sector so that they further appreciate and support these organizations in their communities. People should not allow arts organizations to fail and disappear because society would be negatively impacted. Therefore, my research will explain how arts nonprofit organizations benefit the community.

Unknown

With many nonprofits, the positive effects on the community are very direct and apparent because they provide services or products to those in need. People often don't recognize the many benefits of arts organizations because they think they are just for entertainment. Even if they are just considered to be a form of entertainment, wouldn't these organizations then bring in profit to the community from ticket sales, etc? Also, could these organizations attract more visitors into the community? Even with these questions in mind, people still view arts nonprofit organizations as low on the priority list for the community. If many people view arts nonprofit organizations as frivolous, why do most communities still make a point to support the arts? Even during the recent recession, people still worked hard to keep arts nonprofit organizations afloat. Why would they do this? Also, why does the government help fund these types of organizations when that money could go towards organizations helping with causes like fighting hunger or cancer? There must be more substantial benefits to arts organizations than just simply entertainment. For instance, the arts are known to help with coping and relaxation. Do the cultural experiences or products that arts nonprofits produce have a significant impact on the community's mental health? Are there arts organizations that directly work on assisting with rehabilitation and disabilities? Also, do these sources of creativity greatly affect or improve society? Overall, do the arts have a greater impact on our lives than we realize? After

considering all these questions, I have a strong interest in learning more about how arts nonprofit organizations positively affect the community.

Thesis/Research Questions

Most people enjoy the arts because it inspires and invokes creativity, novelty, and thought. They often view the arts as a hobby or a source of entertainment, and so they often view arts nonprofit organizations as frivolous. Even so, the sector's continued resilience and governmental and communal support express that there might be more substantial benefits to the community than what is expected. Therefore, I propose to investigate the variety of positive effects arts nonprofit organizations have on the community in order to better understand their significance in society.

In order to address this issue, I plan to delve into multiple research questions. For instance, what are the economic benefits of arts nonprofit organizations? In this section, I will investigate to see if these organizations attract people and revenue into the community and how much of an economic impact these organizations have. In general, people might not expect much revenue to come from these organizations, but the results might be surprising.

Another important question is "what are the social benefits?" For this question, I will research to see if arts organizations help to attract more people to cities and to find out if arts organizations affect people's social lives. Many large urban cities have successful, influential arts organizations, and I would like to find out to what extent the correlation between these organizations and the bustling environment is.

In addition, what are the therapeutic benefits? There are some arts nonprofit organizations that are dedicated to helping people with disabilities or rehabilitation through the

creation of art. I would like to research to see the influence of these organizations. Also, I will research to see what therapeutic benefits there are to just attending art events at these nonprofit organizations. Art is often considered to help people relax, but I would like to see if interacting with art really does benefit people.

Investigation

In order to investigate my thesis, I will gather data from scholarly articles, books, and possibly nonprofit professionals, and from these sources, I will draw conclusions. I will find most of these sources through the Indiana State University library database. I also might interview nonprofit professionals who I know from my internship at the Indianapolis Museum of Art. They might have valuable feedback that could develop my thesis. In order to accurately describe the benefits of arts nonprofit organizations, I will read through the scholarly sources objectively. I will make sure to address negative effects of these organizations if I find them in my research in order to not skew the representation of the data. Overall, I will find approximately 15-20 sources in order to have a variety of perspectives and an abundance of information.

Summary

Throughout my thesis, I aspire to investigate what the benefits of arts nonprofit organizations are for the community. Often, people overlook the impact of these organizations, and they consider them to be frivolous. In the nonprofit field, the arts sector is small, but it is still influential and successful. I have a passion for the arts, and I aspire to work for an art nonprofit organization once I graduate. These organizations are very valuable because the arts are an important part of culture, and they express the values of the community. Even during hardship, it is vital to support the arts and have them available to society. In order to better understand the

impact of these organizations, I will investigate the economic, social and therapeutic benefits of these organizations. Therefore, I propose to investigate the variety of positive effects arts nonprofit organizations have on the community in order to better understand their significance in society.

