

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT USING THE ARTS:
AN INDICATIVE THEORETICAL MODEL FOR PRACTITIONERS

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This thesis proposes a comprehensive model for fostering youth empowerment through the arts. A viable working model is urgently needed since many current research reports appear to be case studies or articles describing specific programs and lacking the adequate methodology and documentation necessary to render these studies verifiable and replicable by other researchers. In addition, the absence of consensus regarding program objectives and outcomes hinders meaningful discourse among researchers and practitioners. By identifying knowledge gaps in research on arts-based approaches to youth empowerment, this thesis provides a valuable starting point for professionals as they develop desired objectives for their programs and design activities for achieving programmatic goals. The methodology of this thesis harnesses techniques of meta-analysis and grounded theory to construct a definition of youth empowerment that is currently operative in the field. Patterns observed in programs implemented to-date are noted, including art forms mobilized, duration and location of programs, participant demographics, and evaluation methods. References made to researchers' work and findings are synthesized to summarize and critique the theoretical framework currently in use. The proposed model detailed in this thesis is grounded in current practices, which are outlined and summarized in the study. It focuses on developing four attributes that enable the individual to empower him or herself: competence, consciousness, self-efficacy, and positive connections. Competence encompasses skills including communication, critical

thinking, and the ability to self-heal. Consciousness entails the motivation for community involvement and awareness of social justice issues, and self-efficacy is present in parallel with having a positive sense of identity. The resulting ongoing empowerment of self and others promotes the linkage of taking action and resilience. This study includes practical guidelines along with theoretical references to help practitioners design the most effective programs, contributing to demonstrable and lasting outcomes.

Keywords: Empowerment, Adolescents, Youth, Young Adults, Art, Visual Arts, Photography, Literature, Poetry, Film, Dance, Drama, Theater, Music, Story Telling, Popular Culture, Art Education, Art Therapy, Community Arts.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

When I was 16 years old, I had the opportunity to spend an academic year in the United States as a high school exchange student. That experience had a major impact on my development, as I returned home more independent and responsible, more aware of who I was and who I wanted to be, and with an increased sense of ownership of my actions. It also influenced my preference as a professional to work with and for adolescents, in facilitating their positive identity development and empowering them within their communities. Using culture, arts, and cultural heritage as working themes, I set up several programs with these objectives for Syrian youth. In one of those programs, young people in 11th grade through second year of university documented songs, tales, and proverbs, researched elements of their cultural heritage, and used photography to explore what culture meant to them. Along the way, they increased their confidence and developed and acquired skills of leadership, viewed their environment critically, conducted research, investigated sources of information, and came to value teamwork (Alkateb, 2013).

Through my graduate study program for a Master's degree at Indiana University, particularly after taking courses on research methods and adolescent development, and attempting to conceptualize the previously noted program as a case study, I realized that in setting its objectives, I had been part of an international trend in community arts, international development, and other programs that use the term *youth empowerment* loosely, do not measure its impact systemically, and do not implement evidence-based

programs. I also noted a scarcity of academic sources, even within the field of psychological development, on this topic.

As a result, I decided to undertake a research project that constitutes this thesis. Through this inquiry, I aim to propose a theoretical model of youth empowerment for use by practitioners in the fields of community arts and art education. Work in this area has existed for years and therefore, instead of re-inventing the wheel and in order to link theory to practices in the field, the proposed model is based on an analysis and synthesis of existing definitions and approaches to youth empowerment by academics and reflective practitioners in the community arts area, enhanced with the aid of literature and theory from psychology. It is hoped that this model will help compare, evaluate, and enhance programs, to ultimately reach more young people with higher quality interventions.

Background

Youth empowerment could include facilitating positive identity development, increasing self-esteem, and increasing the ability to make competent decisions, create and access knowledge, and set personal goals. Defined by Webster dictionary (in one of three definitions) as “promoting self-actualization or influence” (Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary, n.d.), it may also include increasing one’s ability to adapt, collaborate with and engage responsibly with others, be conscious of the surrounding world, and participate in political decision making. Youth empowerment programs are generally designed and employed by educators, civil society organizations, and policy makers to encourage and support youth to become more actively involved in their social, political,

and economic environments. They include community service and youth leadership programs, youth-led media production activities, arts-based programs, creating youth councils attached to the executive branch of a government, and initiatives that assure youth opportunities to participate in quota seats in parliament. Voice, social justice, change, autonomy, and resilience are buzz words in these increasingly popular programs. Target groups vary in terms of age, socio-economic status, and vulnerability, and while some programs are aimed at general populations and deem every member of a community as in need of empowerment, others specifically target vulnerable or at-risk populations such as cultural minority groups, juveniles, teenage mothers, or refugees.

Most academic literature about youth empowerment using the arts is in the form of case studies, program briefs, or reports that include inspiring stories and accounts of successful programs. Measurements and evaluations of program outcomes are lacking, and there is wide variance in specified empowerment goals with few developed theories regarding best purposes or ways of engaging youth toward these specific outcomes. Therefore, there is need for a comprehensive model of youth empowerment to facilitate better design and implementation of programs through exchanges of ideas, learning from others' successes and failures, and becoming more efficient in evaluating the impact of particular programs on both students and the communities served by these programs. If referenced, critiqued, and improved by fellow practitioners and academics, such a model might inform research and increase knowledge in this area.

This study aims at proposing a model for arts-based youth empowerment, after drawing a portrait of current definitions and synthesizing them with existing empowerment theories. It does so by conducting a thorough meta-analysis of recently

published journal articles on youth empowerment programs using the arts. These typically take place in or after school, and might include theater, music, mural creation, poetry, film production, and other art genres. The study addresses the following questions:

- How do reflective practitioners and academics in the field define empowerment?
- Upon what theory/ies (if any) do they rely in designing programs aimed at empowering adolescents?
- Whether the programs are part of formal or informal education, or are therapeutic ones?
- Which adolescent groups are targeted in these empowerment programs?
- What are the durations and locations of the programs?
- What research methods are used to assess programs?
- What limitations are stated in relation to program design or implementation?
- What role does art making or participation have in these programs?

Afterwards, findings are compared and contrasted with relevant literature from the field of psychological development and a theoretical arts-based model for youth empowerment is proposed.

Conceptual Framework

Academic literature in the field of youth empowerment using the arts is primarily presented through case studies. Two attempts at drawing a comprehensive model of arts-based youth empowerment were found; the first describes the use of arts in general and

the second proposes that social workers infuse hip-hop culture in their professional practice. In the first undertaking, Deborah Kronenberg (2007) struggles with the ambiguity of empowerment as a term in arts-based work, and sees this ambiguity as leading to differing and potentially non-efficient programs. She proposes an empowerment goal of cultivating mentally healthy adolescents and facilitating their transition into pro-active adults. She sets components of empowerment as: self-efficacy, which she highlights as more proactive than self-esteem; critical thinking; and socio-political consciousness.

Illustrating the components of her proposed empowerment model, which she labels as an approach to empowerment, Kronenberg refers to definitions from psychology and theory from Paolo Freire's and Augusto Boal's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and *Theater of the Oppressed*. However, while she illustrates her approach with examples from existing theater programs and proposes additions to improve them, she scantily justifies inclusion of the components of empowerment that she proposes, but does not explain why she thinks other ones are not appropriate for inclusion. Thus, Kronenberg's model highlights a need for a more complete one.

The second attempt at a comprehensive arts-based model of empowerment is described by Raphael Travis Jr. and Anne Deepak in their article "Empowerment in Context: Lessons from Hip-Hop Culture for Social Work Practice" (2011). Travis and Deepak introduce an "individual and community empowerment framework" addressed to social workers for use in prevention and intervention efforts that infuse hip-hop culture, noting that it could be most useful in assessment and in inclusion of risk factors, especially when it is harder to start formulating a plan with an individual, in addition to

providing a structure for practice and evaluation. The proposed framework's dimensions are self-esteem, resilience, growth, community, and change (Travis & Deepak, 2011, p. 211).

Travis and Deepak justify the dimensions' selection based on theory from psychological development, and a later follow-up study by Travis (2013) examines evidence from the field to support the value of the proposed framework. Travis and Deepak's article will be further investigated in this thesis; their work on youth empowerment and hip-hop culture is of great value for practitioners in other art genres. They also highlight that "attitudes and behaviors that feel empowering to an individual or community may be risky or pro-social, or contain elements of both" (Travis & Deepak, 2011, p. 219). This point connotes that certain art forms might simultaneously have supportive and inhibitive factors of positive youth development and, although there is no overarching attention to the varieties of art forms these might be, their attention to the use of hip-hop informs the conclusions of this study.

The lack of academic literature and models that may inform educators of goals, processes, and outcomes of arts-based youth empowerment programs renders this an important area of examination for art educators and community arts practitioners. In this thesis, I include a synthesis of academic literature about arts-based youth empowerment programs and propose a model of arts-based youth empowerment based in that literature in addition to relevant literature from psychology, notably Zimmerman's empowerment theory (1995) and Lerner and his co-researchers' positive youth development (Lerner, Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, Phelps, Gestsdottir, Naudeau, Jelicic, Alberts, Ma, Smith, Bobek, Richman-Raphael, Simpson, Christiansen & Von Eye, 2005).

Marc Zimmerman's highly cited empowerment model, which is not exclusive to adolescents (Zimmerman, 1995) includes intrapersonal, interactional, and behavioral components. He sees that psychological empowerment is not limited to self-perception of empowerment qualities but extends to one's relationship with the community and awareness of his or her sociopolitical environment. Richard Lerner's Positive Youth Development, which is increasingly popular with prevention programs related to at-risk youth, establishes five traits that characterize individuals who enjoy a healthy adolescence and a smooth transition into adulthood: Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring. These are referred to as the Five C's (Lerner et al., 2005), to which Lerner added a resulting sixth C later, "Contribution" (Lerner, 2004, p. 24).

This study is situated within the third wave of the scientific study of adolescence according to Lerner and Steinberg (2009), which comes in contrast with previous ones where adolescence was passively deemed a time of turmoil and the nature versus nature debate dominated. Recent studies emphasize the qualities adolescents have of plasticity, diversity, individual agency, and the capacity to influence their own development (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009); and ones noting the importance of both environmental and genetic influences are increasing.

Statement of the Problem

The academic literature in the field of youth empowerment using the arts is composed primarily of case studies with variations in defining the construct *empowerment* and programs' goals and implementation methods. A model of arts-based

youth empowerment, which consists of different variables and capitalizes on academic work done in this area in addition to theories from other fields, will help identify and prioritize goals across programs, serving as a cornerstone in verifying achievement of goals, measuring impact, facilitating comparison, learning from others' successes and failures, and enhancing quality of interventions. This study aims to construct a model of arts-based youth empowerment, first by learning how practitioners and academics in the field are using this concept, and second, by reviewing theory from other fields to identify limitations of the previous definition, address them, and develop a comprehensive and enhanced model. It is hoped that the proposed model will be critiqued and enhanced by other researchers in the field, and later serve in guiding field trials, program delivery in the non-profit sector, and policy formation.

Limitations of the Study

The model of arts-based youth empowerment to be proposed is to be grounded in practices from the fields of art education and community arts through conducting a meta-analysis of peer-reviewed academic journal articles about the subject and using grounded theory in the coding process. This is followed by reviewing related literature from the field of psychological development and synthesizing, comparing, and contrasting results to construct the model. Limitations and boundaries of this study pertain to the selection of literature for the meta-analysis, usage of meta-analysis and grounded theory research methods, and not dividing results by subgroups of adolescents based on age or by art genre.

In terms of selected literature for the meta-analysis, delimiters of this study include limiting the literature sample to published peer-reviewed journal articles archived by a national database. Articles unpublished at the time the sample was collated by the database or overlooked by the database will not be considered. Additionally, only articles that explicitly talk about empowerment will be included; ones that talk about similar outcomes for youth but give the goals or outcomes a different label will be excluded.

The ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) database was chosen to construct the sample because of its large size, inclusion of articles from a wide array of academic journals, high accessibility at academic institutions, and free availability, all of which facilitate follow-up studies. However, limiting the literature search for the meta-analysis to one search engine and not expanding it to articles referenced by initially identified ones results in missing journals and journal articles that were not deemed useful for inclusion in the ERIC database by its staff, and leads to the results of the meta-analysis being indicative, rather than comprehensive, of the field of youth empowerment through the arts.

One weakness of the meta-analysis approach is that it mixes good and bad studies. While this is mitigated by reviewing articles composing the sample for validity of conclusions and quality of research methods, the qualitative nature of the greatest majority of articles in the sample and the variation of accepted procedures to assess validity in qualitative work renders the construction of a weighing scale for reviewed articles difficult.

A weakness related to utilizing grounded theory is unintentional bias. In order to mitigate this, I drafted a preliminary conceptual model of youth empowerment using the

arts before starting the study. This model [see Appendix A], composed of intra-personal and interactional qualities, shall help me keep track of unintentional author biases during the analytical coding process. Before starting the analytic coding process, I also reviewed technical research from the field of psychological development, e.g. Zimmerman's empowerment theory (1995) and Lerner's positive youth development (Lerner et al., 2005) in order to increase the theoretical sensitivity of the coding process and clarify unrecognized assumptions of previously developed theory about the phenomenon under study, as advised by Strauss and Corbin (1990, pp. 49-50).

This study mixes results from literary arts, performing-arts, visual arts, audio-visual media, and cultural heritage approaches, all under the arts-based umbrella. This is deemed necessary at this stage of research in order to identify sought results and variables constituting the concept of youth empowerment for arts-based practitioners in general, capitalizing on the collective knowledge of different arts-based approaches. Due to the way the sample is constructed, the literature analysis includes programs that target adolescents directly and not whole communities. Accordingly, discussion of community-based approaches to youth empowerment may be limited within the meta-analysis but will be remedied in Chapter Six of the thesis.

Definitions of Key Terms

Youth Empowerment

A definition of youth empowerment using the arts will be proposed as a result of this study. It should be noted that literatures examined through the meta-analysis process are to explicitly talk about empowerment. The input of practitioners and academics

addressing similar work but not calling it empowerment is not included in this thesis due to the way of constructing the sample, but may be of equal importance.

Youth

Adolescence is the period of moving from childhood to adulthood and maturity, occupying roughly the second decade of life (Chinman & Linney, 1998) and marked by important biological, psychological, social, economic, and legal transitions. For the purposes of this study, adolescence is generally defined as ranging between 13-21 years old. Therefore, secondary and middle school students are included in the study. Also, the terms adolescence and youth are used interchangeably. The term *teenagers* is indicated by the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), a comprehensive online library of education research, as an outdated descriptor for youth, which was used between 1966 and 1980 and is now an archived term. This paper follows suit by not using teenager as an identifying term.

Art

For the purpose of this study and to make sure no relevant literature is missed, a wider definition of culture, encompassing the arts, is used, with reference to the *2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics* (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009). While the wider definition detailed here will be used to identify articles included in the literature sample for the meta-analysis, the range of arts actually used and art activities referred to by practitioners of arts-based youth empowerment will be specified later in the study based on the results of the review.

The UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics identifies six sectorial domains of culture, four transversal ones, and two related ones. The sectorial domains are cultural

and natural heritage, performance and celebration, visual arts and crafts, books and press, audio-visual and interactive media, and design and creative services. The domain *cultural and natural heritage* includes museums, archaeological and historical places, cultural landscapes, and natural heritage; *performance and celebration* includes the performing arts, music and festivals, and fairs and feasts; *visual arts and crafts* includes fine arts, photography, crafts, and commercial places of exhibit like art galleries; *books and press* includes books, newspapers and magazines, other printed materials, libraries, and book fairs; *audio-visual and interactive media* includes film and video, TV and radio, internet podcasting, video games, and cultural expressions related to the web; and *design and creative services* includes fashion, graphic, interior, and landscape design, and architectural and advertising services.

The four transversal cultural domains, measured across the sectorial ones, are identified by the Framework for Cultural Statistics as *intangible cultural heritage* (oral traditions and expressions, rituals, languages, and social practices), *archiving and preservation, education and training, and equipment and supporting materials* in the previous noted domains. The two domains related to culture, noted by the Framework as partially rather than purely cultural, which are not included in this study, are *tourism* and *sports and recreation*. For the purposes of this study, the six sectorial domains are used, in addition to the first transversal one (intangible cultural heritage). Out of the sectorial domains, all but natural heritage are included.

Summary

This study aims to propose a model of youth empowerment that is achieved through the arts. It grounds that proposal in current and recent practices, academic reflections, and referenced theory in the fields of community arts and art education, and enhances it with theory from the field of psychological development, particularly in the area of positive youth development. The meta-analysis aims to answer the questions of a) how academics and reflective practitioners in the fields of art education and community arts define youth empowerment, b) what theory they reference, c) whether the programs they describe are part of formal or informal education, or are therapeutic ones, d) what adolescent groups and subgroups they target, e) what methods they use to assess their programs and interventions, f) what limitations for further investigation they note, g) what art genres they use and how, and h) what the duration and location of the described programs are. The study uses the methods of meta-analysis and grounded theory to fulfill its objective. It is not expected that all reviewed articles within the meta-analysis will have answers to all the previous questions. However, the information obtained from the meta-analysis will be used to construct a preliminary theoretical model of arts-based youth empowerment, one that is based on practices on the ground.

Relevant literature from the field of psychological development is reviewed afterwards in order to enrich that preliminary model and mend its weaknesses. While literature on previous work done in this area of the community arts and art education fields is included in this chapter, this second review of technical literature from the field of psychological development constitutes part of the data of this thesis and is therefore performed after the meta-analysis and before the discussion and conclusion of this study. The proposed final model, if applied, critiqued, and enhanced by other academics and

practitioners, will serve in guiding outcomes of relevant programs, verifying achievement or successful delivery of services, comparing results, and enhancing quality of interventions.

This study is not claiming to re-invent the wheel, and that is why it is grounding the proposed model in practices in the field. Its boundaries and limitations pertain to the selected sample of reviewed literature for the meta-analysis, using the meta-analysis and grounded theory methods, mixing results for different art genres, and not dividing results by subgroups of adolescents based on age.

The remainder of this thesis is divided into six chapters. Chapter Two illustrates the methodology used to conduct the study. Chapters Three to Five present results of the meta-analysis:

- Chapter Three includes an illustration of reviewed programs by art genre, targeted adolescents, methods of evaluation, and other parameters.
- Chapter Four presents a synthesis of the theoretical frameworks currently used in the field
- Chapter Five answers the questions posed by this study on how academics and reflective practitioners in the fields of art education and community arts define and approach youth empowerment.

Chapter Six presents relevant literature from other fields and includes a discussion of some key questions, leading to proposing a model for arts-based youth empowerment in chapter Seven. This final chapter also discusses implications for the field, weaknesses of the study, and notes for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The outcome of this study is a proposed theoretical model for youth empowerment that is achieved through the arts. The model stemmed from definitions and practices by contemporary academics and practitioners in the areas of art education and community arts, enhanced with the aid of related literature from the field of psychological development. In the study, a definition of *empowerment* based on what practitioners and academics in the field of arts-based youth empowerment are saying emerged from a meta-analysis of published journal articles in this area. That being said, the study looked at how practitioners and academics in the fields of art education and community arts define empowerment and have employed psychological constructs to describe their research. It also located theories currently in use for developing, evaluating, and reflecting upon arts-based empowerment programs and identified which adolescent groups are targeted.

Notes by researchers in the field about limitations of arts-based youth empowerment programs, the role of art making or participation, and the methods used to evaluate programs were collected from the sample literatures, synthesized, and critiqued. Finally, an extensive review of literature from the field of psychological development on empowerment theory, youth empowerment, and positive youth development was used to inform, compare, contrast, or modify the conceptual model arising from the meta-analysis. In summary, to arrive at the model, the following activities took place:

1. A meta-analysis of recently published journal articles about the topic of youth empowerment through art programs
2. A review of empowerment theories cited in these articles
3. A synthesis of results into a preliminary model
4. A review of related literature from psychological development
5. Developing a revised and complete model of arts-based youth empowerment
6. Noting needs for further investigation.

The Literature Sample

Data were limited to published peer-reviewed journal articles (published between 2003 and 2013) on the subject of empowerment of adolescents using the arts. The input of practitioners and academics addressing similar work but not calling it *empowerment* was not included in this thesis but may be of equal importance to the studied sample. Data were identified through the Educational Resources Information Center's database (ERIC), searching for journal articles addressing arts-based youth empowerment initiatives. There are a multitude of programs that use arts-based youth empowerment across the globe. The study achieved portraying a picture of the *academic* reflection of the field by looking at peer-reviewed journal articles rather than at individual programs through published reports or information about them online or by doing first-hand observation.

ERIC is an online education research and resources database produced by the Institute of Education Sciences at the U.S. Department of Education since 1966, including more than 1.4 million records (Institution of Education Sciences, n.d.). The

Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors, 14th edition, assisted in forming a sample of terms and idea constructs that were employed to identify appropriate texts for examination in the study. For example, *The Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors* defines the construct Adolescents as “approximately 13-17 years of age” and asks researchers to use that term instead of Adolescence and Teenagers (Houston, 2001, p. 11). More than 650 academic journals are indexed in ERIC, about 500 of which are indexed comprehensively, where every article in each issue is included, and about 150 selectively, for education-related articles only (Institution of Education Sciences, n.d.). ERIC is free-of-charge and widely used across academic institutions in the United States, at least, and using it facilitates conducting follow-up studies in the future.

After applying the search criteria detailed below, articles were excluded in three cases: if they were not published in a peer-reviewed journal article (ERIC included two in the sample that were published in a peer-reviewed magazine rather than an academic journal), if they had an empowerment descriptor assigned by ERIC’s expert staff but the article’s author(s) did not use the word empowerment or any variations of it (e.g. empowering, empower) in the text, and if they did not talk about adolescents. This further ensured that the voice in the analyzed articles is that of the author(s) and does not include an added one of the database that was used to locate the articles.

Data Collection

A systematic search through ERIC was performed in October 2013, looking for journal articles published since January 1, 2003 (in the last 10 years), with descriptors belonging to all three categories: empowerment, adolescents, and art. These categories,

illustrated below, are each composed of a set of constructs that were selected from ERIC's Thesaurus, 14th Edition, based on the working definitions of this study.

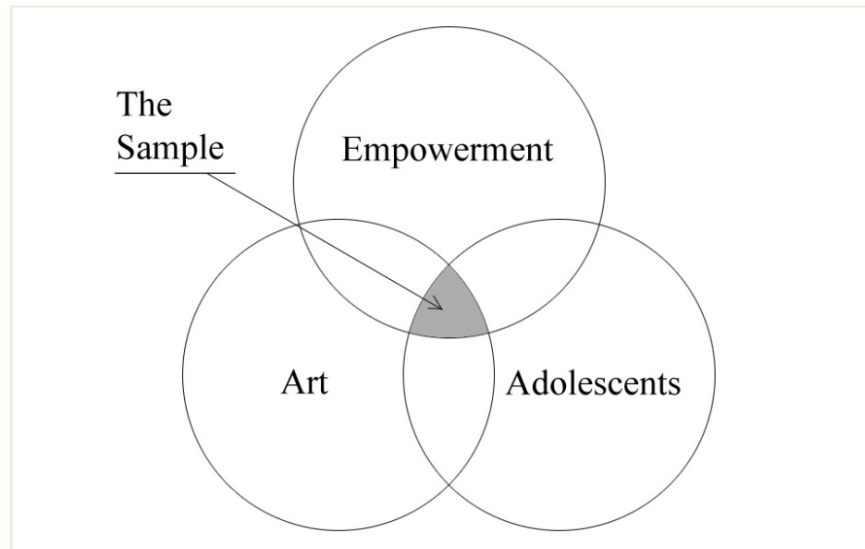


Figure 1: The working sample based on used ERIC descriptor groups

For a journal article to be included in the sample, it had to be indexed by ERIC's expert staff as talking about all three areas: art, empowerment, and adolescents. Any combination of descriptors from the three categories, with one descriptor at least from each, was enough to get an article into the sample. The number of possible combinations based on the descriptors given above was 720. This figure is the result of multiplying the number of used descriptors in each category ($2 \times 8 \times 45$) [see Table 1]. Some examples are (Secondary School Students + Empowerment + Poetry), (Adolescents + Student Empowerment + Acting), and (Late Adolescents + Student Empowerment + Woodworking). Not each category produced journal articles, and the categories and art forms actually covered are discussed within outcomes of this thesis. The number of used descriptors in all categories, and notably art, was maximized in order not to miss relevant literature. The art category includes activities that may be debated by some as being less artistic or cultural.

Constructs Category 1: Empowerment

According to the *Thesaurus of ERIC Descriptors*, 14th edition, Empowerment is the promotion or attainment of autonomy and freedom of choice for individuals or groups. The Thesaurus indicates this term to be used instead of Personal Empowerment and Self Empowerment. This study follows suit, using the descriptor Empowerment as inclusive of the other two. A related descriptor that was also included to form the sample is Student Empowerment [See Table 1].

Constructs Category 2: Art

According to the Thesaurus, Art is a broad term for the processes and results of aesthetic expression, while Aesthetics is the branch of philosophy dealing with beauty, artistic expression, and psychological responses to beauty and art. Related descriptors, with their ERIC definitions, are:

- Aesthetic Education
- Art Activities: productive or appreciative participation in aesthetic experiences, including the use of such experiences generally in the school curriculum
- Art Education: education concerned with one or more of the fine or applied arts, including studies and creative experiences
- Discipline Based Art Education: art education that draws its content from the four foundational art disciplines of art production, art history, art criticism, and aesthetics, rather than emphasizing art production (studio experiences) alone

- Visual Literacy: a group of competencies that allows humans to discriminate and interpret the visible action, objects, and/or symbols, natural or constructed, that they encounter in the environment (e.g., television, films, paintings, etc.)

All of the previously mentioned descriptors were used to form the sample, in addition to:

- Art Appreciation
- Art Criticism: description, interpretation, and evaluation of visual art works
- Art Expression: process of communicating thoughts or feelings aesthetically
- Art History: the study of art expression through the ages, including specific periods, artists, or schools of art

These terms overlap, but using all of them to construct the sample increased the likelihood of including relevant journal articles. The results were not expected to include all used descriptors, and the actual found ones are explained during the study and detailed in Appendix B. Art Therapy, which is defined by the Thesaurus as “the therapeutic use of art forms... in achieving self-expression and emotional release, usually in a context of remediation or rehabilitation” was not included because its goals are out of the scope of this research, which focuses on non-clinical interventions and populations. However, art therapy articles that talk about empowerment and appear in the sample search were included.

In addition to the previously mentioned general ERIC descriptors related to art and art education, the following ones, decided based on the parameters of the working definition of art that was given above, were used. Again, the labels constituting the

working definition were cultural heritage, performance and celebration, visual arts and crafts, books and press, audio-visual and interactive media, design and creative services, and intangible cultural heritage. According to the *2009 UNESCO Framework for Cultural Statistics* (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009), the label *cultural heritage* refers to museums, archaeological and historical places, and cultural landscapes, the last of which is related to a long and deep interaction between humans and nature. ERIC descriptors related to this label which were used in constructing the literature sample for the meta-analysis were Archaeology and Museums.

The label *performance and celebration* includes the performing arts, music and festivals, and fairs and feasts. Utilized ERIC descriptors related to it were Dance, Drama, Dramatics (activities in the creation, preparation, and production of plays), Music, Playwriting, and Theater Arts. Descriptors such as Jazz, Opera, Pantomime, Acting, and Puppetry were judged to be likely accompanied by more general ones referring to the category of arts they belong to, such as Music or Theater Arts, and were therefore not included. The label *books and press* includes books, newspapers and magazines, other printed materials, libraries, and book fairs. Descriptors from it related to arts and included in the sample were Literature and Poetry. Journalism Education, was also included because of photojournalism and new-media journalism, which may be referred to by practitioners and academics in the field of arts-based youth empowerment as art forms, and because no other ERIC descriptors seemed suitable to include articles covering such use in the sample.

The label *visual arts and crafts* includes fine arts, photography, and crafts. Related ERIC descriptors are of two types: general ones related to visual arts such as Fine

Arts and Visual Arts, and more specific ones like Freehand Drawing, Painting (Visual Arts), Photography, Sculpture, and Studio Art, all of which were used to construct the sample. Portraiture was judged to be too specific and likely to be accompanied by the descriptor Painting (Visual Arts), and therefore was not included. Used crafts-related descriptors were Ceramics, Design Crafts (the artistic creation or decoration of a structure or material, either by hand or by machine), Handicrafts, Industrial Arts, Metal Working, and Woodworking.

The label *design and creative services* includes fashion, graphic, interior, and landscape design, and architectural and advertising services. The selected ERIC descriptors for it were Graphic Arts and Architectural Education. No other specific descriptors were found for this category. It was expected that fashion design, for example, was covered by one of the descriptors already included to construct the sample, such as Fine Arts or Freehand Drawing. The descriptor Design was not included because ERIC's Thesaurus defines it more as a planning process and less as related to art, although some of the descriptors mentioned in the Thesaurus as related to it are art practices, such as Architecture. The descriptor Design was excluded in order to avoid including journal articles that may not be related to art in the sample. The risk of its exclusion was assessed as minimal, as the descriptor Design, when used to describe an art activity, was deemed to likely be accompanied by others related to art, such as Design Crafts, Graphic Arts, or ones about specific art forms.

The label *audio-visual and interactive media* includes film and video, TV and radio, internet podcasting, video games, and cultural expressions related to the web. Related ERIC descriptors are Video Games, Video Technology, Film Study, and Film

Production, which were used to refer to filmmaking as well. No suitable descriptors for inclusion were found to describe empowerment education using blogging or radio production. It was hoped that when present, journal articles about those topics were assigned the descriptor Journalism Education, by ERIC, leading to their inclusion in the sample. Finally, the label *intangible cultural heritage* includes oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices related to nature and the universe, and traditional craftsmanship. Some of these overlap with what is included in the previous labels. The following ERIC descriptors were added to the main group of descriptors in order to adequately include this category: Cultural Activities, Folk Culture, Popular Culture, and Story Telling.

Constructs Category 3: Adolescents

According to ERIC's Thesaurus, adolescents are those approximately 13-17 years old. It recommends to use the descriptor Adolescents instead of Teenagers, which was used in 1966-1980. The following descriptors are mentioned in relation to Adolescents or some of its related descriptors and were employed to form the sample. The given definitions are those provided by the Thesaurus:

- Youth: individuals or time of life between childhood and maturity
- Early Adolescents: age group between Pre-Adolescents and Adolescents, approximately 11-15 year-olds
- Late Adolescents: age group overlapping with Adolescents and Young Adults, approximately 16-23 year-olds
- Young Adults: approximately 18-30 years of age
- Middle School Students

- High School Students: in grades 9 or 10 through 12
- Secondary School Students

To identify other descriptors in this category, an ERIC search was performed using the descriptor Empowerment, plus the previously identified art-related ones. The resulting articles were scanned for descriptors related to adolescents, and as a result, the following descriptors were also used in this category to construct the sample. The definitions below are those provided by the Thesaurus:

- College Freshmen: first-year students in higher education, generally four-year, institutions
- Urban Youth
- Youth Programs: programs for adolescents and/or young adults
- After School Programs
- Student Projects
- Grade 5; Grade 6; Grade 7; Grade 8; Grade 9; Grade 10; Grade 11; Grade 12
- Middle Schools: various combinations of grades 5 through 9
- High Schools: providing formal education in grades 9 or 10 through 12
- Secondary Schools
- Urban Schools

Adolescents was one of the three construct categories including specific search terms to form the sample, in addition to *empowerment* and *art*. While using this category resulted in including programs that address youth, it may have excluded ones that address whole communities – including their young members – when such programs were not labeled with any adolescent-related descriptor in the ERIC database. Involving – and

empowering – communities is likely to play an important part of youth empowerment. However, discussion of community-based approaches to youth empowerment is limited in the meta-analysis.

Table 1: ERIC Descriptors used in forming the sample, by category

| Empowerment | Adolescents | Art | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| Empowerment Student Empowerment | Adolescents Youth Early Adolescents Late Adolescents Young Adults Middle School Students High School Students Secondary School Students College Freshmen Urban Youth Youth Programs After School Programs Student Projects Grade 5; Grade 6; Grade 7; Grade 8; Grade 9; Grade 10; Grade 11; Grade 12 Middle Schools High Schools Secondary Schools Urban Schools | Art Aesthetics Aesthetic Education Art Activities Art Education Discipline Based Art Education Visual Literacy Art Appreciation Art Criticism Art Expression Art History <i>(Cultural heritage)</i> Archaeology Museums | <i>(Performance and celebration)</i> Dance Drama Dramatics Music Playwriting Theater Arts <i>(Visual arts and crafts)</i> Fine Arts Visual Arts Ceramics Design Crafts Freehand Drawing Handicrafts Industrial Arts Metal Working Painting (Visual Arts) Photography Sculpture Studio Art Woodworking | <i>(Books and press)</i> Literature Poetry Journalism Education <i>(Audio-visual and interactive media)</i> Film Production Film Study Video Games Video Technology <i>(Design and creative services)</i> Graphic Arts Architectural Education <i>(Intangible cultural heritage)</i> Cultural Activities Folk Culture Popular Culture Story Telling |

An advanced search on ERIC was performed on October 18, 2013 in order to construct the literature sample, resulting in 46 peer-reviewed journal articles¹. Of those, two were excluded because they were not published in a peer-reviewed journal article but in a “peer-reviewed education magazine,” according to the magazine’s website (Davis Publications, 2014). One was excluded because it described a program that was not targeted at adolescents, and another eight were excluded because their authors did not use the term empowerment or any of its variations (e.g. empowering, empower) in the article. This was done to give more weight to the author’s voices rather than those of ERIC staff who assigned an empowerment descriptor to the article. The resulting final number of articles included in the literature review for the meta-analysis was 35 articles.

In the sample, article authors were not recurrent except for two cases, Victoria Kress and Raphael Travis Jr., with each co-authoring two articles in the sample. The sample includes articles published after January 1, 2013. Out of the final pool, 33 were published in or after 2006 and two before. Of these, the sample includes five articles on average for every year between

¹ The employed search equation was (DE "Adolescents" OR DE "Youth" OR DE "Early Adolescents" OR DE "Late Adolescents" OR DE "Young Adults" OR DE "Middle School Students" OR DE "Middle Schools" OR DE "High School Students" OR DE "High Schools" OR DE "Secondary School Students" OR DE "Secondary Schools" OR DE "College Freshmen" OR DE "Urban Youth" OR DE "Grade 10" OR DE "Grade 11" OR DE "Grade 12" OR DE "Grade 5" OR DE "Grade 6" OR DE "Grade 7" OR DE "Grade 8" OR DE "Grade 9" OR DE "Urban Schools" OR DE "Youth Programs" OR DE "After School Programs" OR DE "Student Projects") AND (DE "Empowerment" OR DE "Student Empowerment") AND (DE "Film Study" OR DE "Film Production" OR DE "Video Games" OR DE "Video Technology" OR DE "Graphic Arts" OR DE "Architectural Education" OR DE "Cultural Activities" OR DE "Folk Culture" OR DE "Popular Culture" OR DE "Story Telling" OR DE "Fine Arts" OR DE "Visual Arts" OR DE "Ceramics" OR DE "Design Crafts" OR DE "Freehand Drawing" OR DE "Handicrafts" OR DE "Industrial Arts" OR DE "Metal Working" OR DE "Painting (Visual Arts)" OR DE "Photography" OR DE "Sculpture" OR DE "Studio Art" OR DE "Woodworking" OR DE "Literature" OR DE "Poetry" OR DE "Journalism Education" OR DE "Art" OR DE "Art Activities" OR DE "Art Appreciation" OR DE "Art Criticism" OR DE "Art Education" OR DE "Art Expression" OR DE "Art History" OR DE "Visual Literacy" OR DE "Discipline Based Art Education" OR DE "Aesthetic Education" OR DE "Aesthetics" OR DE "Archaeology" OR DE "Museums" OR DE "Dance" OR DE "Drama" OR DE "Dramatics" OR DE "Music" OR DE "Playwriting" OR DE "Theater Arts"). Applied search limitations were that articles were published after January 1, 2003 and were peer-reviewed journal articles.

