Summer March 2016

A Week in Your Shoes: The Impacts of a Visual Art Program Informed by Clinical Art Therapy With Adolescents in a School Setting

Jessica Bianchi
Loyola Marymount University

Summer July 2014

A Week in Your Shoes: The Impacts of a Visual Art Program Informed by Clinical Art Therapy With Adolescents in a School Setting

Jessica Bianchi
Loyola Marymount University, jessicabianchi7@gmail.com

LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY

A Week in Your Shoes: The Impacts of a Visual Art Program Informed by Clinical Art Therapy With Adolescents in a School Setting

by

Jessica Bianchi

A dissertation presented to the Faculty of the School of Education,

Loyola Marymount University,

in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education

2014

A Week in Your Shoes:The Impacts of a Visual Art Program

Informed by Clinical Art Therapy With Adolescents in a School Setting

Jessica Bianchi

Loyola Marymount University
School of Education
Los Angeles, CA 90045

This dissertation written by Jessica Bianchi, under the direction of the Dissertation Committee, is approved and accepted by all committee members, in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

7/25/14
Date

Dissertation Committee

[redacted]
Karen Huchting, Ph.D., Committee Chair

[redacted]
Debra Linesch, Ph.D., Committee Member

[redacted]
Jill Bickett, Ed.D., Committee Member

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Three years later I have come to the end of a journey that has been wonderfully challenging. Throughout this process I have been supported immensely and consistently by many people, both my professional and personal worlds.

Thank you to my dissertation committee chair Karen Huchting whom could not have been more supportive, motivating, and patient with me. I knew if you could get me to understand quantitative data analysis you were pretty much a superhero!

Thank you to my committee member Debra Linesch who after 8 years continues to inspire me to stay determined in my focus on how the arts and art therapy are a valuable source of data that should always be respected.

Thank you to my committee member Jill Bickett for saving the day on more than one occasion and for helping me to navigate not just the dissertation but the world of doctoral study in general.

Thank you to my husband Noah who patiently let me monopolize dinner conversations with the intricacies of empathy development and for consistently encouraging me when I felt it just couldn't be done.

Thank you to my Aviva family who pretended not to see me frantically working on school work in my office when there was definitely other things I needed to be doing and for being an interested audience for practice presentations.

Thank you to my Cohort 8 family who made the last 3 years of doctoral study honestly enjoyable! I always looked forward to seeing you!

Thank you to my daughter Ramona who waited three whole days until after her mom gave her dissertation defense to gracefully arrive into our world. And also for being a “captive” audience while editing the final document.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

ABSTRACT

A Week in Your Shoes: The Impacts of a Visual Art Program

Informed by Clinical Art Therapy With Adolescents in a School Setting

by

Jessica Bianchi

This study looked at the impact of a weeklong visual art program informed by clinical art therapy on empathy development with two groups of adolescents in their school setting. The study used a mixed-methods approach to uncover any quantitative change in empathy as well as identify emergent themes seen through qualitative data. Quantitative outcomes indicated no change in empathy development as seen through analysis of a survey measure. Qualitative analysis uncovered several key findings seen through observations, participant interviews, and visual art data; most specifically, participants illustrated beginning levels of empathy by way of increased self-awareness and several cognitive functions involved in empathy development.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Today's educational culture promotes standards-based learning and achievement evaluated by test scores. This culture puts educational environments in danger of ignoring essential components that motivate a young person's desire to learn. Specifically, social and emotional learning opportunities are necessary ingredients to a student's education that can motivate student learning. Social and emotional learning opportunities provide students with the opportunity to develop skills necessary for success in and out of the classroom. Social skills such as listening and sharing, connecting through shared experience, reading non-verbal cues enable students to work cohesively in groups. Also, emotional skills such as being able to identify and label personal feelings, developing coping skills for times of stress, and increasing frustration tolerance allow students to persevere when faced with challenges related to school or life in general. Additionally, teachers, administrators, and educational communities are increasingly being asked to go beyond their role as educators and provide emotional support to their students (Comerford Boyes & Reid, 2005; Deasy, 2002; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). It is under this educational climate that the current dissertation seeks to offer an educational program for teachers to provide students with emotional support through their engagement in the arts.

Clinical art therapy can assist educators in school settings with ways to provide emotional support to students (Albert, 2010). For instance, clinical art therapy borrows therapeutic techniques from the field of psychology and utilizes art materials such as paint or clay, to process

and explore emotional content. In that way, educators can use the art-making process to assist students with their emotional development by providing an opportunity for expression and community building. Therefore, the current project borrows from the field of clinical art therapy to create an art program for the school setting that promotes positive emotional development for students. A review of literature from both clinical art therapy and the field of education suggest that engaging in arts is positive for students. There is a substantial body of research that indicates that engaging students in arts programming is a stimulating and desirable venue for social and emotional growth (Catterall, Chapleau, & Iwanaga, 1999; Comerford Boyes, & Reid, 2005; Halverson, 2010). Specifically, research indicates that educational environments that exhibit higher social and emotional teaching competencies are more likely to have prosocial classrooms, in other words classrooms that encourage collaboration, sharing, and acceptance (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). The success that students feel in the arts also transfers to other subjects. For instance, research has found better overall academic achievement evidenced by higher graduation rates among students who participate in the arts and has found the arts to facilitate a student's positive participation in society (Catterall et al., 1999; Comerford Boyes, & Reid, 2005; Halverson, 2010). Additional research on engagement in the arts—defined in this study as regular participation in quality arts programming (i.e., visual art, dance, music, theater) consistently shows that students are more likely to succeed cognitively, socially, emotionally, and academically (Catterall, 1998; 2009). Furthermore, engagement in the arts provides students with opportunities to develop transferable skills, such as imagination, perspective taking, and collaboration. These skills assist students in the development of prosocial behaviors, or behaviors that are positive and advantageous to the individual as well as society. For example,

sharing, acceptance, and compassion are examples of prosocial behaviors. Additionally, displaying empathy is a positive and prosocial behavior. Students who exhibit higher levels of empathy are more likely to exhibit sharing, acceptance, and compassion and are less likely to exhibit antisocial behavior, such as bullying (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006). Based on this line of research, the current project offers schools an art program, grounded in empathy development and informed by theories in clinical art therapy, to promote social and emotional growth.

Empathic behavior is considered a human characteristic that can be developed and that can promote prosocial behavior. As such, empathy development is the main framework applied to the art program that I created for this project, and suggests that empathy can develop or grow over time. Therefore, this art program, intentionally created with empathy development in mind, asked students to participate in group art-making projects that encourage perspective taking and collaboration. Developing prosocial skills such as empathy through the arts also allows young people to think critically about their world, take initiative in their learning, or share compassionately in the experiences of their peers (Gullat, 2007; Robinson 2010). Empathy also increases a sense of belonging in student groups, allowing these groups to develop positively within and outside of academic forums (Gerdes, Jackson, Mullins, & Segal, 2011; Gomez & Mei-Mei Ang, 2007; Wagaman, 2011). The current educational curricula, unfortunately, does not provide sufficient opportunities for students to engage in programs created intentionally to promote empathy. The current study responded to this need by offering an art program designed specifically to promote empathy among adolescents.

In addition, research has found that students defined as being from underserved communities benefit more from engaging in the arts than their higher socioeconomic status

counterparts (Catterall, 1998). Yet, opportunities for such programs are especially insufficient in underserved communities, creating an issue of access for those with greatest need (Woodworth, Gallagher, &Guha, 2007). Knowing that the art-making process can encourage a sense of community, it may be that group art-making experiences also serve to protect students from underserved communities from the additional stressors they face, including negative cultural stigma and high incidents of violence found in urban neighborhoods. The current study therefore offered the art program to a school serving low-income, urban, Latino, adolescents.

This study focused on how engagement in an art program might impact and promote social and emotional learning in the form of empathy development among this population. Specifically, how does group art making, intentionally designed to encourage empathy development, impact a group of adolescents when facilitated in their classroom culture? In addition, are there any observable changes in empathy that occur among the adolescents as a result of this art program?

The discussion begins, to frame the following chapter, with my personal motivations for this line of inquiry. This section is followed by a brief introduction to key subject areas such as how the arts are connected to social and emotional learning opportunities and prosocial behavior. A review and brief history of art therapy is provided as this is the underlying framework that guided the development of the art program being evaluated. Next, the arts in the school environment are discussed and attention is given to the extensive research on the positive outcomes of students engaged in the arts, particularly noting the recent literature that indicates positive correlations between the arts and overall academic achievement. Theories that constitute the conceptual framework of this study are discussed as follows: art therapy, adolescent

development, positive youth development (PYD), and social justice. Related to art therapy, a discussion on specific interventions and strategies that art therapy can provide schools will be explored. Next, a review of literature that evaluates why the arts are highly influential during the adolescent developmental stage will occur. A discussion on how the arts can impact empathy development in adolescent populations, improving social, emotional, and academic performance frames the section on PYD. Finally, this section concludes with a discussion of social justice in education, borrowing from Paolo Freire's (1970) notions of how dialogue can provide opportunities for increased humanization. Lastly, the chapter outlines the problem from the perspective of this study, the question that guides the research, the purpose and significance of this topic, the conceptual framework that supports the collection and analysis of data, and finally possible limitations of this study. Overall, this chapter presents an introduction to the dissertation project which created and implemented a visual art program in a school setting, grounded in theoretical concepts of art therapy and empathy development, engaging adolescents from underserved backgrounds in the promotion of empathy.

Background

Personal Motivation

I am motivated to understand the relationship between the art-making experience and the impact this can have on the positive development of youth—specifically on developing empathy—because of my professional and academic experiences. I became interested in this line of inquiry during Loyola Marymount's Art Therapy Master degree program. In 2008, as part of my culminating Master's research project, I conducted a qualitative study on the outcome of a weeklong arts program designed to address the developmental needs of 15 low-income,

urban, Latino adolescents labeled as "falling through the cracks" from an inner-city Catholic that served residents that had lower incomes in East Los Angeles. These students were recommended to the program by their principal due to teacher observations that indicated that these students were struggling emotionally and socially in the classroom. Students were invited to attend the program for 1 week during their summer vacation on Loyola Marymount's campus in the Art Therapy suite. Results of the program were largely positive and centered on themes that suggested that the participants had increased their confidence and strengthened their relationships with peers.

Due to the success of this initial pilot program, I received funding to continue the program for 1 week each summer for the past 6 years. This Summer Arts Workshop occurred on the campus of LMU and approximately 12 to 18 students (new and returning) from the East Los Angeles inner-city Catholic school were enrolled in the program each summer. To date, four of the initial participants have graduated middle school, attended private high schools, and have begun college. These four original participants exhibited such commitment to the program that leadership positions were incorporated into the program for these participants. The "Junior Mentor" position was thus introduced and these original participants assumed roles of mentorship for newer members. They also assist the art therapy team of graduate students in the planning of the program.

Over these 6 years, informal observations of the program suggest that students experience outcomes supported by theories of PYD. PYD will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter but it essentially aims to promote and cultivate the strengths and prosocial competencies of youth (Gillham, Reivish, & Chatte, 2002). Prosocial behavior such as empathy was clearly

exhibited by the participants evidenced by their increased competence, confidence, and most notably the connectedness and caring demonstrated towards their peers. When asked to articulate their experiences, these participants attributed the experience of learning how to express themselves via the art as being pivotal in their process of self-acceptance and feelings of connectedness to others. For example, during the Summer Arts Workshop in August 2012, one participant, Pauline Herrera (pseudonym),described her experience with other participants in the program:

> I talk to them as though I've known them [other participants] for a lifetime. I don't think there's anyone here I can't talk to. Everyone here is just an amazing artist, and I feel like we have connected through that simple method of we both like art, and even if we don't at least we're both here and we're both trying it! Everyone comes up with some great idea and each one has some inspiration and I want to make another one. (August, 2012)

This young person clearly identifies what I aimed to explore further in this study: how the art-making experience can provide youth with opportunities to develop by specifically increasing empathy in understanding and accepting their own experiences as well as the experiences of others. To extend this line of inquiry, which began during my Masters program, my goal with the dissertation project was to revamp the art program and incorporate it into the classroom setting.

Since my graduation from the Art Therapy Masters Program, and in addition to my work with the Summer Arts Workshop, I have spent the 6 years working professionally to facilitate clinical art therapy with emotionally challenged, incarcerated, teenage girls. In my day-to-day

professional work, I have observed the positive social and emotional impact of arts-based clinical interventions. Through arts-based interventions (clinical interventions that utilize art materials such as collage, paint, clay, to process and explore emotional content with clients), I observed how these young women build self-awareness and the confidence that comes with an increased sense of self. In addition, through the creation of physical objects that represent the self, the group becomes a direct witness to another's process. Individuals can more clearly understand another's experience represented by a physical expression of emotion—the piece of artwork. Prosocial behavior such as empathy tends to develop in these moments where I observe the group verbally connecting and sharing in one another's emotional experience. To exemplify more fully the positive effect of arts-based clinical interventions on youth, the following is a quote taken from a fellow art therapist, Amy Davison (pseudonym), at my place of employment. This quote beautifully articulates the therapeutic group art-making process:

> It's the verbal processing while making the art. They are making images and these images are not something they can hide behind—they are truthful expressions of their identity. The group making the art witnesses each other truthfully and this projects positive light onto themselves. They are being really seen through the images that they create, building ego strength and then self-esteem. It's parallel play. They witness each other making things and are inspired to try different things [in their art] in a non-threatening way they can take on another viewpoint. It's a non-aggressive exchange of opinions. (Amy Davison, Field Notes)

This statement again indicates an opportunity for the development of prosocial behavior in the form community building and empathy development, where group members witness another's

truthful expression of experience; this expression, given attention and acceptance, then inspires the work of another.

While these academic and professional experiences occurred within the field of Art Therapy, ringing loudly in these sentiments are ideas presented by education expert Paolo Freire (1970) and his timeless work exploring critical pedagogy. Specifically, Freire emphasized shared dialogue in education and is famous for questioning the process of education. He posited that the teacher is not the ultimate holder of knowledge; conversely both student and teacher can learn from each other by sharing their experiences through dialogue. Freire stated that true knowledge is built through this dialogue—partners in dialogue becoming awakened to their own experiences as well as another's and how these experiences can build new understanding of both parties in a supportive atmosphere (Freire, 1970). Freire's perspective connects to my own work where dialogue is occurring when these young people create art around personal experiences. For example, the participants in the Summer Arts Workshop, as well as the teenaged incarcerated girls, engaged in not only verbal dialogue but also a visual dialogue, communicating and building increased understanding through new and shared imagery. Empathy occurs as a result—when each are able to recognize their experiences and then apply that new understanding in an effort to understand another—both walking away from the experience with a stronger sense of self. As Freire stated, when dialogue is successful, those who have been oppressed and those who oppress can work towards humanization, where both become more fully human. As such, Freire's emphasis on dialogue also informed the creation of the art program for this study.

It is through these professional and academic experiences that I arrive to this proposed line of research: How can I create an art program that bridges my experiences in art therapy with

my experiences in education? More specifically what impact will this program have on these adolescent's social and emotional interactions, specifically empathy development while in their school setting?