The Community Benefits of Arts and Culture Nonprofit Organizations

In most communities, at least one form of arts or culture nonprofit exists. Many of these organizations are small, but they are still influential. Oftentimes, people underestimate the power and influence of arts and culture nonprofit organizations. People typically think this industry only serves a purpose as entertainment value. Even so, these organizations have continuously been successful, and they garner support from the government and many community members. In reality, these organizations have a great deal more value than just entertainment. Arts nonprofits contribute economic, social, therapeutic, cultural, intellectual, and many other benefits. In order to better understand their importance in society, this thesis will specifically focus on the economic, social, and therapeutic benefits of arts and culture nonprofit organizations.

What are the economic benefits?

Often, people believe that the arts sector of the nonprofit field is small and financially insubstantial. In reality, this is not the case. Robert Lynch (2013b), president and chief executive officer of Americans for the Arts, states “look to the arts as an investment rather than a gift, a frill, or even an appropriation. Just as we invest in infrastructure, schools, and safety, we need also to invest in the arts and culture.” Arts and culture nonprofits continue to be a thriving industry, and they contribute to economic activity, jobs, and generate revenue.

In general, according to Americans for the Arts' study, Arts and Economic Prosperity IV, arts and culture nonprofit organizations generate \$135.2 billion in economic activity every year, nationwide (Lynch, 2013c). Of this number, \$61.1 billion is from spending by organizations and \$74.1 billion relates to event-related expenditures by their audiences (Americans, 2015). In addition, this industry generates \$86.68 billion in resident household income (Americans, 2015). To put it in perspective, \$135.2 billion "is greater than the gross domestic product of most countries" (Lynch, 2008). This industry has been continuously growing over the years. For instance, from 2003-2008, there was a 24 percent increase in the economic activity (Lynch, 2008). These numbers are impressive, especially considering that for-profit arts organizations are not included.

The arts and culture nonprofit industry contributes immensely to the job market. Lynch (2013b) states, "Fundamentally, the arts foster beauty, creativity, originality, and vitality. They inspire us, soothe us, provoke us, involve us, and connect us. But they also create jobs and contribute to the economy." Across the nation, this industry supports approximately 4.13 million full time jobs (Americans, 2015). To better understand how big an impact this is, Lynch explains that,

In fact, according to a comparison with statistics from the U.S. Department of Labor, the nonprofit arts and cultural industry supports approximately 0.87 percent of the entire U.S. workforce. That may not seem too impressive—until you consider that the same data demonstrates that elementary school teachers make up 1.17 percent of the workforce, police officers represent 0.51 percent, farmers account for 0.32 percent, and firefighters represent 0.24 percent. (Lynch, 2013b)

Therefore, the nonprofit arts and culture industry makes up a substantial part of the American workforce, and it creates a great deal of jobs for citizens. Also, according to Americans for the Arts, from 2002 to 2008, 850,000 more jobs were created in this industry (Lynch, 2008). Since a majority of these jobs are embedded in their community, these jobs remain local and are not outsourced overseas (Lynch, 2008). Thus, the community directly benefits from these job opportunities, and it improves the local economy.

Not only do arts nonprofit organizations generate jobs, but they also generate government revenue. According to Witt (2008), this industry generates \$29.6 billion in local, state, and federal government revenue every year. “By comparison, the three levels of government collectively spend less than \$4 billion annually to support arts and culture. This is a spectacular 7-to-1 return on investment that would thrill even Wall Street veterans.” (Lynch, 2008). Also, the figure in Appendix A expresses that government revenue contributes only about 11% of the total revenue, and 60% is income (Lynch, 2013b). Therefore, arts nonprofit organizations are not overly dependent on the government to stay afloat, and they are actually a great asset to the government due to the substantial revenue they generate.