2006 and 2012. The articles come from 28 different peer-reviewed academic journals. The highest numbers come from the journals *Art Education* and *Creativity in Mental Health*, followed by *Literacy, Reclaiming Children and Youth*, and *Studies in Art Education*. Also, out of the articles pool, 31 use qualitative research methods to assess the programs, one uses quantitative methods, and three use mixed methods [see Appendix B].

Data-Analysis

A meta-analysis of identified literature draws a picture of the field of youth empowerment using the arts within the past decade, employing grounded theory to see how academics and practitioners define empowerment and looking at what theories they refer to in their work, what population groups they target, what research methods they use to assess the programs, what limitations of the program or study they note, and what art forms they employ.

Stern and Harris define “qualitative meta-analysis” as the “synthesis of a group of qualitative research findings into one explanatory theory, model, or description” (as cited in Paterson & Canam, 2001, p. 2). Paterson and Canam give it the principal goals of revealing similarities and differences in the analyzed research and developing theory, and differentiate between the “meta-study” processes of meta-analysis, which comes first, and meta-synthesis, which comes second (2001, pp. 2, 9). Noblit and Hare prefer the term meta-analysis when dealing with qualitative studies by “meta-ethnography,” defining it as the “synthesis of interpretive research... and translating studies into each other,” using them to describe and discuss each other rather than displaying them side-by-side, so that a better understanding of what all are communicating and concluding is achieved (1988, p. 10).

Performing a meta-analysis was chosen as a methodology for this study because it allows for drawing a picture of the landscape of the research domain, locating patterns and inconsistencies, identifying variables, and reaching conclusions that are more viable than those of an individual study. Additionally, the meta-analysis approach has more power than traditional methods of reviewing literature, which are more vulnerable to Type II errors (failing to reject null hypotheses that are false, or failing to recognize relationships between variables) (Rosenthal, 1984, p. 18). According to Rosenthal and DiMatteo (2001), some weaknesses of this approach are the analysts' conscious or unconscious bias in sampling the findings, mixing good and bad studies, the singularity and non-independence of effects, an overemphasis on individual effects, and mixing apples and oranges.

Unconscious bias was mitigated by using a broad definition of the arts in constructing the sample, reviewing the articles thoroughly, and employing grounded theory in coding. Set delimiters in constructing the sample were: not including non-peer-reviewed research, program reviews, white papers, or other reports, using one search engine to construct the sample, and limiting covered research in the meta-analysis to the 10 most recent years. The weakness of mixing good and bad approaches and results was mitigated by reviewing articles for validity of conclusions and quality of research methods. The overemphasis on individual effects was *not* mitigated and it is, in fact, this paper's main purpose. Focusing on individual components and results of arts-based youth empowerment is necessary at this early stage of research in the field in order to present a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon under study. Finally, this study *does* mix apples and oranges through adopting a broad definition of what art is and expanding it to cultural practices, which is deemed necessary in order to generalize conclusions about what

the field is saying, or to “generalize about fruit,” to borrow Rosenthal and DiMatteo’s words (2001, p. 68).

To see how reflective practitioners and academics in the fields of art education and community arts define empowerment, as a first step in the proposal of a model of arts-based youth empowerment, a selected sample of journal articles that address youth empowerment using the arts was reviewed using grounded theory as developed and enhanced by Corbin and Strauss (1990, 2008), which is accepted for use within the meta-analysis method (Paterson & Canam, 2001, 59). This was done to ground the developed theory in reality, making it emerge from practices on the ground rather than being only derived from theory. Strengths of grounded theory include guarding researchers against bias and leading them to more precision and consistency in their analysis, in addition to allowing variation of patterns in emerging concepts and encouraging noting such variations in order to make the emerging theory more conceptually dense (Corbin & Strauss, 1990).

According to Walker and Myrick, grounded theory is “the inductive generation of theory derived from data” (2006, p. 557). Within the proceedings of this research method, data (whether text, interviews, or observations) run through several coding steps. First, there is *open coding*, in which data are coded for concepts, followed by *axial coding*, in which the single codes created through open coding are grouped in conceptual categories, and third, *selective coding*, where a core category emerges from the data, and where the lower conceptual categories act as conditions, action/interaction strategies, or consequences for this final category (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). According to Corbin and Strauss (1990), coding, the central analytic process for grounded theory, is done via iterative comparisons for similarities and differences. Higher conceptual categories do not have to emerge from grouping concepts together, but could also

emerge by subdividing those. Also, once a conceptual category emerges, indicators of it are sought in the complete dataset, becoming more abstract as the analysis goes on. The conceptual categories at the second level of coding are the cornerstone of developing theory, and in this study, they form the components of *empowerment*, the final conceptual category.

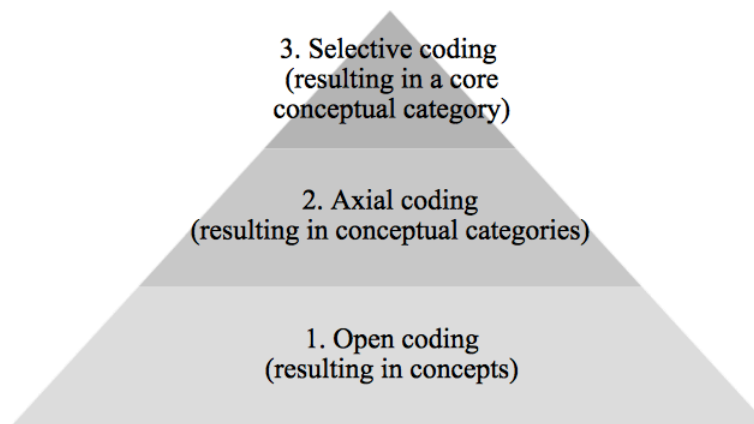


Figure 2: Levels of analytical coding in grounded theory according to Corbin and Strauss (1990)

In grounded theory, subcategories that emerge after open coding are related to higher level conceptual categories through the coding of conditions that give rise to them, and of contexts, strategies, and consequences that result from them (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). For example, for a conceptual category called *resilience*, we would need to ask if it maintains meaning across gender and age groups, if there are pre-requisites to obtaining it, when it is enacted and when not, how it is manifested, what similar concepts to it exist, what consequences does its enactment entail, and what levels of intensity does it have before setting it as a higher conceptual category rather than a subcategory. Truly adopting grounded theory as one of the research methods of this study would necessitate letting go of *empowerment* as a destined emerging core category from the data. Therefore, although this category is the main framework for constructing the reviewed sample of journal articles, it was not *forced* upon the data in the analytical process.

During the coding process, I was faced with the question of whether to include the whole article as being about empowerment or just part of it as such. I decided to include the whole article if it was talking about empowerment in its whole, otherwise only to include explicit references to concepts as composing empowerment. An example is the article “Changing Technology = Empowering Students through Media Literacy Education,” where the author discusses several concepts related to empowerment but does not consistently refer to them as such (De Abreu, 2010). Given that the whole article talks about empowerment, as indicated by its title, the empowerment-related concepts mentioned were all considered part of the author’s conception of empowerment. Another example is Goessling Doyle’s article “Thru the Lenz: Participatory Action Research, Photography, and Creative Process in an Urban High School” (2009), where empowerment is one of several goals of the described programs, and where only those related to it explicitly were considered part of the author’s conception of empowerment.

Similarly, if an author of an article used theory not linked to referencing empowerment, such theory was not included in the meta-analysis, except when the article was assessed to be talking about empowerment in its whole. For example, in an article describing a digital storytelling program targeted mainly at students with hybrid identities, the author used limited theory to frame her own empowerment program and directed her students to refer to an array of theories related to identity (Benmayor, 2008). Only the theories used as basis for her empowerment approach were deemed relevant to this study.

After starting the meta-analysis, I decided to also note the location and duration of implemented programs when described, and whether the project included a final art exhibit or performance. Instances when authors refer to *disempowerment* were also coded, and communal

empowerment was coded as leading to individual empowerment. Quotes were also coded, and if stated limitations were not related to empowerment, they were not included.

Instances where an author talked about empowerment of a certain skill versus empowerment of the individual were not included in the coding process. For example, Lane Clarke describes how the positioning of students in literature circle discussions manifested some gender and class-specific stereotypes and served to empower the literacy development of the participating girls and disempower that of the boys (2006). This empowerment of literacy development was not coded as empowerment.

That being said, there were some articles that made it into the sample that talked about empowerment of certain skills versus that of the individual as a whole. An example is Alison Kelly and Kimberly Safford's article "Does teaching complex sentences have to be complicated? Lessons from children's online writing," in which they describe linguistic empowerment of children aged 7 and 11 as they engage in online discussions related to the World Cup. Such articles were not dismissed from the sample, as they contribute to the understanding of the field. Another example is an article by Malm and Lofgren describing a program using drama to empower students to handle conflicts (2007). Although the majority of this article describes the empowerment of a single skill, which is conflict management, it does speak about empowerment of students in general several times, and those instances were coded as comprising the authors' conception of empowerment.

Limitations of the Study

Using grounded theory for analytical coding within the meta-analysis is limited because of unintentional author bias. While this was mitigated by developing a pre-study model of arts-

based youth empowerment with the aim of exposing such biases to both the reader and author, it was not possible to have the data coded by two reviewers and compare results. Using one search engine to locate the articles might have led to the exclusion of some relevant articles, and the sample was limited to journal articles that explicitly talked about art, adolescents, and empowerment, missing articles that might have addressed components of empowerment but gave them a different label. Article that met criteria for inclusion may have expanded youth empowerment into that of community empowerment, but the way the sample was constructed did not systemically search for programs targeted at whole communities. This limited the frequency of such initiatives in the sample. Also, studies with varying research qualities were included in the sample and in two cases a researcher co-authored two articles, causing an enlarged effect of factors. These were mitigated by examining and critiquing research quality for the reviewed articles and by controlling analysis by author during the study and discussion of results.

Limitations of the study are related to using grounded theory and meta-analysis methods and to the way the literature sample for the meta-analysis was constructed. Results were generalized over adolescent subgroups based on age and across different art genres, which is necessary due to the insufficiency of previous research in this area and with the conviction that findings and best practices in one art genre can inform those using other ones, especially at this preliminary stage of research in the field. Due to set boundaries in constructing the sample, results of the meta-analysis should be viewed as indicative rather than comprehensive of the field. Weakness of the developed model will be discussed after its presentation in the final chapter of this study.

Importance of the Study

The study presents to the community arts and art education fields a point of reference of what youth empowerment should entail. Previous lack of a comprehensive reference for youth empowerment in those areas has led to varied understandings of this construct, causing a lack of comparison and mutual learning between programs, a lack of improvement of initiatives, and a waste of resources due to the potential for not having concrete objectives of interventions. The proposed model is composed of a group of conceptual categories, which in turn includes other concepts. This theoretical proposition could be further developed by adding indicators and creating or finding evidence-based assessment instruments to measure them, which is out of the scope of this thesis.

The selected methodology of performing a meta-analysis of already-existing academic work in this area, followed by reviewing related literature from the field of psychological development, situates the suggested model within already-existing practices in the field, highlighting better and worse practices, and linking proposed components to already-existing applications and initiatives. This study builds on the strengths of the field and takes them one step further by synthesizing approaches to youth empowerment across art genres and enhancing them with theory from the literature of psychology.

Summary

This study aims at generating a model for arts-based youth programs. To do so, relevant literature from the fields of art education and community arts was analyzed and synthesized through a meta-analysis process using grounded theory to see how academics and reflective practitioners in those areas are approaching the construct of youth empowerment. This was

followed by a review of related literature from the field of psychological development, particularly empowerment theory and positive youth development, in order to critique and enhance the previous findings, reaching a proposed model at the end, and highlighting its weaknesses and areas for future research. To get a glimpse of what the field is saying, the literature for the meta-analysis was located through the educational research database ERIC, looking for peer-reviewed journal articles published in the last 10 years that were assigned constructs by the ERIC database in three areas: empowerment, adolescents, and art.

Articles were excluded after plugging in the research equation in the database if they were not published in an academic journal, if the term empowerment or its variations did not appear in the article – although it was assigned to the article as a descriptor by the database – and if they did not talk about adolescents. The final sample size for the meta-analysis was 35 peer-reviewed journal articles, 31 of which use qualitative methods to assess the program, one uses quantitative ones, and three use mixed research methods.

CHAPTER THREE

GENERAL FRAMEWORKS OF YOUTH EMPOWERMENT THROUGH THE ARTS

Introduction

I performed an analysis of a total of 35 peer-reviewed academic journal articles that reflect the academic perspectives of fields relevant to arts-based youth empowerment. The alternative would have been to look directly at specific programs or descriptions of organizations' work as published on their websites or in their publications. However, I intentionally limited the study sample to a group of reflections that might generate metrics for youth empowerment evaluation and be more likely to reference theory. It should be noted that even this group of peer-reviewed journal articles was mostly composed of case studies reporting on specific programs. Although some of the reviewed articles presented overarching models, theoretical frameworks, or sometimes addressed groups of programs, in this purposeful study I explored the large group of mostly qualitative articles through meta-analysis, synthesizing information, generalizing findings, and pointing to collective areas where there are gaps in knowledge.

I examined the articles individually, noting the following points when applicable: the location and duration of the program, number, age, and other descriptors of targeted adolescents, and whether the intervention was part of formal or informal education or a psychological therapy program. Relevant to art, I noted the art genre that was used in the program or artistic experience the article focused on, the nature of the beneficiaries' interaction with art, whether focus was on perception of art, production, or both, and whether or not the program included a final exhibit or

presentation of the produced material. Regarding the study itself, I noted the method of evaluating and/or describing the program or experience and any stated limitations.

Reviewed Programs by Art Genre

The sample was constructed using a search formula that included a broad range of art genres [see Table 1]. The arts genres that actually appeared in the sample were drama, music, design crafts, drawing, industrial arts, painting, photography, woodworking, poetry, narrative text, filmmaking, film critique, visual art critique, popular culture, and storytelling. Most prevalent art genres addressed in the articles were categories of performing arts, followed by visual arts. Next came literature, folklore and cultural heritage, using a mixed collection of art genres, and, finally, the use of audio-visual and interactive media. In terms of specific art genres, first came drama, followed by photography and poetry, then hip-hop and rap. Examples of programs and specific art techniques will be illustrated below.

Mixed Art Programs

Several programs described in sample articles used a mixed-arts approach to youth empowerment. The project “TEEN Mirrors of Motherhood (M.O.M.)”, for example, took place in Canada with members of a community organization working with pregnant teenagers (Levy & Weber, 2011). Participants of M.O.M. interacted with and used different art forms to share their views, participate in community discussions about issues that affect them, and define and solve some of the challenges that they faced. The program ended with an exhibit, a film screening, and construction of a website where participants could share their work beyond the immediate group. The creators and implementers of the program employed critical arts-based methods in the design of the program. Critical pedagogy approaches place learning within

political and social contexts. This is evident in activities that incorporate Photovoice, collage, curated photo albums, mixed-media process journals, and “activist collaborative documentary filmmaking,” which encourages participants to “share stories for change by becoming researchers and filmmakers of their lives” (Levy & Weber, 2011, p. 295).

The participating young women of M.O.M. viewed and reflected on media images and documentary films related to teenage pregnancy, and reflected on their new or impending status of motherhood by creating a reflective collage called “Diva Mom,” which included writing hidden letters to future children on the back of the collage canvas. Participants engaged in an exercise of photography and curated photo albums where each selected nine of pictures that she had taken during the project and wrote captions or accompanying texts for them. They also engaged in performance activities, photography that involved writing on their bodies, making symbolic self-portraits of objects they were carrying, and preparing for a final art exhibit.

In the program “Lyrics on Lockdown (LOL): Slamming the Prison Industrial Complex,” a mix of hip-hop, spoken-word (poetry, rhyme), theater, dance, and visual art were used (Green, 2010). The program was implemented by The Blackout Arts Collective, a U.S. non-profit organization working to empower communities of color through the arts, education, and activism. It took place in correctional facilities, community centers, and colleges, in over 25 cities in the U.S. over a five-year period. Course content invited subjects to compose performances and interactive workshops; these later evolved into a university course exploring uses of the arts as a tool for positive social change.

Also using a mix of hip hop, visual arts (photography and drawing), and popular culture, Haddix and Sealey-Ruiz incorporated the arts into an academic summer writing institute for 5th-8th grade African American males at an urban school in the U.S. (2012). They employed those

arts (labeled by them as “digital tools and popular literacies” to foster a love of reading and writing among participants and encourage them to “produce and create knowledge” within the classroom (Haddix & Sealey-Ruiz, 2012, p. 190). The authors’ practice is focused on using culturally relevant texts and writing activities and capitalizing on students’ keenness for using digital tools to communicate. During the institute, students were allowed to compose texts on their phones and use email for getting comments from classmates even when everyone was in the same room. This empowered them to be producers and creators of knowledge within the classroom versus being policed and censored (Haddix & Sealey-Ruiz, 2012).

In another study, the authors label digital photography and videography as *new media*, in their assessment of a one-week new media camp program in Canada as a site for learning (Grauer, Castro & Lin, 2012). This study serves to highlight community-based art programs that take place out of school in terms of time and location as opportunities for learning and practice-improvement of in-school educators. The authors highlight the curricular flexibility of out-of-school art programs and their ability to offer responsive curriculums to the particular requirements of a cohort or specific discipline. They note that most often the focus of the program is not building skills in a specific art medium only, but using those skills as a vehicle to achieve wider goals, such as supporting students’ identity development and the development of their own voices, and fostering creativity and critical analysis. They add that “community-based arts may serve as a [positive] interruption in the pedagogical and curricular flow of learning by presenting occasions for difference” (Grauer et al., 2012, p. 149).

Finally, Elmesky describes a youth empowerment program where student researchers created a movie as a curricular resource about science (2005). The movie, which explored the physics phenomenon of sound, was titled “Sound in the City” and built on the “embodied

knowledge” of participants, who were economically disadvantaged urban youth. The author defined embodied resources as "ways of being... that may include specific knowledge, values, skills, morals, aspirations, rituals, beliefs, goals, or interests as well as manners of interacting, communicating, or moving” (Elmesky, 2005, p. 4). In addition to filmmaking, this program included dance, theatre, music, and poster making, in addition to incorporating cultural arts that were popular among the young participants.

Performing Arts-Based Programs

Among the performing arts, drama was most often reported as helpful to youth empowerment. Most authors of articles about such performing art programs referenced Augusto Boal’s methods. The next most written-about performance arts-based empowerment programs focused on hip-hop and rap culture, defined broadly to include music, rapping, deejaying, break dancing, and mural arts or graffiti.

Forum Theatre is a form of drama used to facilitate social and individual change through participation and examination of relevant issues from multiple perspectives. Gourd and Gourd have scanned Boal’s writings, published in 1979/1985, 1992, and 1995, to formulate a comprehensive definition:

Participants define problems from their lived experiences and perspectives. After hearing several stories from individuals in the group, participants select one story as their focus. Actors are then selected from volunteers in the audience to create a scene to demonstrate the problem causing the oppressive situation. This scene is performed, and then audience members name the problem in the scene and participate in multiple reenactments to resolve conflicts. Audience members can participate after stopping the action of the scene in three ways. An audience member can give advice to an actor, take the place of an actor to demonstrate his or her ideas for resolving a problem, or join the scene as a new character... Forum Theatre concludes with a discussion of strategies that were effective and explicit statements about why some strategies contributed to resolution while others increased tensions and oppression. (Boal, 1979/1985, 1992, 1995 in Gourd & Gourd, 2011, p. 405).

In the article titled “Boal's Theater of the Oppressed and How to Derail Real-Life Tragedies with Imagination,” Schaedler (2010) advocates for the use of Forum Theatre and critical literacy in English classes for native speakers of other languages, citing the benefits of such methods in increasing participants’ social awareness, transforming them into protagonists in their own lives, and helping them develop language skills. Gourd and Gourd describe a program where Forum Theatre was used as a method to teach a curricular unit on bullying to 8th graders (2011) where participants had the chance to change elements, actions, or characters of a theatrical piece enacting a bullying situation at their school, in order to prevent the escalation of the situation into violence. The participants later reflected on their choices and discussed strategies they could actually adopt at the school to decrease bullying.

Another program utilizing drama for empowerment aimed at improving conflict handling among adolescents through educational drama, which was defined by the authors as a “learning situation structured through a trained facilitator and involv[ing] re-enactment or role-play, [where] creative forms of group work are used to stimulate the personal growth of the participants, development of knowledge based on experiences, appropriate styles of communication, as well as joint decision making” (Malm & Lofgren, 2007, p. 3). Designers of this experimental program, “DRAmA for CONflict management (DRACON),” believe that learning from one’s own experience is better than through books or other means (Malm & Lofgren, 2007).

Medina and Campano demonstrate how the use of drama creates a space between students’ current identities and a more expansive understanding of school-based literacy practices, claiming that through involvement in drama and having space to explore fictional lives in addition to their own, students arrive at a better understanding of how they are positioned by

others, including educators, administrators, and policy makers (2006). Some of the specific techniques they use are *Tableaus*, frozen images of the characters' experiences, and *writing-in-role*, where students write diary entries reflecting on what happened to the characters during that day or writing to a specific character, in addition to putting the character in the *hot seat* and asking him or her questions.

A program that involved perception rather than production of drama consisted of a 40-minute play, followed by an interactive workshop. The program aimed at enabling young people to consider their sexual behavior and its impact and consequence on other people and themselves; the play portrayed adolescents of the same age group as participants, facing decisions regarding their sexual actions (Orme, Salmon & Mages, 2007).

Moving to empowerment via hip-hop and rap, the articles in the sample had a more sensitive understanding of empowerment, including positive and negative aspects. Travis and Deepak introduce a tool called "The Individual and Community Empowerment Framework," aimed at assisting social workers in understanding the competing messages within hip-hop culture and how they might promote or inhibit positive youth development (2011). The Framework outlines areas for empowerment that could be used to analyze songs and provides a structure for collaborative development of goals and changing strategies between youth and social workers.

Travis collaborated with Bowman on a follow-up study, where they examined effects of specific qualities in adolescents, including exposure to rap music, on depressive symptoms (2012). They found positive ethnic identity to be associated with greater music-influenced empowerment, acting as a buffer against depressive symptoms. However, self-esteem was found

to be associated with increased risky attitudes influenced by music. Both studies looked at youth as receptors, versus producers, of art.

Visual Arts-Based Programs

Photography was the predominant genre of visual arts used for youth empowerment purposes. In a method called Photovoice, “participants are invited, guided, and equipped to provide their own images, making visible their voice around a particular social issue that affects them directly” (Levy & Weber, 2011, pp. 294-295). Also used was photo elicitation, where photographs are used to elicit responses from participants (Kearns, 2012), and curated photo albums, where participants create self-study photo albums, choosing pictures around a theme, giving them captions and a title, and writing a statement of intent (Levy & Weber, 2011).

In “Thru the Lenz: Participatory Action Research, Photography, and Creative Process in an Urban High School,” by Goessling and Doyle (2009), the authors describe a program whereby graduate students in a counseling program engaged with at-risk urban high school students in the U.S. through photography and participatory action research. Program sessions included photo discussions, photo taking, and reflection. The project culminated in two exhibits and the sale of a calendar featuring participants’ work to fundraise for buying film in the future.

The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) project provided early adolescents with opportunities for civic engagement through Photovoice (Wilson, Dasho, Martin, Wallerstein, Wang & Minkler, 2007). The program consisted of 25 sessions, meeting weekly for 1.5 hours. Each group of participants had a facilitator, and worked through Photovoice procedures (taking photos about assets and issues in the community and writing about causality), followed by designing an action plan for a project and implementing it to enhance the school environment. As

final projects, most participants, with direction from facilitators, performed skits about issues relevant to their school.

Other visual arts that were used included mural arts, creating masks, scribbling, mandala art, creating personal symbols, art journaling, and creating journal covers, in addition to collage, painting, and drawing. Two of the reviewed articles talked about using creativity and the visual arts in general for empowerment, and the visual arts appeared largely in programs that used a mixed-arts approach, such as doing the set design for a stop-motion animation film (Davenport & Gunn, 2009). As an example of such efforts, Turk describes a program where 6th-8th grade students, including ones with disabilities, collaborated on a mural art project (2012). The project was selected to give participants an opportunity to create physical change in their classroom and social change within aspects of the school environment.

Related to using visual arts in general for empowerment, Burdick & Causton-Theoharis (2012) list strategies for enhancing the learning of all students, including those with disabilities, in art classrooms by capitalizing on the presence of a paraprofessional when a student with a disability is present. Gude (2010) calls for more creativity in the art classroom and shares examples of exercises to do with students to encourage them to use their imagination more. She questions whether the goal of putting students' creativity at the center of the classroom is feasible while maintaining "overly structured approaches to teaching, making, and assessing," and even questions whether doing art necessarily means cultivating creativity (Gude, 2010, p. 37).

Photovoice, collage, painting, drawing, curated photo albums, and keeping a mixed-media process journal were used among other art forms in the project "Teenmom.ca," which sought to empower teenage mothers (Levy & Weber, 2011). Participants interacted with and

used different art forms to share their views, participate in community discussions that affected them, and define and solve some of the challenges that they faced. The program ended with an exhibit, a film screening, and a website that shared the participants' work beyond their group.

Literature and Press-Based Programs

Reviewed programs that used literature for youth empowerment employed a variety of literary genres including storytelling, poetry, and narrative text, in addition to talking about literature in general. The use of poetry was predominant, followed by narrative text. Writing was also part of several programs that used mixed-art approaches, whether through reflecting on the produced artwork or accompanying it with a caption or descriptive text, through journaling, or as a stand-alone activity.

Reyes describes how he integrates poetry into the classroom by creating physical space for it in the room, holding a poetry workshop for students, and building the language of poetic discourse (2006). The workshop includes assessment of prior skills, conducting a mini-lesson, guided practice, independent practice, sharing, critique, practice, and performance. Wiseman describes a year-long program of poetry, based on students' experiences in life (2011). The program was implemented by a community member in the English language classroom for eighth-grade students at an urban school.

Robbins and Pehrsson employed both poetry and narrative texts to enhance a therapy program for young adult women suffering from anorexia nervosa (2009). The alternative treatment approach used poetry and narrative texts to facilitate recovery by “[creating] an expressive and assertive voice while shifting blame from the self to the disorder” (Robbins & Pehrsson, 2009, p. 42).

Related to the use of literary texts, Sawch describes a program where 11th graders used non-fiction writings as a resource to think about the literary texts they were studying (2011). The aims were to increase critical inquiry and critical literacy, empower students to make an informed and activist stance about the larger issues in the world, and improve their abilities to synthesize and analyze information. Another article proposes guidelines for the use of therapeutic stories when counseling sexual abuse survivors (Kress, Adamson & Yensel, 2010). The authors argue that therapeutic storytelling decreases young clients' resistance to change, while enhancing opportunities to connect with alternative positive narratives.

Discussing empowerment and literature in general, Clarke studied power relationships relevant to gender and social stereotypes in literature circle discussion groups of 5th graders (2006). He concluded after a three-year longitudinal study that those circles empowered the literacy development of girls while disempowering boys, and called for more adult supervision and research. Clarke attributed the observations to the girls' large assumption of the roles of sub-teachers within the circles, while the boys accepted the girls' domination in that area for the most part and sought power in the areas of physical strength and disobedience to school rules, in line with socially conveyed stereotypical notions about girls' and boys' conduct.

Audio-visual and Interactive Media-Based Programs

Filmmaking was the predominantly used art genre described in this category. As an example, Davenport and Gunn describe a program of their design where they delivered animation moviemaking workshops to indigenous youth in Mexico (2009). The workshops were aimed at fostering in participants a more critical perspective as consumers of media, and to empower them to creatively express their personal perspectives. The authors worked with

participants through stop-motion animation to record stories from their communities and in their own languages.

In another program, Marnina Gonick used video making to explore and represent issues and problems that the participating 10-14 year-old girls thought were being faced by girls like them (2007). She thinks that her video-production program gave participants a sense of belonging with which they were able to negotiate and contest their social positions relevant to gender and ethnic identities. Another example was presented by Benmayor's college class entitled "Latina Life Stories." The class offered digital storytelling as a platform for participants to tell their own stories while drawing on stories of others. At the end of the class, students shared their digital videos with their classmates and reflected on what they had learned, connecting their stories to bigger issues in society, and wrote about how this experience impacted their thoughts about their social roles and responsibilities (Benmayor, 2008).

In the mixed-arts project "TEEN Mirrors of Motherhood," participants engaged in film and media critique of representations of teenage pregnancy, and saw film productions by activists, which were followed by discussion (Levy & Weber, 2011). Finally, in the article "Changing Technology = Empowering Students through Media Literacy Education," De Abreu advocates for media literacy as a way to empower students. He argues that instead of protectionism, students should be equipped to be critical thinkers and able to make thoughtful choices relative to media content (2010). This new media literacy includes investing in students' ability to create and produce ideas and topics using web platforms and is linked to responsibility, respect for self and others, and citizenship.

Folklore and Cultural Heritage Programs

The folklore and cultural heritage category includes youth empowerment programs that utilized indigenous knowledge and arts, handicrafts, and pop culture. Since those genre categories overlap with other art genres, it was sometimes difficult to make the decision to list them under the specific art medium they use or as a folklore and cultural heritage program in terms of organizing the results of this study. For instance, hip-hop and rap culture is placed in the performing arts category, although it is a popular art for some communities and would therefore also fit under the folklore and cultural heritage banner. Programs in the sample under this category utilized storytelling, music, poetry, symbolism, craftsmanship, and sports fandom, in addition to referencing native community governance methods.

Kress & Hoffman present a group counseling model that can be used with adolescent girls who have been sexually abused (2008). This solution-focused Ericksonian model is centered around storytelling, writing, and usage of symbols to increase coping abilities. Another program involved 15-year-old adolescents who had previous life trauma, who built a house for a family in need. The program was faith-based and included supervised travel to another country (Wilhelm, 2009).

Barros describes Cape Verdian cultural literacies, which are ways of thinking, believing, and knowing that tie individuals to the Cape Verdian community, which, coming from the former slave depot on the western coast of Africa, played a significant role in the Atlantic slave trade (2012). Those literacies function as a way for community strengthening, especially for women, in remembrance of the repressive colonial past and the slave trade, and survival and resilience in the face of past and present adversities. They are taught informally by female storytellers called Koladeras, who improvise and sing about their lives and those in their community, following a call-and-response tradition. This tradition, according to the author, leads to positive identity

development of African American women of Cape Verdian descent, and to increasing their critical thinking abilities.

Moving to popular interests of youth, and specifically to sports, whose fandom constitutes a cultural activity according to UNESCO (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2009), Kelly and Safford describe linguistic empowerment processes involved in the engagement of children in written interactions online on the topic of the popular World Cup football event (2009). This article describes the empowerment of a specific skill (linguistic expression), capitalizing on popular culture interests and students' level of engagement. Finally, James calls for practicing democracy in the school environment in order to cultivate youth who are active and responsible citizens in society (2010). He ties the roots of democratic practices in the U.S. to Native American ways of governance.