Clinical Art Therapy

Clinical art therapy is a field in mental health that aims to facilitate the process of making artistic expressions to explore emotional content with a wide variety of populations (Landgarten, 1981; Wadeson, 1980). Theories in clinical art therapy are grounded in the belief that arts-based therapeutic interventions can increase awareness of self and others by way of externalization and interpretation of the visual imagery created. Although a young field, there have been many seminal theorists who have contributed to the growing field of art therapy. For the purposes of this study, several key foundational theorists will be represented in this brief description of the practice of art therapy. Margaret Naumburg (1987), one of the first theoreticians of arts psychotherapy, believed therapeutic processes were facilitated through client creation and interpretation of personal symbols. In addition, Naumburg (1987) believed that the only valid interpretation of a symbol came from the creator and that the role of the art therapist was to engage the client in dialogue about the possible unresolved (conscious or unconscious) conflicts the symbol represented. The intended result was that the client would gain insight and understanding into his/her way of being, making accommodations to his/her behavior where fit. In addition, Edith Kramer (1971) took the position that the very act of making art was therapeutic and allowed the participant-artist to divert energy into the art-making experience in a socially appropriate manner. Helen B. Landgarten (1981), another pioneer in the field of art therapy, paid special attention to how and why various art materials were used in the therapeutic

process, carefully delineating between the process, content, and the art product. Landgarten (1981) acknowledged that the artwork acts as an agent for change and offered continuous avenues for growth. The art-making experience allows for organization of emotional content, resolution of inner conflicts, and identification of new ways of being. Borrowing these key concepts from the discipline of art therapy, the new art program offered in the current study attempts to bridge art therapy with the field of education by offering schools an art program that encourages the process of art making as a means to promote students' emotional growth.

Arts in Schools

The field of education offers an expansive amount of research suggesting that involving students in the arts, especially the expressive arts such as visual art, music, theater, and dance, positively impact student outcomes (Catterall, 1998, 2009; Comerford Boyes & Reid, 2005; Halverson, 2010; Robinson, 2010). Specifically, participating in the arts has been found to develop transferable skills (i.e., critical thinking, perspective taking, positive risk taking, collaboration), which contribute to positive social, emotional, and cognitive development. The result is a positive effect on the student's overall school achievement, including both social and emotional development and mainstream academics (Catterall, 1998; Comerford Boyes & Reid, 2005). Widely agreed upon is the notion that engagement in the expressive arts allows students to access deeper level critical thinking skills (Comerford Boyes & Reid, 2005; Fiske, 1999; Gullatt, 2007). Hamblen (1997) stated that the arts are a means by which students become actively involved in learning as opposed to passive rote memorization. Through the arts, students engage in "creative thinking, fluency in thought origination, focused perception, imagination, risk taking, task persistence, ownership in learning critical self-awareness,

communication, and expression" (Hamblen, 1997, as cited in Gullatt, 2007, p. 213). Eisner (1998) acknowledged that students who participate in arts activities,

> […] learn to transform their feelings and ideas in an art form that they can share with others to convey a message, students become aware of aesthetic qualities in art as well as life. Students can come to appreciate beauty in the world they live in. (as cited in Gullat, 2007, p. 214)

Multiple authors also emphasized increased self-esteem by way of arts involvement; self-esteem is pivotal in the acquisition of other cognitive skills (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 1999; Catterall, 1998). Respress and Lufti (2006) commented that students engaged in arts more likely to experience greater academic achievement and are less likely to have social or behavioral problems. Across this line of literature from the field of education, it is clear that engagement in the arts is beneficial for students. The current art program designed for this study borrowed from this line of literature to create a visual art program for students to provide a way to express their feelings, collaborate with others, and encourage perspective taking.

Adolescent Development

In attempting to promote prosocial skills among adolescents it is important to also review what occurs during this development stage. Multiple theorists such as Piaget (1950) and Erikson (1968) documented the stage of adolescence to be undisputedly one of the most, if not the most, tumultuous times of human development. Adolescence is marked by significant changes that a young person must pass through on the way to adulthood. Erik Erikson's (1968) theories about identity formation stated that identity formation is the preeminent task of adolescence. Identity formation, or a sense of self, allows an individual to effectively move into adulthood by

developing mastery in their environments. Identity formation is also addressed in theories of PYD. PYD, positive youth development, is a more recent theory in human development that falls under the umbrella of Positive Psychology. PYD suggests that from a psychological perspective when looking at adolescent identity development focus should be on identifying and strengthening positive behaviors, such as resiliency, perseverance, and problem solving skills versus identifying deficiencies in an adolescent, such as defiance or oppositional behavior.

More recently there has been an increase in the research that looks at how culture, ethnicity, urban environments, ecology, and the occurrence of violence play into identity development (Barone, Weissberg, Kaprow, & Voyce, 1995; Bedolla, 2000; Ciornai, 1983; Gillham et al., 2002; Hart, Atkins, & Ford, 1998; Heath & McLaughlin, 1993; Jensen, 2003; Kulis, Marsiglia, Kopak, Olmsted, & Crossman, 2012; Martinez & Dukes, 1997; Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997). This research highlights how factors such as immigration, the case of many Latino students, can cause significant stress on an adolescent where there is tremendous pressure to acculturate to mainstream American norms while maintaining traditional cultural values. Umana-Taylor and Updegraff (2007) reported that Latino adolescents demonstrate the highest risk for depression when compared to other ethnic groups due to perceived discrimination associated with cultural and ethnic identity formation. However, these same authors reported that when Latino adolescents described higher levels of ethnic identity, levels of self-esteem were positively correlated (Umana-Taylor &Updegraff, 2007). As such, developing a positive sense of self appears to be beneficial to students. Research shows that issues related to low socioeconomic status, lack of resources, as well as violence and community disconnection

associated with urban neighborhoods can also cause significant stress on positive identity development (Hart et al., 1998; Heath & McLaughlin, 1993; Phinney et al., 1997).

Opportunities for exploration of the self are key in the development of an adolescent's positive self-identity. Research heavily promotes visual art as an opportune vehicle for identity exploration and production of prosocial skills amongst adolescent populations (Catterall et al., 1999; Catterall, 2011; Chin, Chin, Palomba, Palomba, Bannasch, & Cross, 1980; Greene, 1995; Halverson; 2010; Respress & Lufti, 2006; Werner, 2002; Wright, 2006). Specifically, clinical art therapy interventions defined by the incorporation of visual art media (2D, 3D, media) in therapeutic processes, in both individually and group environments, had demonstrated positive results with adolescent populations—a population motivated to engage in deliberate exploration of self and other through a positive and prosocial outlet (Block, Harris, & Laing, 2005; Chin et al., 1980; Darell & Wheeler, 1984; Emunah, 1990; Gasman & Andersen-Thompkins, 2003; Landgarten, 1981; Linesch, 1988; Lowe, 2000; Mason & Chuang, 2001; Moon, 1999; Phillips, 2003). Many of these same authors agreed that art therapy with adolescents was culturally and developmentally appropriate in that adolescents are undergoing a period of development that is heavily characterized by leaps in cognitive and emotional growth that may make verbal processing challenging. Expression through visual imagery acts as a less threatening form of identity exploration and expression (Erikson, 1968, 1980; Riley, 1999; Wallace-DiGarbo & Hill, 2006). Knowing how challenging the adolescent stage is and how additional stressors are present for Latino students, the current program intentionally created an expressive, visual art program for these students in an attempt to positively bolster their sense of self.

Empathy Development

Defining empathy is challenging. Widely agreed upon, however, is that empathic behavior is a human characteristic that can be developed. The history of the term empathy has its roots in the arts. Jeffers (2009) states that the term empathy is derived from the German word *Einfuhlung*, meaning "in-feeling," or "feeling into," coined by the philosopher, Robert Vischer in 1873 (Jeffers, 2009, p. 2). Einfuhlung was intended to describe the projection of human feeling into art objects (Jeffers, 2009). Yet, defining empathy beyond its historical origins has led to debate, arising from how or if to distinguish between the cognitive and affective components of an empathic process. In other words, is empathy a cognition or a feeling? Currently, research indicates a growing consensus that presents a multidimensional approach to empathy—one that considers both the cognitive, affective, and developmental nature of empathy (Hoffman, 2000). Examples of how empathy is defined include "a social cognitive skill, matching the emotional state of another" (Goldstein & Winner, 2012, p. 20),"the understanding and sharing in another's emotional state" (Cohen & Strayer, 1996, p. 988), or the definition that guides this study: "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person" (Gerdes et al., 2011, p. 109). While these definitions vary slightly in their description of empathy, it is agreed upon by most that empathy is an innate human trait that develops over the course of the life span and can be impacted either negatively or positively by external environmental factors. Specifically, empathy can increase in environments where there is consistent nurturing and positive attention, and conversely, decrease in environments of high-stress and poverty (Catterall, 2011; Decety, 2012). The ability to engage in imaginative processes has been identified as being a part of the cognitive process of empathy (Greene, 1995;

Ryan & Lane, 1997; Wix, 2009). Imagining oneself in the place of another or taking on the perspective of another are consistent themes that emerge throughout the literature. As introduced earlier, prior research suggested that the arts provide an optimal venue for the development of prosocial behaviors including empathy development (Comerford Boyes & Reid, 2005; Darell & Wheeler, 1984; Gasman & Andersen-Thompkins, 2003; Halverson, 2010; Mason & Chuang, 2001; Wallace-DiGarbo& Hill, 2006). Lastly, very recent neurological research discovered that the same parts of the brain that are active when a person engages in arts activities are the same parts of the brain that are active during moments of empathic interactions (Catterall, 2011).Therefore, with regards to the literature, there appears to be both a historical link between empathy and the arts and a current perspective that arts and empathy are closely connected.

Statement of the Problem

In today's educational culture, students are not afforded opportunities to develop the adequate social and emotional skills necessary for optimal cognitive, social, emotional, and academic development (Catterall, 1998). The result is that students are increasingly becoming disengaged, limited in their abilities for divergent thinking (seeing multiple solutions to any given problem), and less motivated to collaborate with others (Robinson, 2010). Engaging students in the arts was shown to raise overall student achievement and increase social, emotional, and cognitive skills. Despite this research, many schools do not (or cannot) make arts education a priority (Woodworth et al., 2007). Frustrating this conversation is that current research suggests that students involved in arts programming are more likely to stay in school, feel a sense of belonging to their classmates, succeed academically, socially, and emotionally, and ultimately graduate (Catterall, 2009; Goodenow, 1993; Halverson, 2010; Ma, 2003).

Additionally, our current educational system is governed and focused primarily on test taking. Students are not afforded the vital space they need to interact and develop healthy relationships with their classmates. Students have limited opportunities to develop empathy. This lack of attention to empathy development is a problem with our educational system because having low levels of empathy has been shown to be related to both indirect and aggressive acts of bullying (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006) which have significantly increased in our schools and via technology over the past years (Ang & Goh, 2010; Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006).

Research Question

Borrowing from my background as an art therapist and combining what we know about empathy development during adolescence, the current study aimed to bridge the disciplines of art therapy and education. By creating an arts-based program that could be implemented in schools, I wished to explore how students would respond to visual art activities that were informed by clinical art therapy and how this could be used to inform and promote positive development for students. This visual-arts-based program was framed by clinical art therapy and emphasizes identity exploration and perspective taking to attempt to enhance social and emotional learning opportunities, specifically promoting empathy development among lower income, urban, Latino adolescents.

Through personal observations, documented findings, and current literature on the topics of clinical art therapy, expressive arts in schools, adolescent development, and empathy development, this study focused on how a visual arts program could be best designed to offer opportunities for social and emotional growth, with special attention given to empathy development, within a school setting. Specifically, the study asked what are the components of a

visual art program framed through a clinical art therapy lens that can promote optimal opportunities in the classroom for identity exploration and positive social and emotional interactions in the form of empathy? How well does this program impact positive empathy development among a Latino adolescent population living in an urban neighborhood? This study was guided by the following research question: How does this visual art program, informed by the practice of clinical art therapy, impact the development of empathy in low-income, urban, Latino sixth- through eighth-grade students attending an inner-city Catholic school?

Purpose of the Study

For this study, I created, implemented, and evaluated a pilot visual art program designed to create opportunities for identity exploration and positive social and emotional interactions with a focus on empathy development in adolescents. The adolescents involved in this study were students who face significant stressors to PYD (i.e., ethnic, ecological, socioeconomic, and community violence issues). To examine the program and its impact on empathy development, quantitative and qualitative data were gathered via surveys, interviews, observations, and collected artifacts in the form of photographic documentation of the art-making process and final products. I looked for evidence of positive social and emotional interactions, specifically through a lens of empathy development in a group of adolescent youth in the sixth and eighth grades attending an inner-city Catholic school in East Los Angeles. Despite the extensive amounts of research that indicate that the arts positively impact a student's growth—cognitively, emotionally, socially, and academically—priority is still not given to arts-based programs (Catterall, 1998). This research gathered empirically based evidence on an art program to contribute to the fields of education and mental health.

Significance of the Study

The creation of this arts-based program was designed based on strategies that I have found to be successful in my career as an art therapist working with adolescents. Specifically, the art program was grounded in theories of adolescent development and empathy development and informed by clinical art therapeutic practices. The main objective of this art program was to provide adolescents with a venue for identity exploration as well as opportunities for positive social and emotional growth in the form of empathy within their classroom setting. Both the literature and my career experience suggest that by providing an environment that encourages self-exploration and self-expression, prosocial behavior can be enhanced. I wanted to offer the arts-based program to schools to see if this also works in the traditional classroom setting.

This study attempted to bridge the discipline of art therapy with the field of education and as such, provides useful information for both education and art therapy communities. My attempt to bridge these two disciplines was grounded in my desire to assist students in acquiring social, emotional, and cognitive skills necessary to be successful in the classroom and beyond. Using visual art to help students build social and emotional skills, with a specific focus on empathic social interactions, can promote a positive classroom environment where students feel a sense of belonging and disruptive behavior is limited. Specifically, by focusing on using visual art to encourage empathy, the program may heighten the natural human tendency to share, understand, and respond compassionately to another human's emotional experience. This process is a crucial aspect of daily social interactions form birth to death (Decety, 2012). Empathy produces understanding, acceptance, and a sense of belonging within peer groups (Ridette-Moore, 2009; Wagaman, 2011). In fact, students with higher levels of empathy have

lower levels of aggressive behavior towards peers (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006). Additionally, students who feel a greater sense of belonging to their peer group at school exhibit higher motivation in the classroom, are less likely to engage in anti-social behavior (i.e., gangs), and have lower dropout rates (Goodenow, 1993; Ma, 2003). Such findings illustrated the potential benefit that an art program, intentionally created to encourage empathy, might have on students.