Even with all of this data, many people are unaware of the economic prosperity of arts nonprofit organizations, and they consider them to be frivolous. Thus, during the recession from 2007-2009, many arts nonprofit organizations had to endure cuts and reductions in funding. Even so, this industry still survived and even improved. From 2007 to 2008, “arts employees grew by 12.49 percent while the arts business grew by 11.87 percent. In other words, in a time of decreasing or stagnant employment growth, the arts are adding jobs to the local economy” (Lynch, 2008). The arts nonprofit industry in Portsmouth, New Hampshire was a prime example of the resilience of this industry during the recession. After the Great Recession, “total arts

organizational spending along with audience spending increased by \$3.2 million (from \$38.2 million to \$41.4 million). Without the direct and indirect benefit of these creative businesses, Portsmouth would be a much less interesting and economically vibrant city” (Lynch, 2013b). Therefore, the arts industry in many cities actually flourished during the recession, which expresses that this industry is strong and beneficial to the community. Since then, the arts nonprofit industry is still thriving and improving.

Not only does the arts nonprofit industry generate a great deal of income, but they also generate a substantial amount of event-related spending by their audiences. Generally, when people go to an arts or cultural event, they buy dinner, pay for parking, go shopping, pay for a babysitter, etc. Also, if they live outside the city, people might spend the night at a hotel. When audience members spend money outside of the event, they are generating commerce for other local businesses (Lynch, 2013b). According to Americans for the Arts (2015), “an average arts attendee spends \$24.60 per event, not including the cost of admission. On the national level, these audiences provided \$74.1 billion of valuable revenue for local merchants and their communities.” Appendix B shows the breakdown of the average expenditure per event. In addition, Americans for the Arts collected data to record the number of local and nonlocal attendees. From the national sample, the study found that 31.8 percent of attendees traveled from outside the county while 68.2 percent lived locally (Americans, 2015). Research shows that nonlocal residents spend twice as much as the locals do for arts and culture events. This is expressed in their data, which shows that locals spend on average of \$17.42 and nonlocals spend \$39.96 (Americans, 2015). Therefore, attracting cultural tourists creates economic benefits.

Businesses strive to be competitive and creative, especially when they were recovering from the recent recession. It appears that businesses have a competitive edge if they are

innovators and work towards making creative solutions to be successful in the marketplace. Lynch (2008) states that “leaders in government, business, and education are getting savvy to what those in the arts have long known: to fuel creativity and innovation, you need to invest in the arts.” Businesses are realizing the importance of incorporating the arts and creativity into their corporate ideals and goals and the importance of a creative and diverse workforce. More and more CEOs are saying that creativity is very important when hiring, and “a 2010 Americans for the Arts survey found that 72 percent of companies contributing to the arts recognize that art skills stimulate creative thinking, problem solving, and team building” (Lynch, 2013a). These abilities are vital in the workforce, and so business leaders are beginning to understand the importance of investing and supporting the arts. Lynch (2013a) adds,

George Roman, vice president, state and local government operations and regional executive, at Boeing, sums it up nicely: "We have long held that investing in the arts positively impacts economic development and growth, produces a creative and diverse workforce, and nurtures the imagination and self-reflection needed to solve complex personal and community issues. (p. 17)

Therefore, other businesses in communities understand why arts nonprofit organizations are beneficial to the local economy and the community in general, and why it is important for people to become involved in the arts to support these organizations.

Many businesses are even creating partnerships with arts organizations due to the many benefits of this industry. ArtWestchester is one organization that has been working on making arts-and-business partnerships to help the arts industry continue to thrive. For instance, one company they have partnered with is Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, who is sponsoring the

exhibition, STEAM (Shustack, 2014). “It's tapping into - and broadening - the STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) movement to incorporate the arts and their role in teaching creative thinking” (Shustack, 2014). Just as ArtWestchester strives for innovation, so does Regeneron. Also, they have partnered with the Westchester Medical Center to further develop its healing arts program (Shustack, 2014). These partnerships are beneficial to both sides of the partnership, and Janet Langsam, the ArtsWestchester executive director states, “an alliance with the arts could be tailored to suit the needs of most any company” (Shustack, 2014). Thus, any type of business in any community could attain benefits from investing in the arts in some way. Langsam sums it up nicely when she states that “there's a benefit for the corporations and there's a benefit for the community and the arts and that's what these partnerships are about” (Shustack, 2014). Therefore, arts nonprofit organizations not only help the local economy through its services, but also the wellbeing of other businesses in the community.

