

ARTS MANAGEMENT IN LASALLE:
ANALYSING THE SUCCESSES OF ITS STRUCTURE WITHIN AND BEYOND

by

Umar Mukhtar bin Abdul Razak

A Thesis Submitted in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Bachelor of Arts
with Honours in Arts Management

at

LASALLE College of the Arts

2013

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In my judgment the thesis meets recognized scholarly standards for the degree and is therefore ready to proceed to
Examination. If not, please provide written reasons.

Supervisor

Date

Acknowledgements

*The lion who breaks the enemy's ranks is a minor hero
compared to the lion who overcomes himself.*

Rumi

To my Michelle Loh Wen Han, a wonderful supervisor, it is with great pleasure that I extend to you my sincerest gratitude for your tireless advice and guidance. The enthusiasm, professionalism and decorum which accompanied your intellectual input have inspired me to constantly seek perfection in this research. The calibre of this thesis has certainly improved dramatically due to our intellectual engagements and discussions.

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Abstract

This thesis begins by introducing and highlighting the importance of arts management in the context of the international and local industries. Specifically, it will chart the progress and development of arts management from a traditional management concept to a more defined and arts-centric system of management. In Chapter 2, it will investigate the specific roles needed for an arts manager and whether those roles were moulded out of the demands of the arts industry. It will compare and contrast the different styles of arts management with the current system in Singapore. The methods of research will also be thoroughly examined in Chapter 3.

At a macro level, arts managers exist within a similar fold with traditional managers and compete for the same socio-economic supply. Arts management covers a wide breadth of skills and talents which encompasses, and at times eclipses, traditional management concepts. At a micro level, arts managers possess more arts-centric skills and knowledge which enhance their capabilities to lead in the creative industries. The necessity and relevance of arts management will be questioned and research into its successes will be conducted.

In Chapter 4, the core structure of the arts management programme in LASALLE will be analysed vis-à-vis responses from graduates and the empirical data obtained. To account for the large number of graduates pooled from various batches, a neutral standpoint is achieved by posing similar questions and only tailoring the follow-up questions based on the responses. This semi-structured research structure coupled with an analytical mount ensures that the raw data is compiled in a systematic manner. Based on the literature available, a thorough analysis of the findings can be conducted while establishing any recurring patterns or trends. This thesis will also heavily refer to Chong's theory of arts management (Chong, Arts Management) while juxtaposing it with other significant literature like Arts Management: A Practical Guide (Radbourne and Fraser), Management and the Arts (Byrnes) and the various works of Dr. Ruth Bereson (Bereson, Why Manage the Arts?). This will serve as a structural backdrop for recommendations in Chapter 5.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Arts management is a broad concept which covers a variety of definitions but is most accurately described by Radbourne and Fraser as being ‘concerned with monitoring and safeguarding the efficient and sound delivery of artistic product from artist to audience’ (Radbourne and Fraser 3). This definition is in no way absolute but provides the basis of the research conducted which will be elaborated later in this study.

Spurred on by the aspirations of a global city, Singapore has launched three separate Renaissance City Plans (RCP) spearheaded by the National Arts Council (NAC) to develop the arts and further incubate it into a viable resource in the 21st century. Even as early as the 1970s, the government saw the need to retain Singapore’s distinctive character and identity preserving buildings of historic, traditional, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest (K. Y. Lee, *From Third World to First* 209). The two phases of the RCP from 2000 to 2007 saw \$91.5 million invested in Singapore’s arts and culture with \$115 million being planned to be rolled out in span of five years for RCP III which aims to turn Singapore into a global city for arts and culture by 2015 (Hong). Despite this spurt of funding from the government, there seems to be a wanton lack of top-tiered arts managers in Singapore (Chia).

Currently, four tertiary institutions in Singapore offer diploma or degree courses in arts management. Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) offers a Diploma in Arts Business Management, Republic Polytechnic (RP) offers a Diploma in Technology & Arts Management, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) offers both a Diploma in Arts Management & Education and a BA (Hons) Creative Industry Management while LASALLE College of the Arts (LASALLE) offers a BA (Hons) Arts Management. Since the inception of the arts management programme in 1995, LASALLE has offered degree level courses both in visual and performing arts management. The School of Arts Management has been incorporated into the Faculty for the Creative Industries in LASALLE and currently has accreditation from Goldsmiths College in United Kingdom. This formal training in arts management enables graduates to enter the arts industry with critical thinking and management skills relevant to the creative industries. Byrnes notes that DiMaggio’s survey of arts managers in 1981 showed little formal education in arts administration and management (Byrnes 39).

Historically, arts managers have often adopted an on-job training experience when entering the industry and even as far back as the nineteenth century, arts managers chose to enact a more impresario-influenced style combining the traditions, charisma and entrepreneurship of wooing trustees and benefactors for the art product (Kotler and Scheff 22). Despite the viable resource of arts management within the arts industry and creative sector in general, there seems to be an intrinsic lack of a system to track the success of the implementation of arts management courses offered in Singapore.

The existence of the arts management course specifically in LASALLE for almost two decades has not merited a single instance of substantial research into the success of its graduates. As outlined in the Report of the Committee to Upgrade Lasalle and Nafa, LASALLE was structured and upgraded to be an internationally-renowned tertiary-level arts institution (Committee To Upgrade Lasalle & Nafa 8). Ideally, this study would be able to cover all three tertiary institutions but inherent limitations have been noted and will be elaborated in the later part of this chapter (see 1.6).

LASALLE first received international accreditation in 1994 after partnering with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT). However, at that juncture, only degrees in fine art were awarded with the RMIT validation. Arts management was also not a programme in LASALLE at that point in time. Open University came into the picture as a partnering university in 2004. It fully validated all of the programmes in LASALLE which included arts management as a whole. This was a major milestone in LASALLE history as the institution improved its standings in the Singapore educational framework with this new accreditation. Arts management graduates also stood to gain from this change.

LASALLE secured its most recent validation from Goldsmiths College, University of London in 2012 which ensured that arts management graduates gained an upper hand over competing programmes in other institutions. Goldsmiths College is a university of esteemed standing in the United Kingdom and serves to position LASALLE as a forerunner of the arts institutions in Singapore.

1.2 Thesis statement

Formal arts management education has made the LASALLE graduate relevant, employable and successful in Singapore's arts industry.

This thesis statement grew out of the succinct need for research to be conducted into the viability and success of the arts management course offered in LASALLE. There have been intermittent reports and data regarding successful graduates at the peak of their careers yet it has not been substantial enough to develop a database or intuitive resource accessible to policymakers or researchers.

There is also no focused follow-up conducted on arts management alumni after a period of time and only the more successful ones are showcased in the official arts management website for LASALLE. Despite the known number of employed LASALLE arts management graduates in a list provided on the website, it was not extensive and certainly inconclusive. This study aims to focus the research towards the statement above and answering the questions listed. (See 1.4)

1.3 Research Aim and Objectives

This study aims to ascertain the relevance of formal arts management education in Singapore's industry and whether it has significantly affected the employability and marketability of LASALLE arts management graduates. The success of the graduates will also be analysed based on the responses. The specificity of this research will be geared towards LASALLE arts management graduates in a seven-year span.

Objectives

1. To track how the BA Arts Management programme has changed from 2005 to 2012.
2. An overall aim of this study is to examine the career paths of LASALLE arts management graduates as well as ascertaining their general success in their field.
3. It will endeavour to find out how many arts management graduates have remained in the arts industry and whether they have attained their career goals or ambitions.
4. It will conduct exploratory research into the recognition and accreditation of the LASALLE arts management qualification with regards to employment within the public and private sector.
5. Measuring expectations of previous years' graduates from the programme.
6. Discuss matching solutions on meeting the graduates' expectations.

1.4 Research questions

i. How justifiable is an education in arts management in the arts industry?

The objective of this research question is to ascertain whether the careers of arts graduates are deemed to be successful. This question will also investigate whether the current careers of graduates are in line with their initial career goals set during the course of their arts management education in LASALLE.

ii. Do employers who graduate from LASALLE perceive the LASALLE Arts Management graduate as a viable employee?

The objective of this research question is to analyse whether employers in the non-arts related sectors will consider employing a graduate from arts management course in LASALLE. Qualitative research in the form of interviews will be conducted together with quantitative research to ascertain the relevance of the graduate in an industry unrelated to the arts.

iii. What is the progress and development of career paths of arts management graduates?

This research question will trace the career paths of various arts management graduates. It will graph a pattern of their careers which will show whether they remained within the arts industry or veered into a non-arts related sector due to poor employability or marketability in the job industry. It will also check on how their careers have progressed since graduation from LASALLE and whether there are any inherent defining patterns.

iv. Do arts management graduates attain their career goals?