Providing opportunities for our youth to engage in art experiences that are directly aimed at developing positive social interactions such as empathy is significant for our society as a whole. Specifically, the study was significant to students and classroom teachers for demonstrating an activity that encouraged collaboration and built community in the classroom. School principals, district administrators, and policy makers may be better informed to make data-driven decisions related to the arts in education based on the evidence gathered in this study. Mental health practitioners may also see the value in contributing their knowledge to the educational setting. Community members may benefit from students who experience the arts and graduate with greater self-awareness and empathy for others. The data gained from this study can assist these groups by attempting to illuminate evidence-based practices that increase optimal environments for learning. Finally, the program that was created and implemented for this study was deliberately designed to help educators utilize the expressive arts to encourage students to develop a positive sense of identity that aims to activate prosocial behavior in the classroom and subsequent school community. This program is described in detail so that others may replicate this work in additional educational settings.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework that organized the creation of the art program integrates four theories: Clinical Art Therapy (Landgarten, 1981; Rubin, 2005), PYD Theory (Damon, 2004), Multidimensional Model of Empathy Development (Hoffman, 2000), and Paolo Freire's concept of dialogue within his theory of Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 1970).

Clinical Art Therapy

Clinical art therapy is a field in mental health that utilizes the art-making process, including viewing and reflecting processes, to uncover psychological conflicts and optimize healthy mental health processes (Landgarten, 1981; Rubin, 2005; Wadeson, 1980). The practice of art therapy extensively explores the relationship between the art process and an individual's interpretations of their process and subsequent art product. Art therapists are mindful of how various art materials have different qualities inherent within them and how these material qualities might influence the participants process and reactions to content and therefore artistic outcome. For example, an individual might interact differently with clay material versus pencil and paper and thus their art product will reflect that. In addition, art therapists are very concerned with how the participant interprets their art product, for example what types of emotions or narratives are projected on to the art piece by the maker? To summarize, the art-making experience allows for an optimal venue for organization of emotional content, resolution of inner conflicts, and identification of new ways of being. This last sentiment creates an ideal venue for the identification of strength-based behavior and PYD.

Positive Youth Development

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is a relatively new approach to understanding adolescent development (Damon, 2004). PYD aims to identify and subsequently develop strength-based behavior in youth (i.e., leadership, motivation, compassion, creativity, resilience) versus focusing treatment on extinguishing negative or maladaptive behavior (i.e., oppositional defiance, attention deficit, and negative attention seeking behavior). Prior to PYD, theories in educational and psychological fields were focused on identifying the deficits of a young person before they become a problem for the community. Damon (2004) pointed out that this treatment modality had serious repercussions on the way youth are perceived by the "popular mind" (p. 14). This same author posits that adolescence has been portrayed in academia and consequentially public media spheres as a period that is risky and "fraught with hazards" where youth can pose serious harm to self and others and "must be straightened out" before problems can arise (Damon, 2004, p. 14). The consistently negative interpretation of young people and specifically, young people of color, has become a well-known view of young people, where news media coverage has increasingly portrayed youth as negative. This author surmised that this has a negative impact on the adolescent who can internalize these negative associations. Conversely, the PYD theory suggests that identifying a young person's strengths can act as a protective factor against adverse development (Gillham et al., 2002). Stanford Professor of Education and Director of the Center on Adolescence, William Damon (2004) stated:

> This new approach envisions young people as resources rather than as problems for society. The PYD perspective emphasizes the manifest potentialities rather than the supposed incapacities of young people- including young people from the

most disadvantaged backgrounds and those with the most troubled histories. (p. 14).

When considering an art program to promote empathy development, theories in PYD become relevant. This theory posits that by identifying strength-based behavior, such as empathy, an adolescent will have more opportunity of progressing in a positive trajectory. This theory becomes of particular importance when considering the population of this study, low-income, urban, adolescent, Latino youth. This population, as noted above, faces significant stressors to positive identity development and would benefit from increased opportunities to identify personal strengths such as empathy, resilience, determination, and resourcefulness. PYD provides an optimal lens in which strength-based behavior, such as empathetic interactions amongst adolescent peer groups, can be addressed and strengthened.

Empathy Development

For the purposes of this study empathy was defined as "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person" (Gerdes et al., 2011, p. 109). There are multiple theories that surround the topic of empathy development. Making the conversation even more complex is the wide discrepancy in which theorists define the word empathy. Specifically, discrepancy exists in terms of how to identify and differentiate between the cognitive and affective processes that are involved in the empathetic development. Although there is not complete consensus about the empathetic process at this time, what is evident in the research is an agreement that points to a multidimensional developmental model (Hoffman, 2000). A multidimensional model aims to incorporate cognitive, affective, and physiological aspects of empathy development. In addition,

due to the non-static nature of human development (both cognitive and physiological changes) a multidimensional model also takes into consideration where an individual is in his/her life span. Embodied in the literature on multidimensional approaches to empathy development are several key themes of development. In the cognitive realm there are three themes that the literature agrees to be essential to empathy development: identification of emotion, self- awareness, and perspective taking (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987; Hoffman, 2000). The development of empathy echoes key issues in both PYD and Clinical Art therapy. Combining these approaches supports an optimal developmental process of the cognitive, affective, and physiological components of human development.

Shared Dialogue

Education expert and social justice advocate, Paolo Freire (1970), in his pivotal literary work Pedagogy of the Oppressed discussed how engaging individuals in dialogue can provide opportunities for educational enlightenment. Freire's writings on shared dialogue enriched the conversation of development of empathy through clinically-based arts directives. Freire posited that transformative learning can be attained through shared dialogue about lived history. Freire theorized that individuals who engage in dialogue about their experiences deepen their knowledge of self and other. This process of sharing information through dialogue was thought by Freire to free individuals from oppressed ways of thinking and to humanize each individual so that we see ourselves in each other. Freire's ideas that we can learn from each other by engaging in verbal dialogue might be further enhanced when combined with visual interpretations of experiences, thoughts, and feelings. Not only hearing about another's experiences, but seeing a visual representation of that experience, provides numerous avenues for inquiry and thus

understanding of self and other. Opportunities for PYD are addressed through this process; when individuals engage in dialogue about their visual art, shared understanding is created and so too is empathy.

Integrating Theoretical Perspectives

Similar notions are present across these four theoretical perspectives. Clinical art therapy, PYD, a multidimensional approach to empathy development, and attention to dialogue presented in Freire's (1970) views of critical pedagogy, work together to heighten the process of self-discovery and subsequent prosocial behavior in adolescent populations. Together these theories create a lens that is focused on uncovering strength-based behavior, specifically prosocial behavior in the form of empathy development, extracted by way of dialogue that is focused on symbolic meaning making among a group of adolescents through art. The result is a framework that suggests that by increasing opportunities for self-expression through the creation of visual art, dialogue is deepened and participants are more likely to reflect and build understanding around their own experiences as well as others. This heightened understanding produces empathy and a sense of belonging to their peer group. Both art therapist Landgarten (1981) and educator Freire (1970) share a similar sentiment—that through the process of uncovering personal truths transformative change can occur.

Methodology

This project created and implemented a visual art program for middle-school students and subsequently included methodology that attempted to measure the impact of the program on the development of social and emotional outcomes, specifically empathy development. Measures included pre- and post- quantitative and qualitative instruments administered to a convenience

sample of Latino sixth- and eighth-grade students attending an inner-city East Los Angeles Catholic School.

The visual art pilot program occurred once a day for approximately 1 hour for five consecutive days. The visual art program (outlined in detail in Chapter Three) was informed by theories in clinical art therapy, Hoffman's multidimensional theories of empathy including the cognitive, affective, and physiological theories of empathy development, theories of adolescent development as suggested in PYD (2000), and Freire's (1970) theories on increased understanding by way of shared dialogue. Each day a different aspect of empathy was addressed following the developmental trajectory of empathy development outlined in current literature. For example, Hoffman (2000) noted that one must have self-awareness before an awareness of the other can occur. This is followed by an ability to read emotions and a capacity to see an alternate perspective. These four components, self-awareness, awareness of other, emotional literacy, and perspective-taking were theorized to enable a person to "put themselves in another person's shoes" so to speak—or have empathy and thus react in a prosocial manner (Hoffman, 2000). These components were reflected in the program's curriculum. On each day of the lesson, students were encouraged to visually explore the theme offered, via a choice of art materials. For example, the first day of art- making was primarily focused on creating art about one's self increasing self-awareness (the first step in empathy development by Hoffman, 2000). The theme for that first day was to identify a personal experience that each student felt impacted their current identity. As such, this theme focused on increasing self-awareness to align to the first step in the development of empathy. In subsequent days, embedded within the program were deliberate directions that asked students to make art about an assigned peer, intentionally

addressing the second stage of empathy development which is to build awareness of others (Hoffman, 2000).The final product was a culmination of each session's artwork resulting in a singular progressive art piece. At the end of most sessions, a group discussion was held, soliciting the thoughts and emotions that were present during the creative process. Attention was also given to similarities and differences in each student's interpretation of the day's particular directive. This program differed from an arts class in that the emphasis of the program focused on the participants' process and how they chose to convey that process, rather than the development of technical skills related to visual arts instruction.

To evaluate the program's impact on empathy development, the following methodology was used:

1. Standardized pre-/post-program survey to measure levels of empathy development (BES, Concern for Others)
2. Semi-structured student interviews
3. Observation and analysis of student art-making process and art products created throughout the program.

Qualitative Data

Qualitative measures included daily observation notes taken by myself along with two research assistants. Additionally, semi-structured interviews with a preselected group of students were conducted to understand the students' experiences while involved in the art program. Finally, artifacts were collected throughout the lesson in the form of photographs of both the creative process of the visual art and culminating products made by the participants. All the above qualitative data were analyzed to uncover emergent themes as well as to find evidence of

empathy, applying the study's definition: "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person" (Gerdes et al., 2011, p. 109).

Quantitative Data

There were two quantitative measures used to measure empathy. The first quantitative measure was the Basic Empathy Scale (BES) created by Jolliffe and Farrington (2006), which measured the cognitive and affective components related to empathy development in adolescent populations. Questions that measured cognitive components of empathy focused on thought processes, for example, "I can understand my friend's happiness when she/he does well at something." Questions that measured affective components of empathy development focused on emotional processes, for example, "After being with a friend who is sad about something, I usually feel sad."(Jolliffe& Farrington, 2006, Appendix C).The second measure of empathy was the Concern for Others Survey (Child Development Project, 2005, Appendix D), which assessed prosocial tendencies in the form of concern for others. The literature supports the notion that concern for others is an outcome of increased empathy (Decety, 2012; Gerdes et al., 2011; Jolliffe& Farrington, 2006). An example of what was included in the Concern for Others survey was "When I see someone having a problem, I want to help" (Child Development Project, 2005).These two measures of empathy were administered to students prior to the art program and then again after the art program in order to measure any change in empathy.

Limitations

Personal Bias

I approached this line of inquiry with a personal and professional background that supports practicing self-expression and reflection through visual art making. I believe that

through the creation of art we are provided with opportunities to understand ourselves in a deeper way. When we understand ourselves more fully we can begin to evaluate our strengths and weaknesses and make healthy decisions that are aimed at making us the most successful. My experience engaging adolescents in arts-based activities informed by theories in art therapy in a clinical setting as well as a summer workshop setting has shown to increase recognition of positive strength-based behaviors, such as empathy. My personal experience aligned with the literature which indicates that empathic development can create connections within peer groups by encouraging a sense of belonging. This connection was especially important amongst adolescent populations who are seen by mainstream society as marginalized because through the experience, they may find community support. As such, my positionality was perhaps a source of bias in that I am committed to the success of all arts-based programs. My awareness of this limitation led me to design a study that captured multiple forms of data, including quantitative data that was analyzed statistically, in order to come to conclusions that yielded insights beyond my personal desire for its success.

Empathy

In addition to my positionality, emotional growth and specifically empathy are difficult concepts to measure. Existing literature on empathy conveyed that this concept is not easily defined (Gerdes et al., 2011; Phillips, 2003; Ridette-Moore, 2009). Additionally, empathy is embedded in a variety of descriptions of self-processes. For example, Ridette-Moore (2009) observed that "empathy, is never static and stable but always relational and dynamic" (p. 3). Phillips (2003) stated that "one of the best discoveries (and conversely the most maddening aspect) of my search for a definition to empathy is that there is no universal meaning of empathy

that works for every situation" (p. 46). Further, Gerdes et al. (2011) stated that empathy "has not always been well-articulated as a communicable and teachable concept" (p. 109). To compensate for the difficulty in defining empathy, it was vital to keep one definition of empathy as the guiding framework for this study, measuring all data against the following selected definition: "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person" (Gerdes et al., p. 109). Additionally, to accommodate this limitation, the evaluation of the arts program embodied a mixed-methods approach. All data sources were triangulated together to create a rich narrative that clearly described the program and the participants' reactions to the program. Qualitative data in the form of student interviews were compared and contrasted with observation notes gathered from three sources, as well as photographs of the participants' creative process and final products made throughout the lesson. In addition, results gained from quantitative inquiry (pre- and posttest student surveys) were compared and contrasted to the qualitative data to increase the degree of validity.

Research Site

The site where the research was conducted was a thriving Catholic school located in a low-income neighborhood in East Los Angeles. The site of inquiry might be considered to be predisposed to empathic services in that this parish community seemingly is attentive to addressing the social and emotional well-being of their student population. It might be suggested that empathy development be a result of these factors and nor the art program being implemented. In other words, isolating the origin of any display of empathic behavior was difficult to determine. Yet, to accommodate for this limitation, pre- and post- measures were utilized to identify the baseline measures of empathy and to then measure change over the

duration of the art program. In addition, the incorporation of participant interviews attempted to extrapolate significant change over time perceived by the participant that was directly related to the art program. Future research might benefit from conducting this research at a public school site, however for the purposes of this study, intentional efforts were made to choose a school site that, from a social justice perspective, represents a population (low-income, urban, Latino families) that has been widely documented as being underserved.

Summary and Organization of the Study

This study aimed to evaluate the impact of a visual arts program grounded in theories of clinical art therapy and empathy development, for a group of low-income, urban, Latino adolescents attending an inner-city Catholic school. In addition, I was specifically interested in understanding whether the program had an impact on the development of prosocial behavior in the form of empathy among the students. Chapter One has presented the background of the study and why this topic is relevant to the field of education and mental health. Second, the purpose of the study, the research questions, and methodology are articulated. Next, an explanation of the conceptual framework that provides a lens in which to view the study was discussed. Lastly, Chapter One concludes by making the positionality and limitations of the research transparent to the reader. Chapter Two presents a review of the literature that pertains to the key concepts used to develop and evaluate the visual art program created for this study. Key concepts include clinical art therapy, expressive arts in schools, adolescent development with specific focus on PYD, and theories in empathy development. Chapter Three provides the reader with information pertaining to the development and implementation of the visual art program. This chapter describes in detail the content, directions, materials, and relevance to

empathy development that the program entailed. In addition, visual images of a sample art piece are provided to further assist the reader in understanding the objectives of the art program. Chapter Four outlines the research question and methodologies used to guide the study, describing the population, site, instruments, design, and measures. Chapter Five presents the quantitative and qualitative data that were collected during the study and Chapter Six analyzes the findings and includes recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review surveyed existing research on how the arts and specifically the field of art therapy inform social and emotional learning opportunities in educational environments with adolescent populations. Specific attention was given to how the arts promote prosocial behavior in the form of empathy development. The arts, defined as including traditional forms of creative expression (i.e., visual, musical, and performing arts), have been shown to improve overall student outcomes including, academic, social, and emotional aspects of development. Despite the numerous studies that show the arts as essential to student learning, the subject is still one of the first to lose support in the form of funding, material resources, and teacher quality. This is an unfortunate occurrence in the educational field because involvement in the arts is strongly tied to positive social and emotional development and has been connected to the creation of a prosocial classroom where students are more likely to experience a sense of belonging within their classroom/school community. Embodied in this idea of a prosocial classroom is the notion that students have empathy for their fellow classmates. Empathy was defined in this study as "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person" (Gerdes et al., 2011, p. 109). Empathic communities are communities that exhibit mutual support and collaboration and these characteristics impact the chances of increased positive outcomes for all members. The literature compiled here explored the variables that were included in the following research question: How does a visual art program informed by the practice of clinical art therapy impact the development

of empathy in sixth to eighth grade (low-income, urban, Latino adolescents) attending an inner-city Catholic school?