Overall, from the current studies and data, the arts nonprofit industry is thriving, and it greatly supports the local and national economy. Lynch (2008) explains that “the economic power of the arts is one of America’s best-kept secrets. The best part of this economic secret is that at least one, if not several, of the nation’s 100,000 nonprofit arts and culture organizations already call your city or county home.” These organizations generate economic activity, jobs, and revenue, and they support other businesses through event-spending, business partnerships, and providing creativity outlets to inspire innovation. Consequently, the arts nonprofit industry greatly benefits the economy for the community.

What are the social benefits?

After analyzing the economic benefits of arts nonprofit organizations, it appears that this industry is very pervasive among the community, and thus is likely to greatly affect social aspects of the community as well. The arts nonprofit industry has the possibility to attract people to the community and create environments that fosters sociability.

Arts and culture nonprofit organizations do attract people to the community. For instance, CEOs are beginning to pay more attention to the quality of life of a community when choosing a location for their new factory or office. They understand that employees are their number one resource, and they strive to make them happy in order to make the organization effective and successful. CEOs aspire to have their employees want to continue to work at their organization, and they “are realizing that employees become dissatisfied when the area where they live (this could be your city or county) does not offer them adequate leisure activities. In other words, people want things to do” (Lynch, 2013a). Therefore, CEOs investigate the cultural scene of cities to decide where to place their new factories or offices. Thus, if a city has very few available arts or cultural activities available, a business leader is likely to keep looking for a location. This attention to city livability is becoming a more important factor for employers. In today’s society, most people want to be able to live, play, and work in one location (Lynch, 2013a). Without a substantial arts or culture scene, a community can lose out on not only economic benefits, but they also are in danger of losing residents. This can hurt local businesses because they might struggle to find qualified employees. According to Hanesbrands chairman and CEO Richard Noll, "The arts are critical to the quality of life in our communities and to attracting people to our communities to create a high-quality labor pool. Hanesbrands and its employees are proud to be strong supporters of the arts and contributors to the vitality of our

communities” (Lynch, 2013a). Noll stresses the importance of supporting the arts in communities because it draws people to the community, which contributes to the quality of life and strong workforce in the area.

Arts nonprofits in a community not only attract CEOs, but it also draws in many residents and visitors. There are countless examples of times when an arts or culture nonprofit improved a community’s quality of life by opening in an area and attracting other like-minded businesses. For instance, the Louisville Slugger Factory and Museum attracted many businesses to the area and transformed Main Street from a rundown area to a booming Gallery Row (Lynch, 2013c). Paducah, Texas has greatly utilized this concept by having the arts be the center of their program to revitalize part of the city. They created an Artist Relocation Program to attract artists to move into the city through incentives (Lynch, 2013c). Lynch (2013c) explains that, “as a result of this program, the neighborhood has been transformed from dilapidated housing and warehouses to an area that is now a hot spot to live in the city.” Thus, arts organizations improve communities by supplying entertainment and drawing in businesses, which attracts more residents to move into the area. Also, arts organizations attract visitors into the community because they are looking for events to attend or fun activities in which to participate. Lynch (2013c) explains that “savvy managers know that tourists actively seek out events in every state and in every size city or county. More times than not, especially in small towns, these tourists are there solely for some arts or cultural event.” As a result, it does not matter the size of the community; arts organizations of varying sizes and reputations attract residents and visitors.