This question will delve into the graduates initial aims and objectives before graduation and ascertain whether they achieved their goals after finishing their arts management education in LASALLE. It will also compare how they have managed to attain their career goals and whether any failure to do so has had anything to do with their arts management education.

v. ***What is the general perception of graduates towards their formal arts management education in LASALLE?***

The constant admission of students in the arts management course in LASALLE has proven its reasonable attractiveness in academia. This research question seeks to place an inquiry within the graduate student body and put forth their own perception of their education acquired in LASALLE. It will also contrast this with the general aims and objectives of the arts management course stipulated by the academic guidelines.

1.5 Definition of key terms

Arts management refers to the course of formal education or business related to the key aspects of strategic planning, administrative and finance management, fundraising, marketing and venue or artist management within the arts industry (Chong 8). The entity of the arts manager is seen as someone who enables art to happen (ibid.).

Creative industries refers to the creative and cultural economy comprising of, but not limited to, advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film, music, performing arts, publishing, research & development, software, toys and games, television, radio and video games (Howkins 88).

Alumni and *graduate* refers to the group of students who have successfully completed and graduated from the arts management course in LASALLE from the period of 2005 to 2012. For the purposes of this study and the limitations inherent in the research, it will be confined to a seven-year period only.

1.6 Significance and limitations of study

This study will serve as a working database and resource for LASALLE to measure the success of the arts management course it offers. It will also provide valuable information about its graduates and whether there are any changes to be meted out in the syllabus or modules offered by LASALLE. It will also serve as a foundation for further research into the success of the arts management courses offered by NAFA and NP. Data collected from this study can also be used to tailor and fine-tune any future courses in the field of arts management in other academic institutions in Singapore. Even though the arts management programme at LASALLE has been in existence for over a decade, it has not merited a single instance of academic research. This research aims to kick-start research into the arts management programme and perhaps it may continue further.

Despite the best efforts of this study, the researcher accepts that there are some limitations inherent in it. For example, due to the sheer breadth and scope of research constrained by time, this study will only collect data from LASALLE graduates in a seven-year period from 2005 to 2012. Also, this study will focus its data collection on a single tertiary institution – LASALLE – due to the nature of the arts management courses which are offered up to a degree level and because of limited access to records offered by other tertiary institutions like NAFA and NP.

This study will endeavour to provide the most accurate research data based on the specific qualitative and targeted quantitative methods which will be outlined. (See 3.1)

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

An understanding of arts management requires the basic understanding of its concepts and theories. This area of study goes beyond the academic syllabus taught in LASALLE or other institutions and deeper into the core functions of arts management within the arts industry in Singapore. Arts management education was seen as a burgeoning practice and questions were previously raised regarding what it was exactly was being managed. Ruth Bereson examines and evaluates the management of the arts as a practice and investigates the core functions of it (Bereson 27).

One of the main challenges of defining the proper scope of arts management is illustrated by Byrnes as ‘arts managers are not clearly identified as a work group’ when taking into consideration the population of employees in all aspects of the arts (Byrnes 39). Byrnes has also undertaken the task of examining the results of a study by Paul DiMaggio revealing that a limited number of managers had management or arts management degrees. DiMaggio reveals that more than 85 percent of the arts managers in theatres, museums, orchestras and arts associations said that they learned most of their skills from on-job training. The arts managers who were trained in university also responded to DiMaggio’s study saying that they were not adequately prepared or trained during their schooling.

As LASALLE is one of the institutions awarding degrees at a university level for arts management, this study has tremendous relevance to Singapore’s context. DiMaggio had already noticed this trend occurring in his study and LASALLE could do well to utilise the results and data to ensure that the same results do not occur within the academia of arts management. Carefully studying DiMaggio’s results could also reveal several options of enhancing and upgrading the arts management programme in LASALLE to avoid such results.

However, more than three decades have passed since that study was conducted revealing a significant gap in the literature since then. There have only been sporadic attempts to reveal whether arts management employees, specifically in Singapore, have received formal arts management education.

In the Occasional Paper for the University at Buffalo, Matt Hackler elaborates that the arts management graduate will face careers in what is known to be an increasingly complex and embattled field (Hackler 58). Hackler is of the opinion that despite the skills an arts management gains during his education, there might be some

insufficiency once the graduate enters the workforce. There is a growing need for the arts management graduate to learn a wide range of skills from different areas of management and not resign themselves to a certain criteria of management. He also notes that graduate education in arts management presented the most viable option to achieving fulfilling careers in the field itself. This places a certain importance in arts management education as many organisations have begun to demand a graduate degree even for entry level positions (Hackler 59).

2.2 Thematic Analysis

2.2.1 Private vs. Public Governance

There is a recurring theme in American literature regarding the private governance of the arts in its market. Arts managers in that sector rely on private ownership of venues and spaces with the added support of donors to support their ventures. There is a rabid sense of ownership associated with the arts. This relates to art managers having their identity passionately tied to their scope of work. For example, when the state threatened to abolish the NEA in 1981, a significant majority of the arts sector – including non-profit arts organisations, public arts agencies, academics involved in cultural policy – joined forces to protect the agency's existence (Cherbo, Stewart and Wyszomirski 11).

This system lends itself well from the borrowed *impresarial* leadership style of European arts managers from the nineteenth-century which has heavily influenced the American style of modern arts management. (Peterson 162).

In a compiled series of papers by City University, Deanna Petherbridge elaborates the arm's length principle of the United Kingdom (UK) system of arts management where she relates how the role of public funding bodies like the Arts Council has become less central to the arts community (Petherbridge 8). The UK system of arts governance is more public and features support from the state yet it does not directly make decisions concerning the sector. The Singapore system is heavily influenced by this as seen by the publications of the Renaissance City Plans which was first released in 2000. Although the NAC falls under the umbrella of the Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts (MICA), it has enjoyed a fair degree of autonomy in the sector.

This is evident in the nomination of its own 'arts' Nominated Member of Parliament (NMP) with then-Co-director at The Substation, Audrey Wong Wai Yen in July 2009 and the administration of premier

performing arts venue Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay handled by a non-profit public company limited by guarantee, The Esplanade Co Ltd. Although it is not a government body, it does report to a state Sector Administrator, the MICA Charity Unit (MCU) which falls under the purview of MICA itself (The Esplanade Co Ltd 10). The Australian identity of arts management also follows closely to the UK principles explained above as shown in an Australian study (Radbourne and Fraser 5). It reiterates the government creates the policies yet the administration of said policies is left to individual management entities like the Australian Elizabethan Theatre Trust.

Cowen has strong feelings about the arts managers, the government and its arts policies:

These individuals (arts managers) want their government to make a statement that the arts are about more than simply money and about more than mere contractual agreements. They want the arts to be viewed as a vital part of a national or regional heritage, and one that receives official recognition from the government as such. Recognition of this kind requires government financial support and government arts programs (Cowen 26).

The government has stressed the need for cultural vitality (TodayOnline) in the constantly changing socio-economic landscape of Singapore. Its early policy to “promote widespread interest and excellence in pursuit of the arts” (Advisory Council on Culture and the Arts 1) was further re-administered in the Renaissance City Plans (Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts 14) and the Report of the Arts and Culture Strategic Review (ACSR) which promises to strengthen the curricula and profiles of NAFA and LASALLE (Ministry of Culture, Communication and Youth 74).

The Report of the Committee to Upgrade Lasalle & Nafa outlined several initiatives to streamline courses in LASALLE by optimising resources and positioning it as an autonomous arts institution with a dedicated level of government funding. However, it acknowledged a huge gap that both LASALLE and NAFA do not possess the proper standards acceptable within the Singapore education framework.

This fact remains true even till the present day as graduates face certain resistance when applying for employment in the Singapore civil service as well as statutory boards within the Singapore government. Truly, some aspects of the Report have been successful as LASALLE has grown to be a reputable arts institution in Singapore and currently has the accreditation of Goldsmiths College, University of

London. This is an encouraging factor in the continuous effort to improve the standings of LASALLE among the other degree awarding institutions in Singapore.

2.2.2 Roles of an arts manager

The roles of an arts manager in the American system seem to be more intertwined where a single manager can coordinate a multitude of tasks and roles whether it is directly or indirectly related to his appointed position within the organisation. Chong explains that the United States of America (USA) has helped advance a nexus between business and the arts including business sponsorship and the art and culture as subjects of economic inquiry (Chong 3). Kotler and Scheff also agree that managing arts organisations has become much more complex as the arts managers have to ‘take on auxiliary activities such as operating retail stores, dining facilities, educational programs, real estate ventures, music recording contracts and membership tours’ (Kotler and Scheff 23).

The American arts manager is oft-times an arts practitioner himself while juggling his own responsibilities as an artist or venue owner. Franscogna Jr. and Hetherington outline this ‘juggling act’ by noting that the arts manager is the focal point of hundreds of decisions that must be made daily (Franscogna Jr and Hetherington 188).