The review begins by grounding the conversation in theories of art therapy, including defining art therapy and discussing how art therapy might inform arts in educational settings. Next, using the art to bridge therapy and education, a brief discussion on the breadth of research indicating the positive effects of the arts in schools is reviewed. Since literature on the impacts of the arts in education is extensive, particular focus is given to research that documents how the arts impact the affective domains of human development, such as social and emotional development. Following this section is a review of literature that examines the theories that created the conceptual framework for this study and that were used in the development of the visual art program being evaluated by this study: clinical art therapy, adolescent development, PYD, and empathy development. First, adolescent development was reviewed to give the reader context on the population who participated in this study. Of particular focus were Erik Erikson's (1968) theories on adolescent identity development and how these theories converge with current theories on adolescent development. Considerations were given to culture and ethnicity as issues associated with low-income areas that serve as stressors to optimal development. Following this section was a review of the art therapy literature specifically focused on art therapy with adolescents, providing the reader with context on how practices unique to the field of art therapy might benefit the specific populations explored in this study. The following section focused on providing the reader with a review of literature pertaining to empathy development—theories in empathy development were at the core of the visual art program's design and thus a thorough review of the expansive amount of literature is compiled here. Of particular focus in this section

was empathy development with adolescents and connections to PYD. The last section of this review illustrated the convergence of theories presented in the literature that became the foundational elements used to design the visual art program that was implemented in this study. This section aimed to tie together for the reader the extensive amount of research collected from multiple disciplines to inform this study.

Clinical Art Therapy

Recent evidence documented an increase in the prevalence of students of all ages with socioemotional health concerns (Merrell, 2010). In addition, Respress and Lufti (2006) warned that many youth who have trouble at home and school will ultimately enter the welfare and judicial process and that early interventions for poor school achievement and behavior problems can have a significant influence on youth at risk (Thorney-Smith, 1990 as cited in Respress & Lufti, 2006, p. 25). Utilization of the arts in mental health has increasingly become a more prominent treatment modality used with young people (Block et al., 2005; Comerford Boyes& Reid, 2005; Emunah, 1990; Fliegel, 2000; Landgarten, 1985; Linesch, 1988; Moon, 1999; Riley, 1994; Wallace-DiGarbo, 2006). Historically, the arts were deemed a unique impulse to humans (Dissanayake, 1995) as well as an effective psychological healing agent (Rubin, 1980).Generally speaking, the arts allow for an alternate means of communication and expression. Individuals who struggle with both internal and external social and emotional conflicts are able to access and explore thoughts and emotions from a different perspective. In some cases, this new perspective offers greater clarity and can lead to different choices or avenues of recovery. Research on how the many disciplines of art (visual, theater, dance, and music) have acted as an effective treatment modality has been extensive. For example, Slayton (2012) described how her work

with adolescent males, victims of domestic abuse, racial and ethnic violence, and neglect were able to address these trauma issues therapeutically while engaged in artistic expression. Also, Comerford Boyes and Reid (2005) noted the personal and psychological gains that can be accomplished by for example increasing self-esteem and how this has been shown to have an impact on community regeneration projects.

Clinical Art therapy, which is relatively young in practice (approximately 60 years since its conception), embodies the idea that the art-making experience provides an opportunity for exploration, externalization, and dialogue with emotional content via artistic materials, drawing utensils, paint, clay, collage, assemblage, etc.(Naumburg, 1987). The purpose of this review is to give a basic history of the term clinical art therapy and how this practice is relevant to the participants of this study—adolescents. Art therapy was first introduced during a time when the notion of progressive education was on the rise and education researchers were beginning to look at how to provide a holistic education for young people (Eisner, 2003). Arts educators and educators alike became increasingly aware of how engagement in the creative process through the arts could act as a means for healthy development (Vasquez Heilig, Cole, & Aguilar, 2010). Simultaneously, in the field of mental health psychologists and social workers were considering the impulsive drawings of those diagnosed with schizophrenia as a means to uncover the possible dissonance that was exacerbating the illness (Rubin, 1980). Magaret Naumburg (1987), considered to be the "mother of art therapy" introduced the term *art psychotherapy* in which she described the art-making and viewing process of an artwork as an exploration of personal symbols represented in the imagery. Naumburg felt that what was important in this process was the dialogue that occurred as a result of the clients' interpretations of the imagery and the insight

and self-awareness that was prompted (1987). Around the same time, Edith Kramer (1971) promoted a position that suggested that the very act of making art was therapeutic—the "art as therapy" approach. Kramer (1971) felt that creating art was a necessary therapeutic process that allowed the participant-artist to divert energy into the art-making experience in a socially appropriate manner, what is termed "sublimation." Lastly, Helen B. Landgarten (1981), another pioneer in the field of art therapy, gave particular focus to how and why various art materials were used in therapeutic process, carefully distinguishing between the process, content, and the art product. Landgarten (1981) acknowledged that the artwork was "basic agent for change and an everlasting testimony to growth" (p. xi). In summary, these studies indicated that the art-making experience allows for organization of emotional content, resolution of inner conflicts, and identification of new ways of being.

Arts in Education

When shifting the review to examine the literature that reported the impact of arts in school settings, there is consensus in the education literature that the arts appeared to benefit students and especially those students who were categorized as marginalized. Consistently quoted in education literature was *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning* (Fiske, 1999).This publication was a joint work by the Arts Education Partnership and the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. Of special interest was James Catterall's 2009 longitudinal study on the impact of the arts (visual art, music, dance, and theater) on student achievement with specific attention given to students who were defined as low socioeconomic status. Catterall analyzed the data of more than 25,000 students from the National Educational Longitudinal Survey (NELS) to determine the relationship of engagement in the arts to student

performance and attitudes. Catterall found that students with high levels of arts participation outperformed “arts poor” (low involvement in the arts) students on virtually every measure—test scores in core visual art lesson areas, motivation, and behaviors were recorded. In addition, Catterall determined with quantifiable data (standardized test scores, academic grades, reading proficiency, and increased self-reports on positive self-concept) that economically disadvantaged students also progressed at a higher rate in each measure when compared to “arts poor” counterparts. Data collected over a 12-year span concluded that in both cases when measuring the results of all students and when analyzing just the data of low-socioeconomic status students, higher academic achievement and motivation to learn was found. Multiple authors suggested involving students in the arts positively impacts students cognitively, personally, and socially which has a positive effect on the students overall achievement (Catterall, 1998, 2009; Comerford Boyes & Reid, 2005). In addition, some research in the education literature identified the arts as vehicle for acquisition of socioemotional skills that arts involvement provides such as a protective, preventative, and resiliency-building tool for our students (Merrell, 2010; Halverson, 2010). Respress and Lufti (2006) commented that students engaged in the arts are offered opportunities not only to experience greater academic achievement but are also less likely to have social, or behavioral problems. Wallace-DiGarbo and Hill (2006) offered art as an intervention that helps youth seen at risk to mindfully engage in the creative and imaginative thinking inherent in creating art, finding it to be a powerful intervention in creating competency amongst participants in an after school art program.

Conceptual Framework

The following section of this review is intended to provide the reader with a survey of the existing literature that creates the conceptual framework that guided the development of the art program being evaluated by this study. The following theories were used extensively and include: clinical art therapy, adolescent development, PYD, and empathy development. This review begins by giving the reader necessary information on the population that participated in this study, adolescents. The literature that speaks directly to using art therapy with adolescent populations is reviewed followed by literature that explores empathy development. This section includes discussion of the history, definition, and development of empathy followed by a more focused discussion on empathy development with adolescents and connections to PYD and prosocial behaviors.

Adolescent Development

Erikson's theories on adolescent identity development. The art program designed for this study was intended for adolescent populations, thus it is necessary to provide a review of the literature explores this developmental stage. Adolescent development has been widely investigated and multiple theories have been documented to explain the significant changes a young person must pass through on the way to adulthood (Erikson, 1968; Kohlberg, 1981; Piaget, 1950; Vygotsky, 1987). Erik Erikson's (1968) theories about identity formation continue to be forefront in research discussion on the social and emotional development of adolescents. Erikson's theory stated that identity formation is the preeminent task of adolescence (1968). Identity formation allows for an individual to effectively move into adulthood. Erikson's theories of healthy adolescent development primarily focused on the adolescent's ability to feel a

sense of safety in exploring their environment, the outcome being a mastery of her/his environment (Erikson, 1968). Erikson suggested that the ego will pass through a series of eight stages marked by a coinciding crisis. One moves through each stage basing the next on experiences learned from the one prior. Erikson described adolescence as a crisis involving identity vs. role confusion. Multiple authors highlighted the process of identity development as being one that embodies a complicated blending of lived experiences with present situations, projections of the future and how this integrates into society (Kroger, 2004; Mitchell, 1986). Kroger (2004) explained that the crisis resolution of identity vs. role confusion is a balance between the two that is unique to the adolescent given their particular environment. Authors identified two critical components of Erikson's theory: exploration and commitment. These two components assist the adolescent in determining a resolution of self-concept and how he/she is recognized by their community (Umana-Taylor, Yazedjian, & Bamaca-Gomez, 2004). In addition, this path of self-discovery poses the continual question of "who am I?" and "where do fit?" Another term relevant to adolescent identity development is fidelity. Fidelity, according to Kroger (2004), is at the heart of Erikson's identity theory. Kroger explained that fidelity describes the process of the adolescent committing to an ideological worldview that will continue to shape their development (Kroger, 2004). Lastly, Erikson (1968, 1980) posited that healthy adolescent identity development will encompass the development of an optimal sense of self by achieving balance in her/his intrapersonal, interpersonal, and community contexts. Erikson (1980) explained that adolescent development is dependent on a young person's sense of mastery of experiences that is unique to the individual: "strength is gained through recognized accomplishment" (Burdett Schiavona, 2009, p. 103).

Low-Income Inner-City Youth

Although Western theories on adolescent development have been pivotal in providing frameworks for education and practice, Ntsayagae, Sabone, Keitshokile, Seboni, Sebego, and Brown (2008) raised an important consideration for the need to incorporate cultural, ecology, and history into the context of adolescent development, making theories of adolescent growth and identity development more relevant to current societal norms. In addition, the stressors outlined in this section are stressors that the population in the current study (low-income, urban, Latino adolescents) are likely to have endured.

Ethnic discrimination. For example, Umana-Taylor and Updegraff (2004) reported that Latino adolescents demonstrate the highest risk for depression when compared to other ethnic groups due to perceived discrimination. This perceived discrimination causes significant stress and hinders a positive development of identity.

Poverty. Also, youth populations living in inner-city urban environments are documented in the literature as having to face additional stressors that could impede successful identity formation, in addition to ethnic and cultural concerns, issues related to low socioeconomic status, as well as violence and community disconnection associated with urban neighborhoods are significant stressors (Hart & Atkins, 1998; Phillips & Pittman, 2003; Prelow & Loukas, 2003). To exemplify one aspect of this, Phillips and Pittman (2003) identified three categories that are a resultant of poverty; derogatory self-relevant information, limitations in opportunity structure, and excessive stress. The primary concern of these three categories rests in the last—the excessive amount of stress that is placed on the family unit where feelings of inferiority, inadequacy, depression, and frustration are reported in the literature (Phillips &Pittman, 2003).

Phillips and Pittman also state that as a result these feelings tend to lead to familial conflict, which in turn affects the psychological well-being and restricts the environment for positive adolescent identity development (Phillips & Pittman, 2003). In comparison, several factors that Prelow and Loukas (2003) found to be associated with positive adjustment for youth include parental monitoring, parental involvement, adolescent socioemotional competence, and adolescent involvement in extracurricular activities. Of the above listed factors parental monitoring had a significant effect on low economic status Latino students and showed that with higher levels of parental monitoring and school support students received higher GPAs (Prelow & Loukas, 2003).

Urban environments. Another stressor to adolescent development that is relevant to the participants of this study is residence in an urban neighborhood. Hart and Atkins (1998) reported that high-poverty, urban neighborhoods have fewer adult members to provide structure and opportunities for children 18 and younger. Lower levels of education among these adults are common which further limit resources. Heath and McLaughlin (1993) also reported that of the inner-city youth interviewed, it was apparent that there was a lack of "caring and involved adults." These authors found that the lack of involvement was in cases due to factors such as single parent families, care givers working long hours or multiple jobs and left them with little energy left to be involved in their adolescent's life. Further, Heath and McLaughlin (1993) reported that inner-city youth feel that school is an environment that is rejecting, exclusive and feel there are no groups that they can join for extracurricular activities. The participants of the same study discussed with researchers the stigma attached to "being from the projects." One teenager from this study stated, "People just don't expect much of you" (p. 47). The media also

contribute to negative self-perceptions of urban adolescents (Damon, 2004; Heath & McLaughlin, 1993). By portraying violent and disparaging images of an adolescent's neighborhood on nightly news channels the hopes and expectations for the future are further challenged (Heath & McLaughlin, 1993, p. 37). According to Bolland, McCallum, Lian, Bailey, and Rowan (2001), residents of inner-city neighborhoods have fewer resources due to the lack of good paying jobs, higher occurrences of residents to serving jail time, morbidity/mortality, susceptibility to chronic health problems, and violence (p. 237). Violence is also a predominant factor affecting the development of urban adolescents (Hart & Atkins, 1998; Heath & McLaughlin, 1993; McIntyre, 2000). McIntyre (2000) reported that when asked to describe community the participant of the study a group of 11 sixth graders stated that community was "where you live," "family," "school," "neighborhood," "where you clean," "where you throw away guns and get like $100 for your gun," "drugs," "drug cars," and "violence" (p. 60). McIntyre (2000) described four types of violence that urban youth endure: *Interpersonal violence* is most commonly discussed by mainstream society; *educational violence* suggested by ignored and under-funded schools*; structural violence* is resultant of youth living in under-resourced communities; and *environmental violence* demonstrated by poor youth and people of color living in pollution (p. 58). McIntyre (2000) also reported:

> [That] in response to living in a violence prone community, the participants have developed a set of strategies for organizing- and normalizing- their lives, to the extent that that is possible. One of the strategies they use to organize their lives is to "be ready for anything"- a protective stance that takes its toll on these young

people and distracts them from engaging in other aspects of adolescent life. (p. 64)

To conclude, Bolland et al. (2001) discussed the possible mentality and influence that habitation in a low-income, urban neighborhood can have on the development of an adolescent:

> Several observers suggest that adolescents deal with their uncertain and hostile future by abandoning conventional, long-term approaches to success in favor of things they can achieve in short-term- unlawful or risky behaviors that may be associated with more attractive. Frequently, these behaviors may eventuate in violence, indeed, many youths apparently see little sense in being careful for themselves or others if poor outcomes, physical harm, or early death see an inevitable part of their future. (p. 238)

High instances of violence. Literature also indicated that although not exclusively, minority youth living in inner-city urban environments were disproportionately more likely to witness community violence and poverty (Burdett Schiavona, 2009). This same author reported that exposure to violence and poverty are correlated with poorer health outcomes both physical (i.e., higher production of cortisol) (Kliewer, 2006 as cited in Burdett Schiavona, 2009) and psychological (i.e., posttraumatic stress disorder and depression) (Rosenthal, 2000 as cited in Burdett Schiavona, 2009). These are significant stressors that remarkably hinder an adolescent's opportunity for positive identity development in Eriksonian terms (Burdett Schiavona 2009; Erikson, 1968). In addition, multiple authors pointed to the development of maladaptive coping strategies that as mentioned earlier result from the severity of stress (i.e., substance abuse and

aggression) (Bolland, McCallum, Lian, Bailey, & Rowan, 2001; Goldstein, Walton, Cunningham, Trowbridge, & Maio, 2007).