In addition, many CEOs invest in the arts by creating partnerships with arts organizations. With these partnerships, CEOs sometimes offer art-based rewards to their employees. For instance, Janet Langsam from ArtsWestchester explains that some of their

business partners offer their employees tickets to concerts, performances, or family art events (Shustack, 2014). This helps employees connect to the local culture and to socialize more in the community. This socialization is important for employees because it can help them better serve their community as a worker and help them to become a happy community member. CEOs aspire to have happy and well-balanced workers, and so they often encourage socialization through events, like art performances or showings.

Many arts nonprofit organizations create a very social environment, like museums, concert halls, dance studios, etc. These social experiences positively impact the community, and Jafari, Taheri, and Lehn (2013) conducted a detailed study of the social benefits of art museums. When people go through a museum and study the art, they create social ties to other people and “even feel a sense of belonging to a wider social group or community” (Jafari, Taheri, & Lehn, 2013). Since they are experiencing the same cultural environment, they often bond over the experience and their responses to the art. One contributing factor to the bond that is formed among people in a museum is the sense of nostalgia that is felt. Nostalgia, “as a complicated emotional and psychological sensibility, has the power to connect individuals together through shared meanings and feelings” (Jafari et al., 2013). Oftentimes people will discuss how they feel about the art with others attending the museum. It sometimes can even spur conversation among strangers. It seems like a “museum’s cultural consumption experience acts as a catalyst to develop conversations amongst people and lead to discovering one another’s shared interests” (Jafari et al., 2013). The museum becomes a very social location that encourages people to express their feelings, and this open socialization creates more meaning to the shared place, the museum itself. Some might argue that they would not share their feelings in a museum since they are introverts, but Jafari, Taheri, and Lehn (2013) found through their observations that people

feel more comfortable to share their feelings and to start a conversation about not only the objects surrounding them, but also themselves. They are not worried about others' judgments due to how the museum environment encourages people to think independently and express their opinions. This sociability in the museum then carries over into the audience's life, on and off line. People often discuss their experiences and beliefs with others long after they have left the museum, and they share their experiences on social media, as well. This sociability helps to strengthen relationships and create new ones. Overall, "museums are, therefore, not just about what to see and what to relate to; they are also about who to see and who to relate to" (Jahari et al., 2013). Therefore, many arts nonprofit organizations have many social benefits for a community by offering a social hub that inspires socializing, creating, and sharing.

Overall, arts nonprofit organizations help to attract business leaders, residents, and visitors to a community. These organizations often offer a form of entertainment that attracts people, and arts organizations help to improve the quality of life in a community. Arts nonprofit events also inspire sociability among people due to the shared cultural experience and nonjudgmental environment. Therefore, this industry has many social benefits for the community.

What are the therapeutic benefits?

Frequently, people state that art can be relaxing and therapeutic. Observing paintings or watching a play or performance can be beneficial to a person emotionally and mentally. Also, there are many art therapy nonprofit organizations that help people with disabilities or health issues have a better outlook on life and feel more emotionally stable. Therefore, arts nonprofit

organizations have the possibility of also helping the community due to their therapeutic benefits.

Going to art events at nonprofit organizations is typically entertaining, but it can also be therapeutic. Alain de Botton (2014), an author of *Art as Therapy*, explains that just like music, art can be therapeutic since “it, too, is a vehicle through which we can do such things as recover hope, dignify suffering, develop empathy, laugh, wonder, nurture a sense of communion with others and regain a sense of justice and political idealism.” In order to do so, people must not just look at art for its historical value, but also its emotional value. Art can evoke a great deal of emotion from people, which can create a cathartic and healing release. For instance, people can feel a sense of hope from paintings with images of flowers, blue skies, laughing children, etc., like the painting, *Bridge Over a Pond of Water Lillies* by Monet, which is displayed in Appendix C (Bonnin, 2014). Also, some works of art confront the concept of sorrow or grief. Richard Serra’s *Fernando Pessoa* is a prime example since “the large scale and monumental character of this sombre sculpture declare the normality and universality of grief” (Bonnin, 2014). Instead of trying to cheer up the observer, this piece of artwork expresses that sorrow is a natural emotion, and everyone must deal with it throughout their lives. Thus, works of art can help people find consolation and effectively cope with their emotions. Therefore, art can be very therapeutic for the general public.