Table 2: Reviewed articles by the art genre used for youth empowerment

| | Art genre | Academic journal in which article appears | Article title | Quick reference |
|--------------------|---|--|--|----------------------------|
| Mixed-art programs | Filmmaking along with dance, theatre, music, and poster making | School Science and Mathematics | “I Am Science and the World Is Mine”: Embodied Practices as Resources for Empowerment | Elmesky, 2005 |
| | Photography and videography | Studies in Art Education | Encounters with Difference: Community-Based New Media Programs and Practices | Grauer et al., 2012 |
| | Hip-hop, poetry, theater, dance, visual arts | Race, Ethnicity and Education | Our Lyrics Will Not Be on Lockdown: An Arts Collective's Response to an Incarceration Nation | Green, 2010 |
| | Hip-hop, visual arts (photography, drawing), and popular culture | Adolescent and Adult Literacy | Cultivating Digital and Popular Literacies as Empowering and Emancipatory Acts among Urban Youth | Haddix & Sealey-Ruiz, 2012 |
| | Visual arts (photography, collage, drawing, painting, curated photo albums, journaling), film and media critique, and writing | Studies in Art Education | Teenmom.ca: A Community Arts-Based New Media Empowerment Project for Teenage Mothers | Levy & Weber, 2011 |

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|--|--|------------------------|
| Performing arts-based programs | Drama | Equity and Excellence in Education | Enacting Democracy: Using Forum Theatre to Confront Bullying | Gourd & Gourd, 2011 |
| | | Peace Education | Empowering Students to Handle Conflicts through the Use of Drama | Malm & Lofgren, 2007 |
| | | Language Arts | Performing Identities through Drama and Teatro Practices in Multilingual Classrooms | Medina & Campano, 2006 |
| | | Improving Schools | Risk and Responsibility: The Potential of Peer Teaching to Address Negative Leadership | Morrison, 2004 |
| | | Children and Society | Project Jump: Young People's Perspectives on a Sexual Health Drama Project for Hard to Reach Young People | Orme et al., 2007 |
| | | New Directions for Youth Development | Boal's Theater of the Oppressed and How to Derail Real-Life Tragedies with Imagination | Schaedler, 2010 |
| | Hip-hop and rap | Youth Studies | Ethnic Identity, Self-Esteem and Variability in Perceptions of Rap Music's Empowering and Risky Influences | Travis & Bowman, 2012 |
| | | Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work | Empowerment in Context: Lessons from Hip-Hop Culture for Social Work Practice | Travis & Deepak, 2011 |

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|----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Visual arts-based programs | Photography | Creativity in Mental Health | Thru the Lenz: Participatory Action Research, Photography, and Creative Process in an Urban High School | Goessling & Doyle, 2009 |
| | | Educational Action Research | Seeking Researcher Identity through the Co-Construction and Representation of Young People's Narratives of Identity | Kearns, 2012 |
| | | Early Adolescence | Engaging Young Adolescents in Social Action through Photovoice: The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) Project | Wilson et al., 2007 |
| | Mural arts | Art Education | Collaboration, Inclusion, and Empowerment: A Life Skills Mural | Turk, 2012 |
| | Visual arts in general | Art Education | Creating Effective Paraprofessional Support in the Inclusive Art Classroom | Burdick & Causton-Theoharis, 2012 |
| | | Art Education | Playing, Creativity, Possibility | Gude, 2010 |
| | Mixed: Masks, murals, scribbling, mandala, personal symbols, journaling, journal covers | Art Therapy | Art as Agency: Exploring Empowerment of At-Risk Youth | Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006 |
| Literature and press- | Storytelling | Creativity in Mental Health | The Use of Therapeutic Stories in Counseling Child and Adolescent Sexual Abuse Survivors | Kress et al., 2010 |

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|---|---------------------------|---|--|--------------------------|
| | Poetry | Multicultural Education | Finding the Poetic High: Building a Spoken Word Poetry Community and Culture of Creative, Caring, and Critical Intellectuals | Reyes, 2006 |
| | | Literacy | Powerful Students, Powerful Words: Writing and Learning in a Poetry Workshop | Wiseman, 2011 |
| | Poetry and narrative text | Creativity in Mental Health | Anorexia Nervosa: A Synthesis of Poetic and Narrative Therapies in the Outpatient Treatment of Young Adult Women | Robbins & Pehrsson, 2009 |
| | Narrative text | English | Asking and Arguing with Fact and Fiction: Using Inquiry and Critical Literacy to Make Sense of Literature in the World | Sawch, 2011 |
| | Literature in general | Literacy Research | Power through Voicing Others: Girls' Positioning of Boys in Literature Circle Discussions | Clarke, 2006 |
| Audio-visual and interactive media-based programs | Filmmaking | Arts and Humanities in Higher Education | Digital Storytelling as a Signature Pedagogy for the New Humanities | Benmayor, 2008 |
| | | Art Education | Collaboration in Animation: Working Together to Empower Indigenous Youth | Davenport & Gunn, 2009 |
| | | Gender and Education | Girl Number 20 Revisited: Feminist Literacies in New Hard Times | Gonick, 2007 |

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|---|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| | Audio-visual media in general | New Horizons in Education | Changing Technology = Empowering Students through Media Literacy Education | De Abreu, 2010 |
| Folklore and cultural heritage programs | Storytelling and music | Community Literacy | “Koladeras,” Literacy Educators of the Cape Verdean Diaspora: A Cape Verdean African Centered Call and Response Methodology | Barros, 2012 |
| | Storytelling, symbolism, participants' culture | Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development | Empowering Adolescent Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Application of a Solution-Focused Ericksonian Counseling Group | Kress & Hoffman, 2008 |
| | Craftsmanship | Reclaiming Children and Youth | Industrial Art: Mission to Meaning | Wilhelm, 2009 |
| | Community governance | Reclaiming Children and Youth | Reclaiming Deep Democracy | James, 2010 |
| | Sports fandom | Literacy | Does Teaching Complex Sentences Have to Be Complicated? Lessons from Children's Online Writing | Kelly & Safford, 2009 |

Location and Duration of Programs

Twenty-three out of the 35 reviewed articles described programs or studies performed in the United States. Out of the remaining eight, one described a program implemented in Mexico, three in Canada, two in the United Kingdom, one in both the U.S. and Mexico together, and one in three countries - Sweden, Australia, and Malaysia.

The concentration of locations in developed world countries was expected, given the disparity of quantities in academic publishing and papers between first or second world and developing world nations. Locating articles published in English through a single (albeit, comprehensive) search engine also limited the scope of geographic coverage of reviewed programs. Most of the identified studies or programs focused on a specific location within one country, which was usually the United States. One significant article described a study that was carried out simultaneously in three locations (Australia, Sweden, and Malaysia) with the aim of testing the resilience of an explicit type of program when implemented in different cultural contexts. The program was aimed at improving conflict handling among adolescents through the use of educational drama (Malm & Lofgren, 2007).

Unfortunately, not all articles that described a specific program noted its overall duration or how it was implemented over time. It was difficult to determine and contrast actual time spent with students in different programs, as most mentioned the overall duration of the program in weeks or years, but rarely indicated how many sessions were spent with students and the duration of each session. Also, program durations varied considerably, which may have been influenced by time required to engage in or enact differing art genres, and by the students being involved in art production in some projects, such as creating a movie, art perception in others, such as watching a theatrical play, or a mix of both. The amount of time the subjects engaged in a program might impact achievement of program objectives. The element of time, therefore, should be included in studies. Lacking information about subject engagement over time and the

specific number of hours that instructors or facilitators spent with students would make reproduction of the program and verification of results difficult if not impossible.

In one drama-based program, which aimed at enabling young people to consider their sexual behavior and its impact and consequence on other people and themselves, the duration was a 40-minute show, followed by an interactive workshop (Orme, Salmon & Mages, 2007). The duration of the Australia-Sweden-Malaysia program that used drama to reduce bullying was enacted over nine years. Authors noted that the length of programs varied with specific groups, but specification of the actual time spent with students engaging in components of the program would have aided comparisons (Malm & Lofgren, 2007).

A college-based class that employed digital storytelling lasted for one academic semester (16 weeks), yet the number of hours was not specified (Benmayor, 2008). Similarly, a program employing the arts in a solution-focused therapy support group for adolescent survivors of sexual abuse lasted for eight weeks, but the actual time spent with youth was not indicated (Kress & Hoffman, 2008). Of the more thoroughly described programs in terms of time, “Thru the Lenz,” a program employing participatory action research, photography, and creative processes in an urban high school, lasted for eight weeks, with four hours a week devoted to learning tasks (Goessling & Doyle, 2009). Also, a program for at-risk youth involving the creation of masks and a mural lasted for ten sessions over six weeks, with a specified total of ten hours of work with the students (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006).

Only seven of the 35 articles in the sample specified the duration of the program in terms of hours spent with students or gave enough information which would allow that

to be calculated. Excluding the program that was composed of a 40-minute performance followed by an interactive workshop, the duration of the remaining six reviewed programs, which specified the duration of the program in terms of hours spent with students, ranges from three to 40 hours.

Program Types

After reading a few articles from the sample, I decided to include in the analysis whether the article describes a specific program aimed at empowerment or not, as some did not, and whether the described empowerment takes place within formal or informal education settings or as part of a psychological therapy program. Twelve out of the 35 articles included in the sample did not describe a specific program. These were seen as equally valuable to the study as articles describing specific programs because they contribute to our understanding of how youth empowerment is tackled in the field.

The informal education programs that were encountered described educational activities that took place out of the school context or education in school that happens temporarily and out of the curriculum. As for therapy programs, although art therapy was not included in the research formula to create the sample for the meta-analysis, articles describing such programs that made it to the sample were not excluded. Fifteen out of the 35 articles in the sample described formal education (i.e. in-school) programs, 12 informal education (i.e. extracurricular) ones, 3 a combination of both formal and informal programs, 4 described therapy (clinical) programs, and 1 was unspecified.

An example of a formal education program was a college class entitled “Latina Life Stories.” The class offered digital storytelling as a platform for participants to tell

their own stories, drawing on a wide range of theory and stories of others. While creating their stories, the students experienced increased awareness of the contexts and elements that shaped their perspectives, and were empowered to theorize about their own cultural and historical experiences. At the end of the class, they shared their digital videos with their classmates and reflected on what they had learned, connecting their stories to bigger issues in society, and writing about how this experience impacted their thoughts about their social roles and responsibilities (Benmayor, 2008).

An example of an informal education program was a moviemaking workshop targeted at indigenous youth in Mexico. The workshop aimed at fostering in participants a more critical perspective as consumers of media, and empowering them to creatively express their own perspectives. The trainers worked with participants through stop-motion animation to record stories from the participants' communities in their native languages (Davenport & Gunn, 2009). An example of a therapy program was an alternative treatment approach for young women with anorexia nervosa, using poetry and narrative texts to support them in recovering from the illness. The authors indicated that most studies measure weight loss to assess recovery and also seek to target psychological health factors. They advocated that the proposed treatment "creates an expressive and assertive voice while shifting blame from the self to the disorder" (Robbins & Pehrsson, 2009, p. 42).

How Art Was Used

Out of the 35 reviewed empowerment articles, 11 involved art production only, such as writing a poem, producing a visual art piece, or dancing, six involved art

perception only, such as watching a film or a theater play, or listening to a rap song, and the majority, 18, involved a mixture of art production and perception activities. None of the art genres used was concentrated in one of the two categories only.

Out of the 35 reviewed articles 11 involved a final exhibit. It was not clear whether two did or did not, and the rest did not. Some program designers saw the final exhibit as an integral part of the program, furthering positive youth development. For instance, in “Project TEEN Mirrors of Motherhood (M.O.M.),” 14-23-year-old participants used tools like Photovoice, collage, curated photo albums, and active collaborative documentary filmmaking to “re-frame and re-present with critical and transformative intent the meaningful issues in their lives” and get critical feedback from the group (p. 295). Designers of the program saw the final exhibit that shared the work of participants with a broader audience as an integral part of the program, and two out of the 13 workshops composing the program were dedicated for participants to present their work to each other, select what they wanted to exhibit to the wider public, and approve the materials for exhibiting (Levy & Weber, 2011).

Targeted Adolescents

Only about half of the reviewed articles specified the number of beneficiaries or students participating in the program or study, and even for those who did, the description was sometimes non-specific. For example, the authors might indicate six classrooms in reference to the size of the participating group, without specifying the number of students in each (Kelly & Safford, 2009). When included, numbers ranged between one to 5,000 beneficiaries. If the numbers of participants were arranged from lowest to highest, the

one right below 5,000 would be 212. The mode, or most occurring number, was 8, and the median number of participants was 12. The median, located in the middle of the distribution of the data, is a good statistical descriptor in this case, because it limits the effect of extreme scores. Out of the 18 cases in which the number of participants was specified, 10 had 12 or fewer participants, three had 50 or fewer participants, three had participants numbering between 51 and 150, and two were above 200.

For the purpose of this study, and in line with the general trend in the field of Psychological Development, adolescence was defined as ranging between 13 and 21 years of age. During data analysis and in line with the descriptors used in the educational search engine ERIC, the adolescent target groups of studies or programs were categorized into three groups: Early adolescents, ranging in age between 11 and 15; Late adolescents, who are 16 to 23 years old; and Young adults, aged 18-30 (Houston, 2001). When the ages described in the article did not fit neatly into these pre-set categories, the one where age ranges predominantly fall is listed below, and in cases when an overlap was large, the target group was considered to be mixed.

About half of the reviewed articles targeted early adolescents and a quarter targeted late adolescents. The remaining quarter is mostly composed of articles that did not specify the age or school grade of the target group at all. This last quarter includes one article about a program for young adults, two about a mixed group of ages among adolescents, and two about the whole community. Two thirds of the articles gave other signifiers of the target group, in addition to the number and age of participants, while a third did not. Of those who did, the most common characteristics were belonging to a

minority group, being female, being at risk or vulnerable, and coming from an economically disadvantaged background.

The most commonly described characteristic of study participants was that of belonging to an ethnic minority. Some programs targeted youth from diverse cultural backgrounds in general or from minority ethnicities without specifying which ones, while the majority specified groups such as African Americans or Latinos matched with a gender group (i.e. African American boys or Latina girls). One program worked with indigenous youth in Mexico, another with immigrants, and one used a religious group descriptor (Christian). One of the programs was implemented in both ethnically homogeneous and mixed classes so as to observe differences in results. All articles describing programs that targeted whole communities addressed minority group communities. Only one article in the sample targeted Advanced Placement or higher achieving students.

In general, articles that specified the age group were more specific with other descriptors as well. Seven out of the 35 reviewed programs specified women or girls as their target group, which in a few cases included pregnant teenagers and young mothers, while two specified males. In only one case, the program was implemented with both mixed and separate gender classes. It is safe to assume based on the countries in which the programs took place that when gender was not specified, the target group was of mixed genders.

Another prevalently used descriptor under which several studies were listed was *at-risk youth*. Ten of the reviewed articles were about programs targeting this population. The ERIC thesaurus defines at-risk persons as “individuals or groups identified as

possibly having or potentially developing a problem (physical, mental, educational, etc.) requiring further evaluation and/or intervention,” and “at-risk students” as “students considered in danger of not graduating, being promoted, or meeting other education-related goals. Risk factors may include, but are not limited to, socioeconomic status; academic background; behavior, cognitive, or physical problems; family or community environment; and school capacity to meet student needs” (Houston, 2001).

In some of the reviewed articles the exact term *at-risk* was used. Risks identified were not reaching performance levels for promotion to a certain school grade, being at risk of dropping out of school or employment, being at risk of exclusion, being a young pregnant woman or a young parent, and experiencing other social vulnerabilities. Some articles also described programs targeting economically disadvantaged youth, programs based in inner city or urban schools (within the developed world), incarcerated youth, sexually abused youth, and students with disabilities.

Used Methods to Assess Programs

Two thirds of the articles that were studied in the meta-analysis described specific programs that have youth empowerment as their main aim or one of their aims. In those programs, authors described various modes and degrees of evaluation for program effectiveness. It is important to describe and critique different evaluation methods, or lack thereof, in order to highlight best practices and areas of weakness in the field. Most evaluations conflated self-reported behavior change with actual changes in behavior. One may argue that this is a minor point because being empowered is an attitudinal quality and there is no need to track behaviors. However, even attitudes are measured through

behaviors in psychology, which makes this observation important. Of the very few articles that describe behavioral changes, one targets decreased bullying and more ability to do self-management as an empowerment goal. The assessment of achieving this goal included self-reported data by participants and interviews with teachers and parents regarding improvement in actual bullying behavior (Malm & Lofgren, 2007).

Another article that included observation of behavioral change was Davenport and Gunn's, who mentioned that a number of the participants in their program studied visual communications at university as a result of the program (2009). In another article, the author interviewed teachers to note the positive development of two academically disengaged 14-year-olds after participation in a program where they lead a group of 11 year olds in performing a drama piece. This assessment included actual changes in the students' academic performance and personal engagement at school (Morrison, 2004).

The most-used method to assess programs was ethnography, which included observation of participants, plus audio and video recording, followed by analysis. The second most-used tools were surveys and interviews directed at participants. When further information about the timing of these efforts was provided, most indicated was implementation at the end of the program. A few assessments were implemented during the program, and in two better cases, surveys were conducted pre-, post-, and six months after the completion of the program. Participant focus groups, which were implemented most often during the program, were also indicated. Next often-used assessment methods were analysis of student reflections and interviews with teachers. Uncommonly used assessment methods included accounting for retention in the program, level of

participation and completion of assignments, feedback from final exhibit attendees, and discourse analysis.

Davenport and Gunn described animation moviemaking workshops that they taught to indigenous youth in Mexico. The workshops were aimed at fostering in participants a more critical perspective as consumers of media, and empowering them to creatively express their own perspectives. The authors worked with participants through stop-motion animation to record stories from their communities in their native (indigenous) languages (2009). They did not mention whether they did evaluations at the end of workshops. We know that the authors documented the workshops through photography and video, and reported that many participants from previous workshops returned during their visit for the latest workshop to share with them how they had employed what they had learned. According to the authors, at least one participant went into university to study visual communications as a result of the workshops.

As far as we know, no systemic verification of whether the goals of the program were achieved was done. In spite of reports concerning follow-up communication by participants to say thank-you, pride expressed by previous participants, and the choice of one participant to study visual communication at university, we do not know the percentage of participants who followed-up and whether that might have been different had a follow-up been mandated for all previous participants. If the number of participants did not increase, could it be that only those who returned were those who were satisfied with the program? Furthermore, the student's studying of visual communication might have been triggered by something other than the workshop, since participation in the workshop was by a self-selecting group of students who were already interested in the

topic. Even if we accept these as valid ways of assessment, it is difficult to link them to the original goals of the workshops, which were to foster in participants from indigenous groups a more critical perspective as consumers of media, and to empower them to creatively express their own perspectives.

Another example of used assessment methods is from a program that employed the Ericksonian therapeutic model, which focuses on solution-based therapy and is active rather than passive in terms of initiating what happens during therapy. In their article “Empowering adolescent survivors of sexual abuse: Application of a solution-focused Ericksonian counseling group,” Kress and Hoffman used a post-intervention focus group to assess the impact of the program (2008). Holding a focus group, as an assessment method, has the benefit of interacting with participants, asking follow-up questions and ones that probe for deeper answers, and observing non-verbal reactions. However, it may limit participants’ responses due to its lack of anonymity, and the direction of the answers of the group may be influenced by the general leniency of opinions due to peer pressure, where vocal or influential members of the group may influence the opinion of the group, and voices of more silent members may be drowned out. Therefore, mixing this method with anonymous surveys would have provided more reliable results. In the same article, while the authors mentioned a 0% drop-out rate, they did not indicate that as one of the indicators of the program’s success. Attrition is a valid indicator given that the participants were not forced to participate.

In a program where arts were used to empower teenage mothers, participants interacted with and used different art forms to share their views, participate in community discussions that affected them, and define and solve some of the challenges they faced.

The program ended with an exhibit, a film screening, and a website that shared the participants' work beyond their group (Levy & Weber, 2011). To evaluate the program, the authors observed workshops, videotaped activities, interviewed staff who worked with participants on a regular basis to note their progress after participation in the program, questionnaires were distributed to participants at the end of the program, and consistency of attendance, levels of participation, and completion of the assignments were noted. Finally, feedback from attendees of the final art exhibit was collected.

The program is thoroughly described by the author and examples of the participants' work are shared, which facilitates better understanding and validation of results by the reader. The article is dense with theoretical references that provide a basis on which the program was developed, and ground reflection on the program's results. This is another example of a program that was evaluated well. The only limitation is that the impact of the different art activities composing the program is not assessed individually, since a mix of them was used, leading to an inability to identify which program components led to which results and a lack of ability to replicate part of this very varied program in order to achieve particular results.

The article "Empowering students to handle conflicts through the use of drama" describes a school-based program called DRAMa for CONflict management (DRACON), aimed at improving adolescents' abilities to handle conflict as a consequence of educational drama (Malm & Lofgren, 2007). Although the authors describe empowerment of a single trait (i.e. handling conflicts) rather than whole individual empowerment, it is an excellent example in terms of describing and evaluating what was done. Designers of this experimental program believe that learning from one's own

experience is better than through books or other means. For this reason, they used drama as a method of working with adolescents who would benefit from being able to handle conflicts. The researcher-authors wanted to develop a program that could be taught, implemented, and evaluated in different schools, and therefore tested it in three countries (Sweden, Australia, and Malaysia).

The Malm and Lofgren (2007) comparative study involved four independent research teams, one in Sweden, one in Malaysia, and two in Australia, who tested program *resilience* in differing teaching contexts. The authors gave the following justification: Pedagogical programs that work in Sweden may be less feasible in Malaysia and vice versa. Programs that work for boys may not work for girls. Knowledge of the cultural sensitivity of drama work is important because the participating countries are all multicultural or at least moving in that direction. Our intention is to develop culturally inclusive programs that function in drama classes composed of students from different cultures. Therefore, we have given the project a comparative design (Malm & Lofgren, 2007).

The DRACON team initially intended to study, develop, and test singular drama exercises for conflict handling in order to improve the conflict-handling repertoire of students. After feedback from drama specialists, it was agreed that a drama format by definition cannot be done in bits and pieces. It was also noted that different cultures and natures of school systems and how open they were to the drama interventions were a factor that could not just be tested as an independent variable but as part of the drama exercises. Therefore, no standard measures of effects were developed and teams of researchers had flexibility in setting up the different programs in different schools and in

tackling the problem at hand in their own ways. What they had in common was the presence of specialists in both areas of drama and conflict management, and meeting annually (over the five years of the study) to share and discuss issues at hand.

The authors sought diversity in the selected sample by including subjects from urban, suburban, and rural areas. Subjects included persons of mixed (lower than high socio-economic) classes, mixed genders, and from both ethnically homogeneous and mixed ethnic backgrounds. The researchers aimed to measure several dimensions of outcome, such as motivation, language, and skills, and on many levels of aggregation (individual, class, whole school), in addition to paying attention to short- and long-term goals. Collected data were both quantitative and qualitative. It included self-reported data from questionnaires, diaries, and questions requiring problem solving, in addition to data from focus groups, interviews with students and their teachers, observations, and video-taping drama exercises. One of the research teams used pre- and post-tests, which were unreliable because participants were resistant to completing anything written at the beginning of the program. Another team used the same assessment framework of pre- and post-tests, combined with having students interview each other, which worked better. Finally, data was gathered at different points in the process.

The DRACON program was conducted over a long period of time and involved a large and diverse sample in terms of locations of implementation. The sample size of 5,000 students was the largest of all reviewed articles for this study. The next largest study included only 212 participants. Evaluation of the DRACON program was strong because researchers relied on a combination of assessment methods and assessment was done at different intervals of project implementation. Wisely, these researchers did not

attempt to generalize findings; they acknowledged that what might work in a certain culture or school system or with a specific gender group might not work in another context. Therefore, that they did not generalize their findings. Measuring changes in behavior in addition to those in attitude and personal traits also was one of the better markers of the evaluation process of this project. The authors specified part of empowerment as being the students' abilities to manage conflicts on their own. Behavioral change was measured through self-reported data and observations by teachers and parents, followed by corroborating data, which made self-reported input more reliable. The study, however, might have been strengthened by adding control groups or students who did not participate in the program.

In general, most of the reviewed journal articles used qualitative research methods, and few used a mixed method approach. Mixed methods were used in a study looking at the effects of ethnic identity, self-esteem, exposure to rap music, age, and gender on depressive symptoms in adolescents. Questionnaires were distributed to 128 youth in the presence of researchers who were available to answer questions. Structural equation modeling, assisted by computer software, was used to corroborate the data and test the hypotheses of the researchers. Positive ethnic identity was found to be associated with greater music-influenced empowerment and to act as a buffer against depressive symptoms, while self-esteem was found to be associated with increased music-influenced risky attitudes (Travis & Bowman, 2012). Empowerment in this context was earlier defined by Travis and Deepak as being comprised of self-esteem, resilience, growth (development, mentoring), community (culture, pride), and change (awareness, action)

(2011). Risk was noted by Travis and Bowman to mean “violence, risky sexual behaviors, and substance use” (2012, p. 455).

Although quantitative methods are limited by default when studying human phenomena, they still indicate directions of work that small sample sizes, which are often associated with qualitative work, may not lead us to. They also allow us to simultaneously investigate relationships between different variables. Travis and Bowman (2012) listed the following limitations of their study: the need for measuring changes in relationships between variables in the model across time, the intersections and overlapping of variables, and the impact of the environment of listening on the resulting influence. They also highlighted the need for exploring variability of rap music content and impact, and the need for more research.

Finally, Wallace-DiGarbo and Hill (2006) describe a program where visual arts (mask making and mural making) were used to empower at-risk students who were struggling at school. They defined empowerment as self-efficacy and measured it by a set of assessment instruments (Wanberg’s 1991 Adolescent Self-Assessment Profile and The Outcome Inventory), which were implemented at three points of time: at the beginning of the program, immediately after program completion, and 6 months after the program. The researchers mixed quantitative methods that measured the probability of program outcomes with qualitative ones such as observing the participants and facilitators of the program. Limitations identified were the small number of the sample and short duration of the implementation of the program. I would add to that the limitations of low retention of the program (i.e. only 6 out of 12 completed the program, and only these 6 filled out the assessment questionnaires), and not having a control group. Additionally, the

researchers did not abide by their proposed definition of empowerment as equaling self-efficacy, and measured it by implementing tools that focused on “the participants’ agency in their world as measured by . . . : (a) family adjustment, (b) psychological adjustment, (c) peer influence, (d) school adjustment, (e) deviancy, and (f) attitude” (p. 120).

A better example of evaluation that relied upon qualitative methods was described in an article about a year-long program of poetry based on students’ experiences in life (Wiseman, 2011). The program was implemented during an academic year by an outside researcher in an English language classroom for 8th-grade students at an urban school. The research question was “how do students participate in a classroom poetry workshop led by a community member that builds on their experiences and knowledge in various contexts?” (Wiseman, 2011, p. 70). Wiseman used ethnographic techniques of participant observation and descriptive analysis in exploring her question over the duration of one academic year. She held four focus group sessions with 5 out of the 22 participants, selected by their teacher as representative of their class in terms of race, ethnicity, academic success, and interest in the used art form. She also conducted several individual interviews and used the coding method of grounded theory in analyzing students’ writing to determine what part of their personal experiences appeared in their poetry. She used the coding method of grounded theory. Data were gathered over the whole duration of the project and interactions were audio-recorded for later analysis.

By comparing and crossing analysis of written poems with comments from focus groups and group interviews, and classroom observations, Wiseman employed triangulation to validate data by crossing different sources. She increased the credibility of observations by prolonged engagement in the classroom, collaboration with research

participants, and having varied types of data. She also increased the transferability of the results by providing thick description (Wiseman, 2011). The study concluded that the program encouraged students to contribute to the classroom and helped them improve their language practices and develop their own writing voices. Assessment could have been improved by describing improvement in specific rather than broad terms. Having a second person in addition to the author code the poems and comparing results of the two coders would have increased the validity of the analysis.

Stated Limitations

The general stream of stated limitations in many reviewed articles highlighted needs for more empirical research, more longitudinal studies, and more studies with clearly articulated experimental designs with control groups and randomly selected subjects. Limitations also were evidenced by small sample sizes, and minimal intervention or program times. Orme, Salmon, and Mages indicate that when working with vulnerable youth groups, there should be less use of assessment methods that depend on language and literacy skills, and more drama-based initiatives to allow for more appropriate and inclusive evaluation methods (2007). Wallace-DiGarbo and Hill also noted that young participants struggle to see the value of doing assessments (2006).

Travis and Bowman examined effects among ethnic identity, self-esteem, exposure to rap music, age, and gender on depressive symptoms in adolescents. They found that positive ethnic identity and music-influenced empowerment acted as a buffer against depressive symptoms, while self-esteem was associated with increased music-influenced risky attitudes (2012). They cited a need for more exploration of the

variability in rap music content and its impact, changes in relationships between variables in the model across time, intersections of variables, and the impact of an environment of listening on the influence.

Other stated limitations focused on issues of recruitment and selection of participants, program design, and exposing participants to theory. In Davenport and Gunn's animation filmmaking workshops for indigenous youth in Mexico, for example, they wished they had involved multiple groups of indigenous youth at the same time in order to foster more intercultural learning among participants (2009). Goessling and Doyle called for shifting from a structured to a flexible curriculum to meet the moods and needs of participants (2009). Gourd and Gourd, who implemented a program using Forum Theatre to teach a curricular unit on bullying to 8th graders, wished they had included in the goals of their program the linking of bullying to larger inequalities in society, in order to expand the perspectives of the students and enrich the discussion (2011).

Summary

Data of this examination consisted of 35 academic peer-reviewed journal articles having three things in common: all focused on adolescents, addressed empowerment as a goal, and employed some arts form in affecting empowerment. This chapter described a large group of mostly qualitative studies with the purpose of providing a picture the current status of the field of youth empowerment through the arts, highlighting trends and recurrent practices, pointing to collective areas where there are gaps in knowledge

regarding how youth might become empowered, and identifying successful programs and assessments. General observations of data identified:

- location of the implemented youth empowerment program
- duration of the program
- number of beneficiaries or participants of the program
- characteristics of the participant group
- whether the program was conducted in a formal or informal educational setting or was of therapeutic nature
- used arts
- nature of beneficiaries' interaction with art
- whether the program includes a final exhibit or presentation
- methods used for evaluating the programs
- stated limitations.

The arts genres that appeared in the sample were drama, music, design crafts, drawing, industrial arts, painting, photography, woodworking, poetry, narrative text, filmmaking, film critique, visual art critique, popular culture, and storytelling. Most prevalent was the use of the performing arts, especially drama, then visual arts, especially photography, followed by poetry and hip-hop culture. Sixty-six percent of the reviewed articles described programs inside the U.S. and most focused on a specific location. Mention of the duration of the program was largely missing from the articles and when indicated, it was rarely defined in terms of the actual time spent with students versus the overall duration with the program. Only about half of the reviewed articles specified the number of beneficiaries or students participating in the program or study. When

specified, most had smaller groups of 12 or fewer participants, most targeted early adolescents, ranging in age between 11 and 15, and many targeted ethnic minorities and at risk youth, while most were not gender-specific.

There were slightly more formal programs (i.e. that took place within the classroom) than informal programs in the reviewed articles, and a few therapy programs were represented. In terms of the nature of interactions with art, most leaned towards art production (i.e. where participants wrote a poem, produced a visual art piece, or danced) over perception, where they listened to a rap song or watched a film. The majority of programs involved a mixture of both producing and perceiving art. Finally, about half of the programs that involved art production included a final exhibit.

It is unfortunate that most articles were not descriptive enough of the technical elements of the study, such as the group size, time frame, actual time spent with youth, characteristics of the participating youth group, and even their age. Equally unfortunate was the quality of performed assessments. Most evaluations conflated self-reported behavioral change with actual change in behavior, most poorly used qualitative methods and had small numbers of participants. Most relied on only one method of assessing success, such as observations or student surveys, and none included control groups. The most used assessment method was ethnography, which involved observations of participants and video and audio recordings, followed by surveys and interviews directed at participants. Most assessments occurred at the very end of the programs, versus having pre- and post-assessments or assessments after some length of time having passed - one may argue that empowerment components take a longer time to sink in. A few more

wholesome assessments included focus groups, interviews with teachers, and noting levels of participation and completion of assignments.

Fortunately, many authors identified these limitations. They called for more research, more longitudinal studies, more studies employing empirical designs, having bigger numbers and more purposefully recruited participants, and utilizing methods that are friendlier to vulnerable youth groups. Such methods recognize that language and literacy skills may limit input into classic assessment tools that mostly involve written responses.

CHAPTER FOUR
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS FOR ARTS-BASED YOUTH
EMPOWERMENT

Introduction

One aim of this study is to identify theory that is referenced in the field of youth empowerment through the arts by practitioners and academicians as they design programs and conduct studies. This will be done through an analysis of the 35 studied samples. I will look for common references, and eliminate ones that were infrequently mentioned or not included in relation to youth empowerment. In this chapter, I present theoretical frameworks that practitioners and academicians used in a sample of articles where each included references to: adolescents, empowerment, and the arts.

Using meta-analysis methods, I describe theoretical frameworks that the practitioners referred to while designing, implementing, and evaluating their programs. All theoretical references within the documents were noted, regardless of whether or not they referenced established theories. After coding theoretical references within the articles, I transferred these codes to an external database. Each was notated along with the title of the sourced article, where it was mentioned, and what it was mentioned in reference to. References cited by multiple authors were considered more important than those cited several times by one. I also noted instances when an author was citing his or her own previous work.

The pool of studied articles included those that solely addressed youth empowerment and also others that targeted broader objectives. For instance, “Enacting

Democracy: Using Forum Theatre to Confront Bullying” (Gourd & Gourd, 2011) did not enlist all of the goals of the described program as components of empowerment but also of democracy – which may not be the case for other authors. On the other hand, “Collaboration in Animation: Working Together to Empower Indigenous Youth” (Davenport & Gunn, 2009) is about empowerment in its entirety. When an article in its entirety addressed youth empowerment, I looked throughout the whole article for theory and considered broader theoretical references. However, when an article addressed youth empowerment in addition to other areas, I only noted theory that was used when addressing empowerment.

Overview of Findings

The most-referenced theories and theoretical frameworks were Critical Pedagogy, Photovoice, Forum Theatre, Positive Youth Development, Ericksonian Theory and solution-focused therapy, and integration of Hip-Hop culture into social work practice, in addition to critical ethnography, research, and media production and consumption.

The study showed that the authors most referenced in relation to youth empowerment through the arts are Paolo Freire and Caroline Wang. Freire is a recognized name in the field of education for his writings on critical pedagogy. Famous for his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, his educational approach links teaching and learning to the political and social contexts that intersect with one’s journey of seeking knowledge (Freire, 1970). Caroline Wang is a principal developer of a tool that incorporates photography and participatory action research, which she calls *Photovoice* (Wang, 2003). Photovoice has set processes as an educational tool and is popular around

the world. It is also the name of a UK-based international development organization, which uses participatory photography to enable disadvantaged communities to represent themselves and advocate for their causes (Photovoice, n.d.).

Major referenced theories in the articles covered by this study are presented below and an overview of most referenced authors follows. There were many other authors and theorists that were referenced in relation to youth empowerment, but none were mentioned in more than one article. After Freire and Wang, the most reference authors, all with the same frequency of citation, were Augusto Boal, Edgar Tyson, Milton H. Erickson, Richard Lerner, William Damon, and an article by co-authors Nilda Flores-Gonzalez, Matthew Rodriguez, and Michael Rodriguez-Muniz. Augusto Boal was either referenced directly in many of the reviewed articles or through studies and articles about his work and methods. Boal's most referenced work was his book *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1979/1985), which was influenced by Paolo Freire's works. His most-referenced method was Forum Theatre, which has been widely adapted as an educational tool (Farmer, n.d.), and includes improvisation, audience participation, and use of theatre to work through cases of oppression.

Milton H. Erickson is a psychiatrist and psychologist specializing in medical hypnosis and family therapy. He believes that the therapist should be active, initiating what happens during therapy, rather than passively interacting with the client. His psychiatric method is solution-based, focusing on encouraging resistance, causing change by communicating in metaphor, emphasizing the positive, and seeding ideas. He also stresses the family as a resource for therapy (Haley, 1973, pp. 17-34).

Richard Lerner is based at Tufts University and his research is ongoing. He is the originator of a major trend in developmental psychology and adolescent psychological and psychotherapy practices called *Positive Youth Development*, which is increasingly popular in prevention programs designed to mediate at-risk youth. It establishes five traits that characterize individuals who enjoy a healthy adolescence and a smooth transition into adulthood: Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring. These are referred to as the *Five C's* (Lerner et al., 2005), to which Lerner later added a Sixth C, Contribution, which develops when the first five are present (Lerner, 2004, p. 24). Lerner's articles were either referenced directly or indirectly, e.g. an article by William Damon titled "What is positive youth development?" (2004).

Edgar Tyson writes in the area of hip-hop and social work, exploring whether rap music could be empowering to listeners and integrating hip-hop culture into social work practice with youth (Tyson, 2003, 2006; Kobin & Tyson, 2006 in Travis & Deepak, 2011 and Travis & Bowman, 2012). Nilda Flores-Gonzalez, Matthew Rodriguez, and Michael Rodriguez-Muniz (2006) examine identity support, empowerment, and youth civic engagement, and argue that hip-hop culture embedded within a rich social network can be empowering (Travis & Deepak, 2011; Travis & Bowman, 2012).

Critical Pedagogy

Richard Shaull writes in his preface to Freire's book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) that

education either functions as an instrument that is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes 'the practice of freedom,' the means by which men

and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. (Freire, 1968, p. 34).