Art Therapy with Adolescents

Pivotal to the design to this study was literature focused on using art therapy with adolescents. Overwhelmingly researchers agreed on the success and appropriateness of art therapy as a treatment modality for adolescent populations (Block et al., 2005; Comerford Boyes & Reid, 2005; Emunah, 1990; Fliegel, 2000; Landgarten, 1985; Linesch, 1988; Moon, 1999; Riley, 1994; Wallace-DiGarbo, 2006). There is a clear consensus in the research claiming that the main developmental tasks of adolescence is identity development and separation, and that these tasks can be effectively addressed via the art-making process. Riley (1999) asserted that the art process provides adolescents control over their expressions, stimulates creativity, provides a pleasurable experience, and allows them to explore personal and peer group symbols and metaphors. Slayton (2012) commented on the opportunities that the art-making process can provide for adolescents to "express diverse values without judgment" (p. 180). These studies indicated that when adolescents are engaged in artistic expression, they are in fact engaged in identity exploration and development.

In some cases, adolescents can uncover negative coping skills and develop strategies for healthier practices making changes to their identity. In a study with juvenile sex offenders, Larose (1987) described how the creative process was able to help this population go beyond the learned self-image (how others saw them) to become in touch with the true self and have an expanded sense of potential. The literature indicated that the creative process in therapy can support adolescents with an appropriate cultural and developmental approach to identity

formation and separation (Moon, 1999; Slayton, 2012). According to Emunah (1990), the art product and process can serve as a safe container for teens' explosive feelings. Emunah (1990) stated that adolescents are "desperately" attempting to express and communicate their internal world, but don't always have the verbal capacity to articulate what they think and feel (p. 102). Creative arts match the "intensity and complexity of their experience" and these approaches are "direct but non-threatening" providing a way to express the "inner explosiveness" of adolescent experience (Emunah, 1990, p. 102). Riley (1999) agreed that adolescents can represent their conflicts through art more readily than they can verbalize them. Authors agreed that the art-making process assists adolescents in processing difficult sometimes intangible emotions via objectification. This process of making an object (in the form of visual image) around something abstract (like emotion) allows the adolescent to have a sense of ownership or control over the emotion. From here the artwork then serves as a tool, allowing the adolescent to explore, interpret, and/or change the object. Adolescents externalize threatening feelings onto a neutral art form, providing an opportunity for self-discovery and integration in a non-threatening way (Emunah, 1990; Kahn, 1999; Moon, 1999; Slayton, 2012; Wadeson, 1980).

Other ways that art therapy is particularly appropriate and effective for adolescents include: allowing defensive or resistant clients a way to communicate while guarding against excessive self-disclosure (Emunah, 1990; Kahn, 1999; Slayton, 2012), providing a safe place to experiment with roles and identity (Emunah, 1990; Linesch, 1988; Slayton, 2012), and strengthening a sense of mastery and self-esteem (Emunah, 1990). The literature conceded the positive outcomes of group art therapy as an appropriate modality for adolescents. Researchers noted that group art therapy provides opportunities for enhancement of social skills and

increased self-concept in its adolescent members because the "group" is a natural environment for this developmental stage (Maat, 1997; Slayton, 2012).

Taken together, the literature supported the use of the art therapy to assist teens in their development. Moreover, findings especially supported art therapy as an appropriate tool for adolescents whom are marginalized. The current study intended to include a population of low-income, urban, Latino adolescents. The literature focused on this population; ethnic minority adolescents that inhabit low-income urban neighborhoods, were enabled to raise self-esteem, establish more positive social skills, develop relationships with positive role models, and establish connections within their community allowing for a greater sense of control over their environment (Block et al.,2005; Chin, et al., 1980; Darell & Wheeler, 1984; Fliegel, 2000; Stiles & Mermer-Welly, 1998; Wallace-DiGarbo, 2006). Specific to literature pertaining to art therapy with Latino populations, Greenberg Garrison, Roy, and Azar (1999) reviewed a school-based prevention program in Maryland titled "Amigo"—the program developed in 1991 in response to growing Latino population. The program aimed to address issues that appeared to be impacting recently immigrated Central American families, such as poverty, family disruption, teenage pregnancy, youth violence, and school dropout. These authors state that the AMIGO program found art therapy to be an effective tool in therapeutic work with children and adolescents of Latino descent that have experienced the above-mentioned stressors (Greenberg Garrison, Roy, & Azar, 1999, p. 213). Ciornai (1983) posited that expressive therapies represent an appropriate treatment choice for young working class Latino women. Ciornai (1993) maintained that the process of art therapy was "intrinsically rooted in the daily life of many minority populations" (p. 64). Literature also indicated that the use of art activities in therapy has been shown to

strengthen sense of identity among Latino families (Moreno & Wadeson, 1986). Santos (1977) posited that art therapy is a more useful assessment tool with Hispanic teens because it may be less culturally biased than many other assessment tools. In summary, the literature posited that art therapy can be an especially effective modality for Latino populations (Ciornai, 1983; Greenberg Garrison et al., 1999; Moreno & Wadeson, 1986; Santos, 1977).

Empathy

In addition to designing an art program that intended to provide adolescents with an opportunity to explore their identity, the main goal was to measure the overall impact of the visual art program on adolescents' displays of empathy. Therefore at the core of this study were design elements taken from empathy development. Thus, it is important to provide the reader with a thorough review of the expansive literature and complex nature of empathy development. The following review of empathy uses a funnel approach to first explore empathy from a broad perspective and then guide the reader to a more focused look at empathy development as a prosocial behavior in adolescent populations. This section is presented as follows: brief history of empathy, multiple definitions that surround the term empathy, theories in the development of empathy, programs and theories that discuss how to train people in empathy, empathy development amongst adolescents, and concluding with how PYD and prosocial behavior can impact empathy development in adolescents.

History. According to recent literature, the term *empathy* was derived from *Einfuhlung*- "in-feeling," or "feeling into," a German term coined by the philosopher, Robert Vischer, in 1873 (Jeffers, 2009, p. 2). This same author reported that "*Einfuhlung* was intended to describe the projection of human feeling into art objects" (Jeffers, 2009, p.3). At the beginning of the 20th

Century, Theodor Lipps evaluated and extended Vischer's notion and reasoned that if humans project feelings into objects, then feelings could also be projected into other human beings. Specifically, Jeffers stated that Lipps focused on "inner imitation," the process by which one individual found his/her own emotions activated when observing the emotional expressions of another (Jahoda, 2005 as cited in Jeffers, 2009, p. 3).

Definitions. Early definitions of empathy include that of Hogan (1969), a prominent authority on empathy who defined the term empathy as "the disposition to take the moral point of view by considering the consequences of one's actions on the welfare of others" (1969 as cited in Pecukonis, 1990, p. 225). In addition, Hogan (1969) listed the characteristics determined from a 1969 study as descriptors of a highly empathetic individual. The individual:

1. Is socially perceptive of a wide range of interpersonal cues,
2. Seems to be aware of the impression he makes on others,
3. Is skilled in social techniques of imaginative play, pretending, and humor,
4. Has insight into own motives and behaviors, and
5. Evaluated the motivations of others in interpreting situations.

Specifically, definitions in the literature define empathy as the tendency to vicariously experience other individuals' emotional states (Davis, 1994) and an emotional response that is focused more on another person's situation or emotion than on one's one (Hoffman, 2000). This type of emotional response can be either identical to or congruent with that of the other person involved (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987). Jolliffe and Farrington (2006), who created the Basic Empathy Scale to be used specifically with adolescence, described empathy "as comprehension of and sharing in another individual's emotional state or situation." Gerdes et al.'s (2011)

definition of empathy guides this study: “the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person" (p. 109). This definition considers all of the aforementioned definitions, both cognitive and affective experiences and in addition describes observable behavior.

Development of empathy. Empathy appears to be a multifaceted term, evidenced in the array of definitions presented above. Throughout history different theorists have tended to focus on the different components of empathy; moral behavior, vicarious experiences, cognitive (comprehension of emotion) and affective (feeling of emotion) elements. In addition, the literature indicates that there are divergent theories on the nature/nurture aspects of empathy development, specifically whether empathy is a biological or a trait that is promoted via environmental agencies (Caterrall, 2011). Wagamon (2011) simplified that all humans have an innate drive to “mirror” or simulate the emotions, body states, and intentions of the people they observe or tune into. Conversely, multiple authors agreed that empathy is developmental and influenced by external or environmental factors, such as the caregiver or home environment (Calley& Gerber, 2008; Catterall, 2011). James Catterall (2011), in recent research on empathic development, surmised that empathy is not something that is solely innate. This author stated that empathy is documented in psychological literature to be developmental: “Empathy as a human trait is considered in the psychological literature to be developmental. A typical view is that very young children do not exhibit empathy, that empathic behavior emerges in childhood, and empathy grows more or less steadily until early adulthood” (Catterall, 2011, p. 7). Further, Catterall cited additional literature that asserts that empathic development is more conducive in select environments, increasing in environments where there is consistent nurturing and positive

attention and limited in environments of high-stress and poverty (Catterall, 2011, p.7). Therefore, currently the literature research indicates that empathy is trait that can be developed however the rate and amount are strongly tied to a person's developmental stage and external stimuli.

In addition, the literature appears to contain some discrepancy about how to categorize the process of empathy with specific discussion about whether empathy development is defined as a cognitive process, an affective process, or a combination of both. Eisenberg and Strayer (1987) described empathy as a process where "empathy is an affective response that stems from the apprehension or comprehension of another's emotional state or condition, feeling similar to what the other person is feeling or would be expected to feel" (p. 752). However, these same authors concurred with Pecukonis (1990) in that empathy may be comprised of related constructs in both the affective and cognitive domains. In a 1990 study, Pecukonis found a significant association between cognitive and affective processes in empathy development and defined empathy being emotional understanding regulated by both affective and cognitive components (Pecukonis, 1990). Pecukonis (1990) surmised that empathy should be viewed as a multidimensional relationship between the affective and cognitive processes, where there is systematic feedback loop versus a linear process. In addition, researchers agreed that the ability to be empathic increases with age (Barr & D'Alessandro, 2009), suggesting another layer of empathy development which Hoffman (2000) indicated was physiological with regards to human development. Most recently, the phenomenon of empathy was viewed from a neurological research with the discovery of mirror neurons (Rizzolatti & Craighero, 2004). Explained simplistically, neuroscientists were slowly uncovering research that indicated that empathy might

be a biological drive (Jeffers, 2009). Most notably, Gallese (2009) described a group of neurons that fire at the same time in the same part of the brain when simultaneously engaged or observing an activity. In addition this group of neurons can be broken down further into sub groups where neurons identified as super mirror neurons, associated with a motor movement will be replicated in the observer when viewing an object that has embodied that perceived movement, dance, or brush stroke. Thus, the literature revealed an ongoing need for research to clearly articulate the internal process of empathy development. However, what can be surmised from the research is that empathy development consists of multiple processes that occur simultaneously such as cognitive, affective, developmental, and physiological.

Empathy training. A substantial amount of literature indicated the benefits of increasing empathy. For example, higher levels of empathy led to a heightened sense of belonging within a social group (Johnson, 2009) as well as decreased antisocial and aggressive behaviors (Jolliffe& Farrington, 2006). Thus for the purposes of this study it was important to survey the literature that speaks to how to train or teach people to be empathetic. Pecukonis (1990) described Feshbach's 1978 model of empathy training, which embodies three components addressing both cognitive and affective elements of empathy development. The first two components addressed cognitive processes and the last component addressed affective processes. The first cognitive component addressed affective discrimination where participants were asked to differentiate between another's affective states. The second cognitive component was role taking, putting oneself in another's situation. The third and last component of Feshbach's model was the affective process where participants personally matched the positive or negative emotion of the person they were observing (Feshbach, 1978 as cited in Pecukonis, 1990).

Calley and Gerber (2008) noted that while training juvenile male sex offenders in empathic development the needs addressed were as follows: "the identification and expression of emotions; the development of effective listening skills; and the comprehension of how anger, stress, and values influence personal reactions" (p. 71). Calley and Gerber (2008) also pointed to the need for concrete interventions and in addition also highlighted author Lundrigan (2001) who suggested that "juvenile sex offender treatment programs focus on developing an increased understanding of the uniqueness of individuals to prevent projection of personal feelings onto others" (p. 71). Wagaman (2011) reported that the most effective way to increase ability to be aware of empathic feelings and to develop the cognitive skills necessary to make sense of those feelings is through mindfulness training. Wagaman (2011) continued that adolescent mindfulness training can significantly increase adolescents' empathic capacity and experiences. Gathered from the literature is that training individuals in empathic behavior initially requires a focus on both cognitive and affective processes, where individuals are encourage to first to identify or increase their ability to identify emotions in themselves and then apply that feeling towards another entity.