Rothman and Derby also note that great management is about leading and developing people and managing tasks (Rothman and Derby 9). It is also noted that goals need to be set early so that it can address each person’s specific issues and may include career development goals (Rothman and Derby 138).

2.2.2 Job skills essential to an arts manager

Citing Hoving, Chong states that “a leading arts manager must characterise the contemporary balance of skills and competencies as a scholar, aesthete and connoisseur on one hand; fund-raiser, publicist, and diplomat on the other” (Chong, Arts Management 10). Purushothaman puts it beautifully about a team concept inherent in the scope of arts management:

An artistic director/festival director – supported by a team of curators/managers who have oversight of programming, marketing and administrating the event and its resources - often leads a festival taking responsibility for its overall aesthetic architecture. Working with a local

and international team of artists, patrons and specialists, this individual develops a visionary concept, which is realized through a performance-oriented set of activities that display sensitivity towards aesthetic and social experiences (Purushothaman 23).

Purushothaman is elaborating the various types of tasks which an arts manager can be expected to handle. It is therefore extremely pertinent that the arts manager is equipped with traditional management skills like marketing or accounting but also other skills like artist management and art history. This provides the arts manager with a palpable base of resources which can be drawn upon during employment at almost any organisation, event or festival, as related above. The arts manager must also possess a vision and definitive goal in mind when leading a team towards the development of a particular exhibition or event. This arts leadership quality must be inculcated during the term of study within an institution and further developed upon entry into the working world.

Radbourne and Fraser assert:

The most effective arts managers are those who combine a sensitivity to the arts and an administrative background. The increasingly corporate nature of arts organisations requires a manager who displays sophisticated business skills but not at the expense of a genuine appreciation of creativity in art and cultural practice (Radbourne and Fraser 168).

This assertion supports Purushothaman's notion as well. Arts organisations like the Singapore Arts Museum (SAM) are increasingly leaning towards a total corporatisation of their management structure. This exponentially increases the need for arts managers to bolster their knowledge of other management skills without sacrificing their innate ability to stay sensitive towards the arts.

In order for the arts manager to truly maximise the effectiveness of all the skills acquired throughout the educational and mentorship process, it is important not to allow the balance between arts-centric management and traditional management to tip over.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Rationalising Qualitative Orientation towards Research.

The sensory side of human experience is primary in the arts, or so it is believed. Plato himself regarded the senses as impediments to the achievement. Eisner mentions that what one needs to research in a situation must be appropriate for the circumstances one addresses and the aims one attempts to achieve (Eisner 4). The root of this study is the highly individualised experiences of the arts management graduates from LASALLE and the consequential result of their formal arts management education. As such, it was pertinent to approach each interviewee with a set of questions which would elucidate their experiences and career journeys.

Seidman states that at the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of the interviewee and the meaning they make of that experience (Seidman 9). The method of qualitative research holds true to the very basic modes of inquiry. The interviews seek to recount narratives of experiences with each interviewee to bolster the collection of data. Successful data management depends on a sound organisation that has mapped out in advance all the data preparation (Stouthamer-Loeber 98).

Candidates were selected through the directory listing of arts management graduates provided by LASALLE. A request was made with the School of Arts Management and the non-confidential contact details of graduates were provided. A pool of potential candidates was created and a sample size of 30 was selected to encompass the years from 2005 to 2012. The sample size of 30 graduates was selected as a balance between accuracy of data and inherent time constraints of this study. 33 graduates responded and their answers recorded.

The primary mode of interviews was conducted via e-mail to streamline the data collection process. Interviewees were also selected based on their year of graduation to clearly gather data based on the change in accreditation from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) to the Open University in 2008 and Goldsmith College in 2012 onwards. Although no Goldsmiths graduates can be sampled because the pioneer batch will only graduate in 2013, the 2012 graduates managed to experience a renewed Goldsmith-accredited syllabus in LASALLE for approximately one year.

Seven graduates from the sample size were selected for face-to-face interviews as they were interested in providing answers with more candour and decided to illustrate their career paths further than the questions posed via e-mail. This was also done to bolster the set of e-mail interviews already done with the sample size.

The interview questions were designed based on the aims and objectives of this study and also in consideration of the research questions posed (see 1.4). They were also designed to be threaded together so as to develop a well-rounded set of questions which would avoid being overly formal yet professional.

This method was chosen to identify the types of jobs arts management graduates take on and their main reasons for doing so. The questions posed also illustrate the factors of the graduates who have left the arts industry for other professions. Knowles and Cole mention that as a framework for inquiry, arts-based research is sufficiently fluid and flexible to serve either as a methodological enhancement to other research approaches or as a stand-alone qualitative methodology (Knowles and Cole 60).

Confidentiality of each interview is maintained by a strict code of ethics outlined in the Participation & Confidentiality Form attached to the e-mail sent to the interviewee. The interviewee is also informed that any answers given will be kept strictly confidential and used only for the purposes of research in this study. They are also informed that this study may be published and used as reference for future research. Consent is given through appending their signature on the said form or in a written reply in the e-mail sent to them should they be unable to physically append their signature on the form.

3.2 Substantiating Quantitative Research

Quantitative data is also used to a certain extent in this study to bolster the qualitative research done. Data acquired from the LASALLE database of graduates will show the statistics necessary to outline the growth of the arts management course.

The number of graduates for each year corresponding to the different accreditation will be compared and contrasted with their career paths. The answers will also be collated and categorised to create a more comprehensive analysis of graduate career paths.

A clear graphical analysis will also illustrate the data collected and provide a concise view of its overall impact on this study. This is to ensure accurate and comprehensive information dissemination during research.

3.3 Limitations to Research Methodology

Research Ethics

Chong has the opinion that no research is truly 'neutral' (Chong, Arts Management 16). As such, any study conducted is bound to gear itself towards a certain result. However, the researcher has to maintain a sense of decorum and an ethical collection of data. To ensure absolute confidentiality, interviewees who chose to remain anonymous are not referred by their real identities at any point in the research.

Every interviewee has also submitted consent either via e-mail or a signed consent form. This ensures that they are fully aware of their responses being recorded for this paper and approves it for publication. The researcher also notes to fully record and transcribe every interview ad verbatim without any edits or unwarranted deletions. This is to ensure the fullest accuracy when compiling the raw data needed for further analysis.

Conflict of Research Interests

The research also encountered some degree of conflict within the interests seeing that the researcher is currently a student of the arts management programme in LASALLE. This research has been structured to remain completely neutral insofar as to structure the interviews with non-leading questions so as not to pry answers from interviewees.

The initial questions and follow-ups were reactionary but followed a semi-structured form of interviewing. Interviewees were always aware of the intent of this research and were given the opportunity to review their quotes in order to maintain accuracy.

Reluctance of Respondents

This research also had to contend with the general reluctance of the respondents due to the sensitive nature of research and prying questions regarding their career development. It was observed that a large number of interviewees were initially uncomfortable about relaying their negative experiences in LASALLE to the researcher but finally disclosed information after reassurances that this was purely a neutral research paper. Some degree of persuasion and subtle coaxing had to also be employed to ensure that the interviewees actually turned up for the interview and responded to the emails sent.

4. Analysis of Findings

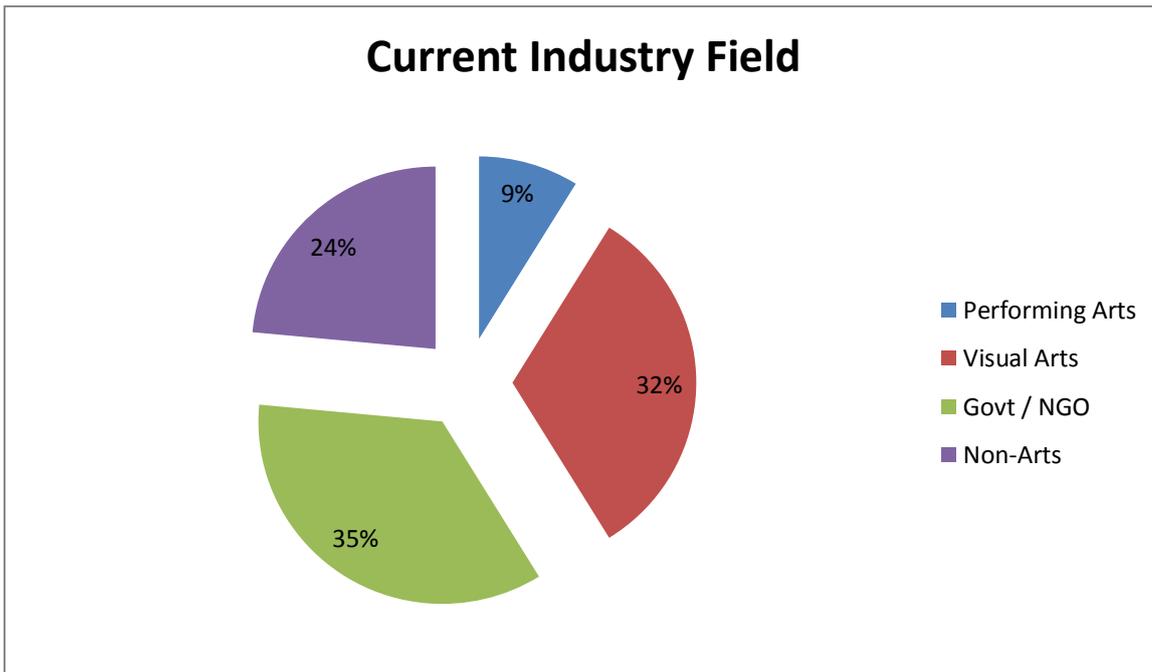


Fig. 1 This chart displays the current industry the graduate is employed in.