Critical pedagogy has its roots in critical theory and is concerned with transforming oppressive relations of power. The concept originated in the 1970s and '80s based on the work of Paolo Freire, Pierre Bourdieu's work on cultural capital, and the critical theory of the Frankfurt school, which reinterprets some of the economic and political notions of the Marxist school of thought (Kincheloe, 2004, pp. 45, 77; Corradetti, n.d.).

A leading theorist of critical pedagogy is Paolo Freire, whose book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) is a seminal reference for educators working in the field. For Freire, a liberating pedagogy should follow a problem-posing model versus a banking model. The problem-posing model involves dialogue and a constant unveiling of reality, whereas in the banking model:

The teacher teaches and the students are taught;
The teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
The teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
The teacher talks and the students listen- meekly;
The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
The teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
The teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;
The teacher chooses the program content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it;
The teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which she and he sets in opposition to the freedom of the students;
The teacher is the Subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects. (Freire, 1968, pp. 59, 73, 81).

The problem-*posing* education that Freire advocates for considering the people's history as its starting point includes education and investigation, where the content is constituted and organized by the students' view of the world. In contrast to this model,

banking education fails to acknowledge people as historical beings (Freire, 1968, pp. 84, 109). Dialogue for Freire simultaneously includes reflection and action and cannot exist without love for the world and for people, humility, hope, and critical thinking (pp. 87-92). Freire's educational approach is contextualized with theory about development (i.e. international development, or development of developing countries). He believes that development of a certain society is beyond criteria based on indicators such as per-capita income or potentially misleading statistics and extends to whether members of that society's own political, economic, and cultural decision-making power or such power "exists for itself" (Freire, 1968, pp. 161-162).

Photovoice

Photovoice is a participatory action research method first developed by Caroline Wang and Mary Ann Burris to enhance women's public health. It is rooted in theories on education for critical consciousness, feminist theory, and non-traditional approaches to documentary photography (Wang, 1999; Wang & Burris, 1997). According to Wang, Photovoice is a

process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique. [It] has three main goals: to enable people (1) to record and reflect their community's strengths and concerns, (2) to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about personal and community issues through large and small group discussion of their photographs, and (3) to reach policymakers. (Wang, 1999, p. 185).

According to Strack, Magill, and McDonagh, the Photovoice process provides youth with the chance to develop their personal and social identities and is instrumental in building social competence (2004).

The procedure of using Photovoice is composed of: 1) Recruiting a target audience of policy makers and community leaders to serve as an influential audience for the participants' images, stories, and recommendations; 2) recruiting participants; and 3) introducing the Photovoice method to participants and facilitating group discussion. This includes discussing issues of power and ethics, assessing and discussing ways of minimizing risks to participants, talking about giving pictures back to community members in expressions of gratitude, introducing cameras, posing an initial theme for taking pictures, meeting to discuss the photographs taken, and collaboratively planning with participants about ways of sharing their work with policymakers and/or community leaders (Wang, 1999).

The programs reviewed in this study, which cite the Photovoice method, employed the standards indicated above to varying degrees. Wilson et al. (2007), for example, implemented a program where early adolescents used documented assets and issues in their community and discussed causality, followed by designing an action plan for a project to be implemented with the aim of enhancing school environment. As final projects, most student groups performed skits about issues relevant to their school. The method followed was not fully shared and the indicators used to assess the success of the program (i.e. the number of students who participated in designing social action projects) were not in accord with the Photovoice methodological objectives.

Another program claiming a Photovoice methodology was called "Thru the Lenz." Graduate students in a counseling program engaged with urban at-risk high school students in the U.S. through photography and participatory action research. The program had a wide array of aims, including improving the well-being of participants and their

communities, gaining insight into the lives, experiences, and communities of participants, teaching students about their lives and communities, developing community relationships, exchanging expertise and skills, facilitating creative expressions of self in general and toward people in power, and assisting personal and interpersonal development. Program sessions included photo discussions, photo-taking, and reflection. The project culminated with two exhibitions and the sale of a calendar featuring participants' work as a fundraiser for buying camera film in the future. The researchers noted that starting discussions with participants about the pictures they took was challenging (Goessling & Doyle, 2009). The researchers identified the problem as too focused on photography after the fact, rather than encouraging discussions among participants before cameras were used.

Forum Theatre

In Forum Theatre, audiences are allowed to become part of the theatrical work. A scene featuring oppression is enacted twice. During the second enactment, any member of the audience can shout 'stop' and join the actors in resolving the situation. A facilitator (or joker) enables communication between the audience and the players (Farmer, n.d.). This method was developed by Augusto Boal from Brazil, who was a student of Paulo Freire, author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968).

Boal's Forum Theatre method is used widely in certain educational contexts (Farmer, n.d.). Schaedler (2010), for instance, argues in favor of using Forum Theatre along with critical literacy in English for ESOL classes for immigrants. He cites the benefits of increasing participants' social awareness, transforming them into protagonists

of their own lives, and helping them develop language skills. Gourd and Gourd (2011) describe a program where Forum Theatre was used as a method of delivering a curricular unit on bullying to 8th graders. The unit aimed at creating opportunities for a transformative educational experience in relation to democratic and social justice ideals, with the specific goals of

(a) enabling participants to acknowledge behaviors that hurt individuals and damage the sense of community in the school context, (b) helping the group envision changes in behavior that support individuals and the collective good of all members of the community, and (c) providing opportunities to try out strategies that might support improved human relationships within the school community. (Gourd & Gourd, 2011, p. 405).

In this program, participants had the opportunity to change elements, actions, or characters of a theatrical piece enacting a bullying situation at their school, in order to prevent the escalation of the situation into violence. Afterwards, they reflected on their choices and discussed strategies they could actually adopt at the school. The authors said their goals were achieved but wished they had been explicit in connecting the issue of bullying to social inequality, which would have made student learning deeper.

Positive Youth Development

Positive Youth Development refers to a group of practices in the areas of psychology and social work related to preventing risky adolescent behaviors and supporting the healthy development of youth into adulthood. It emphasizes the plasticity, diversity, and individual agency of adolescents, in addition to their capacity to influence their own development. This is compared to previous (and still present) trends that view adolescence as a time of turmoil and deficiency (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009, pp. 4-12). According to Richard Lerner, who is the main figure in the field of positive youth

development, there are five traits that characterize individuals who enjoy a healthy adolescence and smooth transition into adulthood. He calls them the Five C's, which are Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring (Lerner, 2005; Lerner et al., 2005).

Competence refers to skills in social, academic, cognitive, and vocational areas. *Confidence* includes self-esteem. *Connection* focuses on positive relationships with family, school, community, and peers; *Character* pertains to ethics and focuses on integrity, values, and interpersonal skills, and lastly, *Caring* includes sympathizing and empathizing with others, plus having a sense of social justice (Lerner, 2005; Lerner et al., 2005). Lerner and his co-researchers later added a Sixth C, *Contribution*, involving contributions to self, family, community, and civil society, which the individual will develop after the Five C's are present (Lerner, Dowling & Anderson, 2003). Lerner et al. write that when the Five C's

place the young person on a life path toward a hopeful future, the youth is manifesting exemplary positive development... such youth will become generative adults, persons who make simultaneously positive contributions to themselves, to family and community, and to civic life. The individual will develop, then, a 'Sixth C,' that is, 'contribution'. (Lerner, 2004, p. 24).

Similar to contribution is the construct of *initiative*, suggested by Reed Larson as part of positive youth development. For Larson (2000), initiative is a set of skills that youth need to take charge of their lives, and is composed of intrinsic motivation, concerted engagement in the environment, and an arc of effort over time.

Two of the studies reviewed through meta-analysis use Positive Youth Development as a theoretical framework, both with Raphael Travis Jr. as a co-author. The first describes studies in which hip-hop culture is explored as promoting or

inhibiting. Researchers describe positive youth development and suggest tools that could improve social workers' practices by capitalizing on hip-hop culture as relevant to beneficiaries (Travis & Deepak, 2011). The second article challenges perceptions of the empowering and risky influences that rap music inspires and examines effects among ethnic identity, self-esteem, and exposure to rap music, and other biographical factors, on depressive symptoms in adolescents (Travis & Bowman, 2012).

Ericksonian Theory and Solution-Focused Therapy

Erickson's therapeutic model is active rather than passive, insofar as the therapist initiates what happens during therapy. His psychiatric method focuses on encouraging resistance, causing change by communicating in metaphor, emphasizing the positive, and seeding ideas (Haley, 1973, pp. 17-34). Furthermore, Erickson believed that inspiration (versus information) taken from counseling sessions is what the client needs, and that any change, even for the worse, meant that change is possible, which is better than the client remaining in a static position (Kress & Hoffman, 2008). Solution-focused therapy, just as its name implies, is goal-oriented, and focuses on the future (De Shazer & Dolan, 2007).

Following an Ericksonian model, including solution-based therapy, one of the reviewed articles describes a program where therapeutic stories were used in counseling adolescent sexual abuse survivors. Kress, Adamson, and Yensel employed photos to create an empowering space for participants to reflect upon the topic of identity (2010). They referenced Erickson's method of presenting a child or an adolescent with a story, by which the client's belief in the story's characters allows his or her unconscious to interpret the story's message in an empowering way. Similarly, Kress and Hoffman

employed storytelling, writing, and symbols to increase coping abilities of sexually abused girls, investing in the participants' stories, metaphors, cultures, and world views (2008).

Integration of Hip-Hop Culture into Social Work Practice

Several authors of reviewed programs integrated hip-hop culture (music, dance, and graffiti) in their activities. Haddix and Sealey-Ruiz (2012) designed an empowerment summer writing institute for 5th- to 8th-grade African American males at an urban school. The program included digital, visual, and hip-hop literacies in an effort to achieve positive academic goals for the students and an in-school mentoring program where digital tools and popular literacies were employed to foster the love of reading and writing in participants. Participants also used digital tools to create knowledge within the classroom. The program “Lyrics on Lockdown (LOL): Slamming the Prison Industrial Complex” used hip-hop, spoken-word, theater, dance, and visual arts to raise awareness and catalyze action towards ending mass incarcerations of people of color in the U.S. The youth component of the program aimed to develop participants' literacy, critical thinking, and other practical life skills, and empower them to envision and plan life beyond prison and become active in the positive transformation of their communities. The program took place over five years in correctional facilities, community centers, and colleges in over 25 cities in the U.S. and evolved into a university course exploring the uses of the arts as a tool for positive social change (Green, 2010).

On the research front, Travis and Deepak (2011) introduced a tool called “The Individual and Community Empowerment Framework,” aiming at assisting social

workers in understanding the competing messages within hip-hop culture and how these might promote or inhibit positive youth development. The Framework outlines areas for empowerment that could be used to analyze songs and provides a structure for collaborative development of goals and personal change and growth strategies between youth and social workers. In a later study, Travis and Bowman (2012) examined effects among ethnic identity, self-esteem, exposure to rap music, age, and gender on depressive symptoms in adolescents. They found that positive ethnic identity is associated with greater music-influenced empowerment and acts as a buffer against depressive symptoms, and that self-esteem is associated with increased music-influenced risky attitudes. What is distinct about the work of Travis and other researchers working in the area of youth empowerment and hip-hop is that they address both the potential positive and negative impact of engaging with a certain art form, rather than assuming or focusing on positive impact alone.

It was interesting to find through this study that youth development work through hip-hop culture was the most researched art form in the reviewed sample of studies. There are multiple developed models that give guidance to social workers and youth development practitioners on using hip-hop culture as a resource for youth interventions, including at-risk youth, particularly males and African American and Latino youth. These models invest in the immediate social environment of young participants and highlight the benefit of using hip-hop culture to increase youth's engagement and motivation for treatment and improvement of health outcomes. These outcomes include self-esteem, resilience, growth, and pride and cultural belonging, in addition to socio-economic and

political awareness and “action for change” (Tyson, 2003; Travis & Deepak, 2011, p. 211).

Critical Ethnography, Research, and Media Production and Consumption

Participatory action research, beyond Photovoice, was referenced in the studied articles. Activist Collaborative Documentary Filmmaking is a visual research strategy of participatory action research that promotes self-study and social change. It facilitates that participants “share stories for change by becoming researchers and filmmakers of their lives” (Levy & Weber, 2011, p. 295). Critical ethnography is a similar, although more established method. Though critical ethnography, participants engage in research while committing to a political agenda to achieve political rights for the disadvantaged. This practice emerged in the education literature in the 1980s as a merger between ethnography and critical theory. It assumes that education and research are intrinsically political and influenced by cultural values (Barton, 2001).

Some practitioners have applied critical ethnography and means of helping student understand their own local culture further, by initiating youths from disadvantaged minority populations to create media content that might be presented to a wider audience beyond the confines of their impoverished communities. For instance, Davenport and Gunn designed and implemented animation moviemaking workshops for indigenous youth in Mexico. They worked with participants through stop-motion animation to record stories from the indigenous communities in their native languages. The workshops aimed at fostering participants’ critical perspectives as consumers of

media and empowering them to creatively express their own perspectives (Davenport & Gunn, 2009).

Critical media literacy, which was referenced as well, was presented as allowing students to analyze, critique, and resist dominant media narratives (Gainer, 2010), and as envisioned to go hand-in-hand with responsibility, respect for self and others, and citizenship (De Abreu, 2010). UNESCO states that media literacy “activates people’s engagement and serves as a catalyst for open and well informed dialogue” (UNESCO, 2009). Levy and Weber (2011) put together a program for teenage mothers and mothers-to-be where a mixed arts approach was used to open up space for them to share their views, participate in community discussions that affected them, and define and solve some of the challenges they faced. The program included engaging in film and media critique related to coverage of teenage pregnancy, and concluded with a final exhibition that included photography, collages, writings, and a film screening.

Other Theoretical References

Travis and Bowman examined effects among ethnic identity, self-esteem, exposure to rap music, and other biographical indicators on depressive symptoms in adolescents. They found that positive ethnic identity and greater awareness of one’s community and connection to it act as empowerment tools, while decreasing the chance of depression (2012). As seen with approaches that invest in hip-hop culture, which is observed or assumed to be relevant to the participant youth, Activist Collaborative Documentary Filmmaking and critical ethnography may focus on issues experienced by

participating youth. In a broader sense, there are multiple voices advocating for the use of local or native literacies and popular culture to support youth's development.

In an article reviewed in this study, Haddix and Sealey-Ruiz describe an in-school mentoring program where digital tools and popular literacies were employed to foster the love of reading and writing in African American male participants by inviting them to create knowledge within the classroom (2012). Kelly and Safford tackled the empowerment of linguistic expression by capitalizing on popular culture interests identified by the researcher and an already existing level of engagement by students. They worked with students' writing interactions related to the football World Cup (2009). As another example, Elmesky designed a youth empowerment program where student researchers created a movie as a curricular resource about science. The movie, which explored the physics phenomenon of sound, was built on the embodied knowledge of participants, who were economically disadvantaged urban youth. The author defined embodied resources as "ways of being (both conscious and unconscious) that may include specific knowledge, values, skills, morals, aspirations, rituals, beliefs, goals, or interests as well as manners of interacting, communicating, or moving" (2005, p. 4).

Besides Photovoice, other photography-based methods used included photo elicitation, where photographs are used to elicit responses from participants (Kearns, 2012), and curated photo albums, where participants created self-study photo albums, chose pictures around a theme, gave them captions and a title, and wrote a statement of intent about them (Levy & Weber, 2011). Also present were general references to phototherapy techniques, although not always presented as such. Phototherapy supports participants' engagements with self-exploration while interacting with photographs. The

pictures are thought to be useful material to support self-reflection and self-study regardless of who is featured in them. They could be taken by the participant, or of him or her by another person. They could also be self-portraits, could include family albums and photo-biographical collections, and could include interaction between the participant and any photographs (Weiser, 1993).

Goessling and Doyle describe a program involving photo discussions, photo-taking, and reflection. Their aims included increasing participants' well-being and that of their communities, gaining insight into their lives, teaching them about their lives and communities, and assisting personal and interpersonal development (2009).

Unfortunately, this program, like many of those reviewed, had very broad goals and assumed that mere participation in art production would achieve the sought-after results, without engaging participants in theoretical readings, reflections, or discussions.

Furthermore, the program's aim of teaching participants about their lives and communities seems to impose or press a pre-prescribed image of what the participants' lives or their communities were rather than supporting participants in exploring and defining their lives and communities for themselves.

Finally, several of the reviewed articles reference research and theory about art's role in education and human development and the importance of cultivating creativity. Elliot Eisner, a renowned figure in the field of art education, highlights the value of the arts in opening venues for lateral thinking about problems, enhancing sensory experiences of the world, developing emotional intelligence, and providing opportunities for learning that complement other traditional ways (Eisner, 1992). Another educational researcher, David Krathwohl (2002), suggests a revision of the educational objectives of

the famous Bloom's Taxonomy to recognize the importance of creative thinking as a higher-order skill that should be cultivated through education. Krathwohl proposes changing the sequence of Bloom's educational objectives from (knowledge > comprehension > application > analysis > synthesis > and evaluation) to (knowledge > comprehension > application > analysis > evaluation > creativity). Although Krathwohl's argument is centered on creativity as expressed in multiple disciplines rather than creativity as specifically centered on the arts, he includes the arts in his examples.

As an example of a program that associates art with flexible, risk-oriented thinking and explores its ability to create competence, a small group of at-risk youth, aged 13 to 16, were involved in creating masks as "encounters with self" (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006, p. 121). They then implemented a mural of their design. The results of the programs were assessed with mixed methods, including a questionnaire at the start of the program, its end, and after 6 months of its completion, direct observation of participants, and observation by facilitators. The researchers found that implementation of the program had high probability of causing positive change in participants, particularly in areas of deviancy or law-breaking, peer influence, school adjustment, family adjustment, psychological adjustment, and positive attitude.

Summary

The study pool consists of 35 academic peer-reviewed journal articles with three things in common: adolescents, a mention of empowerment, and use of the arts to achieve goals. The most-referenced theories and theoretical frameworks in the studied articles were Critical Pedagogy, Photovoice, and Forum Theatre. Critical Pedagogy aims at

enabling transformation of the world into one without repression. It includes teaching participants to think critically about their society, actively explore surrounding realities, and engage in dialogue. Photovoice is a participatory action research method that provides a platform for exploring and representing one's community. It increases participants' social competence and falls under the critical pedagogy umbrella by promoting critical dialogue. Forum Theatre also promotes critical thinking and dialogue: A scene featuring oppression or a problem is enacted once, and then a second time where any member of the audience can stop the performance and join the scene to resolve the situation.

Positive Youth Development, which is used in the areas of psychology and social work, was third most-referenced framework. Its Five C's characterize a healthy progression from adolescence into adulthood: Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring. Ericksonian Theory was also referenced. It uses an active, rather than passive, psychological therapy approach, where the therapist actively encourages resistance and inspires the client. Similarly, solution-focused therapy, which was also referenced, is goal-oriented and focuses on the future rather than the unpleasant present.

In addition to the theories above, using hip-hop culture for empowerment was referenced widely in the studied articles. Its aims ranged from developing participants' literacy, critical thinking, and other life skills, to helping social workers connect to youth and increasing youth's motivation for treatment of mental health issues. Finally, critical ethnography and research and critical media production and consumption as theoretical frameworks for youth empowerment were used. Critical ethnography merges

ethnography and critical theory, where participants engage in ethnographic research while committing to achieving more rights for the disadvantaged.

CHAPTER FIVE

DEFINITIONS IN PRACTICE OF ARTS-BASED YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

Introduction

In this chapter, I examine and categorize varied definitions that are currently in use for youth empowerment through the arts. My sample for the study was composed of 35 peer-reviewed journal articles, written by practitioners and academicians who addressed three things: adolescents, empowerment, and the arts. Using meta-analysis methods and grounded theory, I synthesize different components of empowerment into a pyramid of components of *empowerment*. All these components represent metrics that were used in the studied articles to assess or measure the level of achieving *youth empowerment* or as objectives of the studied programs.

To construct the overall definition of youth empowerment through the arts, I used grounded theory. The first step, called open coding by Corbin & Strauss (1990), was to note various characteristics that authors of the examined articles used as explicit or implied descriptors of empowerment. First, I made coding notations in the margins of the 35 examined articles, then transferred these coded notations to a database with references to where they were mentioned in the texts. Later, as I grouped individual characteristics into conceptual categories, the references allowed me to go back to original articles and re-examine contexts of usage as questions arose.

When articles specifically addressed youth empowerment, I coded all the objectives mentioned in them under youth empowerment. When they did not, I only coded qualities that were used when specifically referring to issues, strategies, or

objectives of empowerment. Additionally, I coded references to un-empowerment or disempowerment, as oppositional forces to empowerment might facilitate an understanding of what the author conceptualized as empowerment.

Second, I grouped together defining ideas or characteristics of empowerment that seemed similar across articles. This led to a process of axial coding, where higher or broader conceptual categories were articulated (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Grouping similar ideas together allowed me to see overarching categories into which ideas about characteristics of empowerment these might fall. The accuracy of assigning similar ideas to broader categories was tested by going back to individual and groups of characteristics to see if they actually fit within parameters defined by larger categories.

Next, discrete conceptual categories were studied side-by-side to see if any of them might serve as baseline for emergence of other categories or as overarching umbrellas incorporating other categories. According to Corbin and Strauss, the concepts listed under and above one of the higher conceptual categories represent the conditions that give rise to them, and the contexts, strategies, and consequences that result from them (1990). When conceptual categories were re-grouped, the relationships between them in the hierarchy were examined again to test validity of all relationships, going up and down the hierarchy.

Finally, the process of selective coding resulted in the emergence of a core conceptual category (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). I abandoned empowerment as a destined emerging core category from the data in order not to force it upon it. Indeed, the results, which will be presented below, led to recognition of six distinct components that

contributed to understanding a conceptual category which could be labeled empowerment.

When talking about empowerment, some authors differentiated between what led to it and what constituted part of it. For example, in the sentence “Both product and process in digital storytelling empower students to find their voice and to speak out” (Benmayor, 2008, p. 188) it is not clear whether the ability of expression is a component of being empowered or a cause leading to it. The sentence follows a circular logic, with storytelling leading to students speaking out and finding their voice. By contrast, in the following sentence the ability to express oneself is clearly considered a cause of empowerment: “The program goals included making art in order to empower the participants through self-expression and community building” (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006, p. 119). Whether the coded qualities were mentioned in their original contexts as constituting part of empowerment or leading to it was registered interchangeably, since the studied articles were often not clear on these points.

Conceptual Components of Youth Empowerment

As a result of open coding of the articles in the sample, 36 elements were identified as defining characteristics of empowerment. Different iterations of these factors were coded and assigned titles based on what I determined to be the descriptor most representative of the group. In some cases, the exact words of the descriptor were used by the authors, which Corbin and Strauss call *in vivo* coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). In others, I applied descriptors that closely matched what was being presented in the text. The 16 most recurrent concepts that authors associated with empowerment were:

1. investing in personal growth,
2. taking action toward inequalities and injustice,
3. self-consciousness and ownership of one's own image,
4. having the ability to express and communicate,
5. having positive connections,
6. self-esteem,
7. self-efficacy,
8. engaging in safe behaviors,
9. the ability to cope and self-medicate,
10. taking positive action in general, toward one's own self and toward others,
11. critical literacy,
12. consciousness of social justice issues,
13. coping and self-medication (the actual behavior versus the ability to do it),
14. critical thinking,
15. creativity, and
16. having motivation for positive community involvement and development.

Here are the various iterations identified within each category:

1. *Investing in personal growth* was indicated in words or phrases such as:
sustaining, maintaining or enhancing personal growth, self-empowerment, the ability to change oneself, utilization of personal abilities, applying inner strengths, striving toward self-perceived personal potential, a more engaged

role on behalf of individual improvements, achieving one's goals or achieving academic greatness.

2. *Taking action toward inequalities and injustice* described actions taken toward social change or positive social change, participation in social change, social action, action to change systemic inequalities, transforming society, addressing oppression, confronting inequalities and injustices, linking to institutions to pressure external systems blamed for unequal access to power and resources, taking an informed and activist stance about larger issues in the world, promoting action that would lead to social and policy changes, attempting to gain power over decision-making opportunities, having a more engaged role on behalf of improvements for the broader community, service, or contributing to community through role-modeling, mentorship to peers, and encouraging others to make wise decisions. Some descriptors mentioned social change without specifying what kind of change was targeted. Others were more specific, indicating that it was change toward mitigating inequalities or alleviating oppression.
3. *Consciousness of self and ownership of one's own image* may have been listed as self-knowledge or understanding, self-study, exploring identities, finding voice, having the ability to talk about oneself, being the author of one's own story, feeling the importance of one's own experience and knowledge, or finding strength and value in one's own voice. Also as having authenticity of voice or having a personal aesthetic [taste].

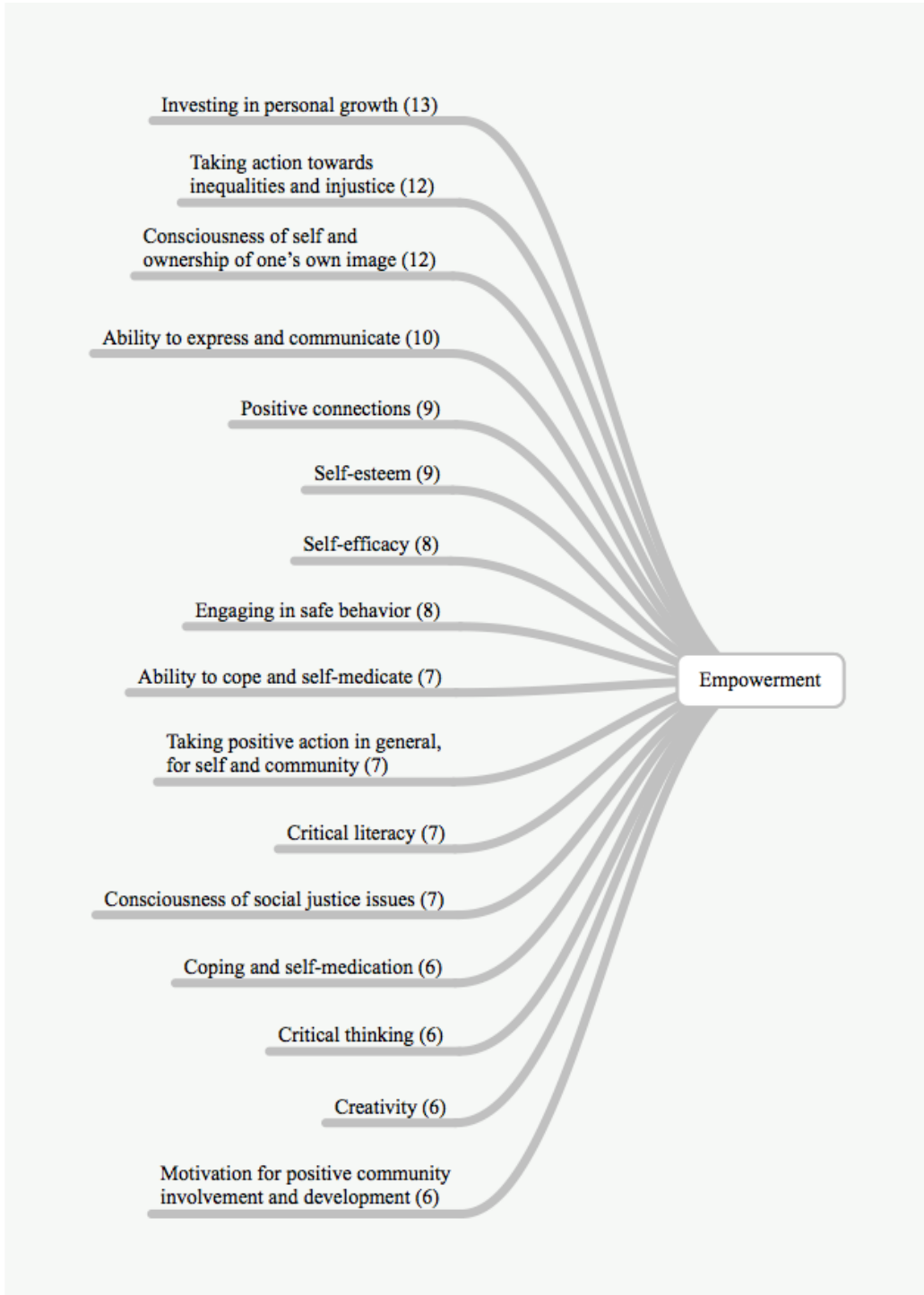


Figure 3: Most recurrent concepts defining empowerment in the 35 studied articles, along with the number of articles in which they were mentioned

4. *The ability to express and communicate* included the ability to express, narrative abilities, the ability to communicate, engaging in dialogue (being able to communicate, share ideas, and agree or disagree), open dialogue, having democratic skills, democratic collaboration, or having a group do a project on their own, followed by having collective action plans.
5. *Positive connections* were referred to as positive relationships, having a sense of interpersonal connectedness, feeling acceptance, having connection, working with others, communication, doing things in a group, having community awareness and connection, or having a sense of unity and solidarity. Tolerance, treating others positively, respecting others, demonstrating appreciation, or attitude improvement were also seen as positive connections. Isolation was listed as a component of disempowerment. By virtue of its opposition to characteristics of empowerment, disempowering isolation contributed to the notions that forming positive connections is part of empowerment.
6. *Self-esteem* may have been included in the studied articles as positive self-esteem, self-appreciation, self-liking or love, self-acceptance, approval of self, self-worth, or respecting oneself. It was also evident as pride, having a positive identity, or viewing oneself in a positive way. Another group of qualities included here were competence in environments that may persistently assault one's view of oneself, feeling better, the ability to talk about experienced trauma without shame, normalization of the trauma experience, focusing on personal strengths, having a strengths-based personal

reality, and increasing personal resources. Self-blame, on the other hand, was listed as a component of disempowerment and contributed to understanding self-esteem as a component of empowerment.

7. *Self-efficacy* may have been indicated as having a strengths-based perspective toward the world, having a sense of personal power and an attitude to enact it, having confidence to act effectively in one's world, mitigating alienation, or coming out of one's shell. Helplessness, feeling victimized, shyness, fear, and being aware of inequalities accompanied by feeling unable to change them, were mentioned as components of disempowerment, and therefore contributed to a notion of self-efficacy as an empowering opposite.
8. *Engaging in safe behavior*: This may have been mentioned in the studied articles as embracing pro-social and healthy lifestyles, exercising self-control, making thoughtful choices, positive decision-making, ability to manage conflicts and crises, solution building, examining issues from multiple perspectives, maturity (i.e. being mature), or being able to call on social support. Character, which is one of the components of Positive Youth Development and indicates respect for societal and cultural rules, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong, and integrity (Lerner et al., 2005), was also included here. Risk or engaging in risky behavior was listed as a component of disempowerment, thus contributing to the notion that engaging in safe behavior, by opposition, is empowering. Such risks ranged from engaging in violence, engaging in substance use or risky sexual behavior, to family disruption, low school engagement, and/or failing

at school (Travis & Deepak, 2011; Travis & Bowman, 2012; Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006).

9. *Ability to cope and self-medicate*: This was indicated by having self-help or expressive/cathartic ability, using personal strength or competencies or using positive thinking, physical relaxation, or distraction as coping mechanisms, having the ability to protect oneself, avoiding hardships and victimization, being psychologically and emotionally strong, having the ability to vent anger and/or pain experienced or witnessed, seeking to feel better, being able to define one's problems, or finding strength and value in the voices of others.
10. *Taking positive action in general, for oneself and for the community* was described by being responsible (toward self and others), being dependable, having an improved function, exercising voice and agency, seeking to do better, or making the world his or her own or owning the world.
11. *Critical literacy*: Critical literacy was indicated as thinking critically about the world or about oppressive systems and social disparities, questioning the world (the political, cultural, and social forces that shape it and one's own and others' abilities to act in it), critical analysis of social conditions, awareness of social causes of issues and assets in society, or the ability to evaluate information and conduct needs assessment for social action. Media literacy, the ability to critically read the surrounding social visual world, being a critical consumer of media, or being knowledgeable of the construction of language, ideas, and the media, were descriptors included in this category as well. Sheltering from media was listed as a component of disempowerment, in

contrast with the empowering state of having a classroom culture of questioning received information.

12. *Consciousness of social justice issues* was defined in the studied articles as social awareness, awareness of oppressive systems and social disparities, critical consciousness, or socio-political development.
13. *Coping and self-medication* may have been mentioned as resilience, making it through bad times, rising above circumstances, coping with stress and trauma, coping in an adaptive way, self-medication, self-care, positive adaptation in the face of significant adversity, meeting challenges, trauma symptom reduction, psychological adjustment, family and school adjustment, or survival.
14. *Critical thinking* included having analytical tools, or applying, understanding, and remembering, as the higher-order levels of Bloom's Taxonomy. Rationality was also included in this group.
15. *Creativity*: This may have been mentioned as creativity, flexible and risk-oriented thinking, imagination, or exploring creative talent. When mentioned in the context of describing creativity, risk-oriented thinking was different from risk-taking as a behavior.
16. *Motivation for positive community involvement and development* was included as willingness to embrace a proactive and engaged role within one's community, wanting to do something positive or make a difference for one's community, having a sense of agency, desiring to exercise greater voice, desiring to take action, or taking initiative. Other descriptors of this group

were embracing socio-political development, envisioning a new world, having aspirations of collective action for justice and equity in health, and having a thirst for justice.

Less frequently mentioned descriptors of empowerment included: positiveness and hope about the future, peer-empowerment, civic engagement, taking action toward community building, empathy, and having certain competencies in general or viewing empowerment as a set of skills. They were followed by having a positive ethnic identity, knowing oneself for the sake of social change (or connecting personal experience with social action), Positive Youth Development (as a construct that includes Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring), leadership, producing knowledge, using the arts for quality expression, having technological skills, and learning how to learn.

Gaining actual power or influence was mentioned as a component of empowerment. Some of the articles indicated one or more types of power that are needed to achieve empowerment, such as economic power or prosperity, status, political power or voice in decision-making, sexual power or ownership of one's body, and an overall characteristic of being autonomous or independent. Achieving democracy and social justice were also listed as features of empowerment. Finally, contexts and relationships to youth, who are being empowered, were mentioned as important features of or contributions to empowerment. Having a healthy environment for youth, encouragement, and having developmentally appropriate, strength-based, cognitively challenging, or fun programs were described as contributing contexts of empowerment.

Some articles mentioned the arts in general as a valued characteristic or a component of empowerment, and some mentioned specific art disciplines. Most popular

were photography, hip-hop and rap music, storytelling, and exhibiting or displaying the artworks they had creating in a final exhibit. Additionally, Forum Theatre processes of making a movie, media production, engaging in digital and popular literacies, and producing social justice-based art were mentioned.