Adolescent empathy development. Because adolescence is a time when cognitive capabilities are increasing the literature suggested that empathic capabilities are also increasing (Albiero, Matricardi, Speltri, & Toso, 2009; Hoffman, 2000). Substantial research posited a developmental understanding of empathy development where skills such as perspective-taking, self-reflection, emotional literacy develop with age along with the ability to separate self from other. (Barr & Higgins-Alessandro, 2009; Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987; Hoffman, 2000). In addition, Barr and D'Alessandro (2009) based on their quantitative study which evaluated

relationships between adolescent prosocial behavior, empathy and school culture posit that "by mid- adolescence the cognitive and emotional components that support empathy may he nearly fully mature or at least developed to a stable point that is necessary for relatively mature empathy and/or prosocial responding" (p. 765). Albiero, Matricardi, Speltri, and Toso, (2009) agreed when they stated that empathy is thought to reach its highest development at late adolescence. Goldstein and Winner (2012) stated that the perspective-taking skills underlying empathy continue to develop throughout middle childhood and early adolescence and therefore this is a "prime developmental period for empathy training where it will most likely to have an impact" (p. 22). Multiple authors agreed that individual characteristics and contextual factors may predict an individual's level of empathy (Caterrall, 2011; Decety, 2012; Eisenberg & Stayer, 1987; Feshbach, 1978). Higher levels of empathy among adolescents are associated with prosocial skills, such as conflict resolution skills, increased positive social relationships (Albiero, et al. 2009; Barr& Higgins D'Alessandro, 2009). With respect to peer relationships, research showed a positive correlation between empathy and a young person's willingness to come to the defense of a peer who was the victim of bullying (Albiero, et al., 2009; Ang & Goh, 2010). Barr and Higgins-D'Alessandro (2009) suggested that "future research should investigate the longitudinal change and relationships of empathy and prosocial behavior with a younger population and with a population across a wide range of ages from grade school youth through adulthood" (p. 765). These findings suggested that empathy in adolescence is an important factor in developing prosocial behavior, inspiring young people to take an active role in shaping their environments, and ensuring that the experiences and interactions of those around them are positive. Barr and Higgins-Alessandro (2009) tested adolescent empathy in relation to school

culture with two different school samples over a 2-year duration and found that changes in empathy might require more opportunities for adolescents to exercise cognitive and emotional responsiveness in their day-to-day lives.

Empathy as Prosocial Behavior for PYD

PYD. PYD theory is a framework that aims to promote and cultivate the strengths and prosocial competencies of youth (Gillham et al., 2002). Specifically, the growing field of PYD draws from an identity developmental model, and specifically within that model, focuses on cultural identity formation as a characteristic of positive human development. PYD is defined as displaying high levels of competence, confidence, connectedness, and caring (Halverson, 2010). Erikson (1980) explained that adolescent development is dependent on a young person's sense of mastery of experiences that are unique to the individual "strength is gained through recognized accomplishment" (Burdett Schiavona, 2009 p. 103). PYD strategies suggest that by providing vital supports for healthy development maladaptive coping behaviors may be prevented (Damon, 2004). Incorporating a model of PYD in classrooms offers an ideal venue because the school environment has such a strong impact on the identity of the individual; where the student is developing cognitively, socially, and vocationally.

Empathy as prosocial behavior. Substantial literature suggested that empathy is pivotal in the development of social understanding prosocial behavior (cooperation, perspective taking, acceptance), and therefore a key ingredient to PYD (Pecukonis, 1990 p. 1). Multiple researchers found evidence that suggests that youth who exhibited higher levels of empathy consequentially exhibited lower levels of aggressive behavior (Jolliffe& Farrington, 2006; Pecukonis, 1990). Specific to education literature, and with relevance to the topic of this study, a review of research

on empathy suggested that that empathetic development is addressed in several categories of prosocial behavior, for example, social competence, prosocial behavior, and student belonging (Maynard, Monk, & Booker, 2011; Wentzel, Looney, & Filisetti, 2007; Ma, 2003). Social competence develops with increased emotional intelligence. Maynard, Monk, and Booker(2011) presented Humphrey, Curran, Morris, Farrell, and Woods' (2007,as cited in Maynard et al., 2011), four-stage developmental theory for the emotional intelligence among children:

> The first stage requires the child to accurately identify one's own emotions and subsequently name others' emotions in the same manner. The second stage emphasizes the emotional application for specific social settings (e.g., the ability to understand that when someone falls down, he/she may feel sad and may need comforting). The third stage emphasizes the importance of emotional empathy. The final stage describes the attainment of emotionality, suggesting the child has gained self-awareness to guide decision making across different social settings. (p. 167)

Successful navigation of these four stages increases a child's abilities to engage in prosocial behavior and develop in a positive trajectory. Catterall (2011) continued that empathic development influences prosocial behavior. Prosocial behavior was defined as a ''voluntary behavior that benefits others or promotes harmonious relations with others'' (Wright et al., 2009, p. 5). According to these Wright et al., (2009), the most common prosocial behaviors were recorded as "Comforting, helping, sharing, donating, and volunteering" (Wright et al. 2009, p. 76). Wentzel, et al., (2007), stated that their research on the prosocial development has been linked to a range of self-processes including perspective taking, affective reasoning, moral

reasoning, and empathy. Subsequently, prosocial behavior was defined as any purposive action on behalf of someone else that involves a net cost to the helper (Hoffman, 1994 as cited in Barr &Higgins D'Alessandro, 2009, p. 753). In addition these same authors reported that research indicated that prosocial behavior was strongly tied to perspective taking skills which is a key component in empathy development (Barr &Higgins D'Alessandro, 2009).

School culture that stresses prosocial behavior such as connectedness and cooperation tend to have more positive interpretations of school culture, which in turn impacts academic performance in a positive trajectory (Barr &Higgins D'Alessandro, 2009). For example, a positive school culture was related to the prosocial behavior and socioemotional adjustment of students in a large-scale study of 188 schools (Barr &Higgins D'Alessandro, 2009) Lastly these same authors found that more positive student-peer relationships and more positive relationships between teachers and students were related to students' positive emotional concern for others (Barr & Higgins D'Alessandro, 2009). Evidence suggested that the development of empathy may serve a reparative function for youth whose biological development has been negatively impacted by traumatic stressors in childhood, such as child abuse and neglect. For example, "by increasing empathy through activities that enhance affective response, such as mirroring or emotion identification and reflection, some of the long-term ripple effects of negative child-hood experiences may be minimized" (Wagaman, 2011, p. 287).

Student sense of belonging. Importantly, empathic development, prosocial behavior, and social competence show similarities and can be influential in a student's sense of belonging, defined by Goodenow (1993) as "the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included and supported in their environment (p. 23). Maslow (1962) emphasized that

in the course of human development, the need for interpersonal belonging held greater weight over the need for knowledge and understanding (as cited in Goodenow, 1993). Student perceptions of belonging have been documented in multiple studies as having paramount importance in developmental and educational outcomes (Fine, 1991;Goodenow, 1993; Ma, 2010. A student's sense of belonging becomes of major importance to society when considering Fine's (1991) research that suggested that a lack in a student's sense of belonging was linked to high school dropout, or Burnette and Walz (1994) findings that suggested that gang-related problems increased when students lacked a sense of belonging.

Adolescent Empathy Development with Art

This section ties together the key research topics that were used to design the art program being evaluated by this study; the arts (arts in education and arts in therapy), adolescent development (including PYD), and empathy development. The literature that pertains specifically to using the art to promote prosocial behavior in the form of empathy development with adolescents is limited. However, the existing literature conceded that arts engagement may indeed have an impact on the development of empathy in adolescents across a variety of contexts. Engagement in the creative arts offer multiple opportunities for prosocial development including empathy development. For example, sustained identification and reflection on one's thoughts and emotions encourages participants to use imagination to effectively communicate thoughts, feelings, and values (Jeffers, 2009). For example, Calley and Gerber (2008) discussed the use of expressive mask-making in empathy development training of adolescent sex offenders, where participants created masks to represent different feelings and personality traits both positive and negative. Also, Goldstein and Winner (2012) noted that adolescent groups involved

in music and visual art increased empathic capability during a 1-year study (p. 32). Goldstein and Winner (2012) suggested findings that:

> [...] demonstrate continued plasticity of self-reported empathy as well as theory of mind through middle childhood and adolescence and show that these skills may be enhanced through imagining and enacting oneself as an imaginary other. Specifically with regards to performing art, youth actors learn to mirror others' emotions (empathy) and reflect on what others are thinking and feeling (theory of mind). Role-playing beyond early childhood may be a route by which humans come to develop enhanced empathy and gain greater insight into others' beliefs and emotions. (p. 33)

Jeffers (2009) posited that empathy can be observed frequently in arts educational settings; however, it is more by chance versus a directed outcome: "Empathy can surely be found in art classrooms around the world, but too often, it is merely a happenstance, the resulting by-product or incidental outcome of the learning process" (p. 10). Jeffers (2009) stated that education of empathy must be clearly delineated and addressed in the educational goals (Jeffers, 2009). For example, youth engaged in the process of creating visual art were asked to employ "critical reflective processes afforded by the acts of making, exhibiting and critical discussion" (Grushka, 2009 p. 239). Multiple authors (Eisner, 2003; Greene, 1995; Phillips, 2003) connected empathic development to the arts stating that the arts provide multiple venues for the development of empathy through engagement of imagination and emotional awareness. Eisner (2003) posited that by cultivating the imagination one can establish a new form of thinking and that by creating and critiquing art, cognitive processes are nurtured. Phillips (2003) specifically

provided an example seen in her visual art lesson—creating replicas of art products made by varying cultures provides opportunity for students to imagine the perspectives, thoughts and feelings that an artist in a different culture experienced when making a specific piece. A captivating example of how arts processes can promote imagination found in the literature is that of art educator/therapist Friedl Dicker-Brandeis. Wix (2009) relayed the story of Dicker-Brandeis, an Austrian Jew, who developed a unique philosophy of teaching children art when imprisoned in the Terezin concentration camp in Czechoslovakia between 1942 and 1944. Dicker-Brandeis encouraged her students to draw freely and these "free sessions offered children time and space to think deeply as they explored personal memories and longings." She claimed that her purpose was not to turn children into artists but "unlock and preserve for all the creative spirit as a source of energy to stimulate fantasy and imagination and strengthen children's ability to judge, appreciate, observe, [and] endure" (Dicker-Brandeis, 2005, p. 2 as cited in Wix, 2009). Further, Wix (2009) relayed that "her words, her teaching, and her artwork all point to a faith in image making as a way to access personal courage, truth, imagination, and beauty" (p. 154). Both imagination and dialogue are documented to be critical in the development of prosocial behavior and thus empathy (Eisner, 2003; Halverson, 2010; Ridette-Moore, 2009). Greene (2000, cited in Cartwright & Noone, 2006) suggested that it was the task of the educator to "create situations in which our students are moved to begin to ask, in all the tones of voice that there are, 'Why?'" (p. 6). Greene's work gave special attention to the concept that the arts promote development of imagination. Specifically, engagement in the arts allows children an opportunity to experience education because it offers children entry to another mode of thinking and experiencing (Veale, 1991). Veale (1991) indicated "The process of visualizing, problem

solving and talking about art may not produce immediate results, but it does provide children with the options of alternative ways of representing experience" (p. 4). Wix's (2009) narration of Dicker-Brandeis illustrated the power of artistic processes and the impact this can have on children:

> She used her teaching to tend children's relationships with themselves, with each other, and with their internal and external worlds. She taught them to participate sympathetically with the world through making images. That Dicker-Bradeis continued both to paint and to offer her art classes for children in the midst of the Nazi's ongoing transports to Auschwitz-Birkenau speaks to her deep faith in the workings of art as a means for human sustenance. (p. 157)

Although limited, the literature that does explore the impact of the arts on empathy development indicates positive results. Goldstein and Winner (2012) found that when early adolescent students were involved in visual and performing arts program for 1 year, empathy increased as evaluated by a pretest and a posttest. A significant amount of literature focused on how specifically the arts facilitator had an impact on the development of empathic behavior (Gerdes et al., 2011; Orzulak, 2006; Phillips, 2003; Ridette-Moore, 2009; Stout, 1999). Ridette-Moore (2009) discussed her practices as an artist and modeling for her students that the arts process can promote dialogue for visual exploration. Previous literature suggested youth engaged in arts processes are more likely to engage in meaningful dialogue about personal experiences and listen and witness the experiences of their peers (Phillips, 2003; Ridette-Moore, 2009; Stout, 1999). For example, Stout (1999) described how her students appear to build empathy when engaged in art:

> Through encounters with paintings, poems, and piano sonatas, students can enter a world of ongoing dialogue that can move them from narrow interests and absorption in self to an unfolding curiosity and a growing concern for the world in which they live.(p. 23).

Synthesizing the conceptual framework literature above, these theories led to the integrated approach that I used to create the art program being evaluated in this study. Similar notions are present across these four theoretical perspectives. Clinical art therapy with adolescents, PYD, and a multidimensional approach to empathy development taken together heighten an adolescent's ability to explore his or her identity in an accepting and positive manner. This process ultimately facilitates more opportunities for prosocial behavior. This framework offered a recipe for program development that aimed to facilitate the uncovering of strength-based behavior, specifically prosocial behavior in the form of empathy development, extracted through the art-making experience.

Conclusion

The arts have been widely documented to positively impact young people in their educational settings, seen through increased cognitive abilities, social and emotional capabilities as well as overall academic success. Specifically, students who were defined as being low SES were found to increase at a higher rate than their higher socioeconomic status counterparts. The literature suggested that involvement in the arts can positively impact the young person in the educational setting because the arts provide students with opportunities to learn transferable skills, such as critical thinking, perspective taking, positive risk taking, and collaboration. The arts additionally have been shown to be a welcomed and appropriate treatment modality in

mental health when working with adolescent populations. Clinical art therapy incorporates the use of expressive arts materials and dialogue around the artist's process and art product assisting the adolescent in the development of a positive identity—one of the main developmental task of adolescence. Students who are afforded opportunities to develop a positive identity are more likely to engage in prosocial behavior which can increase a student population's sense of belonging and in turn increases a students' likelihood of staying in school. The skills and PYD that is a result of the art process have been shown to provide adolescents with protective factors against stress due to adverse circumstances, such as familial instability due to lack of resources, stigmas attached to class and ethnicity, habitation in urban environments where violence is commonplace. Included in the skills that students whom are involved in the arts are afforded are opportunities to develop imagination, perspective taking, and collaboration. These are key ingredients in the development of empathy. Adolescents with higher levels of empathy are more likely to engage in prosocial behavior and less likely to engage in antisocial behavior, such as bullying, and indirect and direct forms of aggression. In addition, students who have higher levels of empathy are more likely feel supported by their peers and a sense of belonging with their school community. As noted above, empathy acts as both a protective factor towards adverse circumstances as well as strengthens a student's motivation to stay in school.

CHAPTER THREE

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Visual Art Pilot Program Description

This chapter will orient the reader to how the visual art pilot program evaluated in this study was designed and the strategic steps that were taken when implemented with middle school participants. This program was developed with the main objective to use theories in art therapy to provide opportunities for participants to explore self-identity and build social and emotional competencies in the form of prosocial behavior, specifically empathy. Therefore discussion begin with a brief review of empathy development with adolescents and connections to art and theories in art therapy. Specifically, a multidimensional model of empathy is described and connected to definition of empathy that guides this study. Next, an overview of the program is given to frame the following section that gives a detailed description of the specific content, directions, and materials that were used throughout the pilot program. Lastly, visual aids in the form of a table and photographs of examples are presented to further assist the reader conceptualize the process.