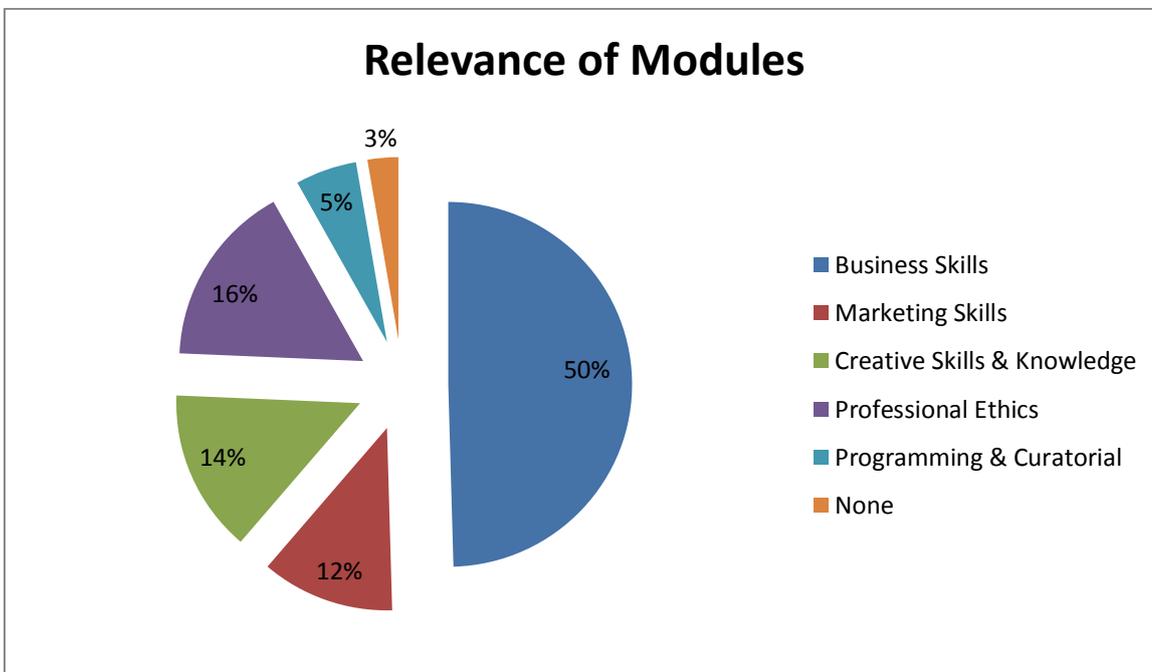


Fig. 2 This chart displays which modules were deemed relevant to the graduate.

Career Development

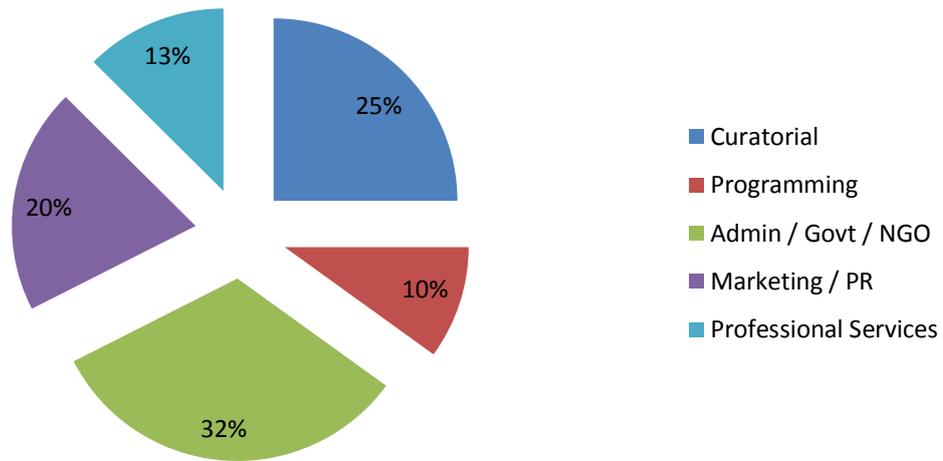


Fig. 3 This chart shows the types of jobs held since graduation.

General Attitude

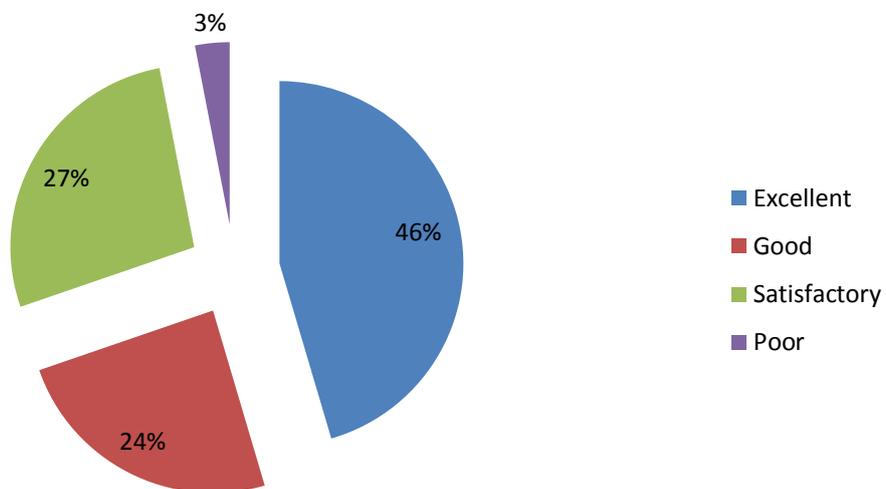


Fig. 4 This chart displays the level of satisfaction graduates felt towards their arts management education in LASALLE.

4.1 Introduction

A thorough analysis of the findings collected over the course of this research will be done in this chapter. Systematic observations were conducted during the interviews and empirical data was collected to ensure accuracy of observations. Candidates for interview were also carefully selected to provide sufficient feedback across different batches.

In selecting the candidates to be interviewed, qualitative research necessitates the emphasis of relevant sampled cases to the research topic rather than their representativeness, since the purpose of sampling is to collect specific cases that can clarify and deepen understanding (Flick 33). At a micro level, the candidates for interview were generally warm and developed a casual friendship with the researcher through the constant communication in the course of confirming the interview. At a macro level, all the interviewees had a unique attachment to LASALLE as their alma mater and a place where they grew into a mature, thinking student. This ultimately led to their exploration and foray into the working world. Bravo and Whitely note that a good student should always take advantage of every opportunity on the job as well as those that surface beyond the office walls (Bravo and Whitely 135).

This research is also by no means exhaustive and has adapted to extenuating circumstances pertaining to time and resources. The raw data gathered has been analysed and can be consumed, keeping in mind that one cannot fully comprehend the intangible nature of art, and experiencing it is never completely exhausted. Bereson adds that the judgement of art itself cannot be final (Bereson, *Understanding Cultural Diplomacy* 13).

The various shortcomings and successes of the arts management programme will be addressed by extracting from the interviews conducted and cross-referencing with the current arts management curricula. It will analyse how the programme has developed and managed to overcome different issues raised in the sphere of LASALLE administration.

Several recurring themes have been developed from the interviews as points raised repeatedly by the interviewees. These themes will be discussed below.

4.2 Positive and Negative Outcomes of the Curriculum

4.2.1 Internship and job placement

Bravo and Whitely emphasise the importance of networking as one should take the opportunity to get to know as many people as it will reap more benefits in the future (Bravo and Whitely 139). Patrick sums up that the arts management programme in LASALLE does not have a competitive alumni association that promotes networking as compared to other universities like the National University of Singapore (NUS), Nanyang Technological University (NTU) or the Singapore Management University (SMU). Piay narrates the following:

I feel the support was lacking. Even in terms of finding jobs for graduates, after they graduate. I'm not trying to demoralise you or anything. I have not noticed them doing enough to get their students headhunted... Networks must be forged. They should help to forge networks between students and prospective employers (Piay 9).