Higher-Level Conceptual Categories of Youth Empowerment

In Grounded Theory, higher levels of conceptual categories are formed through axial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Here new categories of empowerment, which are higher in the hierarchy, arise out of grouping, comparing, and contrasting categories toward aspects that represent the conditions that give rise to them, and contexts, strategies, and consequences that result from them. After grouping similar ideas together, suggesting overarching concepts that represent them, and testing the validity of these by going back-and-forth to the group of underlying elements to see if they actually fit within the new parameters, I found 10 higher concepts to be representative of the whole group. The process also included studying the higher conceptual categories side-by-side to see if any of them fit on top of another as an overarching concept. The identified higher conceptual categories were:

1. *competence,*
2. *consciousness,*
3. *self-efficacy,*
4. *positive connections,*
5. *self-empowerment,*
6. *empowering others,*

7. *producing knowledge,*
8. *ways to achieve learning of empowerment competencies,*
9. *power, and*
10. *democracy and social justice.*

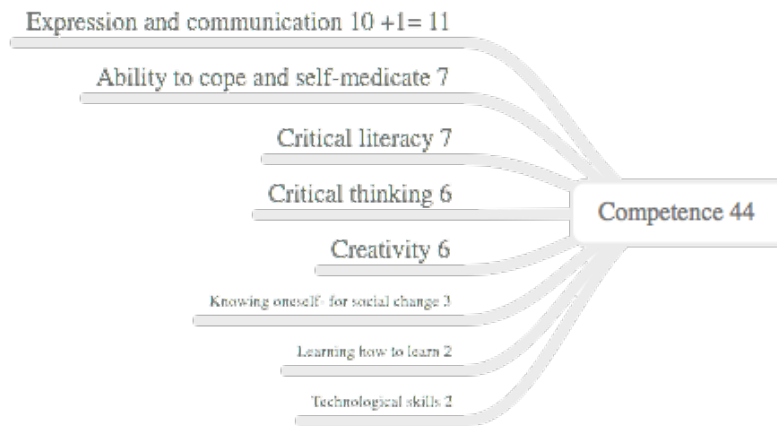


Figure 4: The higher conceptual category *competence* with its sub-concepts and how many articles in which they were mentioned

Activities of empowerment that fall under the higher conceptual category *Competence* are expression and communication, the ability to cope and self-medicate, critical literacy, critical thinking, and creativity. *Consciousness* includes consciousness of oneself and ownership of one's own image, consciousness of social justice issues, and motivation for positive community involvement and development. *Self-efficacy* supersedes self-esteem, while *Positive connections* does not have sub-components. *Self-empowerment* includes notions of investment in personal growth, coping and self-medication or healing, and engaging in safe behavior, while *Empowering others* includes taking action towards inequality and injustice.

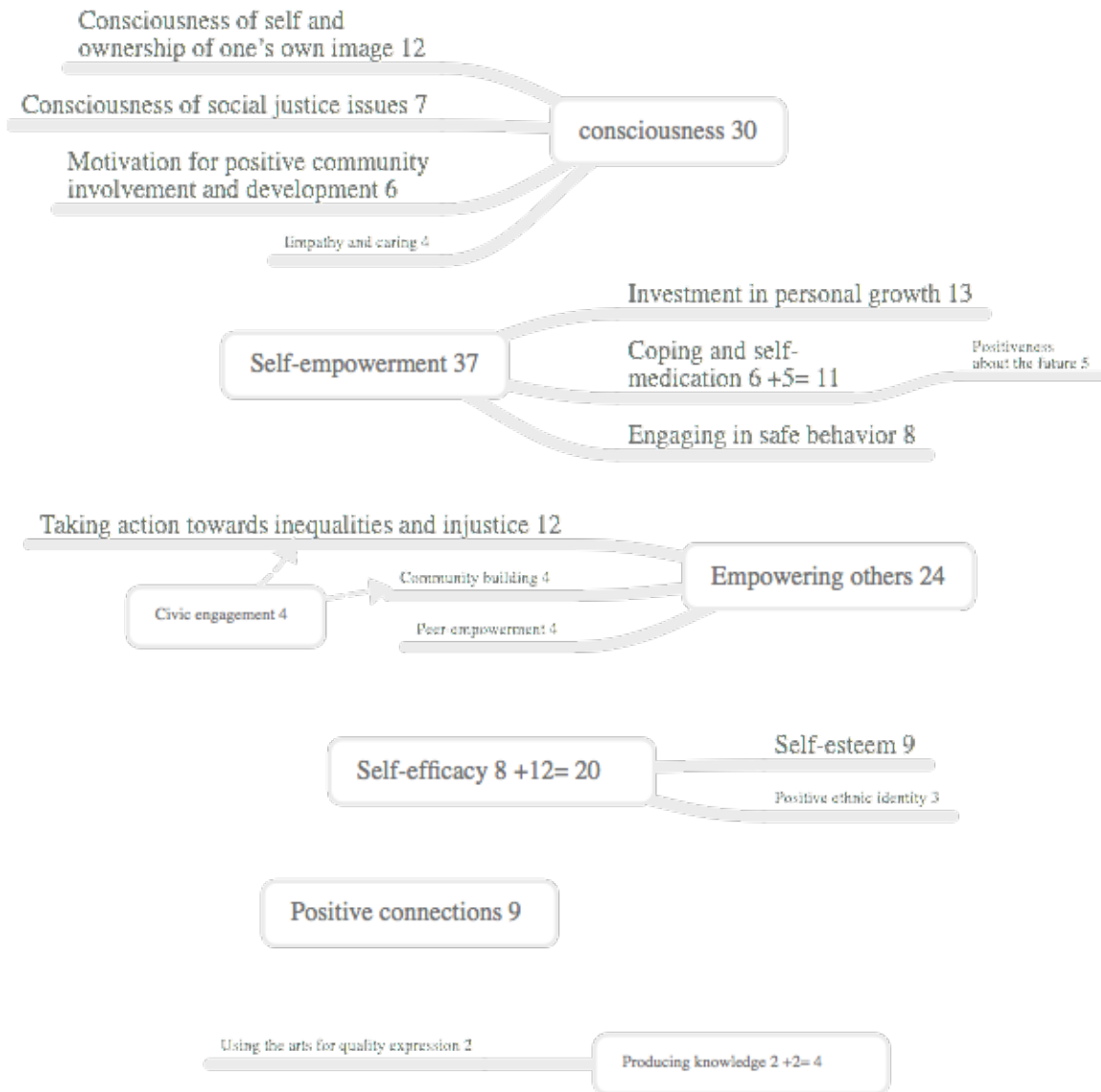


Figure 5: Other higher conceptual categories with their sub-concepts and how many articles in which they were mentioned

Under how to achieve learning of empowerment competencies were ingredients such as ‘arts lead to empowerment’ or ‘a healthy environment for youth leads to empowerment.’ Other examples of ways toward empowerment included encouragement, fun, and the consideration of empowerment in essence as a communal activity.

Definitions of empowerment like these, which indicate the tools to get there versus the

goal to get to, are distinct from the sub-concepts that make up the composite concept of empowerment, and are therefore not included in the final coding step of selective coding. Similarly, two generic terms used to describe empowerment within social contexts included ‘democracy and social justice’ and ‘power,’ which might refer to economic power, status, political power, power over the body or sexual power, and being autonomous.

Additional descriptors that did not fit the scope of this inquiry were ‘learning the empowering message by the unconscious,’ which was mentioned in one article, and ‘Positive Youth Development,’ a concept from the field of psychological development, which was mentioned twice in articles by the same co-author. This notion overlaps with many of the developed higher-conceptual categories but not all of them. It was seldom found in the study and hence not included as a status quo definition of youth empowerment through the arts, but rather included in the theoretical references. ‘Taking positive action in general, for self and community,’ was included as two separate higher-conceptual categories: ‘Self-empowerment’ and ‘Empowering others.’ Had this factor not been split into two conceptual categories, the count of its instances of recurrence, including the two subgroups, would have been 72 times, which is highly significant. Finally, the concepts of leadership, wanting to get one’s message to others, and aggression occurred once each in the sample and were therefore not included.

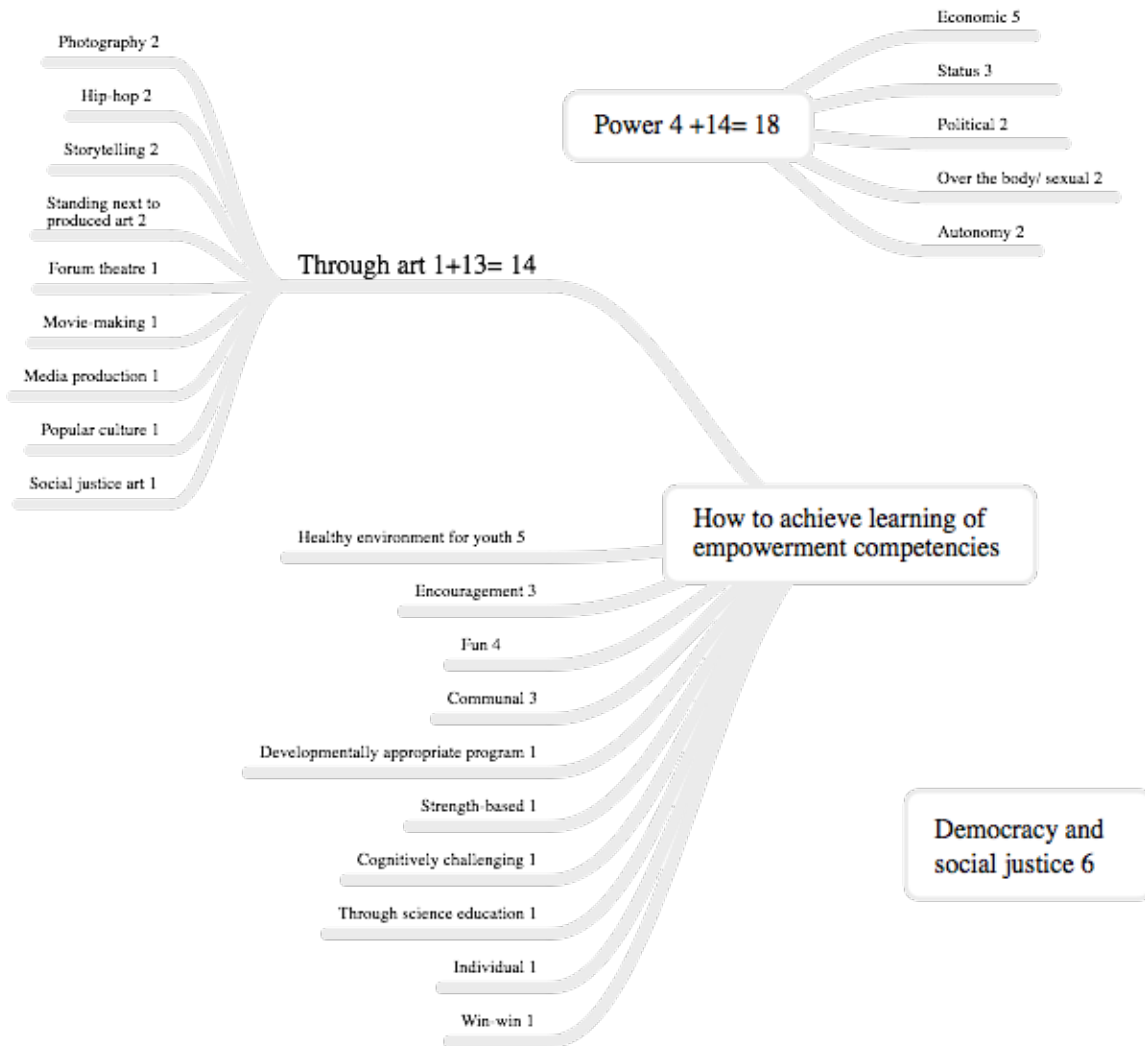


Figure 6: Higher-conceptual categories that were judged unsuitable for inclusion in the next coding step and the number of articles in which they were mentioned

The Definition of Empowerment

Selective coding is the final coding process, which results in a core conceptual category (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Looking at the final set of ingredients, the most-mentioned in the framework of designing and describing art-based youth empowerment programs are:

1. *competence,*
2. *consciousness,*
3. *self-empowerment,*
4. *empowerment of others,*
5. *self-efficacy, and*
6. *positive connections,*

all of which are distinct from each other and which, together, form the definition of empowerment as used in the field of community arts and art education.

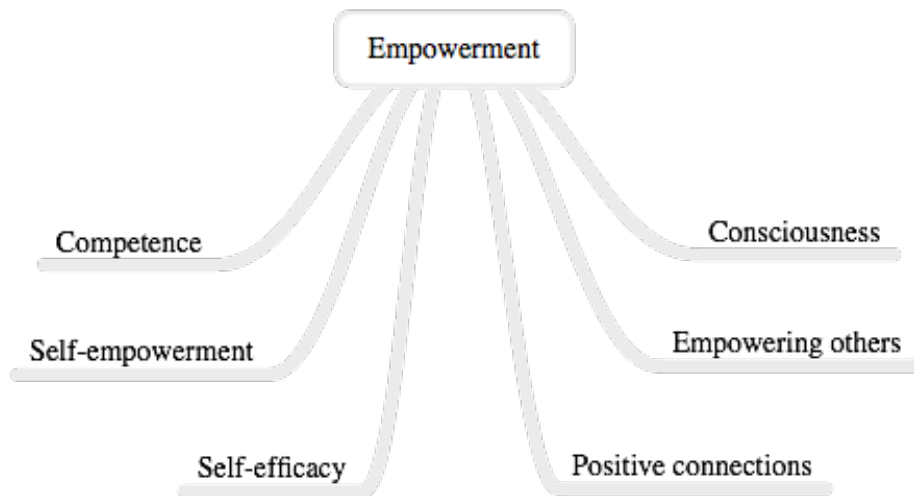


Figure 7: The core conceptual category Empowerment with its components

Competence includes the ability to express and communicate, the ability to cope and self-medicate, critical literacy and critical thinking, creativity, and knowing oneself for social change. Consciousness includes that of one's own self and ownership of one's own image, being conscious of social justice issues, motivation for positive community involvement and development, and empathy and caring. Self-empowerment includes investment in personal growth, coping and self-medication or healing, and engaging in safe behavior. Empowering others includes taking action toward inequalities and

injustice, community building, civic engagement, and peer empowerment. Self-efficacy is having a sense of personal power and belief in one's ability to succeed in doing things, and includes self-esteem and having a positive ethnic identity. Lastly, positive connections refer to the ability to form and have a supportive network.

A layer of linkages among components of empowerment is seen when conceptual qualities of competence, consciousness, self-efficacy, and positive connections are more deeply explored. As a quality that leads to empowerment, for example, competence includes several skills: the ability to express and communicate, the ability to cope and self-medicate or heal, critical literacy and thinking, creativity, and knowing oneself for social change. Competence also reinforces the other qualities that lead to empowerment: consciousness, self-efficacy, and having positive connections. The *meaning* of competence implies possession of tools to develop one's consciousness, increased *self-efficacy* and self-esteem, and ability to form and maintain *positive connections* to those around him or her.

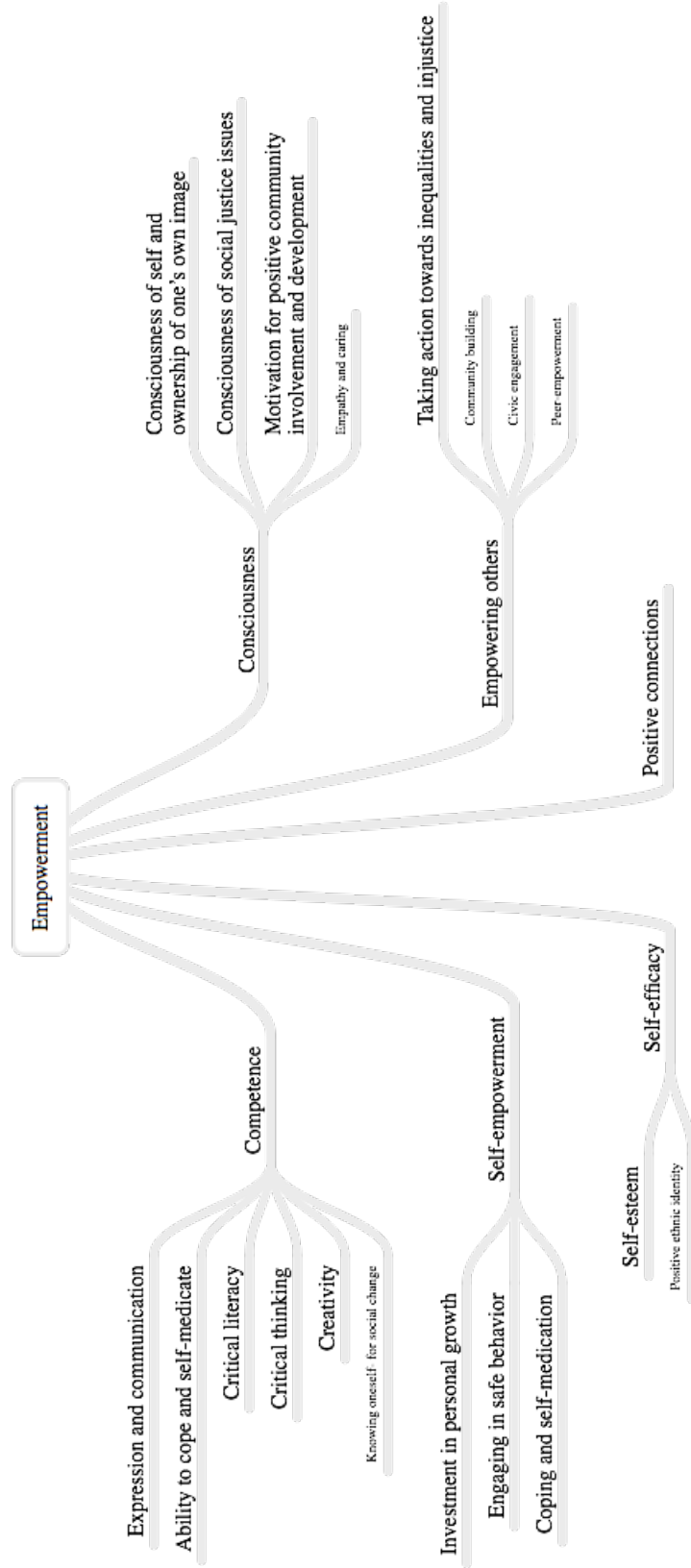


Figure 8: The core conceptual category *Empowerment* with detailed higher concepts leading to it

There is also a clear connection between some of the components of competence, especially the ability to cope and self-medicate or heal, and consciousness of self and ownership of one's own image (under Consciousness), and self-empowerment. One could argue that self-empowerment is a result of these qualities, as well as self-efficacy, and having positive relationships that nurture a person at times of stress and difficulty. Another connection is between empowering others, as a resulting action, and having consciousness of social justice issues, motivation for positive community involvement and development (both components of Consciousness) and several competencies like expression and communication, and critical thinking and literacy, all of which are crucial tools enabling an individual to take positive action to help others around her or him.

One of the aims of this study is to single out a definition of youth empowerment that is currently used in the fields of community arts and art education. Informed by the analysis, we can define empowerment as *the combination of competence, consciousness, self-empowerment, empowering others, self-efficacy, and having positive connections.*

Summary

The study pool consists of 35 academic peer-reviewed journal article with three things in common: adolescents, a mention of empowerment, and use of the arts to achieve goals. A study of the concept of empowerment in the sample articles was presented, going through three coding processes according to Grounded Theory: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. As a result of the first coding stage, a group of qualities defining empowerment emerged from the data. The most prominent were investing in personal growth, taking action toward inequalities and injustice, having consciousness of

one's own self and ownership of one's own image, having the ability to express and communicate, having positive connections, self-esteem and self-efficacy, engaging in safe behavior, having the ability to cope and self-medicate, taking positive action in general--for oneself and community, critical literacy, and consciousness of social justice issues.

As a result of axial coding, ten higher conceptual categories emerged, the most prominent of which were picked through selective coding to form the core concept of empowerment. These are competence, consciousness, self-empowerment, empowering others, and self-efficacy. Competence means having a set of skills that include expression, the ability to cope, critical literacy and thinking, and creativity. Consciousness includes self-consciousness and that of social justice issues, in addition to motivation; self-empowerment includes investment in personal growth, engaging in safe behavior, and coping; while self-efficacy means belief in personal ability. These qualities do not exist in separate spaces from each other, as competence enhances consciousness, self-efficacy, and positive connections, and each of these is linked to self-empowerment and empowering others.

CHAPTER SIX

**THEORY TO CONSIDER WHEN DESIGNING PROGRAMS AND INEVITABLE
QUESTIONS ABOUT POWER, ETHICS, RISK, ACTION, AND
EMPOWERMENT**

Introduction

The lack of academic literatures or models that inform educators of goals, processes, and outcomes of arts-based youth empowerment programs triggered the initiation of this study. The study aims to identify and reflect upon theory that is referenced in the field of youth empowerment through the arts and propose an indicative youth empowerment model for practitioners. In this chapter I start laying the ground for the empowerment model I will propose. I share theory about arts-based empowerment, discuss questions raised by those models and theoretical references that I found in the sample of reviewed academic journal articles, and question points about which they were silent. These questions and points of silence came to mind while I was coding the literature, and are deemed necessary to discuss before proposing a model for youth empowerment, due to their impact on the model's components.

Theory referred to by practitioners who designed or reflected upon their programs, and which will be discussed below, includes models, reflections, program templates, definitions of empowerment, and additional youth empowerment models proposed by community arts practitioners and those from the field of psychological development. The reflective questions tackled below are:

- *Can we talk about empowerment without talking about power?*

- *Is empowerment always positive, does it always lead to positive outcomes, and should ethics be included in an empowerment model?*
- *Are risky attitudes and behaviors necessarily disempowering?*
- *Does everyone need to be empowered to the same level?*
- *Should theory be shared with students?*
- *Should a proposed model focus on personal empowerment as the starting-point for practitioners to empower the individual, or should it include components about empowering the community?*
- *And does being empowered necessarily include taking action?*

The Empowerment Model Currently in Use in the Field

Based on the concepts and constructs commonly used by community arts practitioners and art educators of this study, it can be determined that empowerment is *the collective presence of competence, consciousness, self-empowerment, empowering others, self-efficacy, and having positive connections:*

1. Competence includes the ability to express and communicate, to cope and heal, engage in critical literacy and critical thinking, and express creativity.
2. Consciousness includes being cognizant of one's own self and taking ownership of one's own image, being conscious of social justice issues, being motivated to become positively involved in community and community development, and having empathy and caring for others.
3. Self-empowerment includes being invested in personal growth, coping and healing, and engaging in safe behavior.

4. Empowering others includes taking action toward inequalities and injustice, community building, civic engagement, and peer-empowerment.
5. Self-efficacy is having a sense of personal power and belief in one's ability to succeed in doing things, and includes self-esteem and having a positive ethnic identity.
6. Lastly, positive connections refer to the ability to form and have a supportive network.

These qualities are interconnected; having competence enforces having consciousness, self-efficacy, and positive connections. Similarly, having all the previous qualities enforces self-empowerment and empowering others.

Empowerment Models in the Literature

Academic literature in the field of youth empowerment using the arts is primarily presented through case studies. However, there have been some attempts at proposing models of arts-based youth empowerment, which inform the discussion in the second half of this chapter. Travis and Deepak's "Individual and Community Empowerment Framework," that infuses hip-hop culture, may be used by social workers in working to assist youth in becoming empowered members of their communities (2011). Travis defines empowerment as "the process by which adolescents develop the consciousness, skills, and power necessary to envision personal or collective well-being and understand their role within opportunities to transform social conditions to achieve that well-being" (Travis & Deepak, 2011, p. 144).

Empowerment components of the proposed framework fall under two areas: individual empowerment and community empowerment. Individual empowerment is composed of self-esteem, resilience, and growth, which are related to additional qualities such as positive identity, self-liking, power, expression, coping, development, and mentoring. Community empowerment is composed of community (culture, pride) and change (awareness, action) (Travis & Deepak, 2011). In order to turn Positive Youth Development into an empowerment model, Travis adds two components to its six C's (Competence, Confidence, Character, Caring, Connection, Contribution): community, and change, which refer to having a sense of community and active and engaged citizenship (2013, p. 159).

Deborah Kronenberg struggles with the ambiguity of empowerment as a term in arts-based work, and sees this ambiguity as leading to differing and potentially non-efficient programs (2007). She proposes an empowerment goal of cultivating mentally healthy adolescents and facilitating their transition into proactive adults. She sets components of empowerment as: self-efficacy, being proactive, and critical socio-political consciousness. Kronenberg advocates that the missing component in some youth empowerment programs that she had seen is *change*, or increasing participants' capacity to change their environment toward a more just social environment.

Laurie Hicks discusses a three-dimensional method to achieve feminist-sensitive empowerment through art education (1990). The first dimension is education toward diversity and difference, which takes place by achieving an understanding and appreciation of identities of others as well as one's personal identity. The second is education toward context, which is an ability to contextualize artworks "as culturally

defined and validated forms of communication” (p. 45). She argues that an awareness of the social and political frameworks used by the students to understand works of art is transferrable to other domains of their lives.

Hicks’ third dimension is education toward a community of difference, which is achieved by cultivating abilities to understand, criticize, and oppose oppressive mainstream traditions (Hicks, 1990, pp. 44-45). Hicks’ education to diversity and difference could be achieved, according to her, through teaching aesthetics and art history. The dimension of education to context could be achieved through teaching art history. Finally, education to a community of difference could be achieved through teaching art criticism (Hicks, 1990).

Taylor and Murphy propose the following definition: “Empowerment at its essence is about envisioning our dreams and moving toward them, even in tiny steps. It’s about acknowledging and building on our strengths and gifts, living with purpose and meaning. It’s about taking a stand for justice and equity in the world” (Taylor & Murphy, 2014, p. 21). *In Catch the fire: An art-full guide to unleashing the creative power of youth, adults and communities*, they list many examples of being empowered where these could have been listed more accurately as manifestations of being empowered rather than forms of being empowered.

For instance, the authors maintain that empowerment

takes different forms for different individuals. For Anna, a young woman in Uganda, empowerment means going back to her HIV/AIDS teen club and speaking up for the first time. For Marquis, an inner-city youth from Detroit, it’s mending a relationship with his family and deciding to stay in high school... For Robert, a high school teacher in Seattle, it’s establishing a racial equity program in his school... (Taylor & Murphy, 2014, pp. 21-22).

When such incidents are considered, more correctly, as manifestations rather than forms of empowerment, we acknowledge that we are not looking specifically for them and that what we're trying to build will lead to these as well as other empowered actions.

Most Prominent Referenced Theory in the Field

Identifying most-referenced theory was done through an analysis of the studied sample of 35 peer-reviewed academic journal articles that talked about the arts, empowerment, and adolescents. The most referenced theories and theoretical frameworks are:

1. Critical Pedagogy,
2. Photovoice,
3. Forum Theatre,
4. Positive Youth Development,
5. Ericksonian Theory and solution-focused therapy,
6. integration of hip-hop culture into social work practice, and
7. critical ethnography, research, and production and consumption of media.

In addition to these, several of the reviewed articles reference research and theory indicating art's role in education and human development and the importance of cultivating creativity. Some went as far as crediting art with producing empowerment directly rather than enforcing skills or other qualities that lead to empowerment, like saying that photography, hip-hop and rap music, storytelling, or standing next to the artwork produced by the young participant in a final exhibit is empowering.

Critical Pedagogy aims at enabling transformation of the world into a society whereby repression of any individual or group is not permitted. It includes teaching participants to think critically about their society, actively explore, and dialogue about surrounding realities. Paulo Freire is one of the most recognized philosophers in this area. His book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1970) illustrates his educational approach, which links teaching and learning to the political and social contexts that intersect with one's journey of seeking knowledge.

Photovoice is a participatory action research method that provides a platform for exploring and representing one's community. It increases participants' social competence and falls under the critical pedagogy umbrella by promoting critical dialogue. Caroline Wang is the principal developer of a tool, the name of which is also that of a UK-based international development organization which uses participatory photography to enable disadvantaged communities to represent themselves and advocate for their causes (Photovoice, n.d.).

Forum Theatre, developed by Augusto Boal, has been widely adapted as an educational tool (Farmer, n.d.) and also promotes critical thinking and dialogue. It includes improvisation, audience participation, and the use of theatre to work through cases of oppression. For example, a scene featuring oppression or a problem is enacted once, and then a second time where any member of the audience can stop the performance and join the scene to resolve the situation.

Positive Youth Development refers to a group of practices in areas of psychology and social work that are related to preventing risky behaviors, while supporting the healthy development of youth into adulthood. It emphasizes qualities of plasticity,

diversity, and individual agency, in addition to teenagers' capacities to influence their own development. According to Richard Lerner, a leading figure in the field of Positive Youth Development, there are five traits that characterize individuals who enjoy a healthy adolescence and smooth transition into adulthood: Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring, which he refers to as the Five C's. When these are present, a sixth trait emerges: Contribution.

Ericksonian theory was also referenced frequently. Milton H. Erickson is a psychiatrist and psychologist specializing in medical hypnosis and family therapy. His psychiatric method is solution-based, focusing on encouraging resistance and emphasizing the positive, and he believes that the therapist should be active, initiating what happens during therapy (Haley, 1973, pp. 17-34). Such method focuses on the future rather than on the unpleasant present, and is goal-oriented.

In addition to the theories above, using hip-hop culture for empowerment was referenced widely in the studied articles. Its aims range from developing participants' literacy, critical thinking, and other life skills, to helping social workers connect to youth and increasing youth's motivation for treatment of mental health issues. There are multiple developed models that give guidance to social workers and youth development practitioners. In these, hip-hop culture is understood as a resource applicable to interventions that empower adolescents, including at-risk youth, particularly males, African Americans, and Latinos.

Finally, critical ethnography and research and critical production and consumption of media as theoretical frameworks for youth empowerment were referenced by practitioners in the fields of community arts and art education. Critical

ethnography merges ethnography and critical theory and assumes that education and research are intrinsically political and influenced by cultural values (Barton, 2001). Participants in critical ethnography engage in ethnographic research while committing to achieving more rights for the disadvantaged. Critical media literacy allows students to analyze, critique, and resist dominant media narratives.

Inevitable Questions to Consider while Thinking about Youth Empowerment

Can we Talk About Empowerment Without Talking About Power?

This is one of multiple questions that will be tackled in response to the theory that was just exhibited, and which is primarily used in the art-education field in relation to youth empowerment. This study aims to propose a model for youth empowerment, defining it for practitioners in the field. Without going into the details of the definition, one may think that, in essence, youth empowerment may mean giving youth more power as individuals and community members. Another person may think that empowerment of the individual is related to that of their entire community from an economic and political perspective. It is therefore deemed necessary in the frame of this study to discuss what power means, and keep that discussion in mind as we look specifically at youth empowerment.

According to Michel Foucault, power, although abstract, is always exercised and manifested through relationships (1980a, p. 89). There are many spheres of power that could overlap; the legal or liberal sphere stems from 18th century philosophies such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau's social contract and Adam Smith's free market economy. The Marxist (or widely labeled Marxist) argument focuses on economy and the relationships

of production (Foucault, 1980a: 88-89). Another argument, linked to the knowledge revolution of the 20th century, is based on knowledge, and challenges power systems on political, economic, and social levels. Several other power spheres are related to gender, religion, tradition, age, and other factors.

Power through knowledge could be produced and reproduced through education (Apple, 2012, p. 41). Power could also be exercised through language and social relationships (Shor, 1992, p. 129), through symbolic and cultural spheres (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 235-237), and by physical force. In agreement with Foucauldian dispositions, this thesis assumes that power manifests itself in multiple levels, is not only enacted by the government, and is also present in people's daily relationships, religious practices, language, ownership of the body, and many other domains (Foucault, 1980a, p. 92). The thesis also assumes that power may be enacted, including unconsciously, by those who are suppressed or assumed to be disempowered. For instance, this can happen through jokes in the private, told to undermine tyranny in a dictatorship (Wedeen, 1999) or through the resilience themes in hip-hop culture (Travis & Deepak, 2011). As such, this study is in line with Foucault's hypothesis that there are no relations of power without resistance (Foucault, 1980b, p. 141).

Foucault asserts that "power is neither given, nor exchanged, nor recovered, but rather exercised, and... only exists in action" (Foucault, 1980a, p. 89). In agreement with this argument, the proposed empowerment model hereafter differentiates between internal qualities that constitute being empowered, and empowered behaviors. Self-esteem is internal, as well as logical reasoning, whereas being active in the community is a behavior. One could argue that even internal qualities can only be measured through

behaviors, and even then we only make the conclusion that they exist. This argument is situated further in the field of psychology than the scope of this study, and would be an area for future research to address.

Conceptions of power are very important to the construction of an empowerment model because of their impact on empowerment goals for the individual. When educators tackle a quality that could be fostered in an individual, such as resilience, we are referring to an area that helps the individual access, negotiate, or resist the types of power mentioned above. Educators designing or describing empowerment programs are indeed engaged in discussions that acknowledge individual agency in the sphere of structured power systems.

The reviewed articles in this study all talk about youth empowerment through education, particularly through art-centered programs, and discuss examples of how empowerment can be achieved. However, they vary in the degree to which they reference theories about underlying structures of power and the students' or concerned individuals' position regarding such structures and contribution to forming them.

For instance, in an article entitled "Changing Technology = Empowering Students through Media Literacy Education," De Abreu (2010) advocates for media literacy versus protectionism in an increasing open source world. She argues that literacy about new media creates empowered students who enjoy analytical and critical thinking skills, have a critical understanding of the media, understand the power of the information world, are active participants in learning, and are autonomous and rational citizens able to make thoughtful choices, in addition to being good communicators who are respectful of themselves and others. The list of concepts forming her construct of empowerment gets

longer but she does not indicate an underlying conception of power. De Abreu's many examples imply link power to knowledge and access to information, but to be able to make a firm speculation about her conception of power, the article and probably other writings of the author would need to be analyzed in-depth, looking for explicit and implicit references to power.

In another contrasting example, Lane Clarke (2006) discusses power relationships relevant to gender and social storylines in literature circle discussion groups of fifth graders. While he addresses empowerment, his main area of focus is where power lies in those groups. Clarke looks at power that is manifested through language interactions, time allocated for self-representation, role choice, engagement (participation or cooperation) or withdrawal, force (verbal or physical aggression), and getting institutional acknowledgement (by pleasing the teacher and getting good grades). He concludes that the studied literature discussion circles serve to empower the literacy development of the participating girls and to disempower that of the boys. He attributes this difference to the girls' control of communication within these groups by assuming roles of sub-teachers, while boys tend to accept girls' domination in this area and instead seek power in the areas of physical strength and disobedience to school rules.

A combination of both approaches is ideal. Such track would focus on individual attributes as Clarke did, while also framing the discussion in general power systems, as in De Abreu. This would transcend the boundaries of the classroom or working group to the level of the local community and even beyond. Making sure issues of power are visited and addressed should happen as early as the design phase of the program in addition to implementation. It can take place through discussion and different competence-building

exercises that equip students with the tools to do research on their own, become more aware of systems of power and repression around them, and be equipped and motivated to take thoughtful action.

Is Empowerment Positive by Definition or is it Value-Free? And Should Ethics be Part of an Empowerment Model?