Introduction and Background

Empathy is a human trait that allows us to understand one another and experience a perspective other than our own. Historically, empathy built compassion and a sense of belonging amongst groups of humans allowing these groups to pool resources and overcome significant struggles. Currently, an expanse of research indicated that higher levels of empathy are indicators of lower levels of indirect and direct acts of aggression related to bullying in schools (Jolliffe& Farrington, 2006). Research also suggested that students who have higher levels of

empathy engage in more prosocial behaviors in their school environment leading to increased sense of belonging amongst student populations, creating harmonious relationships school wide which Ma (2010) stated is linked to higher graduation rates and decreased occurrences of anti-social behavior, gang involvement, violence and aggression towards others. Needless to say, there has been an increase in school-based programs that aim to promote prosocial behavior by paying specific attention to empathy development. Programs such as Roots of Empathy, Second Step, ART (Aggression Replacement Training), 4Rs, Playworks, PeaceFirst, Healing Species, and MindUP are all evidence based programs that have experienced success seen in various analytic measures in increasing empathic behavior amongst K-8 student populations.

However, little documentation explored how a program that utilizes visual art, specifically visual art informed by the practice of clinical art therapy, has on the impact of empathy development. Visual art has been shown to heavily induce cognitive, emotional, and social thought processes amongst student populations (Catterall, 2009). Within the cognitive processes that are intensely embedded in the undertaking of conceptualizing and creating a piece of visual art is the development of imagination, reflection, and abstract thought. Moreover, imagination is also a key ingredient in the development of empathy- where empathy embodies cognitive process that utilizes imagination to interpret the affect of another person, object, etc. (Greene, 1995; Ridette-Moore, 2010).In addition, research heavily promoted visual art as an opportune vehicle for identity exploration and production of prosocial skills amongst adolescent populations. Specifically, art therapy interventions that were defined by the usage of visual art media (2-D, 3-D, media) in therapeutic processes both individually and group environments were shown in the literature to have positive results with adolescent populations, where this population

was motivated to engage in deliberate exploration of self and other through a positive and prosocial outlet (Moon, 1999; Slayton, 2012; Wadeson, 1980, Wallace-DiGarbo, 2006). Art therapy with adolescents is culturally and developmentally appropriate in that adolescents are undergoing a period of development that is heavily characterized by leaps in cognitive and emotional growth that may make verbal processing challenging. Expression through visual imagery acts as a less threatening form of identity exploration and expression- the preeminent task of adolescence according to renowned developmental psychologists such as Erik Erikson (1960).

Developmental Model of Empathy

Multiple theories surround the topic of empathy development, and wide discrepancies in how theorists defined the word empathy have made the discussion even more complex. Specifically, controversy exists over how to identify and differentiate between the cognitive and affective processes that are involved in the empathetic development. Although there is not complete consensus about the empathetic process, what is evident in the research is an agreement that points to a multidimensional developmental model. A multidimensional model aims to incorporate cognitive, affective, and physiological aspects of empathy development. In addition, due to the non-static nature of human development (both cognitive and physiological changes) a multidimensional model also takes into consideration where an individual is in their life span. Embodied in the literature on multidimensional approaches to empathy development are several key themes of development. In the cognitive realm there are three themes that the literature agrees to be essential to empathy development: Identification of emotion, self- awareness, and perspective taking (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987; Feshbach, 1978; Hoffman, 2000). Within the

affective realm, the literature surmised that just the mere presence of emotion in another human or object will arouse a similar emotion in the observer (Jeffers, 2009). Lastly, from a physiological standpoint, current neurological research suggested that humans could physically hardwired to respond empathically to another's distress, a new form of neurons called "mirror neurons" promoting vicarious emotion in particular neurological processes.

This visual arts program considered all of the above-mentioned theories on empathy development and aimed to address cognitive, affective, and developmental theories simultaneously. This was achieved through a combination of verbal and visual arts processing about lived experiences, combined with visual and expressive processing where students are prompted to conceptualize and interpret thoughts and feelings through imagery made by themselves as well as their peers. Empathy development was achieved through a multidimensional model largely supported in the literature, where cognitive, affective, physiological, and developmental aspects of the adolescent are considered. Of particular interest was Hoffman's Developmental Model of Empathy (2000). Following Hoffman's developmental model this curriculum led students through the cognitive, affective, physiological, and developmental phases of empathy development by way of artistic expression, narrative and class discussion—all components that research suggested highly influence empathy amongst adolescents. This combination of cognitive, affective, and physiological approaches to access empathetic processes was enhanced by additional strategies that the literature pointed to specifically as being successful in promoting empathy. For example, exposure to personal narratives was shown to be highly effective in empathy development, where the observer was a witness to another's story and was prompted to attempt to understand the others position. In

addition, education on verbal as well as non-verbal communication (facial expressions, body language, voice tones) has shown to increase an individual's emotional literacy of self and other, allowing for an increased ability to interact with enhances social awareness and pro social manner.

Program Overview

The main goal of this visual art pilot program was to utilize visual art to address social and emotional processes in an adolescent population. At the core of this program were themes in empathy development and specifically the cognitive, affective, physiological and developmental processes necessary in the development of empathy. By engaging adolescent populations with strategically crafted verbal discussions and visual art directives that address "self," "other," "emotional literacy," and "perspective taking" the goal of this program was to educate, engage, and increase prosocial responses in the form of empathy amongst adolescent populations through a school-based, visual art curriculum informed by clinical art therapy practices. It is important to note that this program did not engage students in traditional notions of therapy or art therapy, but it integrated relevant theories pertaining to adolescent identity and cultural developmental and displayed sensitivity to how art directives and art materials may influence cognitive and affective thought processes at this developmental stage.

The program was divided into five 1-hour sessions that took place at the middle school site. I led each day of the program as a registered Art Therapist and Marriage and Family Therapist Intern (ATR, MFT-I). I was assisted by one undergraduate art student and one Marriage and Family/Art Therapy graduate student. Each session was intended to be structured to be routine-like in nature with a goal to promote safety, familiarity, and ease in transitions

amongst the student population. Each session followed a similar sequence of events listed below:

1. Introduction: Expectations for the day (review of prior session)
2. Topic-of-the-Day**:** Class discussion about what themes will be the primary focus of the session
3. Art: Individual or group visual art activity focused on the topic of the day utilizing a variety of materials that range in their structure (clay, paint, glue, found objects), to be preceded by a short demo on tips and tricks for material usage
4. Share: Semi-structured discussion allowing students to share their artistic process with peers

Description of Progressive Art Project Focused on Empathy Development

Throughout the week, students engaged in multiple artistic experiences that were aimed to access authentic personal expression with a variety of materials and directives through the creation of two three-dimensional (3-D) environments that are affixed to a personal clay footprint and a clay footprint of a peer. The inspiration for this project was drawn from a familiar cautionary phrase: "to really understand a person you must walk a mile in their shoes." The progressive art piece in this study aimed to promote attachment, agency, and motivation in self-expression.

Procedures. The art program began by briefly giving an overview of the program and showing an example made by the researcher. Next, participants were asked to create two personal footprints out of clay. To help participants to create metaphor and symbolic imagery to be used on their footprints, facilitators provided participants with a brainstorming worksheet (see

Appendix A) that helped participants practice relating the elements of art (line, shape, texture, space, value) to emotional content (i.e., red angular lines might represent an angry feeling). Participants were then asked to embellish the first footprint with a variety of materials such as paint and found objects that visually represented personal experiences that were unique to their identity.

Each participant was randomly paired next with a class peer. Students were given a list of interview questions (See Appendix B) and asked to circle three questions that they felt comfortable being asked by their partner. This strategy was put in place to give participants a sense of control and safety about how personal their interview would be. Once partnered up, participants switched interview papers and asked each other the selected questions. Using their partner's footprint as well as information gained from the peer interview, participants were asked to embellish their partner's footprint with imagery that represented their partner's unique identity.

Following the art making about a partner, participants were engaged in a class discussion about what they learned about one another. Participants were asked to view one another's artistic creations thus far and brainstorm ideas, feelings, experiences that were common to the whole class. Participants were helped by facilitators to create visual imagery that represented these commonalities and asked to paint these images on a large class banner that depicted an outline of the school and represented the classes' "common ground."

The last part of the program focused on reflection and discussion. Students were asked to adhere their footprint, along with the footprint made about their partner, to a section of the

banner of their choice. Discussion was encouraged and voluntary and centered on themes related to content, artistic choices made, artistic process, and new information learned.

Materials. A spectrum of mixed construction and traditional art materials were used for this. These materials were deliberately chosen due to the physical engagement and problem solving skills that are required when using these materials which accesses kinesthetic and cognitive thought processes (Slayton, 2012). In addition, by accessing kinesthetic thought processes through the act of physically engaging with visual art materials to create an imagined outcome participants were hypothesized to be able to attain higher levels of developmental functioning (problem solving, imagination) (Slayton, 2012). This type of creative process allowed participants to channel energy into the art-making experience which benefits this developmental stage where adolescents are hyper aware of bodily experiences (Moon, 1999). The thought process encouraged by the directives and art materials are relevant and necessary ingredients in the development of empathy. Lastly, Slayton (2012) states that mixed construction materials was an appropriate material choice for the adolescent population in this study.

Schedule. Tables 1, 2, and 3 show the daily schedule for the art program. The tables present the artistic process, materials used during that session, and themes of empathy addressed in the session.

Table 1

Art Program Daily Schedule: Artistic Process

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Overview of Project: Personal Footprint	Review and activity overview: Peer Footprint	Continue work on individual and peer footprint	Continue work on individual and peer footprint; Contribute to "Common Ground Mural"	Present final pieces
Each student creates two foot prints using air dry clay- set aside to dry Each student keeps one of their personal footprints and sets one aside Each student completes a worksheet that brainstorms how to visually represent their unique identity and significant memories/experiences in their life Each student creates a miniature environment on their personal footprint that represents more than one significant memory/experience that has impacted their life/identity.	Each student trades their other clay footprint with an assigned peer's footprint. Each student interviews owner of peer footprint they were assigned using peer's initial worksheet and an additional interview worksheet Each student creates a miniature environment on peer's footprint that represents more than one significant memory/experience that impacted peer's life/identity. Introduce collaborative mural on canvas, "Common Ground" Help class create image and title representing "common ground" Draft sketch to be drawn by instructors on large canvas	Each student finishes personal footprint and peer footprint (inside) Combine groups and paint outside. Each student contributes to collaborative mural based on class discussion and image drafted by instructors (outside)	Finalize personal and peer footprints Finalize collaborative mural Attach footprints to canvas with industrial Velcro	Adhere industrial Velcro to backside of footprints Attach footprints to canvas with industrial Velcro Whole-class discussion and refreshments

Table 2

Art Program Daily Schedule: Materials

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Air-dry clay (1 package per 2 students)	Dried footprints	Dried footprints	Footprint projects	Finished group mural
Rolling pins	Leftover air-dry clay	Leftover air-dry clay	Industrial Velcro	Industrial Velcro
Clay tools	Tacky glue	Tacky glue	Large canvas	Snacks
Wax paper	Acrylic paint	Acrylic paint	Pencils	
Collage images	Paint brushes (size range)	Paint brushes (size range)	Drop clothes	
Scissors	Beads	Beads	Acrylic paint	
Tacky glue	Balsa wood/wood scraps	Balsa wood/wood Scraps	Paint brushes (size range)	
Acrylic paint	Fabric scraps	Fabric scraps	Leftover air-dry clay	
Paint brushes (size Range)	Found objects	Found objects	Tacky glue	
Beads	Wire	Wire	Beads	
Balsa wood/wood Scraps		Large canvas	Balsa wood	
Fabric scraps		Pencils	Fabric scraps	
Found objects		Drop clothes	Found objects	
Wire			Wire	

Table 3

Art Program Daily Schedule: Themes in Empathy Development

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Building self-awareness	Continuing self-awareness	Building awareness of other	Building awareness self and other	Building awareness self and other
Building emotional literacy	Continuing emotional literacy	Building emotional literacy of another	Continuing emotional literacy in another	Continuing emotional literacy in another
Engaging in narrative	Continuing narrative engagement	Identifying another perspective	Continuing to identify another perspective	Continuing to identify another perspective
Engaging in imaginative processes	Engaging in imaginative processes	Engaging in narrative	Engaging in narrative	Engaging in narrative
Reflection	Reflection	Engaging in imaginative processes	Engaging in imaginative processes	Engaging in imaginative processes
		Reflection	Reflection	Reflection

Examples. Figures 1 through 5 present examples made by me prior to the beginning of the program which was used as a model for the participants. The figures depict the intended successive steps that participants were asked to engage in throughout the five sessions. Figures include a brief description of the directions for that session as well as a bulleted list of themes in empathy that are being addressed.

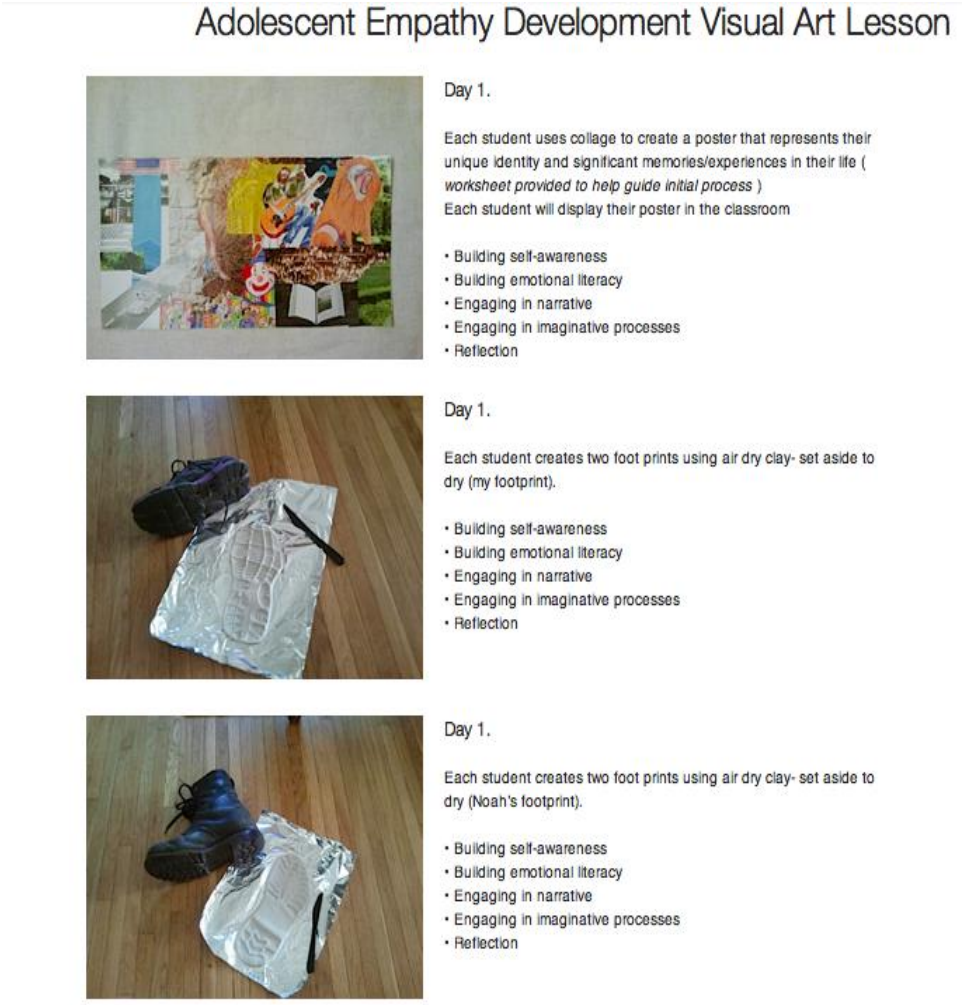

Figure 1. Adolescent Empathy Development Visual Art Lesson: Day 1. This figure illustrates the researcher's example of Day 1 of the art-making process, which was used as a model for the participants. Photos copyright Jessica Bianchi, 2013.