Johari also supports this notion:

LASALLE doesn't do that (industry placement). If you realise for arts management, we had to look for internship on our own. We had a letter from the school but it wasn't the school that placed us (Johari 4).

Even though respondents like Johari felt that the school should intervene and provide contacts and communications for internship placement, others felt that arts managers, including those in training, should learn to develop independent initiative. Chong characterises the arts manager as a personal leader and an architect of organisational change who has the intellectual and creative capacity (Chong, Arts Management 10). The arts manager is expected to be independently confident with his skills to seek out opportunities. Hafiz agrees that he acquired the strong independence from the programme and said that arts management in LASALLE merely opened doors for him (Hafiz 1). This correlates what Schmiel asserts about arts managers maturing enormously and developing beneficial ideas for themselves when they are "on the job" (Schmiel).

At present, LASALLE publishes a weekly e-bulletin which is mailed to all students and staff. Industry practitioners and organisations who wish to recruit interns or permanent staff regularly send their

advertisements to the administrative staff who then inserts it into the e-bulletin. However, most of the placements introduced by LASALLE are geared towards design and media industries.

Art Internship is a compulsory module in the final year of the arts management programme. Students are expected to source for internships independently but may approach the module supervisor if they encounter difficulties doing so. Students have successfully been placed at companies like the Singapore Art Museum and the Asian Civilisations Museum with the direct help of LASALLE. Byrnes notes that the student looks upon an internship as an investment in themselves and as a good way to further their education (Byrnes 330).

Drucker notes that it is important to know your tasks fully and how you can add value to the organisation by working extensively with a company (Drucker 46). Learning does not necessarily need to be confined within the four walls of the classroom. A student can learn different tasks and skills just as effectively with hands-on approaches being included within the academic syllabus.

Although a degree of independence is healthy for the growth of an individual (Bowlby 587), Rothman and Derby assert that coaching increase capability and effectiveness within an organisation (Rothman and Derby 124). Radbourne and Fraser are also of the opinion that the arts manager must show initiative in recognising opportunities (Radbourne and Fraser 110). Von Stegmann agrees to this 'hands on approach' experienced in the LASALLE arts management programme and acknowledges its success (von Stegmann 3).

4.3 Curriculum

Structure of Programme

Parkes and Harris assert the importance of the syllabus and that it should delineate the responsibilities of the students and of the instructor (Parkes and Harris 1). Feedback from the respondents takes two views. Strada found that a comprehensive course syllabus provides detailed snapshots of what actually transpires beyond the four walls of the college (Strada 205). With its collaboration and huge pool of arts practitioners coming in as part-time or guest lecturers, the curriculum taps on current industrial knowledge as well as its networks. Teo asserts that the arts management programme in LASALLE subscribes to this theory as the structure is clear and covers a lot of things (Teo 7).

However, Chew criticises the arts management programme at LASALLE for not being rigorous enough in comparison to his peers studying in NUS and NTU and that it was a bit easy to get grades (Chew 6).

Hafiz agrees:

What they gave was just, appetizers. That is good enough but that didn't happen across the board. Across all the staff. I just decided from whatever scraps I got, I still needed to go out and find out for myself... (Hafiz 2).

This is a recurring theme with the graduates surveyed who felt that the arts management programme was not focused (Neo 2) or strengthened with the correct modules needed (Cathy 2)¹ to produce a competent manager in competition with other local universities like NUS or NTU (Piay 9). Tammy² also stated that it was not in-depth enough (Tammy) thus making her unsure of her career goals. Sarah³ pointed out that employers would rather have someone who already knows 'how to swim' instead of someone who is 'learning how to swim' (Sarah 2). Sim agrees that the programme needs to be more in-depth (Sim 2) but feels that she was equipped with the essential skills for an arts manager. This can be observed as a slight success of the arts management curriculum and a trade-off between focusing on a few specific modules than widening the scope of modules taught to the student body.

Byrnes theorises that an arts manager should be trained to serve the needs of his or her particular discipline (Byrnes 36). Byrnes is of the opinion that an arts manager should be a little more focused on a specific specialisation but also be well-equipped to deal with different needs of the industry.

Bereson, however, questions how to properly structure arts management due to its unique nature and whether it can be likened to the "administration of a sugar coated pill, which would slide down the collective throat of society and create a Mary Poppins feel good effect on the general population" (Bereson, *Why Manage the Arts?* 27).

This underlying theme deemed as a flaw by the graduates lead some to designate their feelings towards the arts management programme in LASALLE as being "short-changed" (Hafiz 2). Some felt that the quality of their education was lacking (Cathy 2) or simply mediocre (Chan 3) and "so-so" (C. Ng 2). Others acknowledged certain faults (Mawani 3) but agreed that most of the modules taught were "very basic stuff"

¹ Cathy is a pseudonym for a graduate who wishes to remain anonymous.

² Tammy is a pseudonym for a graduate who wishes to remain anonymous.

³ Sarah wishes for her surname to be excluded.

(Haridas 3). Johari strongly felt that the LASALLE administration was at fault and should be changed (Johari 10). She feels:

It doesn't make sense at all... What's the point? Sometimes you think that LASALLE administrator needs a change instead (Johari).

Neo feels that the arts management programme “could have done better” and contained “a lot of touch-and-go” modules (Neo 3).

At present, every module is usually schedule under a seven-week syllabus with a final assignment or examination slated at the end to assess developments. There are one or two classes per week for each module which may or may not lead up to a further continuation of the same modules in the second and third year of study in the BA (Hons) Arts Management programme. This could be one reason to explain the respondents' feedback on the lack of depth of the curriculum.

However, Arman states that arts management graduates from LASALLE undergo rigorous training and are primed to work in a diversity of fields (Arman 2). Ng also agrees her education in the programme was immensely useful to her professional career (E. Ng 3). David asserts that being in the arts management programme opened her mind and that it is known for moulding individuals who are confident of their skills (David 3).

Recognition & Validation

Graduates were also quite concerned regarding the recognition and validation of their LASALLE qualifications. A few reported having difficulty entering statutory boards within the government (Piay 5) and also the private sector (Johari 3). An arts management degree also has difficulty holding fort against more ‘traditional’ art degrees like Art History or Arts Education in Germany (von Stegmann 2). Arman acknowledged that a postgraduate education was needed to bolster the foundational education gained in the arts management programme (Arman 2). It is also observed by Teo that even NAC does not consider the LASALLE degree as “first choice” (Teo 5).

Despite the need for “good” students to cope with major social and policy shifts (H. L. Lee 234), this is not inherent in the current arts policy adopted by Singapore since it was designed to develop cultural institutions,

companies and offerings (Ministry of Culture, Communication and Youth 60). Verily, LASALLE College of the Arts is classified as an arts institution which falls under this category (LASALLE).

Bereson notes that Singapore is in great need of a serious Arts Research Centre which should be distinct from government and the arts community, “but essential that each contributes to it” (Bereson, *The Way Forward* 57). This mentions the need for some sort of cohesive agreement with the government and recognition of arts degrees but places the solution on the creation of an entirely new institution instead of bolstering current ones.

This ties in with Chong’s question about the definition of arts management in today’s context – a sub-discipline within MBA studies with attention to application or as a zone of contact for various intellectual lines of analysis to be pursued (Chong, *Arts Management* 12). Currently, the Singapore government website does not list LASALLE College of the Arts as one of the recognised universities for civil service employment and graduates may face difficulties when attempting to apply for jobs using the official website (Prime Minister's Office Singapore). Former NMP Audrey Wong re-ignited the call for support of arts institutions and its programmes in a 2010 session in Parliament:

I urge the Ministry to support our local arts colleges, such as LASALLE, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and School of Art, Design and Media in NTU, to become top educational institutions that will attract talents from Singapore and around the world, including students from our very own School of the Arts... Support for arts colleges would include making funds available for research by faculty. Research funds could be offered to promising students, like research or lecturer-student collaborations. After all, the production and dissemination of knowledge is important in a knowledge-based economy (Wong).

Despite several other highlights, this issue still leads to some sort of processing and validation confusion within the human resource departments of statutory boards (Piay 4) and results in the graduate producing their portfolio instead to gain approval for an interview (Teo 5).

Theory & Practical Difference

Teo believes that the arts management programme in LASALLE offers theory-based modules which are effective (Teo 7) but some feel that it is simply branding (Cathy 3) or was rendered completely irrelevant upon gaining employment (Johari 7). Hadi hopes that the arts management programme will grow and “become more high profile” (Hadi 2) so that the graduates are better appreciated. Sim stressed that the skills picked up were essential (Sim 4) for someone pursuing a career in arts management.

Based on observational research within the faculty, the arts management programme at LASALLE was developed through a series of dialogues with industry practitioners who then assisted in moulding the programme with the administrative staff. The modules were shaped to enable the graduates to be well-equipped with managerial skills so that they would have a palpable skillset if they were to venture out of the arts scene.