Another important type of arts nonprofit is art therapy organizations, which promote the healing power of art. The American Art Therapy Institute (AATI) states that “art therapy became a distinct profession in the 1940s when psychiatrists became interested in artwork created by their patients. Many then began offering art therapy along with traditional therapies.” (Francis, 2006). In today’s society, it is utilized by health facilities and in psychology, psychiatry, and

counseling sessions (Francis, 2006). It has become a practical and accepted form of therapy, and it was even widely used for children who had traumatic experiences during 9/11 (Francis, 2006). Many people are great supporters of art therapy. Jane Avila is one such example. She became very depressed once her 14-year-old son committed suicide (Francis, 2006). She began to participate in art therapy, and “the class did what no pills, therapy, or counseling could” (Francis, 2006). This transformational experience lead her to become the founder and director of the nonprofit organization, Art Station, which offers individual and group art therapy and community programs (Francis, 2006). Consequently, art therapy appears to be an effective form of therapy, and many people support it.

Some art therapy organizations purely focus on helping those who have disabilities. One successful art therapy nonprofit organization is ArtMix, which is the Indiana state affiliate for VSA, an international program of The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (ArtMix, 2015). This organization strives to remove the stigma of the label “disability,” which causes those with disabilities to be undervalued and excluded (ArtMix, 2015). ArtMix explains that “the exclusion and isolation that are a regular experience among people with disabilities unnaturally magnifies the effects of disability and discounts the skills, expertise, and abilities they can offer their communities,” and they strive to reduce these issues (ArtMix, 2015). Through the use of art, participants at ArtMix can socialize and express themselves, which can help them to enrich their education, communicate more effectively, and unite cultures. By being a part of this organization, participants feel more accepted since they are part of a group, and by learning artistic skills, they can have a greater impact on the community (ArtMix, 2015). As a result, not only does this organization help people with disabilities to develop confidence and skills, but it

also benefits the community as a whole because it encourages the public to be more inclusive and engaging (ArtMix, 2015).

Art therapy is also often used for people who have diseases or who are recovering from traumatic health issues, like a stroke. One study was conducted to research the benefits of art therapy among a group of stroke victims (Beesley, White, Alston, Sweetapple, & Pollack, 2011). Strokes often lead to disabilities, and “approximately 50% of stroke survivors experience residual impairments resulting from neurological damage, contributing to reduced community participation, reduced quality of life (QOL) and social isolation” (Beesley et al., 2011). After the group of stroke survivors participated in the art program, the researchers observed many benefits from the art therapy, including the opportunity for a creative outlet, self-awareness and challenge, increased confidence and lifestyle benefits, sense of belonging to a group, and access to a support system of people with similar experiences (Beesley et al., 2011). Most of the participants had very positive things to say about the experience in the art program. For instance, one member stated, “I would encourage someone to do it . . . [stroke] knocks your confidence for six, even if it’s minor . . . suddenly you find you can’t do things. But if you can come [to the group], with an open mind and allow what happens, the confidence grows in you, it’s positive” (Beesley et al., 2011). This woman explains that she gained a great deal of confidence by creating art and bonding with other stroke survivors, and many participants had similar positive comments. Therefore, art therapy can greatly benefit people who are recovering from traumatic physical or emotional experiences by increasing their confidence, encouraging socialization, and teaching them new skills.