Marnina Gonick (2007) suggests using the arts to create a welcoming space for reflection upon one's social positioning, citing that the arts provide freer spaces for exploring fantasies and fears, overcoming anxieties that inhibit change, and leaping (even if temporarily) above social and cultural boundaries. Another value is that the arts allow for the reflection space to be collective, which allows one to build on the experiences of others in processing and contesting oppressive power relations, such as gender and race, in a group with others. However, while these *freeing spaces* have significant empowerment potential; they are not necessarily equally empowering for all participants nor empowering in a necessarily positive direction. Gonick maturely adds the disclaimer: "I am not suggesting that there are ever any guarantees of a positive outcome or that the group process itself is not rife with competition, tension, and infused with power relations" (2007, p. 451).

It was interesting to find through this thesis that hip-hop culture was the most-researched art form in relation to arts-based youth empowerment. Researchers in that area were also the most sensitive toward the resulting arts-based empowerment having both positive and negative dimensions, compared to other researchers who assume empowerment always has a positive impact. For example, Travis and Deepak introduce a tool called "The Individual and Community Empowerment Framework," aimed at

assisting social workers in understanding the competing messages within hip-hop culture and how these might promote or inhibit positive youth development (2011). The Framework outlines areas for empowerment that could be used to analyze songs and provides a structure for collaborative development of goals and strategies for change between youth and social workers.

Travis collaborated with Bowman in examining effects of specific qualities in adolescents, including exposure to rap music, on depressive symptoms (2012). They found positive ethnic identity to be associated with greater music-influenced empowerment and to act as a buffer against depressive symptoms. However, self-esteem was found to be associated with increased music-influenced *risky* attitudes. Both studies looked at youth as receptors, versus producers, of hip-hop music.

One then might ask the question, should ethics be included in an empowerment model? If we accept that empowering an individual could lead to positive or negative outcomes, a healthy empowerment model would take into account that eventuality and remedy it by including components aimed at raising awareness and working on moral values. Such components should be explicit and an assumption should not be made about participants learning them anyway as a result of participating in the program. The psychology field of Positive Youth Development takes this aspect into consideration, as out of the 5 C's that characterize a healthy progression from adolescence into adulthood (Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring), Character pertains to ethics and has a focus on integrity and values (Lerner, 2005; Lerner et al., 2005). Ethics and being kind towards others are subjective in nature, but we cannot discuss empowerment, let alone support an educational process, without thinking about the ends

that the students will use the skills they have learned and acquired towards. Such moral values could include honesty, integrity, compassion, and respect. A detailed discussion of all these aspects is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Are Risky Attitudes and Behaviors Necessarily Disempowering?

In the reviewed academic journal articles for this study, risk was mostly mentioned as a negative factor. It included engaging in violence, risky sexual behavior, substance use, family disruption, low school engagement, and school struggle and failure (Travis & Deepak, 2011; Travis & Bowman, 2012; Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006; Gourd & Gourd, 2011). When Wallace-DiGarbo and Hill speak of empowerment of at-risk youth through the arts, they identified youth as such when they had “negative involvements and circumstances in their lives that hinder[ed] their development,” adding: “The key risk factors include compromised mental health, school struggle and failure, family disruption, psychoactive substance use, and law-breaking/deviancy” (Milkman Wanberg & Robinson, 1996; Stepney, 2001 in Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006, p. 119). This association of risk with solely negative aspects is striking in contrast with the fact that creativity and art-making are very much associated with risk-taking. Artists often take risks with ideas and forms of expression, and some of the most highly regarded figures in art history are those who broke the rules.

Teenagers are commonly known to be risk-takers. Laurence Steinberg notes that this is caused by their tendency to focus more on rewards, and on the undeveloped ability to reason compared to adults (Dobbs, 2011). Dobbs, Steinberg and Casey believe that from an evolutionary perspective, risk-taking at the adolescence period of life successfully allowed humans to have an adaptive edge by trying new things and

improving the quality of their existence (Dobbs, 2011). Risk-taking tendencies allow adolescents to move beyond comfort zones of the status quo and explore new territories, thus opening venues for learning and socio-emotional development. Considering risk-taking tendencies of adolescents as a positive trait allows us to capitalize on them in ways that might maximize the success of youth in society.

The arts provide a unique avenue for channeling risk-taking energies safely and in productive ways, allowing for growth in the process. This not to claim that the arts are 100% safe. Expressions and ideations that challenge norms in ones' community or confront oppression in certain political contexts may pose a danger to the individual. However, the arts enjoy a layer of ambiguity and symbolism that allows artists to communicate in smart, cunning, or secretive ways. In fact, this sophistication very much speaks to the quality of the produced art. Such usage allows us to capitalize on risk-taking, revolutionary, and rebellious tendencies of adolescents in positive ways, rather than deeming all such activity as leading only to unfavorable outcomes.

Does Everyone Need to be Empowered to the Same Level?

All the articles in the studied sample, except for one, indicated explicitly that they had the same expectation for outcomes from all the participants in the program. The exception was an article describing a program that used drama to empower students to handle conflicts. In this article, the authors stated that “empowerment for conflict handling takes the form of building self-help capacity in all students as well as intervention capacity in some of them” (Malm & Lofgren, 2007). The study adopted the same set of goals or objectives for all students to achieve. These were considered necessary for a basic level of empowerment. Then students were individually supported

based on their potentials to excel in some or all the components of the proposed empowerment model. As such, study conclusions followed a rights-based approach to education at the initial stage, whereby a minimum standard was expected to be achieved by all students, but allowed for a capabilities-based approaches to empowerment at later stages (McCowan, 2011).

Should Theory Be Shared with Students?

In the reviewed programs, some educators shared underlying theory with participating students and some did not. For example, Thru the Lenz was a program in which graduate students in a counseling program engaged with urban high school students in the U.S. through photography and participatory action research. The program had a wide array of aims, including improving the well-being of participants and their communities, gaining insight into the lives, experiences, and communities of participants, teaching them about their lives and communities, developing community relationships, exchanging expertise and skills, facilitating creative expressions of self in general and toward people in power, and assisting personal and interpersonal development. Program sessions included photo discussions, photo taking, and reflection (Goessling & Doyle, 2009).

In this program, participants were not engaged in theoretical presentations or background readings. Accordingly, the fact that discussions with them about the pictures they took were challenging was linked to the lack of contextualizing daily experiences with larger social patterns (Goessling & Doyle, 2009). In another case, a program using Augusto Boal's Forum Theatre techniques to raise awareness of and engage students in addressing issues of bullying at school also did not include exposures of students to

theory of social justice (Gourd & Gourd, 2011). However, program leaders noted this as one of the limitations of the work. In reflecting on this, they concluded that exposure to theory could have broadened discussions and manifestations throughout the program regarding incidents of bullying at the school to considerations of underlying social inequalities and injustices. This in turn, could have broadened the horizons of the students and made the discussions richer (Gourd & Gourd, 2011).

On the other hand, there were programs that were very dense in theory, where educators directed students to theoretical readings and requested that they ground their work in them. For instance, Benmayor organized a digital storytelling program for a college class that mainly targets women of minority groups, especially Latinas (2008). The class aimed at helping the students negotiate and reconcile their conflicting identities. Over the period of an academic semester (16 weeks), the participants read conceptual papers on solidarity, abandonment, isolation, gender roles, stereotypes, cultural identity, individualism, and collectivism, in addition to stories that may have situations similar to those they have experienced. When formulating their own stories, they referred back to these theoretical readings, and were invited to expand by choosing one or two theoretical frameworks from a suggested list that could help them explain the larger meanings held in their stories or outside of which their stories fall (Benmayor, 2008).

In the latter program, suggested theories for consideration included assimilation, acculturation, pluralism, feminism, intersectionality, transnationalism, power and privilege, and positionality. After students created digital stories, they reflected on the process, their choices, what they had learned, and any transformations they experienced.

They also reflected on how participation may have changed their understanding of their relationship to larger communities, social movements, and social change, and on whether they were (or might be) agents of such change (Benmayor, 2008).

Sharing underlying theory with students deepens learning. Program impact transcends beyond developing and enhancing skills such as communication and believing in one's ability to create or do things, to ability to think critically, and be motivated to engage in positive community development. Learning about inequality and injustice beyond the student's own experience could not be achieved without theoretical learning. Critical literacy, consciousness of social justice issues, and ability to take action toward inequalities and injustices are also fundamentally associated with outcomes of empowerment.

Should Community or Personal Empowerment be the Starting-Point for Practitioners?

Communal empowerment is sometimes discussed as one of the components that are necessary to build in order to achieve individual empowerment. Throughout the study, it appears predominantly as a consequence of fostering an individual's healthy relationships with people around him or her, plus having good support from influence groups such as peers and family. Travis and Bowman (2012) state that "community empowerment questions link to empowerment via the embracing of one's culture, faith in cultural resilience, sociopolitical development and aspirations of collective action for justice and equity in health." However, although these qualities are given the title of communal empowerment, subcomponents of communal empowerment are actually

grounded in individual traits. Such traits include a person's faith in cultural resilience and aspiration of collective action for justice and equity in health (Travis & Bowman, 2012).

Current practice and scholarship in the field, as found by this study, suggest a need to focus on individual empowerment as the process to empower the individual and also as a lens toward communal empowerment. This is in line with psychological practices, which also focus on the individual, and allows a focus that starts from educating the individual person, rather than working on community empowerment mechanisms. Such mechanisms may tackle the core of why certain communities have less power, such as increasing the redistribution of wealth, democratic mechanisms to negotiate power, resources and infrastructure to produce qualified leadership, and cultural identity consolidation, but are not the focus of this study.

Does Being Empowered Necessarily Include Taking Action?

This question occurred to me as I reflected upon circumstances in Syria, my country of origin. Although taking action might sound like the proper and empowering thing to do, I wondered if how empowering it might or might be for a Syrian 17-year-old to engage in a political demonstration that might jeopardize not only his or her life but the lives and livelihoods of his or her family. I am not talking here about an individual who, having considered all the repercussions, and made a well-thought decision to act, but the situation of an adolescent who might impulsively jeopardize his or her own and his or her family's safety without recognizing these consequences of action.

Many programs I had looked at before embarking on this research talked about *change* as an ultimate outcome of empowerment, where change referred to taking action to change something in the individual's community. Most did not indicate the nature of

that change or when it was going to happen. This observation and the reflection noted above made me question the validity of *taking action* – which is most often referred to as change – as an objective of any youth empowerment program. A more balanced output, I argue here, would include both *taking action* and *coping and adaptation* as non-exclusive outcomes of empowerment.

The work of Paolo Freire does not actually consider taking action an essential part of defining change. According to Gourd and Gourd,

...a Freirean (1968, 1970/1992) process of change [is] to identify personal and social challenges based in unexamined actions and power dynamics, to consider alternative possibilities that reflect a more just reality, and to develop insights that support individual and group actions for change. (Gourd & Gourd, 2011, p. 404).

Also, including adaptation as a program objective in parallel, and sometimes instead of change, appears to be in line with UNESCO's definition of empowerment:

How individuals/communities engage in learning processes in which they create, appropriate and share knowledge, tools and techniques in order to change and improve the quality of their own lives and societies. Through empowerment, individuals not only manage and adapt to change but also contribute to/generate changes in their lives and environments. (UNESCO, n.d.)

In this definition, a person's responsibility towards one's own self is stressed by including his or her ability to adapt to the environment in which he or she lives.

Out of the studied articles, Kress and Hoffman (2008) refer to coping as a goal of their therapy program targeted at adolescent survivors of sexual abuse, which is based on strength-based and solution-based approaches, where they use storytelling, writing, metaphors and symbols, and the participants' culture, language, values, and world-views to reach targeted outcomes. Travis and Deepak (2011) also include resilience and coping within their "Individual and Community Empowerment Framework," which they designed to assist social workers in understanding the competing messages within hip-

hop culture and how those may promote or inhibit positive youth development. Pulling from several psychological references, resilience to Travis and Deepak includes the ability to adapt positively in the face of significant adversity, the ability to express or vent anger or pain experienced or witnessed, the ability to self-medicate or heal, and avoiding future hardship or victimization.

Adaptation, coping, and/or resilience are in fact part of Zimmerman's highly cited empowerment model in the field of psychology (1995). I would also argue that adaptation and coping are included in Positive Youth Development from the developmental psychology field, where Contribution, or the 6th C for a healthy transition from adolescence to adulthood according to Lerner, ideally manifests itself in adult life as "contributions to self..., family, community, and the institutions of civil society" (2005, p. 32). While contribution to family, community, and civil society institutes could fall under *change*, contribution to one's own self falls more smoothly under *coping and adaptation*.

Feminist theorists' consideration of issues of silence and voice is valuable to this discussion. In her reconsideration of Girl Number 20, a recurring figure in feminist rhetoric who is silent and not involved when faced with discourse to empower her, Marnina Gonick invites her readers to question whether the silence of that girl is in fact disempowered (2007). She highlights the complexity of the term empowerment and asks "what is at stake for girls in replacing silence with voice?" She adds that "girls are more than able to identify the conflicting ideologies about women and their social roles. The problem is, rather, the consequences girls face in having to position themselves within

discourses that are internally contradictory and have conflicting expectations and pressures” (Gonick, 2007, pp. 434, 441).

Gonick’s data for the study comes from a program she enacted with 10- to 14-year-old inner-city girls in Canada. Using video, the participants explored and represented issues and problems they thought were faced by girls like them, and afterwards had an opportunity to collectively analyze their gendered cultural and social practices. While her conclusions are relevant to girls, the questions she raised are valid for all disadvantaged youth negotiating social positions relative to values and power. Gonick and Turnball question “how the girls may feel about their families... at an age when they may well be trying to define themselves as separate from, while still emotionally attached to and financially dependent on [them]” (Gonick, 2007, p. 436; Turnball, 1998, p. 102 in Gonick, 2007). They also question whether it is empowering for girls to reject their families and their values in favor of non-compatible personal choices (Gonick, 2007, p. 437; Turnball, 1998, p. 100 in Gonick, 2007).

As such, girls’ silence is more than the absence of discourse, and the refusal to speak, whether conscious or unconscious, is a possible form of resistance. Taking action does not nullify empowerment, but empowerment is not contingent upon taking action or bringing about change. Peoples’ environments change all the time, and even if a person is intending to take action, the present may not be the best moment or situation for doing that. It is in fact more empowered to weigh one’s choices, strategize regarding the best time for taking action, and act only as needed and when positive impact is expected.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed some theoretical questions that I deemed necessary to tackle before proposing an empowerment model. These stemmed from gaps in theoretical references in the reviewed programs and studies, questions that were raised by the designers and implementers of these programs, and issues they were silent about. They included questions about relations between power and empowerment, whether empowerment always leads to positive outcomes, whether risk-taking is necessarily disempowering, and whether everyone needs to be empowered at the same level. Also, the studied articles brought to light questions regarding whether or not theory should be shared with students, whether personal or communal empowerment should be the starting- point for personal empowerment, and finally, whether being empowered necessarily implies taking action.

In the discussion around power and empowerment, I concluded that the best approach is for educators and practitioners to address empowerment on an individual and local level, while also situating issues of power and empowerment in larger discussions that transcend the boundaries of the classroom or working group to levels the community and beyond. Potential negative outcomes of empowerment were discussed, and I concluded that raising ethics and moral values should be included in youth empowerment work. Similarly, I approached risk-taking as a *de facto* component of adolescence, where such tendency could be directed toward activities that support positive personal development, and noted that art education is an effective avenue for such work.

On whether everyone needs to be empowered to the same level, I adopted a rights-based approach at the initial stage, where a minimum standard is expected to be

achieved for all students, followed by a capabilities-based approach at later stages, where different students are nurtured to excel based on their potential. Regarding sharing theory with students, I concluded that doing so makes the learning deeper and is critical to developing skills such as critical thinking and literacy, motivation for positive community involvement and development, consciousness of social justice issues, and the ability to take action toward inequalities and injustices.

A focus on individual arts-based empowerment as a way toward communal empowerment was illustrated as the focus of this study. Additionally, I discussed *taking action* or *change* as a possible component but not a necessary outcome of empowerment. This was in line with the notion that not all actions are necessarily empowered and silence is not necessarily disempowered. I discussed coping, adaptation, and resilience as potential other outcomes, which could happen side-by-side, or exclusive of, taking action or change as part of empowerment.

In addition to considering the previous theoretical questions, it is useful for art educators and community arts practitioners, while designing their programs, to consider theory that is most predominantly referenced in the area of youth empowerment through the arts, notably Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, Positive Youth Development from the field of psychological development, and Ericksonian Theory and solution-focused therapy from the field of psychology. Relative to specific art forms, and also in general, it is useful to look at literature about Photovoice, a photography-based action-research method, Forum Theatre, which encourages dialogue and critical thinking, and arts that are native to specific cultural groups, and which can promote a positive sense of identity, such as hip-hop. Finally, it is useful to look at critical ethnography methods, which refer

to ethnographic research that is done while committing to achieving more rights for the disadvantaged, and at production and consumption of media while having critical media literacy, which allows students to analyze, critique, and resist dominant media narratives.

So far, I have identified the main components of a definition of youth empowerment that is used in practice in the fields of art education and community arts. I also identified theoretical references used in this area and expanded the theoretical discussion beyond them. I found that the empowerment model that is predominantly used in the field is expressed as the collective presence of competence, consciousness, self-empowerment, empowering others, self-efficacy, and positive connections. Competence focuses on the ability to express and communicate, critical literacy and thinking, knowing oneself, creativity, and the ability to cope with difficulty. Consciousness pertains to social justice, empathy, and motivation for positive community involvement. And these six components are inter-connected.

The field of arts-based youth empowerment is in its infancy and there have not been many attempts to propose a model for youth empowerment through the arts thus far. The attempts that exist lack a solid theoretical foundation, often conflating the skills that would lead to being empowered and the outcomes of empowerment, or are partially vague and therefore not practical to use. The proposed model in the following chapter attempts to remedy these shortcomings.

CHAPTER SEVEN
AN INDICATIVE THEORETICAL EMPOWERMENT MODEL FOR
PRACTITIONERS

Introduction

The importance of this thesis lies in its address of knowledge gaps in research about arts-based approaches to youth empowerment. Most research reports about youth empowerment appeared to be case studies or articles describing specific programs, but did not document the programs well enough to make them replicable or render their results verifiable. The little work which existed in the area of theory focused on specific art forms. Overall, lack in agreement about program objectives, approaches, and means of assessing long-term outcomes of arts-based youth empowerment was evident.

After a summary of studies that describe arts-based programs, in this chapter I propose a model for youth empowerment through the arts, which could be used as a starting-point for practitioners as they think thoroughly about intended objectives for their programs and how to achieve them. The model may serve as a framework for those designing arts-based youth empowerment programs in the future. Finally, the benefits and limitations of using the model as a guiding framework are noted for future designers of arts-based programs aimed at empowering youth.

Summary of Enacted Empowerment Programs

This study included 35 academic peer-reviewed journal articles that focused on adolescents, empowerment, and the arts. Although the sample was pulled from a single

database and therefore may not be all-inclusive of programs the field, it was largely indicative of what arts-based youth empowerment programs look like and gave a general idea of the common practices and gaps in terms of arts-based youth empowerment program design. In general, I was able to determine locations where youth empowerment programs were enacted, the duration, number of beneficiaries and other characteristics of the groups involved, and whether these programs were conducted in formal or informal settings or were of therapeutic nature. Additionally, I considered what art forms were used, the nature of beneficiaries' interaction with art, and whether the program includes a final exhibition or presentation. General observations also included considerations of the methods used for evaluating the described programs and any limitations that were mentioned.

Although I assume that many art genres and forms might be used by practitioners and educators to achieve youth empowerment, such as drama, music, design crafts, drawing, industrial arts, painting, photography, woodworking, poetry, narrative text, filmmaking, film critique, visual art critique, popular culture, or storytelling, only a few forms were identified by authors of the studied articles. The most prevalently used were performing and visual arts. As for specific art genres, the most prevalent was drama, followed by photography and poetry, then hip-hop and rap.

The use of drama included Forum Theatre, where examination of an issue from multiple perspectives was encouraged. Participants created Tableaus, or frozen images of the characters' experiences, engaged in writing-in-role, where students wrote diary entries reflecting on what happened to specific characters during a day or wrote to a specific character, and put a character in a *hot seat* by asking him or her pointed

questions. Also, some drama experiences involved watching a play and then reflecting on its content.

Photography was the predominant form of visual arts used for youth empowerment purposes, especially the method of Photovoice, which is rooted in non-traditional approaches to documentary photography, feminist theory, and critical consciousness, and was initially developed to enhance women's health (Wang, 1999; Wang & Burris, 1997). In programs featuring Photovoice, participants created their own images and made their voices heard about certain issues they were experiencing (Levy & Weber, 2011). Other photography-based methods were photo elicitation, where photographs were used to elicit responses from participants, and curated photo albums, where participants created self-study photo albums, chose pictures around a theme, gave them captions and a title, and wrote a statement of intent.

Hip-hop and rap culture, including music, rapping, deejaying, break dancing, and mural arts or graffiti represented a culturally specific art form, used to empower youth that were targeted by the intervention program. Youth participants of these programs frequently were described as belonging to an at-risk demographic. Use of hip-hop in an arts-based empowerment program might be perceived as employing a folk or cultural heritage-related art, since hip-hop integrates culture-specific indigenous knowledge of art, craft, and symbolism with urban pop culture.

The use of poetry was predominant among the literary arts used by designers of these programs. Writing in general was often part of programs that included mixed-art approaches. Writing involved reflecting on a produced artwork, accompanying an artwork with a caption or descriptive text, journaling, or writing as a stand-alone activity.

Finally, filmmaking, digital storytelling, and reflections following film screenings were predominant among the audio-visual arts.

In terms of the nature of interactions with art, most of the studied articles leaned toward art production; participants wrote poems, produced visual art pieces, or danced. Less frequently mentioned interactions were listening to a rap song or watching a film or theatrical play. The majority of programs involved a mixture of both. It should be noted that programs involving art perception may be popular but are not frequently written about.

Weaknesses determined from the examined program descriptions included the following:

Duration and Location of Programs

Program duration is largely missing. Even when mentioned, it is often that the entire duration is mentioned in terms of weeks, semesters, or even years, without note of the actual time spent with youth, such as the number of hours per week and the length of individual sessions. In terms of location, programs seem to take place proportionately in formal and informal settings, with art therapy programs having the least occurrence. Most academic writings about programs take place in the U.S. and the developed world in general, which does not allow for generalization regarding geographic location. However, it appears that most programs take place at one specific location.

Participant Demographics

There is lack of specific information provided about the characteristics of participating youth groups in terms of size, age, and culture or other characteristics. In fact, only half of the reviewed articles in this study specified the number of beneficiaries

or students participating in the program or study. Of these, most involved groups of 12 or fewer participants. Most targeted early adolescents ranging in age between 11 and 15; many targeted ethnic minorities and at-risk youth, and were not gender-specific.

Reporting and Evaluation

In general, the articles examined for this study were not descriptive enough of the technical elements of the study, such as group size, time frame, actual time spent with youth, characteristics of the participating youth group, or age of participants.

Additionally, the quality of performed assessments was poorly or inconsistently designed.

Many evaluations conflated self-reported behavioral change with actual change in behavior. Others used qualitative methods poorly or had small numbers of participants.

Most measured effectiveness based on end-of-program assessments or used a single assessment method, such as observation or student surveys. None included a control group.

The most predominantly used assessment method was ethnography, which included observation of participants through video and audio recordings. The next most common methodology involved surveys of participants; interviews were third most common. Most assessment exercises occurred at the end of programs, without pre-assessments, and most occurred at the immediate end of the program rather than after some time had passed. This might be a weakness if one reckons that empowerment is not static over time. A few more robust assessments included focus groups, interviews with teachers, and indications of levels of participation and completion of assignments.

Fortunately, many authors identified these limitations and called for more in-depth and breadth research, more longitudinal studies, more empirically designed studies,

studies using more purposefully recruited and larger numbers of participants, and use of methodologies that were friendlier to vulnerable youth groups. For example, youth with inadequate language, literacy, or writing skills may limit youth's abilities to provide accurate accountings of program successes or failures.

Parameters to Consider and Questions to Ask While Designing Programs

My approach in this study has been to look at practices and findings from programs that utilized multiple art forms including fine arts, theatre, dance, literary arts, movie making, and others, to facilitate arts-based youth empowerment. This practice proved useful, as there were many similarities between the examined programs as well as many noticed shortcomings, particularly in the areas of evaluation and insufficient descriptions that prevented a possibility of program replication.

Thirty-five articles composed the sample for this study, all of which were published in peer-reviewed academic journal articles, and all of which address three subjects: the arts, empowerment, and adolescents. The articles came from 28 different journals, with the highest numbers found in the journals *Art Education* and *Creativity in Mental Health*, followed by *Literacy, Reclaiming Children and Youth*, and *Studies in Art Education*. The diversity of academic fields and areas of study concerned with the topic of adolescent empowerment through the arts reflect a need for more coordination, exchange of knowledge, and building on each others' experiences and accumulated knowledge. The diversity of academic journals that published these studies suggests the importance of looking across and sharing knowledge across disciplines; researchers and practitioners in these fields typically have maintained exclusive knowledge within the

confines of their disciplines. Interaction among researchers and practitioners of these fields would permit all to benefit from one another's learning, and perhaps foster recognition of arts-based youth empowerment as a multi-disciplinary area of study.

I encourage practitioners and academicians, while designing future programs and studies, to benefit from others' work, even if they used a different art form than the one intended by the researcher or program designer. Most of the studies that I found capitalized on using theatre and drama, photography, poetry, and hip-hop culture. Other art forms, such as painting, music in general, design crafts, filmmaking, and storytelling, were less evident or lacking from the examined literature. Perhaps these art forms also might be useful to the facilitation of youth empowerment if thoughtful specialists of these art forms took notice of how other art forms were useful to youth empowerment.

Purposeful project design sets the stage for the program to be replicated, assessments to occur, and results to be verified within different contexts and with variations in the ages and genders of the target adolescent participants. Programs should have:

1. *Clearly stated objectives*
2. *A detailed description of activities*, including human and material resources needed for implementation, and
3. *A plan for evaluation of success* based on clear indicators that are linked to the objectives.

What to Include in Program Documentation?

It is unfortunate that many of the reviewed studies lacked a proper description of the implemented program to make them replicable. I recommend that future documentation of programs include the following technical descriptors:

1. *Program nature:* Specify whether the program is enacted within a formal education setting and is implemented inside the art classroom, or within an informal educational setting such as after or outside of school, during a summer camp, or as a free-standing workshop. Also indicate if it is enacted as a psychological therapy program.
2. *Location:* Indicate whether it takes place in one or multiple sites with the same group of participants, or with multiple participant groups in multiple sites. Cultural and perhaps environmental and socio-economic contexts also could be added.
3. *Duration:* It is extremely important to mention not only the overall duration of the program, but also the actual number of hours spent with participants.
4. *Nature of participants:* This includes information about the number of participants of a program broken down by age and other demographic characteristics of participants, such as gender, socio-economic status, and whether they belong to a specific ethnic, cultural, or religious group. Attrition rates also should be included. Descriptors such as vulnerable or at-risk youth, when used, should be well-defined in the documentation of programs.
5. *Used arts:* It is important to describe the art form or forms that are used as features of a programs, as well as the nature of participant interactions with art

forms. Interaction with art could refer to art production, such as creating a mural, writing a poem, or performing a theatre piece, or interaction could refer to art perception, such as critiquing a film or reading a literary text. It also could refer to using a mixture of both. Additionally, it is important to indicate whether the program contains a final exhibition or presentation.

Planning Ahead Toward Evaluation

When thinking ahead toward the time of evaluation, project planners can ask themselves the following questions:

1. **Who?** Who will the participants of the program be? There could be a random selection of participants or usage of a control-group in order to compare and better analyze outcomes.
2. **What?** What information do I need to collect in relation to the objectives of the program? This may focus on changes in attitude and/or behavior and may include psychological components.
3. **When?** When will information be collected? This could include information gathered before and directly after the program or after some time has passed from completion of the program. Additionally, it could include a longitudinal study design.
4. **Where?** Is my program or exercise meant to be implemented in a formal or informal educational setting, or is it lendable to different settings?
5. **Why?** Do I expect the success of the program to hold true if it were to be re-implemented with a similar or slightly different participant group? Or in other

words, do I aim to generalize my findings and learned experience? Having a focus on education, successes should have the purpose of being replicable.

6. **How?** What tools am I going to use to collect information about results? This will range from self-reported data through questionnaires and interviews, to observation by others, to test results or grades indicating improved school or other performance success indicators.

The six technical descriptions noted above are key for understanding what happens in a program, point to places where the program might be improved, and allow for replication of successful interventions. Looking ahead toward implementation at the program design phase allows for better planning.

A Proposed Indicative Model for Empowerment

Based on conclusions of the meta-analysis of the programs studied and discussion of them in previous chapters, the following model is proposed as components to be considered by future designers of arts-based empowerment programs. It is also based on a review of referenced theory by practitioners and previous proposed models, and considers theoretical questions and discussions from Chapter Six. The model I propose for consideration in developing arts-based programs aimed at empowering youth, is in essence a set of developmental and learning objectives that form in their entirety what empowerment entails. The model functions as a reference for practitioners while formulating the objectives of their programs.

The model is grounded in the assumption that empowerment is not a static state and that a person's empowerment status could change over time. A person may be

empowered at a certain moment and disempowered at another. The model is centered in the psychology of the individual, but also includes community-related components that are centered in individual traits, such as the ability to communicate and collaborate with others, and feel responsible toward others. It starts from personal empowerment as a basis for communal empowerment, and focuses on individual's skills and attributes, which could be fostered in order that the individual achieves self-empowerment and becomes an empowering agent of other people.

Empowerment as a Set of Attributes

Previous findings of this thesis provided much insight. When looking at the six key components that summarize how practitioners and researchers in the areas of art education and community arts are defining arts-based youth empowerment, plus the objectives that are most valuable to them, I was faced with the challenge of having what seemed to be two sets of components; one resulted in the other. This and the assumption of empowerment described above led me to conclude that empowerment is a set of attributes and skills, which are acquirable, and which we can aim to achieve through an arts-based educational program. When a person develops these attributes and skills, he or she becomes empowered, which means he or she has the ongoing ability to empower both self and others in his or her environment. As such, the model I am proposing for empowerment is constituted of four skills and attributes that are achievable through an educational program or set of programs, along with two attributes that result automatically from their presence.

Self-empowerment and empowering others are two attributes resulting from being empowered. They have a continuous nature, and include taking action, in addition to

coping, adaptation, and resilience, and to continuously enforcing the four attributes that lead to them. These latter four attributes are:

1. *Competence,*
2. *Consciousness,*
3. *Self-efficacy, and*
4. *Positive connections.*

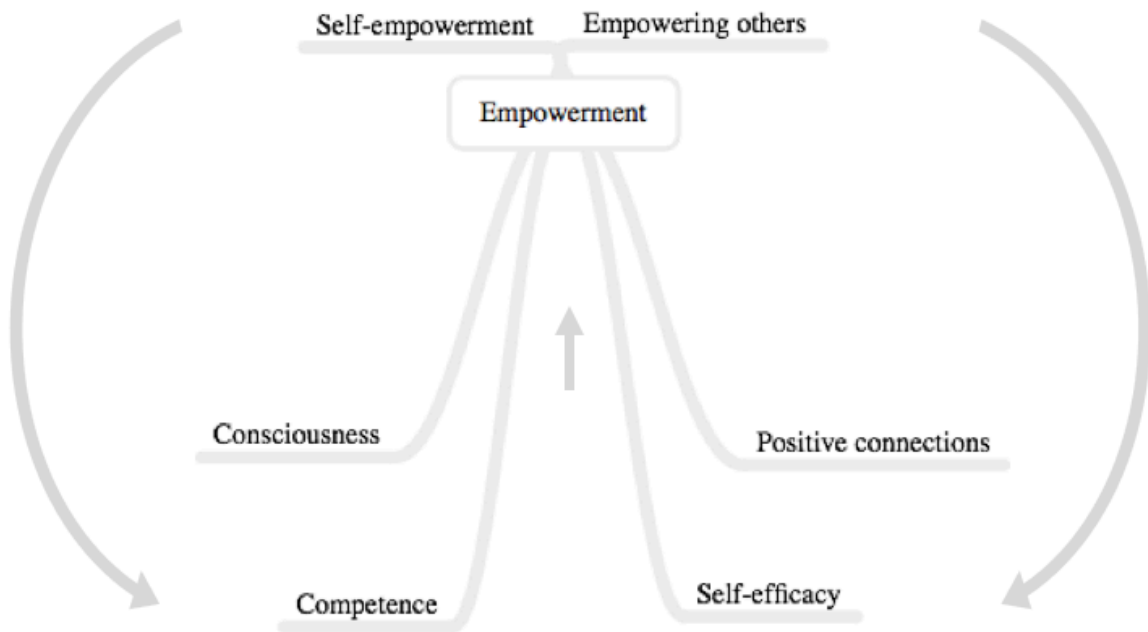


Figure 9: A proposed indicative model for empowerment

Competence refers to having or acquiring a set of skills, mainly the ability to express and communicate, the ability to cope and self-heal, critical literacy, critical thinking, and creativity. Having these skills is essential to one being empowered as they not only constitute a large part of being personally empowered, but also influence a person's ability to develop other areas that are essential to empowerment. For example, how can one develop social consciousness without critical literacy? How can one develop

social connections without communication skills? How can self-efficacy be achieved without knowledge that one has the skills or tools to accomplish what he or she want to do?

Consciousness refers to having ownership of one's own image, when the individual owns his or her narrative of self and is not influenced negatively by perceptions others hold of him or her. It also includes consciousness of social justice issues, motivation for positive community involvement and development, and empathy. Finally, it includes development of one's moral values, because without these, empowerment may not always lead to positive outcomes.

Self-efficacy includes self-esteem and one's belief that he or she is able to achieve what he or she sets out to do. In this model, it also is means having a positive sense of one's own identity. Finally, having positive connections refers to one's ability to build positive connections with those around him or her and the presence of such connections in life. These connections act as a source of positive peer and adult influence, whether at school, at home, or in other contexts.