As such, this led to a dilution of more arts management-specific modules like studies on the arts policies of Singapore and contextual studies within a historical timeline. However, through constant feedback, this scheme is being tailored to recognise the different needs of the industry.

Comparison with NUS, NTU and SMU

Interviews with graduates found that some of them feel that employers are constantly comparing them with other universities (Johari 3) in a negative light and routinely consider the arts management programme in LASALLE to be outperformed by other local universities. Piay admits that most employees in the National Heritage Board (Piay 3) possess qualifications from NUS, NTU or SMU. Some even hold degrees from overseas universities.

The LASALLE graduate is faced with intense competition with other local university graduates who majored in art or social sciences. Due to different aspects of business inherent in arts management, the MBA graduate is also considered competition (Neo 4). This is due to the fact that the arts management programme in LASALLE has diversified and diluted itself to include major core modules of traditional management courses thereby inviting more competition from graduates of those courses.

This highly competitive posture is adopted by most government institutions and holds fast as the policy for its statutory boards as well (Hafiz 5).

Arts education has been gaining traction in all levels of education and the numbers for undergraduate and postgraduate courses are promising (Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts 39). It has been steadily increasing over the years, showing a marked improvement over its initial stages.

The competition between local universities with the LASALLE arts management graduate exists in tandem with the progressive and evolutionary academic system of the programme. As it become less focused, the variety of modules taught in the programme immediately make it within the same competitive league as other graduates who have specialised in a particular module or area of study. This is particularly evident with the managerial and business aspects of the arts management programme.

i-AM Festival

In the second year of study, the LASALLE arts management programme organises a festival for the arts which is now called the i-AM Festival. It is held in conjunction with the year's LASALLE Show which is essentially a showcase for each of the school's faculties. Months of preparation culminate in a performance or exhibition which will be assessed by the lecturers and the group's supervisor.

This festival is also a source of controversy for the graduates. Some felt that it was nonsense (Johari 7) and caused them to forsake other academic responsibilities due to the long hours and preparations made in school. Others felt that it was an extremely wholesome (Amrin 3) and fruitful experience (Piay 4) as a project manager.

It is observed that the discontent arises from the minimal help received from the school and the discord sewn during arguments or disagreements during discussions or group meetings. This may be directly tied to the quality of assistance given by each group's supervisor and the overall module supervisor.

4.4 Support System

Pedagogy

Graduates reported that they received palpable support from their lecturers due to the close-knit nature of their cohort (Amrin 2). They cited several lecturers who remained personal friends with them even after completing the education at LASALLE (Haridas 7). Here there exists a conflict of what students want. Some held certain disdain for the mentorship aspect of the lecturers (Cathy 3). Graduates cited the need for effective mentorship but also held some reluctance regarding the type of mentorship offered. They preferred guidance in the form

of advice and industry relevant talks but graduates like Cathy disliked the fact that her mentor constantly related her own experiences with the students. She maintains that it did nothing to neither motivate nor encourage her.

Overall, there was a general feeling of warmth (Mulani 2) and attachment to passionate lecturers who enveloped them with a tight-knit bond (E. Ng 2).

It is evident that arts practitioners feel a deep sense of self-worth when their practice or work is graced by a prominent figure. Community arts events frequently request the presence of a public figure and the simple participation of one, such as Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, can be considered a resounding success (Heng) for the arts event.

This ties in to the effects of a close-knit bond developed with prominent figures in the academic institution such as LASALLE. Graduates who formed a strong pedagogical relationship with their lecturers had fonder memories of the programme and constantly seek the advice of their mentors.

Due to this close-knit relationship, they are able to forge networks (Amrin 5) which span a bigger sphere of influence within the arts community and manage to attain their objectives sooner.

Arts Practitioners

Research found that graduates were very satisfied regarding the inclusion of industry practitioners into their academic learning journey (Haridas 4). This enabled them to expand their horizons and develop networking capabilities as well as gain insights into contemporary issues (von Stegmann 2) which may have a direct impact on their learning experience. Guest lecturers are often invited into the classroom to give a talk or join the lecturer in a lesson or two so that the students may pose questions to acquire an entirely new perspective. Interactive talks and symposiums are also held within the LASALLE academic year and are free for all students to attend.

In line with this, Chong questioned the classical notion of management and the systematic, reflective processes inherent in it at the end of the twentieth century (Chong, *Re-readings in Arts Management* 290). Boas also cautions against professors of art being seduced by over-simplified theories (Boas 275).

It can be observed that most graduates felt that this was a significant part of their education and that this move can be considered a motivating factor of their arts management education. They are able to recall having a particularly interesting guest lecturer (Liu 1) invited into one of their classes. Graduates also feel that some of the lecturers were key industry players who were adept and extremely knowledgeable (Cortes 2) in their area.

‘Stepping Stone’

Graduates mentioned that they used their education in the arts management programme as a stepping stone (Hafiz 5) in their pursuit of knowledge. Others felt that it was not thorough enough (Cain 2) but this can be attributed to the fact that they did not have a clear direction of their goals during their initial years of education (Johari 4).

There seems to be a correlation between how determined and focused a graduate was during their first and early second years of the arts management programme to the utilisation of their education as a stepping stone for other ventures.

Those intent on furthering their education after LASALLE were left hungry for more knowledge and went on to pursue a Masters at other academic institutions. This is a double edged sword as some did feel very deprived of the learning experience they expected (Hafiz 7). Those who were quite unsure of what they wanted simply finished the programme feeling that they had a good time developing ties with other classmates (Salgadoe 2).

4.5 Individual Factors

Aptitude

Lee states that even simple tasks can nurture a fighting spirit and the will to win (K. Y. Lee, *The Singapore Story* 32). This research has shown that the individual aptitude of the arts management graduate played an important and defining role in their success and general satisfaction of the programme. Graduates who seized opportunities even during their first year of study acquired good jobs upon graduation (Piay 7) but not all did this.

The importance of securing internships from the initial years through to graduation cannot be overstated. At present, there are no modules on internships during the first year. Johari felt that internships should start

earlier and not during the crucial final year of the programme (Johari 6). On the contrary, Neo feels that only personal aptitude plays an important part in securing employment (Neo 2).

Initiative

A significant amount of initiative was observed with graduates from the arts management programme. Some sought advice from lecturers in different faculties to “bounce off their knowledge” (Hafiz 6) while others were already interning with reputable arts organisations even in the first year (Amrin 2).

This factor of personal initiative directly affected their rate of employability and perceived success after graduation. The knowledge gained after their early internships stacked with the learning journey in their remaining years in the programme. Further internships were also acquired which bolstered the graduates curriculum vitae (CV) and portfolio.

This amounted to a pedigree of skills to present to a future employer which showed the palpable working experience of the graduate despite being fresh out of the arts management programme.

4.6 By –product of the programme

CV & Portfolio

Research reveals that a number of graduates approached employers with a substantial portfolio due to their experiences in the arts management programme. This is inherent to their own aptitude, initiative and strong mentorship by the lecturers.

Graduates who applied for jobs using their portfolio were accepted into statutory boards (Hafiz 3) and held good positions within the company (Piay 6). They considered their experience at LASALLE to be fruitful due to the fact that despite the shortcomings, they were able to embark on a career of their choosing fairly quickly after graduation.

The arts management programme was found to produce graduates who sought after opportunities diligently and pounced on any lucrative job vacancy (Amrin 4) which in turn produced successful results in terms of career objectives.

Graduates also show a form of artistic integrity with respect to management ethics, such as a display of loyalty to their initial art field of specialisation and a pro-active approach in learning other specialisations. Richards notes that this requires commitment to some standard of excellence other than public applause (Richards 221). This is an interesting by-product of the arts management programme which seems to recur across many batches of graduates.

Jack of All Trades

Another by-product is the ability for the graduate to adapt to different environments and situations. Haridas mentioned that the programme teaches what is directly relevant in the gallery business (Haridas 6) where it is a must be a jack of all trades. The arts management graduate quickly becomes extremely versatile and able to jump into any arts genre or practice (Johari 7) based on their confidence level.

This is due to the fact that there is a wide spread of modules being taught from the first year through to the final year. The administration felt that arts management should evolve with the current needs of the industry and that an arts manager must possess skills which enable them to compete with other managers from more traditional programmes.

While this decision may prove controversial due to the dilution of certain specialised modules, it has allowed graduates from the programme to even leave the arts industry for an entirely different industry without feeling compromised due to their education at LASALLE.

4.7 Others

Disillusionment of Graduates

A worrying result seen in research shows a large number of disillusioned graduates. The main causes of their disillusionment can be attributed to a poor pedagogical experience in the programme (Cathy 3), weak relationships with classmates (Johari 5), disappointment with LASALLE as an academic institution (Piay 10) and other isolated factors.

This is disconcerting pattern is seen in almost all graduates. Many graduates related anecdotes regarding the negative experiences and “many” shortcomings (Mawani 3) of the programme.