Not only can art therapy benefit stroke survivors, but it can also help people coping with a variety of issues or diseases. For instance, many cancer patients participate in art therapy. One

study examined the benefits of art therapy on adults with cancer (Wood, Low, Molassiotis, & Tookman, 2013). When asked, art therapists identified the following most common reasons why people seek this type of therapy: “expression of feelings (100%); emotional support (88%); anxiety and depression (75%); existential/spiritual support (72%); communication issues (56%); interest in art (41%); poor body image (41%); distraction (38%)” (Wood et al., 2013). After this study with cancer patients, 92% said they believed that the art therapy was helpful (Wood et al., 2013). The participants were asked to do many questionnaires, and the graph in Appendix D displays their opinions about art therapy (Wood et al., 2013). Overall, the results were significantly positive. The participants explained that the art therapy helped with expressing creativity and improving their mental wellbeing, and they appreciated this type of support system (Wood et al., 2013). It not only helps people cope with issues like anxiety, but it also offers a creative outlet that is enjoyable and humanizing during a time when they are surrounded by machines and doctors focused on their cancer cells. Overall, this study found that art therapy is very beneficial to people experiencing traumatic health issues, like cancer.

Arts nonprofit organizations have many therapeutic benefits. To the general public, art can assist with relaxation and emotional support. In addition, there are many arts organizations dedicated to art therapy for people with disabilities, health issues, or emotional struggles. The services that these organizations provide help participants build up their confidence, build a support system, and learn new skills. Art therapy nonprofit organizations help struggling members in the community, and they help the community become more inclusive and engaging. Overall, arts nonprofit organizations offer many relevant therapeutic benefits to the community.

Conclusion

Nonprofit organizations are vital to society because they provide essential services, important products, and cultural experiences. Some organizations are highly praised for their contributions, like the United Way and the Red Cross. However, there are some sectors of nonprofit organizations that people do not fully appreciate because they do not completely understand all the benefits that these organizations provide. A prime example of this is the arts and culture nonprofit sector. This sector includes museums, dance studios, opera halls, art therapy centers, art schools, and many more. Many people enjoy participating in these organizations, but they may not realize the value beyond entertainment. This has caused difficulties for arts and culture nonprofit organizations over the years. During the recession, many organizations had to face cuts to their state funding, and they have had to work even more diligently to prove their societal worth in order to avoid risks of closure and reductions in staffing (Jafari et al., 2013). Surprisingly, the arts sector effectively survived recession, and the industry is still growing and improving. Thus, it appears that these organizations have been more beneficial to the community than expected.

After researching this industry, it is apparent that these organizations have many community benefits. Although there are many benefits, this thesis specifically focuses on the economic, social, and therapeutic benefits of arts and culture nonprofit organizations. After analyzing the data, these organizations were found to contribute significantly to the economic wellbeing of a community. They also contribute to economic activity, jobs, and generate revenue. In addition, they generate a great deal of event-related spending that benefits other local businesses, and they sometimes partner with other businesses for mutual profits. Secondly, these organizations are valuable to the social atmosphere of a community. Communities with a vibrant

arts scene attract more businesses, residents, and visitors, which can also help to improve the quality of life in the area. Lastly, arts organizations have many therapeutic benefits for residents. By attending an arts event or exhibit, people can effectively cope with their emotions and combat stress. Also, art therapy organizations help people cope with disabilities and physical or emotional trauma by boosting confidence, fostering a sense of belonging and inclusion, coping with anxiety and depression, and offering a form of entertainment. Overall, I found only positive responses about the importance of arts and culture nonprofit organizations.

From these findings, it is evident that the arts nonprofit industry is vital to the community, and as a society, people should not disregard these organizations. People need to appreciate and support this industry because it benefits the community. Investing in these organizations is a smart economic decision for any area, and they improve a community's quality of life. Thus, these benefits need to be acknowledged and promoted more often. This could help arts and culture nonprofit organizations gain the proper support that they deserve. These organizations often struggle to grow because of society's inaccurate view of their benefits and purposes. Consequently, it is important for people to learn more about these benefits and to more actively support their local art organizations and possibly invest in them. By doing so, other fields in the community can also benefit as well. If arts organizations have a stronger support system, schools would also improve and diversify their art programs. This can help students develop a stronger sense of creativity and innovation, which are valuable skills in the workforce. Businesses would thus benefit from the innovative employees. Also, businesses would gain from the event-related spending from art events and from the residents and visitors who are drawn to the community, and they could establish valuable partnerships with these arts organizations. Lastly, health organizations would also benefit from an increase in therapeutic options. If art

therapy organizations gain more support, more people could find relief from their effects.