Sub-components of empowerment attributes:

Competence

Ability to express

Ability to communicate

Ability to cope and self-heal

Critical literacy

Critical thinking

Creativity

Consciousness

Ownership of one's own image

Consciousness of social justice issues

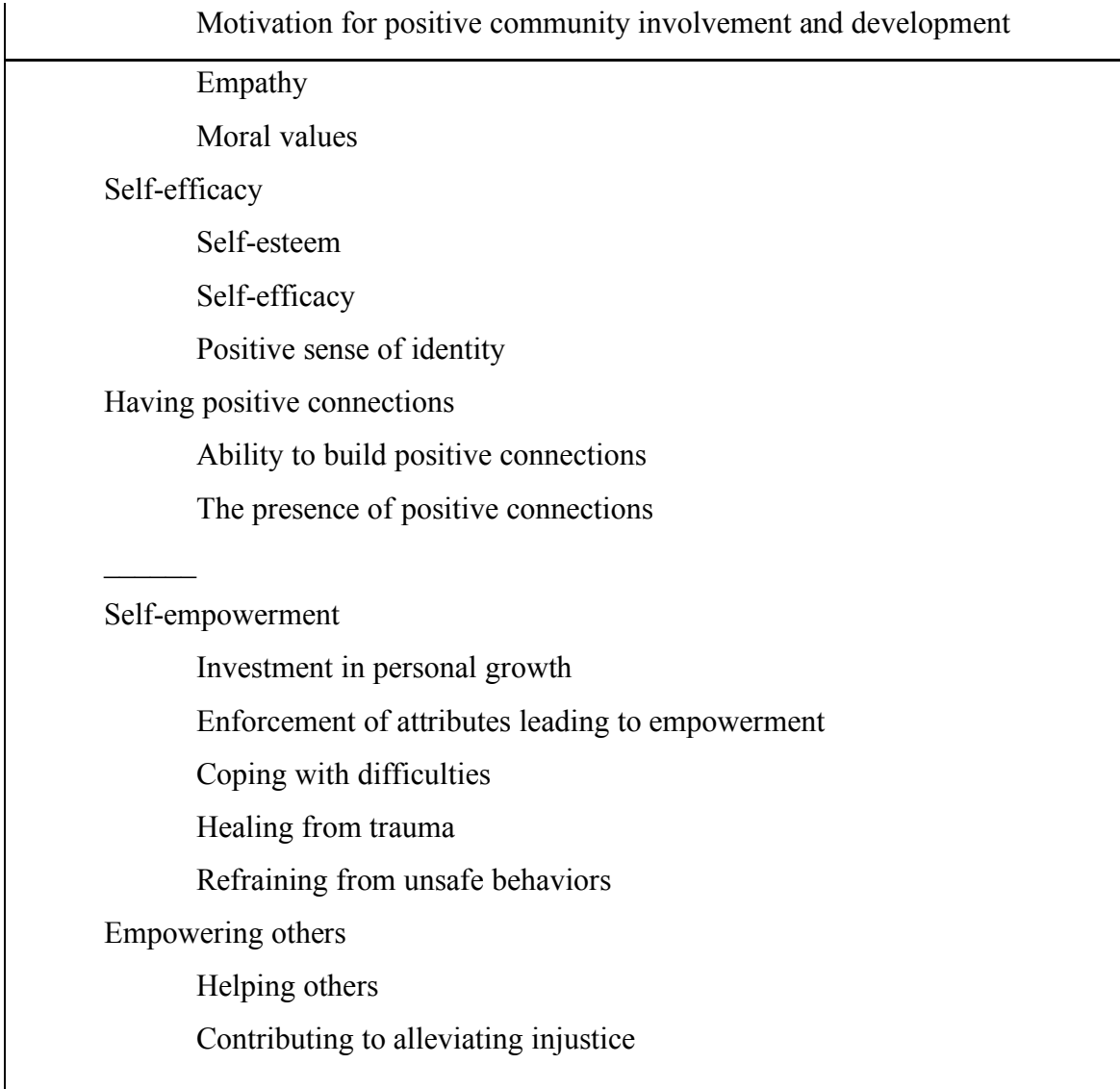


Figure 10: A proposed indicative model for empowerment

Self-empowerment refers to the person’s investment in personal growth and continued enforcement of all the attributes that led him or her to being empowered, actual coping with difficulties and adversity and healing from trauma, and refraining from unsafe behaviors, which may cause a threat to one’s life or well-being. Empowering others refers to taking action in the direction of alleviating inequalities and injustices by helping others who are trapped or caught in oppressive or unjust situations.

The inclusion of consciousness in the model is related to empowerment, even if that may not always lead to positive outcomes. Consciousness also includes an ethical, empathetic, and caring dimension, and reflects the need to share theory with students: The art activities that are implemented need to be pre-set to fall within the larger picture. For example, a communal mural painting project is nothing more than painting on a large wall if not contextualized in the reality of the neighborhood where it is being created and with its subject-matter reflecting the aspirations, struggles, history, or presence of the community hosting it.

Supplements to the Model

Whether everyone needs to be empowered at the same level is an issue that was discussed in Chapter Six. It is important for practitioners to consider this issue when designing empowerment programs. It is recommended that specific objectives be set that all students are expected to achieve, with higher objectives set for those participants who are expected to exceed those initial goals. This ensures, most importantly, that no one is left out, and also that the program caters to different starting-points of knowledge and ability and variations in levels of interest and potential.

In addition to considering this theoretical model, it is useful for art educators and community arts practitioners, while designing their programs, to consider theory that is most predominantly referenced in the area of youth empowerment through the arts; notably Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy and Positive Youth Development from the field of psychological development.

Working with youth while using the arts creates a unique space where they can explore, be creative, express ideas out of the norm, and benefit from ways of expression

that surpass the verbal into the visual and emotional. The arts provide an avenue for youth to select modes of communication and learning that interest them. These communicative modes may range from the visual to audio-visual, and from theatre and music, to literary writing.

Finally, the subject-matter of artwork is multi-disciplinary by definition. It ranges from everyday mundane life, to politics, history, nature, the environment, or beyond. This openness allows youth to focus on topics that interest them the most as they learn various skills and increase knowledge in ways that are anticipated to be transferred across subject areas and into present and future personal lives. Using art forms as tools for empowerment allows students to cross boundaries and explore risky territory, while educators may capitalize on the positive benefits of risk-taking tendencies and minimize negative risk-taking behaviors.

Useful arts-based tools applied in youth empowerment programs included Photovoice, a photography-based action-research tool, Forum Theatre, which encourages dialogue and critical thinking, and use of arts that are native to specific cultural groups, such as hip-hop as a tool used for empowerment of African American youth in urban settings. Also, it is useful to look at critical ethnography methods, which refer to ethnographic research that is done with an ulterior aim of securing rights for the disadvantaged. Additional useful are tools centered on the production and consumption of media that invite critical thinking or nurture critical media literacy. This encourages students to analyze, critique, and resist dominant media narratives that were determined to be demeaning, inaccurate, stereotypical, or disempowering.

Implications for the Field

This study revealed that academic literature in the field of youth empowerment using the arts primarily is composed of case studies. Authors provide variable definitions of empowerment, and goals of empowerment programs vary from case to case. Additionally, methods of implementing empowerment programs for youth are diverse. A model of arts-based youth empowerment which considers different variables, capitalizes on research related to arts-based youth empowerment, and entertains theories from other fields will help identify and prioritize goals across programs. The model may serve as a guide in verifying achievement of program goals, measuring impact, facilitating comparisons, and providing insight regarding strengths and weaknesses of programs. For these reasons, the model may assist program designers and implementers in planning quality youth empowerment programs.

It is recommended that the model be used in designing arts-based empowerment programs. It might be particularly helpful when selecting the objectives of the program-to-be. Given limited resources, some programs will focus on development of some skills over others as means of achieving self-empowerment and/or empowerment of others. Strategically selecting goals, based on available resources, including financial and human resources, are likely to be more useful than having generalized programs that strive to achieve too much or too many results. Users of the model might use it in framing programs that provide not only more measurably reliable results but are also more replicable. This would strengthen the field of knowledge about usefulness of art-based programs as tools of youth empowerment.

Areas for Future Inquiry

The model assumes arts-based approaches as appropriate tools and content of empowerment programs, based on varied cases that employed a range of individual or mixed art forms including literary, performing, and visual-arts, audio-visual media, and cultural heritage approaches. Future studies could examine singular arts-based approaches, such as theater or photography. This would allow effective comparisons of specific art engagements to find out what forms of art and engagement work best to achieve specific goals of empowerment.

While the model presents a point of reference for designing empowerment programs, issues of adolescent psychological development underlie and provide a *raison d'être* for such programs. Continued research in areas of adolescent psychological development over time will contribute insights regarding effective applications of the model. Among considerations might be an examination of which aspects of the adolescent psychology benefit from what types of arts engagements at particular stages of the adolescents' psychological development.

The age group covered by the studied articles included youth from 13 to 21 years of age. This is a wide age demographic. While some of the reviewed articles focus on subgroups of the overall age cohort, authors of most articles did not articulate outcomes and definitions of empowerment exclusive to subdivisions within the wider age range. Therefore, differences in outcomes for youth of specific ages within the 13 -21 age range were not reflected in this thesis. The proposed model might be adapted in the future to narrow in on sequenced stages of adolescence, and perhaps identify what skills might be ideally addressed or developed at what ages.

The empowerment model proposed presents a first step in the process of designing effective empowerment programs. Particularly, the model emphasizes a need to set clear program objectives. However, instruments for reliable assessments of project outcomes also must be determined or developed. These could range from questionnaires to direct observation to psychological testing instruments, which might be contingent on stage of adolescent development. Identifying appropriate measuring instruments is beyond the scope of this study or the proposed model, and thus presents a recommended next area of research. Assessment is a complicated process; instruments need to be culturally and age-sensitive, tested, and generally accepted and used.

Conclusion

This study addresses knowledge weaknesses in the literature about arts-based youth empowerment programs. In response, I have proposed a model for youth empowerment through the arts, which might serve as a starting-point in determining objectives for individual programs. The model includes general parameters for considerations in program design and suggests a theoretical grounding for designing arts-based activities with assessment in mind. This would allow practitioners in the field to compare their work to others and replicate others' work in order to test the validity and efficacy of such programs with diverse youth and in variable settings.

My starting-point in carrying out this study was the work that already existed in the field, exemplified by the writings of academicians and reflective practitioners in peer-reviewed academic journal articles. Although most of the works found were case studies and many weaknesses were identified in their design and reporting, overall they provided

insight regarding the current status of the field and served as a springboard for reflection and collection of further information. The sample of studied articles was formed based on addressing three factors: art, adolescents, and empowerment, with a search equation that included many keywords for each. The sample permitted a sufficient indication of the status of the field without inclusively representing it.

As a result of the literature investigation, I proposed a model that defines empowerment as a set of attributes and skills, which are acquirable, and which lead in turn to enabling the individual to empower him or herself and others over time. The results of self-empowerment and empowering others include taking action, coping, adaptation, and resilience, in addition to continuous enforcement of the attributes that lead to empowerment. The four attributes leading to these attributes are competence, consciousness, self-efficacy, and having positive connections. The model is centered in the psychology of the individual, and its underlying assumption is that empowerment is not static over time. It benefits from theory and already existing practices in the field and encourages practitioners to consider these while designing their programs.

The study concludes with recommendations that future practitioners and researchers of youth empowerment programs include comprehensive descriptions and documentation of implemented programs, in order to render the results verifiable and replicable. It is advised that documentation at least include the following technical descriptors:

- Whether the program falls under formal or informal education or is a therapy program,
- Location of the program,

- Its duration over time and the specific number of hours of participant engagement,
- The nature of participants in terms of age and numeric size of participating group and other demographic characteristics of the participants, such as gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and membership in a specific religious or cultural groups,
- Documentation of the art(s) employed and the nature of interaction with art (production or perception),
- Finally, programs should have clearly stated objectives, a detailed description of activities, including human and material resources needed for implementation, and a plan for evaluation of success based on clear indicators that are linked to the objectives.

This thesis serves as a foundation for more research in the area of youth empowerment through the arts. It is grounded in many art domains, ranging from fine arts and literature, to performance, including music, theatre, and dance. Including many genres was important at this point due to the lack of widely used youth empowerment models in all of them. Limitations lie in generalizations across art fields plus across different age subgroups of adolescents, such as early and late adolescents and young adults. Future research could focus on the specific attributes leading to empowerment and the skills composing them, as well as tackling appropriate and trustworthy assessment tools for each of these attributes. It could also focus on specific art forms and adolescent age groups.

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Appendix A

Pre-study conceptual model of youth empowerment using the arts

Building a preliminary conceptual model of arts-based youth empowerment before conducting the study was done with the intention of increasing my awareness toward unintentional biases during the analytical coding process conducted during the meta-analysis using grounded theory. This appendix was written in November 2013, whereas the meta-analysis was performed starting in March 2014.

Pre-Study Model Development

I agree with Zimmerman (1995) that empowerment has intra-personal and interactional components, but would put behavioral ones, including taking action and/or coping as the result of empowerment rather than being one of its components, which is in line with Lerner's discussion of the sixth C, *Contribution* (Lerner, 2004). I also agree with him that empowerment manifests itself in different perceptions, skills, and behaviors among people, and that it may fluctuate over time. However, I do not agree with him or Lerner (Lerner et al., 2005) that competence or mastery in specific areas should be part of the model, but that only the ability to develop skills and the belief in one's competence should be.

Adding to this discussion Kronenberg's (2007) and Travis and Deepak's (2011) articles on arts-based youth empowerment and empowerment through hip-hop, I think that the type of knowledge or consciousness processed by an individual should not be part of the model, but only the ability to access and judge the quality of information, in addition to curiosity and the attribute of questioning the status quo, which is similar to

Zimmerman's *critical awareness*. Accordingly, socio-political awareness is not a component of the model. To illustrate this point, we can take the example of a student who at a specific point of time is developing awareness of adversities on the level of her classroom but not society in general. At that point of time, could we say that she is not empowered? And if she develops the skill to question her environment, wouldn't that work when she is in the classroom as well as in other contexts?

I am not fully comfortable including in the model what is referred to by Travis and Deepak as *change*. If a student takes action to cause change in his environment (hopefully for the better--I will come to that again when discussing ethics), we cannot say that he is not empowered. However, would that student be described as less empowered at the moment right before he starts his work to cause change? And how would including *Change* in the model allow for the consideration of differing quantity of action over time? Also, if the adolescent's sought change was politically sensitive and his action caused him as well as his family great harm, could we still consider that adolescent empowered when he did it? Action is not always a good thing, and change needs a sound strategy and may not always be possible on the short-term. While being aware of and striving to enhance one's environment is definitely empowered, it is more important to be wise about one's choices and choose the right moment to act, rather than focusing on action itself.

I think that change is an important but not necessary result of being empowered, and that it should be joined by *the ability to adapt*. Adaptation, coping, and/or resilience are in fact part of Zimmerman's and Travis and Deepak's models. As for Lerner (2004; 2005), his 6th C "Contribution" is in conformity with my take on the issue because he

defines its ideal format in an adult life as “contributions to self..., family, community, and the institutions of civil society” (Lerner, 2005, p. 32) and presents it as resulting from the presence of the components of positive youth development or the 5 C’s, so it is not a component of positive youth development but a result of it, and while contribution to family, community, and civil society institutes is similar to *change*, that to one’s own self is similar to *adaptation*.

My next point is about ethics. Given that the model developed in this thesis is one for adolescents, and ultimately an educational one, and with appreciation to Travis and Deepak’s note that the empowerment input to an individual in the frame of hip-hop could contain risky or pro-social values, or a combination of both (2011), I think that cultivating and enforcing ethical stances should be part of the developed model. This is an integral part of Lerner’s positive youth development as well, as the C of Character is defined as “Respect for societal and cultural rules, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong, morality, and integrity” (Lerner et al., 2005, p. 23). I will limit the ethical qualities on the intra-personal level in the preliminary conceptual model to *integrity*, and on the interactional level, to *caring* (sympathy and empathy) and *tolerance*, the first of which is present in Lerner’s, Zimmerman’s, and Travis and Deepak’s approaches.

Borrowing from Zimmerman’s (1995) empowerment theory; my starting conceptual model includes intra-personal and interactional components, in addition to behaviors that result from empowerment. My proposed intra-personal qualities are: a positive sense of identity (including self-esteem), self-efficacy, self-determination (composed of intrinsic and integrated extrinsic motivation), and integrity. The

interactional qualities are: collaboration, caring (sympathy and empathy), and tolerance. There are two more qualities that fit within the intra-personal component as well as behaviors resulting from being empowered. These are *the ability to access knowledge/art* and then *to contribute to knowledge/art*. The first includes questioning the status quo and critical thinking, while the second includes the ability to express plus creativity or divergent thinking. I am using *knowledge/art* here as an overarching term that includes variations of information, understanding, and skill, in addition to art. When the qualities composing empowerment are present, they *empower* the individual to achieve combinations of *change* and *adaptation* plus *the ability to access knowledge/art* and *the ability to contribute to knowledge/art*. Also, these behaviors, if met with positive feedback and/or success based on self-set goals, may reinforce the basic components of empowerment.

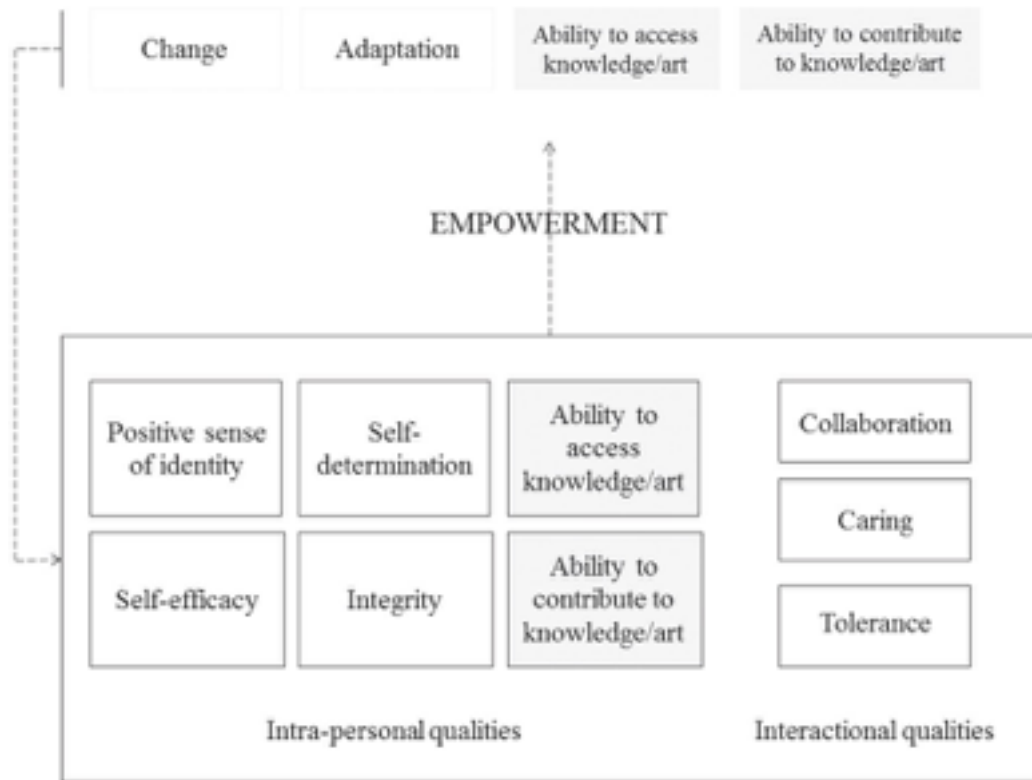


Figure 11: Preliminary conceptual model of youth empowerment using the arts, developed prior to study

One problematic quality that is not included in the model is competence in specific skills. The positive self-perception of one's competence is included through the component self-efficacy and competence in the sense of mastery could be part of *the ability to access knowledge/art* and *the ability to contribute to knowledge/art* but is not mandatory to be empowered. We will come to this point again when discussing competence in an art form related to the empowerment model. Another quality that is not included separately is modesty (which includes accepting criticism), because it could be one of the causal qualities for each of *having a positive sense of identity*, *self-efficacy*, *collaboration*, and *tolerance* – ones that are already included in the model. I did not include it in order not to be redundant but I am not completely satisfied with that

decision, given the importance of that quality as a stand-alone one, especially as part of an educational model designed for adolescents.

Since we are discussing a model for youth empowerment using the arts, I would like to emphasize the point from the previous discussion regarding the non-necessity of competence but of the positive and realistic belief in one's abilities and of work toward achieving self-set goals. In the context of art programs, this would mean that the quality of the produced art is not important for the attainment of empowerment, but what is important is the cultivation of psychological traits and the learning skills that would lead to empowerment. Creating high-quality art is important but not necessary to be empowered. Finally, when I started working on this preliminary model, I had thought that it would include basic goals that youth empowerment would not be achieved without, and secondary ones that would result in some participants being more empowered than others. Later, I set all the goals to have equal weight, differentiating only between components of empowerment and results of being empowered.

Appendix B

Journal articles composing the sample

Table 3: Journal articles composing the sample

| No. | Author(s) | Pub. year | Relevant descriptors | Article title | Academic Journal | Location of study | Methodology |
|------------|---|------------------|--|---|---|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 01 | Barros, Jessica M. | 2012 | Student Empowerment; Folk Culture; High Schools | “Koladeras,” Literacy Educators of the Cape Verdean Diaspora: A Cape Verdean African Centered Call and Response Methodology | Community Literacy | Cape Verde; Portugal; U.S. | Qualitative |
| 02 | Benmayor, Rina | 2008 | Student Empowerment; Story Telling; Student Projects | Digital Storytelling as a Signature Pedagogy for the New Humanities | Arts and Humanities in Higher Education | | Qualitative |
| 03 | Burdick, Corrie; Causton-Theoharis, Julie | 2012 | Student Empowerment; Art Education; High Schools, Middle Schools | Creating Effective Paraprofessional Support in the Inclusive Art Classroom | Art Education | | Qualitative |
| 04 | Clarke, Lane W. | 2006 | Empowerment; Literature; Grade 5 | Power through Voicing Others: Girls' Positioning of Boys in Literature Circle Discussions | Literacy Research | | Qualitative |

| No. | Author(s) | Pub. year | Relevant descriptors | Article title | Academic Journal | Location of study | Methodology |
|------------|------------------------------------|------------------|---|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 05 | Davenport, Melanie G.; Gunn, Karin | 2009 | Empowerment; Art Activities; High Schools | Collaboration in Animation: Working Together to Empower Indigenous Youth | Art Education | Mexico | Qualitative |
| 06 | De Abreu, Belinha | 2010 | Student Empowerment; Journalism Education; Middle School Students, Middle Schools | Changing Technology = Empowering Students through Media Literacy Education | New Horizons in Education | U.S. | Qualitative |
| 07 | Elmesky, Rowhea | 2005 | Student Empowerment; Film Production, Popular Culture, Music; Urban Schools, High School Students, Student Projects, High Schools | "I Am Science and the World Is Mine": Embodied Practices as Resources for Empowerment | School Science and Mathematics | | Qualitative |
| 08 | Goessling, Kristen; Doyle, Carol | 2009 | Empowerment; Photography; Urban Schools, High School Students, High Schools | Thru the Lenz: Participatory Action Research, Photography, and Creative Process in an Urban High School | Creativity in Mental Health | | Qualitative |

| No. | Author(s) | Pub. year | Relevant descriptors | Article title | Academic Journal | Location of study | Methodology |
|------------|---|------------------|--|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 09 | Gonick, Marnina | 2007 | Empowerment; Popular Culture; Early Adolescents | Girl Number 20 Revisited: Feminist Literacies in New Hard Times | Gender and Education | | Qualitative |
| 10 | Gourd, Karen M.; Gourd, Tina Y. | 2011 | Empowerment; Drama; Adolescents, Middle School Students, Grade 8, Middle Schools | Enacting Democracy: Using Forum Theatre to Confront Bullying | Equity and Excellence in Education | | Qualitative |
| 11 | Grauer, Kit; Castro, Juan Carlos; Lin, Ching-Chiu | 2012 | Empowerment; Art Education, Film Production; Youth Programs | Encounters with Difference: Community-Based New Media Programs and Practices | Studies in Art Education | British Columbia, Canada | Qualitative |
| 12 | Green, Keisha | 2010 | Empowerment; Art Activities; Youth Programs | Our Lyrics Will Not Be on Lockdown: An Arts Collective's Response to an Incarceration Nation | Race, Ethnicity and Education | | Qualitative |
| 13 | Gude, Olivia | 2010 | Empowerment; Art Education, Art Activities; Adolescents | Playing, Creativity, Possibility | Art Education | | Qualitative |

| No. | Author(s) | Pub. year | Relevant descriptors | Article title | Academic Journal | Location of study | Methodology |
|------------|---|------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 14 | Haddix, Marcelle; Sealey-Ruiz, Yolanda | 2012 | Empowerment; Popular Culture; Urban Youth | Cultivating Digital and Popular Literacies as Empowering and Emancipatory Acts among Urban Youth | Adolescent and Adult Literacy | | Qualitative |
| 15 | James, Adrienne Brant | 2010 | Empowerment; Folk Culture; Youth Programs, Youth | Reclaiming Deep Democracy | Reclaiming Children and Youth | | Qualitative |
| 16 | Kearns, Sarah | 2012 | Empowerment; Story Telling; Adolescents | Seeking Researcher Identity through the Co-Construction and Representation of Young People's Narratives of Identity | Educational Action Research | | Qualitative |
| 17 | Kelly, Alison; Safford, Kimberly | 2009 | Student Empowerment; Popular culture; Grade 6 | Does Teaching Complex Sentences Have to Be Complicated? Lessons from Children's Online Writing | Literacy | | Qualitative |
| 18 | Kress, Victoria E.; Adamson, Nicole A.; Yensel, Jennifer | 2010 | Empowerment; Story Telling; Adolescents | The Use of Therapeutic Stories in Counseling Child and Adolescent Sexual Abuse Survivors | Creativity in Mental Health | | Qualitative |

| No. | Author(s) | Pub. year | Relevant descriptors | Article title | Academic Journal | Location of study | Methodology |
|------------|--|------------------|---|---|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 19 | Kress, Victoria E.; Hoffman, Rachel M. | 2008 | Empowerment; Literature, Story Telling; Adolescents | Empowering Adolescent Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Application of a Solution-Focused Ericksonian Counseling Group | Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development | | Qualitative |
| 20 | Levy, Leanne; Weber, Sandra | 2011 | Empowerment; Video Technology, Photography, Film Production, Art Education, Art Activities; Adolescents | Teenmom.ca: A Community Arts-Based New Media Empowerment Project for Teenage Mothers | Studies in Art Education | Quebec, Canada | Qualitative |
| 21 | Malm, Birgitte; Lofgren, Horst | 2007 | Student Empowerment; Drama; Adolescents | Empowering Students to Handle Conflicts through the Use of Drama | Peace Education | Sweden, Australia, Malaysia | Mixed |
| 22 | Medina, Carmen L.; Campano, Gerald | 2006 | Student Empowerment; Theater Arts; Grade 5 | Performing Identities through Drama and Teatro Practices in Multilingual Classrooms | Language Arts | California, U.S. | Qualitative |
| 23 | Morrison, Morag | 2004 | Student Empowerment; Drama; Adolescents | Risk and Responsibility: The Potential of Peer Teaching to Address Negative Leadership | Improving Schools | | Qualitative |

| No. | Author(s) | Pub. year | Relevant descriptors | Article title | Academic Journal | Location of study | Methodology |
|------------|---|------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 24 | Orme, Judy; Salmon, Debra; Mages, Linda | 2007 | Empowerment; Drama; Young Adults | Project Jump: Young People's Perspectives on a Sexual Health Drama Project for Hard to Reach Young People | Children and Society | | Mixed |
| 25 | Reyes, Gerald T. | 2006 | Empowerment; Poetry; After School Programs, Middle School Students, Grade 5, Grade 6, Middle Schools | Finding the Poetic High: Building a Spoken Word Poetry Community and Culture of Creative, Caring, and Critical Intellectuals | Multicultural Education | | Qualitative |
| 26 | Robbins, Joy M.; Pehrsson, Dale-Elizabeth | 2009 | Empowerment; Poetry; Young Adults | Anorexia Nervosa: A Synthesis of Poetic and Narrative Therapies in the Outpatient Treatment of Young Adult Women | Creativity in Mental Health | | Qualitative |
| 27 | Sawch, Deb | 2011 | Student Empowerment; Literature; High School Students, High Schools | Asking and Arguing with Fact and Fiction: Using Inquiry and Critical Literacy to Make Sense of Literature in the World | English | | Qualitative |

| No. | Author(s) | Pub. year | Relevant descriptors | Article title | Academic Journal | Location of study | Methodology |
|------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|---|--|--|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 28 | Schaedler, Maria Tereza | 2010 | Empowerment; Theater Arts; Youth | Boal's Theater of the Oppressed and How to Derail Real-Life Tragedies with Imagination | New Directions for Youth Development | Massachusetts, U.S. | Qualitative |
| 29 | Travis, Raphael; Bowman, Scott W. | 2012 | Empowerment; Music; Adolescents | Ethnic Identity, Self-Esteem and Variability in Perceptions of Rap Music's Empowering and Risky Influences | Youth Studies | | Quantitative |
| 30 | Travis, Raphael, Jr.; Deepak, Anne | 2011 | Empowerment; Popular Culture, Music; Youth Programs | Empowerment in Context: Lessons from Hip-Hop Culture for Social Work Practice | Ethnic and Cultural Diversity in Social Work | | Qualitative |
| 31 | Turk, Janelle | 2012 | Empowerment; Art Education, Visual Arts; Grade 6, Grade 7, Grade 8 | Collaboration, Inclusion, and Empowerment: A Life Skills Mural | Art Education | | Qualitative |
| 32 | Wallace-DiGarbo, Anne; Hill, David C. | 2006 | Empowerment; Art Activities, Art Expression; Middle School Students, Middle Schools | Art as Agency: Exploring Empowerment of At-Risk Youth | Art Therapy | | Mixed |

| No. | Author(s) | Pub. year | Relevant descriptors | Article title | Academic Journal | Location of study | Methodology |
|------------|--|------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 33 | Wilhelm, Mike | 2009 | Empowerment; Industrial Arts; Adolescents | Industrial Art: Mission to Meaning | Reclaiming Children and Youth | Mexico; U.S. | Qualitative |
| 34 | Wilson, Nance; Dasho, Stefan; Martin, Anna C.; Wallerstein, Nina; Wang, Caroline C.; Minkler, Meredith | 2007 | Empowerment; Photography; Early Adolescents, After School Programs, Student Projects, Grade 5 | Engaging Young Adolescents in Social Action through Photovoice: The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) Project | Early Adolescence | | Qualitative |
| 35 | Wiseman, Angela | 2011 | Student Empowerment; Poetry, Music; Urban Schools, Adolescents, High School Students, High Schools | Powerful Students, Powerful Words: Writing and Learning in a Poetry Workshop | Literacy | | Qualitative |

Appendix C

Particulars of studied articles: Education type, participants, and art genre and interaction

Table 4: Particulars of studied articles: Education type, participants, and art genre and interaction