Facilities were regarded as sufficient for other more traditional faculties like fine arts or design but insufficient for arts management (Piay 10). There was a cited lack of classrooms and benches for study groups.

Even generally satisfied graduates considered the communication between students and LASALLE administration as being poor (von Stegmann 4). Some graduates questioned the credibility of their grades due to the fact that despite the English language-intensive structure of the programme, students with almost no English language proficiency succeeded in getting satisfactory grades and even graduating together with the rest (Cathy 4).

This research showed that some graduates showed visible signs of clear disappointment and slightly suppressed discontent with the programme when relating their experiences with LASALLE and its arts management faculty.

Pay Scale of LASALLE Graduates vs. Others

Graduates reported having lower pay scale as compared to graduates from other universities (Johari 6). Some preferred to abandon their dreams of working in a theatre company and join more “stable” jobs in statutory boards (Teo 6) due to the low wage they were received despite many years of experience.

This wage disparity also caused a large number of graduates to leave the arts industry (Johari 8) and made them jaded of the situation. This is a striking pattern considering the relatively short time period which causes this phenomenon to occur. This research showed that a growing number of graduates almost immediately leave the arts industry upon discovering that the pay scale is lower than expected.

Although the arts industry has traditionally been a lesser paying industry than other professions like engineering or business management, this seems to be exacerbated by the fact that the graduate is a LASALLE arts management graduate.

Observations show that a LASALLE graduate will receive a lower pay than a polytechnic graduate if employed in an institution like NUS. This is another worrying trend considering that the LASALLE degree has international accreditation. The fact that a diploma graduate can receive a higher pay than a degree holder from LASALLE shows the lack of recognition or influence of the arts management programme, if not the industry as a whole.

Kotler and Scheff are of the opinion that arts organizations, no matter how successful artistically, typically operate under financial strain (Kotler and Scheff 11). This may very well be the major reason for the low pay scale expected of the arts in contemporary Singapore.

Discontinuity Over the Years

Due to the evolutionary nature of the arts management programme in LASALLE, graduates reported a sense of discontinuity in their modules. This is a direct result of modules being reshaped each year to cater to the different needs of the industry.

This effect can also be attributed to the fact that decisions made by the administration are not consulted with the students to allow for a feedback process to be initiated.

Graduates reported a lack of defined structure within the programme (Piay 10) which resulted in arts management being a ‘forgotten child’ sandwiched in between other faculties. There was a nagging sense of being neglected vis-à-vis the more traditional arts faculties like fine arts or design. This resonated with most of the graduates and they were disappointed that arts management was not leading a faculty on its own.

At present, the School of Arts Management has fallen under the umbrella of the Faculty for the Creative Industries. Newly recruited dean Dr. Ruth Bereson leads the faculty together with a pool of lecturers. Previously, the School of Arts Management was grouped under the umbrella of the Faculty of Performing Arts which led to a lot of confusion among graduates.

4.8 Extrinsic & Intrinsic Motivations

There are many factors directly or indirectly contributing to the results of this research but the more important points have been highlighted and categorised above.

This research gathered responses from the graduates through both e-mail interviews and also face to face interviews. The graduates were prompted to be candid and casual during interviews and be as truthful as possible in light of research ethics.

All the graduates complied and henceforth, the results tabulated are accurate and represent the best of the researcher’s ability to produce a complete overview of its data.

5. Conclusion & Recommendations

Juxtaposing this research with the original research questions reveals interesting results based on the feedback and responses received. The major findings reveal that arts management graduates from LASALLE are generally at ease with the fact that they possess qualifications from the institution.

However, there is a growing and widespread dissatisfaction regarding the academic structure and administration of LASALLE. The cited reasons include a disconnect between the pedagogy and student body, lacklustre support, poor inter-faculty communication, and insufficient resources dedicated to the demands and needs of the arts management faculty.

This research also found that graduates were pro-active and took initiatives to achieve their desired goals and often took extra steps to acquire knowledge from a broad palate of sources including other faculty members and external institutions. The graduates were often confident with their abilities and sought out avenues to expand their base of knowledge to cover the different types and genres of art.

They did not resign themselves to their circumstances nor did they allow any challenges to impede their progress into their current careers.

Graduates voiced certain displeasures at alumni relations between the arts management faculty and LASALLE itself but stopped short of specifically naming any individuals. They were also extremely fond of certain lecturers and continued to maintain a friendly relationship with some of the academic staff till the present day.

Contributing Factors for Research

This research was initiated after it was found that there was little documentation and statistical observation conducted within the arts management programme of LASALLE and arts management in Singapore as a whole. This gaping vacuum of research was quite simply an opportune moment for the research to delve into and after confirming the lack of statistical data with the administration of LASALLE; it was decided to pursue the study at length.

Despite being in existence for over a decade, the arts management programme in LASALLE did not have any significant data to support its success or relevance within the Singapore context. The mere employment listing of graduates which was rarely updated did not provide substantial information for current and prospective

students of the arts management faculty to study. This research was undertaken to provide a springboard for future researchers to dovetail. The research conducted also aims to provide a database for LASALLE to utilise in the development and structure of the arts management programme.

Research Process

It is important to note that there is little local literature related to arts management specifically in this context. Therefore, a major part of the literature was gathered from local news articles and international journals as well as different tomes related to arts management in countries like the US and the UK. However, the research was easily relatable to the systems from other countries as Singapore possesses a system which borrows heavily from the structures of the US and UK.

Extensive research was conducted with the graduates via e-mail interviews and also face-to-face interviews. The e-mail interviews were sent to graduates from different batches and several were selected for face-to-face interviews. The researcher structured email interviews similarly to the face-to-face interviews but of course, the latter yielded a more casual and reactionary line of questioning due to the nature of the answers provided by the interviewees.

Synthesis of Results

The results of the research show that formal arts management education has successfully made the LASALLE graduate relevant, employable and successful in Singapore's arts industry. However, there are several factors which contribute to this resounding success.

Firstly, the employability and success of the graduate is almost wholly dependent on the personal aptitude. The formal arts management education merely provided an open door but the steps towards a successful embarkation of a career were left up to the graduate.

Opportunities had to be independently sought after without much prompting from LASALLE or its arts management faculty. Graduates would only attain their career goals if they had made an effort to steer towards it since their initial first year or at the very least, in the second year of study at LASALLE. Internships and mentorships played a vital role in securing employment at desired organisations upon graduation. For example, graduates who desired to work in SAM or within the corporate structure of the NAC would secure

internships with the respective boards during their second year of study in LASALLE thereby making their subsequent application for a full-time position much easier upon graduation.

Secondly, most of the graduates stated that their qualifications were not the clincher in securing the position. They had to produce a reputable CV or portfolio before being accepted for employment in many arts or non-arts organisations. This is observed to occur particularly with LASALLE graduates and not to other local university graduates. Graduates from the LASALLE arts management programme faced much resistance and difficulties within the human resource departments during the processing of their degree as many organisations, government and non-government, did not fully recognise the accreditation or validity of their certificate. This can also be attributed to the fact that LASALLE is not formally stated as an approved institution for degree holders on the official employment database for civil service. In contrast, NUS and NTU are clearly stated as approved academic institutions with corresponding pay scales provided.

This lack of recognition by the government allows individual statutory boards and other organisations to maintain a double standard when reviewing LASALLE degrees. A certain organisation might consider it to be less viable while another might allow it to be on par with other degree holders from universities like NUS or NTU.

A further examination of this phenomenon can be observed in future research as the reasons could be the change of accreditation from RMIT to Open University. The first batch of Goldsmiths graduates could not be surveyed as they will only be graduating in 2013. As such, the impacts measured are mainly extracted from graduates possessing RMIT and Open University degrees.

Thirdly, there seems to be a growing rift between the continuity of study between modules in first through the final year. At times, there is some intermittent discontinuity observed in the modules taught by LASALLE. This is due to a change of lecturers or a change in policies or syllabus. The designed syllabus for the year will undergo some shifts which at times, disrupt the learning journeys of students in LASALLE.

As such, some graduates report having difficulty understanding the holistic idea and overall direction of the module undertaken in the arts management programme at LASALLE. Some were left feeling hungry for more intellectual stimulation and sought postgraduate education to satiate their appetite for knowledge. The graduates reported that their arts management education whetted their appetite but did not fully satisfy it.

This is a common by-product of university education and it is a positive factor of the LASALLE graduates should they possess this attribute. However, it should be followed by measures to continue the education and not a stoppage. This concerted effort should be directed vis-à-vis the desired outcome or career goal.

Implications and Significance

This research will directly impact all past, present and prospective graduates of the LASALLE arts management programme. Since there has been no precursor or precedence in this field, this research will provide a substantial amount of data related to the LASALLE arts management programme.