Consequently, not only would the community flourish from a vibrant arts scene, but so would schools, businesses, and health organizations. Overall, arts and culture nonprofit organizations generate valuable and indispensable assets within communities, and they are certainly worth participating in and supporting.

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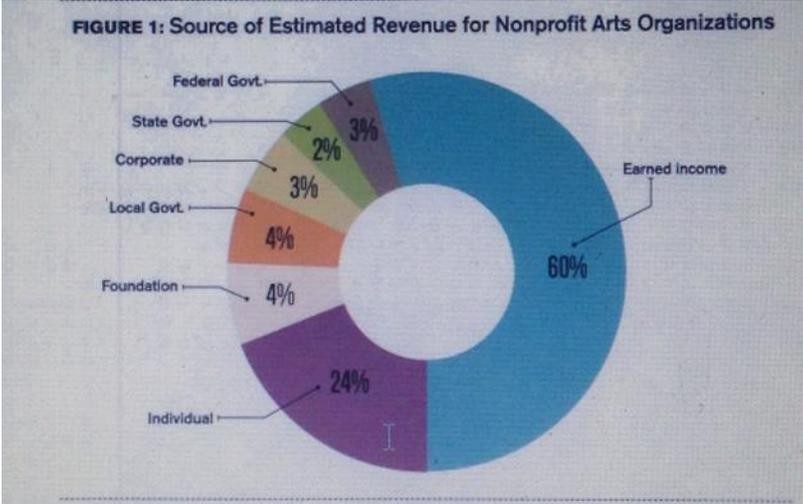
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Appendix A

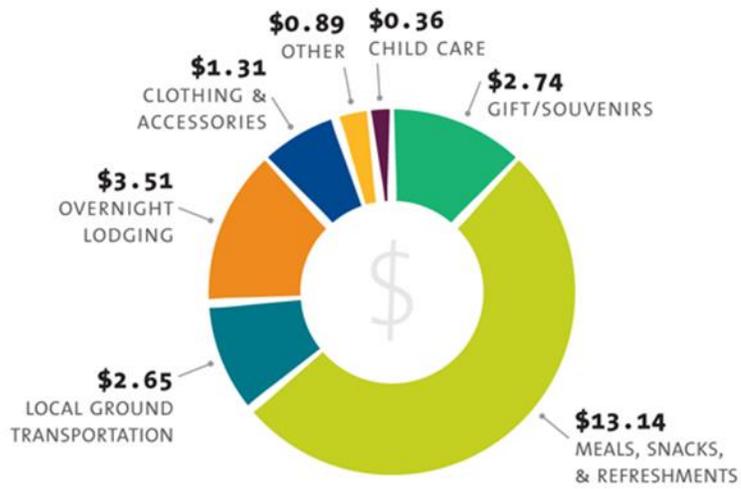
Source of Estimated Revenue for Nonprofit Arts Organizations from Lynch (2008)



Appendix B

Chart for Average Per Person Audience Expenditures from Americans for the Arts (2015)

AVERAGE PER PERSON AUDIENCE EXPENDITURES: \$24.60



Appendix C

Paintings Referred to in Alain de Botton's *Guide to Art as Therapy* (2014)



Figure 1: Bridge Over a Pond of Water Lilies by Claude Monet



Figure 2: Fernando Pessoa by Richard Serra

Appendix D

Opinions of Cancer Patients in Art Therapy Study (Wood, Low, Molassiotis, & Tookman, 2013).