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|------------|---------------------|---|--------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|
| 01 | (Barros, 2012) | “Koladeras,” Literacy Educators of the Cape Verdean Diaspora: A Cape Verdean African Centered Call and Response Methodology | Informal | Not specified (whole community) | | Folklore and cultural heritage | Cape Verdean call and response storytelling and singing tradition | Mixed |
| 02 | (Benmayor, 2008) | Digital Storytelling as a Signature Pedagogy for the New Humanities | Formal | Late adolescence (16-23 year olds) | University students, mostly from ethnic minority groups, mostly female | Audio-visual and interactive media | Digital storytelling | Mixed |
| 03 | (Burdick & Causton- | Creating Effective Paraprofessional | Formal | Mixed adolescent | Students at school | Visual arts | | Mixed |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|--------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|---|--|
| | Theoharis, 2012) | Support in the Inclusive Art Classroom | | groups | | | | |
| 04 | (Clarke, 2006) | Power through Voicing Others: Girls' Positioning of Boys in Literature Circle Discussions | Formal | Early adolescence (11-15 year olds) | | Literature and press | | Perception |
| 05 | (Davenport & Gunn, 2009) | Collaboration in Animation: Working Together to Empower Indigenous Youth | Informal | Late adolescence | Indigenous youth, high school and college students | Audio-visual and interactive media | Animation films. Visual arts also used for set design | Production |
| 06 | (De Abreu, 2010) | Changing Technology = Empowering Students through Media Literacy Education | Formal | Early adolescence | | Audio-visual and interactive media | New media literacy, includes press | Mixed |
| 07 | (Elmesky, 2005) | "I Am Science and the World Is Mine": Embodied Practices as Resources for | Informal | Late adolescence | High school students, African American, economically | Mixed arts | A film based on local culture, includes | Mixed |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|---------------------------|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|--|
| | | Empowerment | | | disadvantaged | | dance, theatre, music, and poster making | |
| 08 | (Goessling & Doyle, 2009) | Thru the Lenz: Participatory Action Research, Photography, and Creative Process in an Urban High School | Informal | Late adolescence | At-risk | Visual arts | Photography | Mixed |
| 09 | (Gonick, 2007) | Girl Number 20 Revisited: Feminist Literacies in New Hard Times | Informal | Early adolescence | From ethnic minority groups in Canada, from inner-city public school, female | Audio-visual and interactive media | Video making | Production |
| 10 | (Gourd & Gourd, 2011) | Enacting Democracy: Using Forum Theatre to Confront Bullying | Informal | Early adolescence | | Performing arts | Forum Theatre | Mixed |
| 11 | (Grauer et al., 2012) | Encounters with Difference: Community-Based | Informal | Not specified | Students at school | Mixed arts | Specifically digital photography | Mixed |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|------------------------------|--|---|--|---|---------------------------------|---|--|
| | | New Media Programs and Practices | | | | | and video making | |
| 12 | (Green, 2010) | Our Lyrics Will Not Be on Lockdown: An Arts Collective's Response to an Incarceration Nation | Informal | Not specified | African American | Mixed arts | Hip-hop, spoken-word, (poetry, rhyme), theater, dance, visual arts | Mixed |
| 13 | (Gude, 2010) | Playing, Creativity, Possibility | Both formal and informal | Not specified | | Visual arts | | Perception |
| 14 | (Haddix & Sealey-Ruiz, 2012) | Cultivating Digital and Popular Literacies as Empowering and Emancipatory Acts among Urban Youth | Describes two programs, one formal and one informal | Describes two programs, one for early and one for late adolescents | Early adolescents: African American males, urban school, population. Late adolescents: Black and Latino males | Mixed arts | Hip hop, popular culture, visual arts including photography and drawing | Mixed |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|-------------------------|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---|--|
| 15 | (James, 2010) | Reclaiming Deep Democracy | Formal | Not specified (whole community) | Students at school | Folklore and cultural heritage | Democratic traditions of Native Americans | Production |
| 16 | (Kearns, 2012) | Seeking Researcher Identity through the Co-Construction and Representation of Young People's Narratives of Identity | Informal | Late adolescence | | Visual arts | Photography | Perception |
| 17 | (Kelly & Safford, 2009) | Does Teaching Complex Sentences Have to Be Complicated? Lessons from Children's Online Writing | Informal | Early adolescence | | Folklore and cultural heritage | Popular heritage or folk culture related to sports (the football World Cup) | Production |
| 18 | (Kress et al., 2010) | The Use of Therapeutic Stories in Counseling | Therapy | Not specified | With history of sexual abuse | Literature and press | Storytelling | Perception |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|-------------------------|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|--|
| | | Child and Adolescent Sexual Abuse Survivors | | | | | | |
| 19 | (Kress & Hoffman, 2008) | Empowering Adolescent Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Application of a Solution-Focused Ericksonian Counseling Group | Therapy | Early adolescence | Female | Folklore and cultural heritage | Storytelling, creative writing, metaphors and symbols, the participants' culture, language, values, and worldviews | Mixed |
| 20 | (Levy & Weber, 2011) | Teenmom.ca: A Community Arts-Based New Media Empowerment Project for Teenage Mothers | Informal | Late adolescence | Pregnant youth or young mothers, low economic background | Mixed arts | Photovoice, collage, painting, drawing, writing, curated photo | Mixed |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|--------------------------|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | | | | | albums, film and media critique, keeping an art journal | |
| 21 | (Malm & Lofgren, 2007) | Empowering Students to Handle Conflicts through the Use of Drama | Formal | Early adolescence | Urban, suburban, and rural youth, mostly low socio-economic profile, mostly mixed-gender classes, ethnically homogeneous and mixed classes | Performing arts | Drama | Mixed |
| 22 | (Medina & Campano, 2006) | Performing Identities through Drama and Teatro Practices in Multilingual Classrooms | Formal | Early adolescence | Includes Latino youth, urban | Performing arts | Drama: Teatro, Tableaus, writing in role, dance and | Mixed |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|---------------------|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|--|
| | | | | | | | puppetry, questioning characters while in the 'hot seat' | |
| 23 | (Morrison, 2004) | Risk and Responsibility: The Potential of Peer Teaching to Address Negative Leadership | Informal | Early adolescence | Female | Performing arts | Drama | Production |
| 24 | (Orme et al., 2007) | Project Jump: Young People's Perspectives on a Sexual Health Drama Project for Hard to Reach Young People | Informal | Late adolescence | At risk of becoming not in education, employment, or training, young parents or young pregnant women, at risk of exclusion, other | Performing arts | Drama | Mixed |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|----------------------------|--|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|--|
| | | | | | vulnerable youth | | | |
| 25 | (Reyes, 2006) | Finding the Poetic High: Building a Spoken Word Poetry Community and Culture of Creative, Caring, and Critical Intellectuals | Both formal and informal | Early adolescence | | Literature and press | Poetry | Mixed |
| 26 | (Robbins & Pehrsson, 2009) | Anorexia Nervosa: A Synthesis of Poetic and Narrative Therapies in the Outpatient Treatment of Young Adult Women | Therapy | Young adulthood (18-30 year olds) | Not sure. Potentially university students | Literature and press | Poetry and narrative text | Mixed |
| 27 | (Sawch, 2011) | Asking and Arguing with Fact and Fiction: Using Inquiry and | Formal | Late adolescence | Advanced Placement students, students | Literature and press | Fiction and non-fiction reading, non- | Mixed |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|-------------------------|--|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|--|
| | | Critical Literacy to Make Sense of Literature in the World | | | at school | | fiction writing | |
| 28 | (Schaedler, 2010) | Boal's Theater of the Oppressed and How to Derail Real-Life Tragedies with Imagination | Not specified | Not specified | Immigrants | Performing arts | Theatre of the Oppressed, Forum Theatre | Production |
| 29 | (Travis & Bowman, 2012) | Ethnic Identity, Self-Esteem and Variability in Perceptions of Rap Music's Empowering and Risky Influences | Informal | Mixed adolescent groups | Mostly female, mostly Latino and African American, in high school or college, predominantly Christian | Performing arts | Hip-hop and rap music | Perception |
| 30 | (Travis & Deepak, 2011) | Empowerment in Context: Lessons from Hip-Hop Culture for Social Work Practice | Therapy | Not specified | | Performing arts | Hip-hop and rap culture (music, rapping, | Perception |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|--------------------------------|--|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|--|
| | | | | | | | deejaying, break dancing, graffiti) | |
| 31 | (Turk, 2012) | Collaboration, Inclusion, and Empowerment: A Life Skills Mural | Informal | Early adolescence | Economically disadvantaged, including students with disabilities | Visual arts | Mural | Production |
| 32 | (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006) | Art as Agency: Exploring Empowerment of At-Risk Youth | Informal | Early adolescence | At-risk youth (who had not reached performance levels for promotion to the next grade level and who are struggling at school), mostly from minority groups, mostly | Visual arts | Mask-making, scribble art, mandalas, personal symbols, journaling, mural | Production |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|-----------------------|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | | | female | | | |
| 33 | (Wilhelm, 2009) | Industrial Art: Mission to Meaning | Informal | Early adolescence | Male | Folklore and cultural heritage | Building a house, industrial art | Production |
| 34 | (Wilson et al., 2007) | Engaging Young Adolescents in Social Action through Photovoice: The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) Project | Informal | Early adolescence | Underserved, low-income, with social and environmental disorganization in the community, mostly from minority groups, mostly Latino | Visual arts | Photovoice, writing | Production |
| 35 | (Wiseman, 2011) | Powerful Students, Powerful Words: Writing and Learning in a Poetry Workshop | Formal | Early adolescence | Urban school, minority students, mostly African American | Literature and press | Poetry. Potentially under folklore and cultural | Production |

| No. | Article | Article title | Type of education | Adolescence stage of participants | Other characteristics of participants as mentioned | Art genre used and/or discussed | Details of art genre used and/or discussed | Interaction with art (perception/production/mixed) |
|-----|---------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---|--|
| | | | | | | | heritage as it draws on students' experiences | |

Appendix D

Summaries of studied articles

Table 5: Summaries of studied articles

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|-------------------|--|---|
| 01 | (Barros, 2012) | <p>“Koladeras,” Literacy Educators of the Cape Verdean Diaspora: A Cape Verdean African Centered Call and Response Methodology</p> | <p>This author describes Cape Verdian cultural literacies, which are ways of thinking, believing, and knowing that tie individuals to the Cape Verdian community. Linked to the former slave depot on the western coast of Africa, which played a significant role in the Atlantic slave trade, these literacies function as a way for community strengthening, especially for women, remembrance of the repressive colonial past and the slave trade, and survival and resilience in the face of past and present adversities. They are taught informally by female storytellers called Koladeras, who improvise and sing about their lives and those in their community following a call-and-response tradition. This tradition, according to the author, leads to positive identity development of African American women of Cape Verdian descent, and to increasing their critical thinking abilities. She considers literacies as part of power relations.</p> |
| 02 | (Ben-mayor, 2008) | <p>Digital Storytelling as a Signature Pedagogy for the New Humanities</p> | <p>This author describes a college class entitled Latina Life Stories. The class offered digital storytelling as a platform for participants to tell their own stories, while drawing on stories of others and a wide range of theories. Student subjects experienced increased awareness of the</p> |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | <p>contexts and elements that shaped their perspectives as they created their stories. They were empowered to theorize about their own cultural and historical experiences. At the end of the class, they shared their digital videos with their classmates and reflected on what they have learned by connecting their stories to bigger issues in society and writing about how this experience impacted their thoughts about their social roles and responsibilities.</p> |
| 03 | (Burdick & Causton - Theoharis, 2012) | Creating Effective Paraprofessional Support in the Inclusive Art Classroom | <p>Authors of this article describe strategies to enhance the learning of all students, including those with disabilities, in art classrooms, by capitalizing on the presence of a paraprofessional when a student with a disability is in the class. The author calls for art educators in such settings to involve paraprofessionals in their classroom and to empower independent artistic production by students with disabilities.</p> |
| 04 | (Clarke, 2006) | Power through Voicing Others: Girls' Positioning of Boys in Literature Circle Discussions | <p>The author looks at power relationships relevant to gender and social stereotypes in literature circle discussion groups of 5th graders. After stage 2 of a 3-year longitudinal study, the author concludes that literature discussion circles empower literacy development of participating girls and disempower the literacy development of boys. He observes that the girls control communication within the group and assume roles of sub-teachers, while boys accept the girls' domination and seek power in the areas of physical strengths and disobedience to school rules. He concludes with a call for more adult supervision and research on literature discussion circles in formal education in order to curb this disempowering effects on boys.</p> |
| 05 | (Daven- | Collaboration in | |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|--------------------|---|--|
| | port & Gunn, 2009) | Animation: Working Together to Empower Indigenous Youth | Two educators describe animation moviemaking workshops taught to indigenous youth in Mexico. The aims are to foster more critical perspectives as consumers of media, and to empower participants to creatively express their own perspectives. Authors assisted participants in creating stop-motion animations of stories from their communities and in their own languages. |
| 06 | (De Abreu, 2010) | Changing Technology = Empowering Students through Media Literacy Education | The author advocates for media literacy as a way of empowering students in a technology and media proliferating world. He argues that instead of protectionism, students should be equipped to be critical thinkers who are able to make thoughtful choices relative to media content. He links this empowerment to responsibility, respect for self and others, and citizenship, and adds that the students' ability to create and produce ideas and topics using web platforms and share them within the classroom present opportunities for directed conversation with teachers. |
| 07 | (Elmesky, 2005) | "I Am Science and the World Is Mine": Embodied Practices as Resources for Empowerment | The author describes a youth empowerment program where student researchers create a movie as a curricular resource about science. The movie, which explores sound waves, amplitude, frequency, and other scientific concepts, is entitled "Sound in the City," is built on the "embodied knowledge" of the economically disadvantaged urban young participants. The author defines embodied resources and knowledge as "ways of being (both conscious and unconscious) that may include specific knowledge, values, skills, morals, aspirations, rituals, beliefs, goals, or interests as well as manners of interacting, communicating, or moving" (p. 4). This represents part of a longitudinal study that aims at understanding how to improve the |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|---------------------------|---|---|
| | | | teaching and learning of urban youth in the U.S. who are culturally and economically marginalized. The author concludes that being able to participate in science learning environments with practices that are natural and embodied is important for generating positive feelings about successful engagement in science. |
| 08 | (Goessling & Doyle, 2009) | Thru the Lenz: Participatory Action Research, Photography, and Creative Process in an Urban High School | These authors describe a program where graduate students in counseling engaged with at-risk urban high school students in the U.S. through photography and participatory action research. The program was designed with a wide array of aims, including improving the well-being of participants and their communities, gaining insight into the lives, experiences, and communities of participants, teaching students about their lives and communities developing community relationships, exchanging expertise and skills, facilitating creative expressions of one's own self in general, and toward people in power, and assisting personal and interpersonal development. Program sessions include photo discussions, photo taking, and reflection. Participants were not engaged in theoretical presentations or background readings, so starting discussions with them about the pictures they took was challenging. The project culminated with two exhibits and the sale of a calendar featuring participants' work to cover film costs in the future. |
| 09 | (Gonick, 2007) | Girl Number 20 Revisited: Feminist Literacies in New Hard Times | The author discusses empowerment and voice. She questions whether silence is in fact disempowered. Her data for the study comes from a program she did with 10- to 14-year-old inner-city girls in Canada, using video to explore and represent issues and problems the |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|-----------------------|--|---|
| | | | <p>participants thought were faced by girls like them. The participants collectively analyzed their gendered cultural and social practices. The author asks whether silence is necessarily disempowered. Women have to <i>choose</i> between and face the different consequences resulting from their positions. Such positions may be in discourses that are contradictory and have conflicting expectations and pressures. The author advocates for programs that involve cultural production because they allow students an opportunity to explore issues through fantasy along with the more conventional rational methods.</p> |
| 10 | (Gourd & Gourd, 2011) | Enacting Democracy: Using Forum Theatre to Confront Bullying | <p>These authors describe a program where Forum Theatre was used as a method to teach a curricular unit on bullying to 8th graders. The unit was designed to create opportunities for a transformative educational experience in relation to democratic and social justice ideals. Specific goals were “(a) enabling participants to acknowledge behaviors that hurt individuals and damage the sense of community in the school context, (b) helping the group envision changes in behavior that support individuals and the collective good of all members of the community, and (c) providing opportunities to try out strategies that might support improved human relationships within the school community” (p. 405). Participants had the opportunity to change elements, actions, or characters of a theatrical piece enacting a bullying situation at their school in order to prevent the escalation of the situation into violence. After this, they reflected on their choices and discussed strategies they could adopt at the school for improvement. The authors said their goals were achieved but wished they had been explicit in connecting the issue of bullying to social inequality and had discussed that with the</p> |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|-----------------------|--|---|
| | | | participants. |
| 11 | (Grauer et al., 2012) | Encounters with Difference: Community-Based New Media Programs and Practices | Authors of this article discuss community and new media-based out-of-school programs as unique opportunities for learning in general and benefitting from the differences they have from within-school programs in terms of location and time, the ability of participants to focus on a focused set of skills or objectives, and the ability to use the program as a vehicle towards achieving pedagogic goals. The article is based on an ethnographic study of a one-week camp program in new media (photography and film-making) as a site for learning. |
| 12 | (Green, 2010) | Our Lyrics Will Not Be on Lockdown: An Arts Collective's Response to an Incarceration Nation | The author describes a program by the Blackout Arts Collective, a U.S. non-profit working to empower communities of color through art, education, and activism. The program is called "Lyrics on Lockdown (LOL): Slamming the Prison Industrial Complex." It involves hip-hop, spoken-word, theater, dance, and visual arts to raise awareness and catalyze action toward ending the mass incarceration of people of color in the U.S. The program targets both youth and adults, and seeks to support their growth by developing literacy, critical thinking, and other practical life skills. These are to be achieved by empowering participants to envision and plan life beyond prison and to become active in the positive transformation of their communities. The program is aimed at addressing root causes of crime, reducing recidivism, and contributing to the revival of artistic contributions by people of color to the U.S. social justice movement. |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|------------------------------|--|---|
| | | | The program, which is composed of performances and interactive workshops, took place in correctional facilities, community centers, and colleges in over 25 cities in the U.S. over five years. It was later turned into a university course exploring the uses of the arts as a tool for positive social change. |
| 13 | (Gude, 2010) | Playing, Creativity, Possibility | The author calls for more creativity in the art classroom and shares examples of exercises an art teacher might do with students to get them to use their imagination more. She questions whether the goal of putting students' creativity at the center of the classroom is feasible while maintaining "overly structured approaches to teaching, making, and assessing?" (p. 37). She also questions whether doing art necessarily means cultivating creativity. |
| 14 | (Haddix & Sealey-Ruiz, 2012) | Cultivating Digital and Popular Literacies as Empowering and Emancipatory Acts among Urban Youth | The authors advocate for the use of local culture to improve literacies. They describe an empowerment (academic) summer writing institute for 5 th - to 8 th -grade African American males at an urban school. The camp includes digital, visual, and hip-hop literacies in an effort to achieve positive academic goals for the students. Additionally an in-school mentoring program is provided, where digital tools and popular literacies are employed to foster the love of reading and writing in participants, and allow them to create knowledge within the classroom. |
| 15 | (James, 2010) | Reclaiming Deep Democracy | The author discusses how practicing democracy in the school setting cultivates youth who will |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|-------------------------|---|--|
| | | | be active and responsible citizens in society. He credits Native Americans for the democratic political practices in the U.S. |
| 16 | (Kearns, 2012) | Seeking Researcher Identity through the Co-Construction and Representation of Young People's Narratives of Identity | The author reflects on her research practice, including on a research process wherein she used photos to create empowering spaces for participants to reflect upon topics of identity. She argues that the process is empowering. |
| 17 | (Kelly & Safford, 2009) | Does Teaching Complex Sentences Have to Be Complicated? Lessons from Children's Online Writing | The authors describe linguistic empowerment processes involved in the engagement of children in writing interactions online that focused on the World Cup football event. This article describes empowerment of a specific skill (linguistic expression) by capitalizing on popular culture interests and student engagement. |
| 18 | (Kress et al., 2010) | The Use of Therapeutic Stories in Counseling Child and Adolescent Sexual Abuse Survivors | Authors of this article propose guidelines and give theoretical support for the use of therapeutic stories when counseling sexual abuse survivors. The authors argue that therapeutic storytelling decreases young clients' resistance to change while enhancing opportunities to connect with alternative optimal narratives. |
| 19 | (Kress & Hoffman, | Empowering Adolescent Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Application of a Solution- | These authors present a group counseling model that can be used with adolescent girls who have been sexually abused. The solution-focused Ericksonian model is built around |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|--------------------------|--|---|
| | 2008) | Focused Ericksonian Counseling Group | storytelling, writing, and usage of symbols to increase coping abilities. |
| 20 | (Levy & Weber, 2011) | Teenmom.ca: A Community Arts-Based New Media Empowerment Project for Teenage Mothers | Authors of this article report on a program where arts are used to empower teenage mothers. Participants interact with and use different art forms to share their views, participate in community discussions that affect them, and define and solve some of the challenges that they face. Arts employed included Photovoice, collage, painting, drawing, writing, creating curated photo albums, film and media critique, and keeping an art journal. The program ended with an exhibit, a film screening, and a website that shared the participants' work beyond their group. |
| 21 | (Malm & Lofgren, 2007) | Empowering Students to Handle Conflicts through the Use of Drama | Authors describe a school-based program called DRAMa for CONflict management (DRACON), which aims at improving conflict handling among adolescents through the use of educational drama. Designers of this experimental program believed that learning from one's own experience is better than through books or other means. The researchers wanted to develop the program as a tool to be taught in different schools. They implemented and evaluated the effects of the program in multiple settings and cultural contexts in Sweden, Australia, and Malaysia. |
| 22 | (Medina & Campano, 2006) | Performing Identities through Drama and Teatro Practices in Multilingual Classrooms | Through examples from two classrooms, these authors demonstrated how use of drama creates a space between students' current identities and a more expansive understanding of school-based literacy practices. They argue that through involvement in drama and having space to |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|---------------------|---|---|
| | | | explore fictional and their own real lives, students arrive at a better understanding of how they are positioned by others, including educators, administrators, and policy makers. |
| 23 | (Morrison, 2004) | Risk and Responsibility: The Potential of Peer Teaching to Address Negative Leadership | The author describes a program examining the impact of leading a group of younger peers on the positive development of the leaders. The program involved two 14-year-old girls who were disengaged from academic learning but good in drama. They participated by leading a group of 11-year-old students in doing a drama piece. The author observed that participation in the program positively influences the two girls' performance at school and increased their self-esteem and confidence. |
| 24 | (Orme et al., 2007) | Project Jump: Young People's Perspectives on a Sexual Health Drama Project for Hard to Reach Young People | The authors present an evaluation of the drama-based "Project Jump," which aims to enable young people to consider their sexual behavior and its impact and consequences on other people and themselves. The project is composed of a 40-min play followed by an interactive workshop. The play portrays adolescents facing decisions regarding their sexual actions. The authors observe that participants have enjoyed learning through the drama-based project and learned better from this program compared to other ones that were lecture- and reading-based. |
| 25 | (Reyes, 2006) | Finding the Poetic High: Building a Spoken Word Poetry Community and Culture of Creative, Caring, and Critical Intellectuals | The author describes his teaching method, which integrates poetry into the classroom and beyond. Features highlighted by integration of poetry in the classroom were physical environment, building identity, the language of poetic discourse, and a workshop that the author titled "The Spoken Wordshop." The Spoken Wordshop includes assessment of prior |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|----------------------------|--|---|
| | | | skills, conducting a mini lesson, guided practice, independent practice, sharing, critique, practice, and performance. |
| 26 | (Robbins & Pehrsson, 2009) | Anorexia Nervosa: A Synthesis of Poetic and Narrative Therapies in the Outpatient Treatment of Young Adult Women | Authors of this article describe an alternative treatment approach for young women with anorexia nervosa which employs poetry and narrative texts as a means of supporting their recovery from the illness. This treatment contrasts with those that measure weight loss alone. The authors wanted to target psychological health factors as well clinical recovery modes. The proposed treatment is said to "create an expressive and assertive voice while shifting blame from the self to the disorder" (p. 42). |
| 27 | (Sawch, 2011) | Asking and Arguing with Fact and Fiction: Using Inquiry and Critical Literacy to Make Sense of Literature in the World | The author describes a program he implemented within the classroom, whereby 11 th -graders used non-fiction writings as a resource to think about the literary texts they were studying. The aim was to increase critical inquiry and critical literacy, empower students to take an informed and activist stance about the larger issues in the world and improve their abilities to synthesize and analyze information. |
| 28 | (Schaedler, 2010) | Boal's Theater of the Oppressed and How to Derail Real-Life Tragedies with Imagination | The author argues in favor of the use of Forum Theatre and critical literacy in "English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) classes" for immigrants. She cites the benefits of such methods as increasing participants' social awareness, transforming them into protagonists of their own lives, and helping them develop language skills. |
| 29 | (Travis & | Ethnic Identity, Self- | |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|-------------------------|--|---|
| | Bowman, 2012) | Esteem and Variability in Perceptions of Rap Music's Empowering and Risky Influences | Authors of this study examined effects among ethnic identity, self-esteem, exposure to rap music, age, and gender on depressive symptoms in adolescents. Positive ethnic identity was found to be associated with greater music-influenced empowerment and to act as a buffer against depressive symptoms, while self-esteem was found to be associated with increased music-influenced risky attitudes. |
| 30 | (Travis & Deepak, 2011) | Empowerment in Context: Lessons from Hip-Hop Culture for Social Work Practice | These authors describe a tool, called “The Individual and Community Empowerment Framework,” which aims at assisting social workers in understanding the competing messages within hip-hop culture and how these may promote or inhibit positive youth development. The Framework provides a structure for collaborative development of goals and change strategies, facilitating communication between youth and social workers. The Framework outlined areas or personal qualities for empowerment, which could form a basis for analyzing rap songs and could be of service in preventive and intervention efforts in social work practice. |
| 31 | (Turk, 2012) | Collaboration, Inclusion, and Empowerment: A Life Skills Mural | The author described a program whereby 6th-8th grade students, including those with disabilities, collaborated on a mural art project. Throughout the process, the participants became more empowered by increasing self-esteem, personal-values, and responsibility. The mural project was selected to give students an opportunity to create physical change in their classroom and social change within aspects of the school environment. Action research was used to facilitate the students' learning, with the purpose of engaging them in higher-level thinking, active inquiry, and real-life problem solving. |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|--------------------------------|---|---|
| 32 | (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006) | Art as Agency: Exploring Empowerment of At-Risk Youth | <p>Authors of this article describe a study assessing the empowerment of at-risk youth (aged 13-16) after their participation an arts-based program in which they created masks and a mural. Quantitative and qualitative research methods were used, and findings indicate that the program had a high probability of causing positive change in participants, especially in the areas of attitudes and psychological development.</p> |
| 33 | (Wilhelm, 2009) | Industrial Art: Mission to Meaning | <p>The author describes a program whereby a group of 15-year-old youth who had previously experienced life traumas build a house for a family in need. The author argued that the experience empowers these youth. The program - a Mission - is faith-based and included supervised travel to another country. The author included a critique of programs that have had similar objectives but lacked meaning.</p> |
| 34 | (Wilson et al., 2007) | Engaging Young Adolescents in Social Action through Photovoice: The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) Project | <p>Authors of this article describe a program that was designed to enhance community capacity for prevention of more than one negative health condition. The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) project provided early adolescents with opportunities for civic engagement through the Photovoice methodology. Participants were early adolescents and the program ran for 25 sessions, meeting weekly for 1.5 hours. Each group of participants had a facilitator and worked through Photovoice procedures (taking photos about assets and issues in the community and writing about causality), followed by designing an action plan for a project and implementing it to enhance the school environment. Most participants, with direction from facilitators, ended</p> |

| No. | Article | Article title | Summary |
|-----|------------------|--|---|
| | | | up performing skits about issues relevant to their school. |
| 35 | (Wise-man, 2011) | Powerful Students, Powerful Words: Writing and Learning in a Poetry Workshop | The author describes a year-long program of poetry that was based on students' experiences in life. The program was implemented by an outside researcher in the English language classroom for 8 th -grade students at an urban school for a full academic year. The author found through observation, focus groups, and interviews that the poetry experience encouraged students to contribute to the classroom, helped them to improve their language communication skills, and helped them in developing their own writing voices. |

Appendix E

Particulars of studied articles that describe specific programs

Table 6: Particulars of studied articles that describe specific programs

| No. | Article | Article title | Included final exhibit | No. of participants as mentioned | Program duration as mentioned |
|-----|---------------------------|---|------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| 01 | (Benmayor, 2008) | Digital Storytelling as a Signature Pedagogy for the New Humanities | Yes | | 16 weeks |
| 02 | (Davenport & Gunn, 2009) | Collaboration in Animation: Working Together to Empower Indigenous Youth | Yes | (3 workshops) | 1 week, several hours per day |
| 03 | (Elmesky, 2005) | “I Am Science and the World Is Mine”: Embodied Practices as Resources for Empowerment | No | 5 | 10 weeks |
| 04 | (Goessling & Doyle, 2009) | Thru the Lenz: Participatory Action Research, Photography, and Creative Process in an Urban High School | Yes | 9 | 8 weeks, 4 hours per week |
| 05 | (Gonick, 2007) | Girl Number 20 Revisited: Feminist Literacies in New Hard Times | No | (Several girls) | 2.5 years, meetings over lunch, number of meetings not clear |
| 06 | (Gourd & Gourd, 2011) | Enacting Democracy: Using Forum Theatre to Confront Bullying | No | 84 | 3 days, 1 class period (50 min.) per day |
| 07 | (Grauer et | Encounters with Difference: | Yes | | 1 week camp |

| No. | Article | Article title | Included final exhibit | No. of participants as mentioned | Program duration as mentioned |
|------------|------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|---|
| | al., 2012) | Community-Based New Media Programs and Practices | | | (immersion) |
| 08 | (Green, 2010) | Our Lyrics Will Not Be on Lockdown: An Arts Collective's Response to an Incarceration Nation | Yes | | 5 years in different locations |
| 09 | (Haddix & Sealey-Ruiz, 2012) | Cultivating Digital and Popular Literacies as Empowering and Emancipatory Acts among Urban Youth | No | Not applicable to one, 12 for the other | Summer |
| 10 | (Kelly & Safford, 2009) | Does Teaching Complex Sentences Have to Be Complicated? Lessons from Children's Online Writing | No | (6 classrooms) | 6 weeks |
| 11 | (Kress & Hoffman, 2008) | Empowering Adolescent Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Application of a Solution-Focused Ericksonian Counseling Group | No | 8 | 8 weeks |
| 12 | (Levy & Weber, 2011) | Teenmom.ca: A Community Arts-Based New Media Empowerment Project for Teenage Mothers | Yes | 8 | 13 2-hour workshops, 1-2 individual interviews, one-on-one meetings as needed |
| 13 | (Malm & Lofgren, | Empowering Students to Handle Conflicts through | No | 5,000 | 9 years, varying |

| No. | Article | Article title | Included final exhibit | No. of participants as mentioned | Program duration as mentioned |
|------------|----------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | 2007) | the Use of Drama | | | lengths of multiple programs |
| 14 | (Morrison, 2004) | Risk and Responsibility: The Potential of Peer Teaching to Address Negative Leadership | Yes | 2 | 5 weeks, 1 lesson per week for 4 weeks, then a performance |
| 15 | (Orme et al., 2007) | Project Jump: Young People's Perspectives on a Sexual Health Drama Project for Hard to Reach Young People | No | 212 | 40-minute performance followed by interactive workshop |
| 16 | (Reyes, 2006) | Finding the Poetic High: Building a Spoken Word Poetry Community and Culture of Creative, Caring, and Critical Intellectuals | Yes | | Academic year, festival |
| 17 | (Robbins & Pehrsson, 2009) | Anorexia Nervosa: A Synthesis of Poetic and Narrative Therapies in the Outpatient Treatment of Young Adult Women | No | 1 | 1 session per week |
| 18 | (Sawch, 2011) | Asking and Arguing with Fact and Fiction: Using Inquiry and Critical Literacy to Make Sense of Literature in the World | No | 50 | 1 year, repeated for 2 years |
| 19 | (Turk, 2012) | Collaboration, Inclusion, and Empowerment: A Life | Yes | 34 | 10 1-hour workshops |

| No. | Article | Article title | Included final exhibit | No. of participants as mentioned | Program duration as mentioned |
|------------|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|---|--|
| | | Skills Mural | | | |
| 20 | (Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006) | Art as Agency: Exploring Empowerment of At-Risk Youth | Yes | 12 | 6 weeks, 10 1-hour sessions |
| 21 | (Wilhelm, 2009) | Industrial Art: Mission to Meaning | Yes | 8 | |
| 22 | (Wilson et al., 2007) | Engaging Young Adolescents in Social Action through Photovoice: The Youth Empowerment Strategies (YES!) Project | No | 112 | 25 90-minute sessions (about 40 hours in 1 year) |
| 23 | (Wiseman, 2011) | Powerful Students, Powerful Words: Writing and Learning in a Poetry Workshop | Not clear | 22 | 1 academic year, weekly |

CURRICULUM VITAE

MAYA ALKATEB-CHAMI

www.linkedin.com/in/mayaalkateb/

Education

Art Education, MS | *Indiana University, Bloomington, USA* [Expected 2016]

- Concentration in community arts
- Thesis on arts-based youth empowerment

Political Science, BA | *Damascus University, Syria* [2010]

Project Development and Management Executive Course
Maastricht School of Management, The Netherlands [2009]

Professional Experience

Executive Director

Jusoor, San Francisco, CA [July 2015-present]

Jusoor is a Syrian-expatriate-based non-profit organization focused on helping Syria through education. Winner of the prestigious Academic Freedom Award of the Middle East Studies Association, the organization's work is focused on higher education scholarships, education for refugee children in Lebanon, academic mentorship for adults, and support for entrepreneurs.

Overseeing a team of 50+ members, I direct programs, communications, finances, and partnerships, while actively engaging volunteers, board members, staff, and donors. My responsibilities include building and implementing a strategy to sustain quality of work, and fundraising.

Member of Review Committee of Submissions on Social Theory and Art Education

National Art Education Association (NAEA), USA [2014-present]

NAEA's Caucus on Social Theory and Art Education curates high-quality resources for educators: contemporary themes relevant to students' lives, projects that speak to social justice created by a diverse range of authors, and critical thinking opportunities that broaden students' perceptions of art (<https://naea.digication.com/cstae/>). I serve on a 6-member committee that reviews educational resource submissions.

Member and Ex-Chair of Syrian National Committee

UWC Syria, Damascus and London [2009-present]

The Syrian National Committee enables Syrian youth to create a peaceful and sustainable future through education. I co-founded the Committee with Jennifer Dueck and built it over 5 years as Chairperson to become one of the strongest across the UWC system,

especially in the areas of recruiting and sustaining the involvement of volunteers and having a completely online-based operation.

I continue to serve on the volunteer-operated Committee as a member and advisor to the new Chair, and to be proud of allowing the benefits of an outstanding international education to Syrian adolescents, with \$2.5+ million value of awarded scholarships to date.

Director of Admissions

UWC-USA, Montezuma, NM

[2015]

Managing student recruitment, admission, financial aid, and visas and immigration, while coordinating with 100+ National Committees internationally across the UWC movement to admit students from about 70 countries annually. During my work with UWC-USA, I documented and systemized selection processes at the admissions office. I also streamlined and invested in its relationships with several other departments across the organization.

Research Consultant

Philadelphia Folklore Project, Philadelphia

[May-August 2014]

Researching the traditional arts and identifying traditional artists of Burmese, Bhutanese, and Iraqi refugee communities who have been recently resettled in Philadelphia, and recommending ways to support these communities in preserving their arts in their new home country.

Consultant at “Engaging Youth” Community Centers Project

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

(UNRWA), Syria

[April-July 2012]

Researching the needs of the adolescent target group in Palestinian Refugee Camps in Syria and their attitudes towards 5 recently established community centers, and recommending a strategy to enhance dissemination of services, especially to at-risk youth.

Director

Al Makan Art Association, Syria

[February 2010- July 2012]

Curating and implementing fine art exhibits, film and poetry festivals, and book and music productions. Projects include documentation of oral heritage by youth, training in cultural journalism, setting up mobile exhibits on cultural heritage in buses, and establishing a fine arts library.

Trainer in Project Planning and Management

Maastricht School of Management

[February-March 2012]

UWC

[January 2011, 2012]

UNRWA

[November 2011]

Director of Sham Spiritual Oasis Architecture Competition

Der Mar Musa al-Habachi

[December 2007- January 2009]

An ideas-competition for a place of hospitality, where people from different religious and cultural backgrounds could share an occasion for spiritual growth and for initiation to accept the other.

Publications

Peer-reviewed journal article

Alkateb, M. (2013). Non-traditional education using cultural heritage: a case study from Syria, *International Journal for Education through Art*, 9(2), 189-204.

Authored books

Alkateb, M. (2010). *Syrian silk: portrait of a living cultural heritage*. Damascus: The Danish Institute in Damascus.

Aboufakher, I. & Alkateb, M. (2012). *Policies and programs for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage in Syria (2005-2011)*. Damascus: Ministry of Culture.

Edited books

Alkateb, M. (ed.) (2008). *أغاني من تدمر [Songs from Palmyra]*. Damascus: Al Makan Art Association.

Alkateb, M. (ed.) (2008). *أغاني من السويداء [Songs from Sweida]*. Damascus: Al Makan Art Association.

Alkateb, M. (ed.) (2008). *حكايا من السويداء [Tales from Sweida]*. Damascus: Al Makan Art Association.

Alkateb, M. & Holman, B. (eds.) (2013). *Khonsay: poem of many tongues*. New York, NY: City Lore.

Conference paper

Alkateb, M. (2014). Traditional crafts and supply chains: lessons from the Syrian silk craft. *Proceedings of Heritage 2014: The Fourth International Conference on Heritage and Sustainable Development, Guimarães, 22-25 July*. Barcelos: Green Lines Institute for Sustainable Development.

Reports

Syrian Ministry of Culture (2012). *The first quadrennial periodic report on measures to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions in the Syrian Arab Republic*, Ministry of Culture, Damascus. - Main contributor to report with Imad Aboufakher; report submitted to UNESCO.

Syrian Ministry of Culture (2011). *Report on the implementation of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and on the status of elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity*, Ministry of Culture, Damascus. - Main contributor to report with Imad Aboufakher; report submitted to UNESCO.

Other

- Alkateb, M. (2007). 'قراءة: رحلتي الطويلة من أجل الحرية' [‘Long Walk to Freedom’: a reading].’ - award-winning essay featuring Nelson Mandela’s autobiography.
- Alkateb, M. (2010). 'صورة الدولة في مناهج التعليم' [The image of the State in Syria’s educational curricula].’ - BA graduation project, University of Damascus.
- Alkateb, M. (ed.) (2011). *Fruits: music from Syria, Italy, and Sweden* [CD]. Damascus: Al Makan Art Association.

Key Awards

| | |
|--|--------|
| Fulbright Graduate Student Scholarship, U.S. Department of State | [2012] |
| She Entrepreneurs Program Awardee, The Swedish Institute | [2014] |
| Global Youth Leadership Award, Sister Cities International | [2006] |
| Youth Exchange and Study (YES) scholarship, U.S. Department of State | [2003] |

Technical Skills

Languages

- Arabic: Native speaker
- English: Proficient
- French: Conversant

Computers

- Windows and Macintosh platforms
- Software: Microsoft Office, InDesign, Photoshop, Lightroom, Audacity

Professional photography, videography, and audio recording equipment.