It will also directly impact the academic and administrative structure of the LASALLE arts management programme. The pedagogical body will be able to study a macro and micro view of the successes and failures of the arts management programme in LASALLE and contrast it with initial and current methods.

There is also potential for this research to be used as a springboard for the LASALLE administration as a whole for other faculties and schools. This includes, but not limited to, institutions with arts management programmes like NAFA, NP, RP and SMU.

There is tremendous potential to be had in this research if directed with the proper amount of resources and efforts by coordination between faculties and institutions.

Plan of Action & Recommendations

LASALLE should improve communication between lecturers and student body in the arts management programme. This is to ensure that the students are constantly aware of the structure and direction of the arts management programme. It will also avoid unnecessary misunderstandings regarding the academic structure of the programme.

There is also a need to reduce the discontinuity in the programme. The academic syllabus should be a machine which continues to churn despite the loss of one or several gears. It should be wholly independent of any incidents, politics or untoward circumstances within the programme. The academic learning journey should be separate from such wanton disturbances and should continue unimpeded. This is to ensure maximum efficiency at delivering the knowledge from the lecturers to the student body. This can also be achieved by maintaining a larger pool of dedicated full-time lecturers instead of depending on adjunct faculty members

who do not have a long-term commitment with the school. Despite the versatility of having an adjunct faculty, the number of full-time lecturers must not pale in comparison with it since the students will more regularly come in contact with the full-time staff of the pedagogy.

LASALLE must bridge the growing gap between its recognition, validation and accreditation with various organisations and government bodies. This is to ensure that graduates from the arts management programme do not suffer difficulties when presenting their qualifications to the respective organisations. This is a potentially embarrassing phenomenon for the graduates and for the institution as a whole. LASALLE can communicate effectively with organisations like NHB or NUS to further encapsulate the validity of the programmes in its syllabus. It can emphasise the need for better cooperation between institutions to improve the overall wholesome education provided in all institutions with arts management programmes.

In turn, this will lead to a cooperative effort and improve the recognition of all the institutions involved. It is a win-win situation for LASALLE either way and should be implemented post-haste.

LASALLE must also recognise the disparity between the diversification of the arts management programme with its specialisation. By including a diverse amount of modules in the programme, the arts management graduates will face competition from a larger demographic of graduates. However, if the programme becomes too specialised, the graduate will suffer should there be a need to exit the arts management industry.

In short, there needs to be a delicate balance between the two directions the arts management programme is willing to take. The decision to steer the arts management programme's academic direction should be left entirely at the whims of whoever is holding the wheel at the moment, but as a cohesive agreement reached upon discussion and careful analysis of the circumstances. Whims and fancies based on spontaneous needs and demands of the arts industry cannot and do not warrant a sudden change or transformation of modules.

Instead, the arts management programme administration can allocate resources to study the demands and effects of different options. The results can be tabulated and presented via meetings and discussions to ascertain the best possible outcome for the academic learning journey of the student body and LASALLE as a whole.

Proposed Further Research Directions

This research began by seeking an elaboration for the empirically-defining features of arts management which differentiates it from other oft-studied traditional management programmes. To account for the emphasis on arts management meant that this research would be in pursuit of the findings based on feedback and interviews from graduates of the arts management programme in LASALLE.

The theoretical framework required analysis and careful observation from different batches. A significant number of graduates were also needed to provide the raw data. Chong's 'Arts Management', Radbourne and Fraser's 'Arts Management: A Practical Guide' and Byrnes' 'Management and the Arts' provided an extensive breadth of work to springboard this research.

The research found its direction by interviewing the graduates and studying the contrasting answers given. The arts management programme syllabus was also taken into account as well as the career development of the graduates. This provided ample substance for the research to move forward.

Future research directions could be geared to include more graduates from more batches to trace the development of the arts management programme since its inception. The LASALLE administration could also provide the raw, statistical data needed to juxtapose this with the qualitative data acquired during this research.

Researchers could also potentially uncover more interesting aspects of the arts management programme in LASALLE and discover its major strengths and weaknesses after tracing the evolution of its pedagogy.

Following the graduation of the arts management class of 2013, research could also be done to include the first batch of Goldsmiths-accredited LASALLE graduates. The effects of their new accreditation could be studied and its impacts could be successfully measured in contrast with this research.

This research started with the purest intent to substantiate the success and relevance of the arts management programme in LASALLE vis-à-vis the Singapore arts industry. The findings have been encouraging and this researcher has discovered many perspectives which would have otherwise been shrouded in unrecorded history. There is enormous potential for further research and it is hoped that this paper will serve as the foundation for a much more extensive, if not exhaustive, point of study.

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Appendix

A. List of Interviewees

	Name	Batch	Occupation	Organisation
1	Aisha Amrin	2005	Gallery Manager	Gajah Gallery
2	Benedict Tan	2006	Gallery Manager	Alliance Francaise de Singapour
3	Cathy*	2009	Childcare Teacher	
4	Charles Liu	2007	Art Insurance Consultant	AXA Insurance
5	Christiaan Ramesh Haridas	2007	Gallery Manager	Richard Koh Fine Art Pte Ltd
6	Clarissa Cortes	2010	Gallery Coordinator	FOST Pte Ltd
7	Cristabel Ng	2009	Projects Assistant	The Esplanade Co. Ltd.
8	Desmond Chew	2010	Programming Officer	The Esplanade Co. Ltd.
9	Dora Claire David	2012	Curatorial Assistant	Maya Gallery
10	Doris Teo	2005	Manager	National Arts Council
11	Edlyn Ng Xin Hui	2012	Community Outreach Executive	The Necessary Stage
12	Eileen Goh Seok Fang	2011	Project Executive	UBM Asia Trade Fairs Pte. Ltd.
13	Firdaus Arman	2007	Consultant	Ernst & Young Advisory Services
14	Jerusha Tan	2012	Projects Assistant	Singapore Drama Educators Association
15	Kruti Malwani	2012	Gallery Manager	Koi Art Gallery
16	Neo Chen Nee	2000	Manager	Ministry of Communications and Information
17	Nicole Ho	2012	Assistant Gallery Manager	Grey Projects
18	Olivia Cain	2010	Administrator	LASALLE College of the Arts
19	Patrick Putra Piay	2010	Project Manager	National Heritage Board
20	Richard Lim	2011	Executive	CapitaLand
21	Sarah*	2011	Centre Management Executive	The Writer's Place Pte Ltd
22	Sarah Sim	2010	Tour Manager	Riot! Records
23	Samrina Mulani	2012	Programming Executive	The Esplanade Co. Ltd.

24	Sharina Salim	2009	Senior Executive	LASALLE College of the Arts
25	Sharon Chan Ci'En	2009	Consultant	Ark Advisors
26	Siti Mariam Ayoob Baarffan	2010	Cabin Crew	Singapore Airlines
27	Sureni Salgadoe	2010	Executive	LASALLE College of the Arts
28	Syed Muhammad Hafiz	2009	Curator	The National Art Gallery Singapore
29	Tammy*	2011	Account Executive	
30	Tanja von Stegmann	2011	Project Assistant	Art & Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany, Germany.
31	Teresa Fu	2011	Manager	The TENG Company
32	Tiara Izzanty Johari	2011	Gallery Assistant	Equator Art Project
33	Yuni Hadi	2007	Partner	Objectifs Film

**denotes interviewee wishes to remain anonymous*

B. Sample List of Interview Questions

Basic Information

Please state your name, organisation, occupation.

Are you a Diploma or BA graduate?

Which batch/year did you graduate from LASALLE?

What is your industry field? Please select from the list below:

Arts Management – Theatre / Arts Management – Dance / Arts Management – Music / Arts Management – Visual Arts / Non-arts Industry / Arts Education / Arts-related Government or Non-Government Organisation

Tell me a little bit of yourself. What kind of person are you? What kind of arts do you enjoy? Has your passion increased or decreased over the years?

Interview Questions

1. Do you feel that your arts management education has come in handy in your career? How has it helped you?
2. Which are the skills that you have gained in your arts management education has come into practice in your career now? (You may choose more than one)
3. Academic Writing, Artist & Venue Management, Business Writing, Arts Marketing/Marketing & PR, Arts Law, Arts Policy, History & Contextual Studies, Financial Management & Accounting, Research Methodology, IT, Arts Writing, Business Planning & Ethics, Communication Studies, Visual Aesthetics.
4. Are/Were you employed in the non-arts sector? If no, skip question 4.
5. Was your degree a strong advantage and consideration in getting the job?
6. Can you tell me a little bit more about the different types of jobs that you have held since graduation?
7. Imagine you are the employer, do you think you would employ a LASALLE arts management? Please state reasons why you would or would not employ.
8. What were your initial career goals when you started education at LASALLE? Has it changed or have you achieved them?
9. How do you feel about your arts management education in LASALLE? Did you enjoy it? What's your general feeling towards it?