Day 2.

Each student will create a miniature environment on their personal footprint that represents more than one significant memory/experience that has impacted their life/identity (my footprint painted).

- Continuing self-awareness
- Continuing emotional literacy
- Continuing narrative engagement
- Engaging in imaginative processes
- Reflection

Day 2.

Each student will create a miniature environment on their personal footprint that represents more than one significant memory/experience that has impacted their life/identity (my footprint with assemblage).

- Continuing self-awareness
- Continuing emotional literacy
- Continuing narrative engagement
- Engaging in imaginative processes
- Reflection

Day 2.

Each student will create a miniature environment on their personal footprint that represents more than one significant memory/experience that has impacted their life/identity (my footprint with assemblage).

- Continuing self-awareness
- Continuing emotional literacy
- Continuing narrative engagement
- Engaging in imaginative processes
- Reflection

Figure 2. Adolescent Empathy Development Visual Art Lesson: Day 2. This figure illustrates the researcher's example of Day 2 of the art-making process, which was used as a model for the participants. Photos copyright Jessica Bianchi, 2013.

Day 3.

Each student will trade/choose another peers foot print.

Each student will interview the owner of the peer footprint they selected, using that peers poster collage, and initial worksheet (Noah's footprint painted by me).

- Building awareness of other
- Building emotional literacy of another
- Identifying another perspective
- Engaging in narrative
- Engaging in imaginative processes
- Reflection

Day 3.

Each student will create a miniature environment on their peer's footprint that represents more than one significant memory/experience that has impacted their peer's life/identity (Noah's footprint with assemblage by me).

- Building awareness of other
- Building emotional literacy of another
- Identifying another perspective
- Engaging in narrative
- Engaging in imaginative processes
- Reflection

Figure 3. Adolescent Empathy Development Visual Art Lesson: Day 3. This figure illustrates the researcher's example of Day 3 of the art-making process, which was used as a model for the participants. Photos copyright Jessica Bianchi, 2013.

Day 3.

Each student will create a miniature environment on their peer's footprint that represents more than one significant memory/experience that has impacted their peer's life/identity (Noah's footprint with assemblage by me).

- Building awareness of other
- Building emotional literacy of another
- Identifying another perspective
- Engaging in narrative
- Engaging in imaginative processes
- Reflection

Day 3.

Each student will create a miniature environment on their peer's footprint that represents more than one significant memory/experience that has impacted their peer's life/identity (Noah's footprint with assemblage by me).

- Building awareness of other
- Building emotional literacy of another
- Identifying another perspective
- Engaging in narrative
- Engaging in imaginative processes
- Reflection

Figure 4. Adolescent Empathy Development Visual Art Lesson: Day 3. This figure illustrates the researcher's example of Day 3 of the art-making process, which was used as a model for the participants. Photos copyright Jessica Bianchi, 2013.

Day 4 & 5.

Introduce collaborative mural on canvas,"Common Ground".
Whole class discussion on what group has learned that they have in common.
Each student will finish personal footprint and peer footprint
Each student will begin to contribute to collaborative mural based on class discussion.

- Building awareness self and other
- Continuing emotional literacy in another
- Continuing to identify another perspective
- Engaging in narrative
- Engaging in imaginative processes
- Reflection

Day 5.

Finalize personal and peer footprints.
Adhere industrial velcro to backside of footprints.
Finalize collaborative mural.
Attach footprints to canvas with industrial velcro.
Make connections between footprints with ribbon, string, yarn, etc.

- Building awareness self and other
- Continuing emotional literacy in another
- Continuing to identify another perspective
- Engaging in narrative
- Engaging in imaginative processes
- Reflection

Figure 5. Adolescent Empathy Development Visual Art Lesson: Days 4 and 5. This figure illustrates the researcher's example of Days 4 and 5 of the art-making process, which was used as a model for the participants. Photos copyright Jessica Bianchi, 2013.

Conclusion

I developed this program after careful review of the literature that focused on clinical art therapy with adolescents along with theories in empathy development. The program strategically used a conscientious awareness to an adolescent's art processes and product to sequentially explore the different stages of empathy development; awareness of self, awareness of other, development of emotional literacy, and identifying alternate perspectives. The project chosen for this program, the creation and embellishment of two clay footprints, was aimed at using materials that would

be stimulating yet structured enough for the adolescent participant to project their emotions and explore the emotions of their partner. To evaluate the program, Chapter Four outlines in detail the methodological approach that was used to assess the overall impact of this program as well as the program's impact on adolescent empathy development.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

For this dissertation study, I created, implemented, and evaluated a visual art program informed by theories of clinical art therapy, empathy development, and PYD with adolescent Latino youth in sixth and eighth grade attending an inner-city Catholic school in East Los Angeles. In this chapter, I present the methods used to evaluate and gather data on the impact of a visual art pilot program through a lens focused on empathy development. Longitudinal research showed that lower SES youth who have involvement in the arts had a greater chance at achieving overall academic achievement (social, emotional, and citizenship) than higher socioeconomic school counterparts (Brice Heath & Roach, 1999; Burton et al., 1999; Catterall, 1999; Comerford Boyes & Reid, 2005; Deasy, 2002; Fiske, 1999). Multiple authors suggested involving students in the arts positively impacted students on multiple levels, where development was advanced through transferable skills, cognitively, personally, and socially. These advances have had a positive effect on the student's overall achievement, including mainstream academics (Catterall, 1998, 2009; Comerford Boyes & Reid, 2005). Running parallel to the documented positive outcomes of arts in education was research gathered from the field of mental health, specifically clinical art therapy. The literature on art therapy with adolescents consistently agreed on the success and appropriateness of art therapy as a treatment modality for adolescent populations (Block et al., 2005; Emunah, 1990; Fliegel, 2000; Landgarten, 1985; Linesch, 1988; Moon, 1999; Riley, 1994; Wallace-DiGarbo, 2006). These authors, along with many others, agreed that the main developmental tasks of adolescence, identity formation and separation, are

effectively addressed via the art process which is accepted as a non-threatening and enjoyable means of self-expression for adolescent populations in multiple cultural groups (Ciornai, 1983; Moreno & Wadeson, 1986; Santos, 1977).

I was primarily interested in how this visual art pilot program might impact the prosocial behavior of a group of adolescents, specifically the development of empathy. Empathy is a human trait that allows humans to understand one another and experience a perspective other than our own. Historically, empathy built compassion and a sense of belonging amongst groups of humans allowing these groups to pool resources and overcome significant struggles. Current research suggested that students who have higher levels of empathy engaged in more prosocial behaviors in their school environment, leading to increased sense of belonging amongst student populations which Ma (2010) stated was linked to higher graduation rates and decreased occurrences of anti-social behavior, gang involvement, violence, and aggression towards others (Burnette &Walz, 1994; Gillham et al., 2002; Johnson, 2009). In addition, Jolliffe and Farrington (2009) in a British study stated that higher levels of empathy were indicators of lower levels of indirect and direct acts of aggression related to anti-social behavior and bullying in schools. Authors stated that adolescence is an optimal time to give attention to empathy development, indicating that adolescence is a time of increased cognitive and affective development as well as a time when youth are increasingly focused on evaluating and forming positive relationships with others- all components relative to empathy and positive identity development (Dryfoos, 1990; Erikson, 1968; 1980; Maynard et al., 2011; Phillips & Pittman, 2003; Rink & Tricker, 2005; Wagaman, 2011; Wentzel et al., 2007). Specific to this study's population, Latino adolescents, considered to be of ethnic minority, face additional stressors to

positive identity development, struggling to find a positive identity in a societal structure that is constructed by an ethnic majority (Prelow & Loukas, 2003; Umana-Taylor, 2004; Umana-Taylor & Fine, 2003; Umana-Taylor &Updegraff, 2007). In addition, minority youth are more likely to inhabit urban environments that are categorized as low socio economic status. Prior research found that these neighborhoods tend to present with higher occurrences of stress and violence and youth inhabiting these areas would likely be in need of greater empathic community support (Barone et al., 1995; Bolland et al., 2001; Burdett Schiavona, 2009; Goldstein et al., 2007; Hart et al., 1998; Weigner, 1998; Wilson, 1987).

Research Question

Student involvement in the arts has been shown to provide multiple opportunities for social and emotional growth. This is important as our communities are in dire need of attention given to the psychological well-being of our young people. The role of the teacher is fast encompassing more than just education curriculum development and delivery. Teachers are often asked to provide their students with social and emotional support. Educational communities that have higher social and emotional competencies (strategies for assisting students in times of social and emotional stress) have increased chances of having prosocial classrooms. Students involved in art programming develop transferable skills such as perspective taking, critical thinking, and problem solving, that assist in overall healthy development. Skills of interest to this particular study specifically focused on prosocial behaviors in the form of empathy. Empathic behavior is considered a human characteristic that can be developed and that can promote prosocial behavior and increase sense of belonging in student groups allowing these groups to develop in a positive trajectory within and outside of

academic forums (Gerdes et al., 2011; Gomez & Mei-Mei Ang, 2007; Wagaman, 2011). Thus, I explored how visual art, framed through a clinical art therapy lens and which has been proclaimed to be an effective vehicle for the promotion of positive self-expression and healthy identity development, might promote optimal opportunities in the school classroom for empathy development among Latino adolescent populations living in a low-income neighborhood. The following question for research guided this study: How does a visual art curriculum, informed by the practice of clinical art therapy, impact the development of empathy in sixth- and eighth-grade students attending an inner-city Catholic school?

It was anticipated that engaging an adolescent population with visual art, directly aimed at empathy development and informed by theories in clinical art therapy and adolescent development, would increase levels of empathy in an inner-city adolescent population. In other words, empathy was expected to significantly increase from before to after the visual art program. Based on the literature gathered around empathy development, adolescent development, and clinical art therapy with adolescent populations, the data indicate that empathy was likely to develop when populations are given opportunity to reflect on self and other, identify emotions in self and other, and distinguish between the two. This process facilitates perspective taking, compassion, and thus empathic behavior in the form of prosocial skills (Catterall, 2011; Comerford Boyes & Reid, 2005; Halverson, 2010; Hoffman, 2000; Respress & Ghazwan, 2006; Ridette-More, 2009; Wright, 2006).

Method

This study measured the impact of a visual art program on the development of prosocial behavior in the form of empathy amongst a group of adolescents. Measures included pre- and

post-quantitative and qualitative instruments used with convenience sample of Latino sixth- and eighth-grade students attending an inner-city East Los Angeles Catholic School. The seventh grade students at the school participated in the art program the week after the program and data collection were completed but did not participate in the study.

This study examined the creation and implementation of a visual art program (once a day for approximately one hour for five consecutive days). The visual art program (See Chapter Three) was informed by theories in clinical art therapy and the cognitive, affective, and physiological theories of empathy development. Each day a different aspect of empathy was addressed following the developmental trajectory outlined in current literature on empathy development. Students were encouraged to visually explore each day's theme via a choice of arts materials, conveying their unique experiences and understandings related to that day's particular directive. The final product was a culmination of each session's artwork resulting in a singular progressive art piece.

At the end of each session, a group discussion was led on the thoughts and emotions that were present during creative process. Attention was given to similarities and differences in each student's interpretation of the day's particular directive. This program differed from an arts class in that the emphasis of the program focused more on the participants' process and how they choose to convey that process to the group versus the development of technical skills related to visual arts instruction.

Context

The site chosen for this study was an inner-city Catholic school located in East Los Angeles that was until recently classified as being one of the poorest parishes in Los Angeles.

The school was established in response to increased growth in public housing that encompassed the area. In the early 1980s, the Jesuits assumed responsibility for the parish and other social service programs were developed to serve the needs of the community. At the time of data collection, the school, with assistance from the Jesuit community, served 215 students and had one class room per grade (K–8).

Although varied, there were certain dominant characteristics that described the families that attend this school. At the time of data collection, the school served largely immigrant families coming from Mexico and other Central American countries. Approximately half of the families were single-parent homes, headed in most cases by the mother. Spanish was the predominant language in at least two-thirds of the homes. On average, the education levels of the parents included 45% having some high school experience. Out of the 215 students, 200 of them received free/reduced lunch and all but a few received assistance from the school's development program.

I chose this site for data collection because it was a site where I have had a relationship with the school community for the past 6 years. I have facilitated similar arts-based programs either on site or with certain members of the student body off-site. Due to this preexisting relationship, I was able to work with the principal and teachers in a trusting relationship. I intended to limit disruption of the day-to-day educational routines of the teaching staff and student body

Participants

All students in the sixth and eighth grades at the school site were invited to participate. The sample consisted of 45 adolescent male and female Latino adolescents aged 11 to 13 years

old in sixth and eighth grade. I distributed both parental consent forms and child assent forms to the entire sixth- and eighth-grade class 1week prior to the visual art lesson (See Chapter Three). In these consent forms, parents were informed that their child, if they so approved, would participate in pre-/post- quantitative surveys, qualitative semi-structured interviews post program, collection and analysis of visual art made throughout the visual art program. Per permission from the school principal, those children that opted to not be involved in the study still participated in the art program but quantitative and qualitative data were not collected from these individuals. A total of 27 students from the sixth grade and 28 students from the eighth grade participated in the project.

Design

This study utilized both quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the impact of a visual art program on empathy development in students. Latino middle school students attending an inner-city Catholic School located in East Los Angeles comprised the study participants. In order to further establish validity, this study utilized existing groups—grade levels—to determine whether the visual art program influenced the dependent variable, empathy (Merriam, 2009).

Qualitative Data

To evaluate the impact the visual art program had on empathy development in a middle school classroom setting, I implemented several forms of qualitative data collection, such as observation notes, qualitative interviews, collection and analysis of the artwork made throughout the program. This allowed for a rich narrative to unfold whilst also providing opportunities for triangulation amongst qualitative and quantitative data (Merriam, 2009). I was assisted by two research assistants in taking observation notes as well as photographs of the students' art

processes and products. Observation notes and photographs were taken throughout the program and organized by day. Notes focused on the following: evaluating the program's content and structure, student responses to materials and directives, student interactions with each other and their art, and student's creative process and final art product. The assistants and I paid specific attention to behavior that might have been indicative of empathy to qualitatively measure levels of empathy before and after receiving the art program. In addition, I attempted to conduct semi-structured interviews with a preselected group of participants that showed either high levels of empathy compared to their classmates or low levels of empathy compared to their classmates. This information was gained from preliminary analysis of the quantitative survey measure described below and two students from the sixth grade and two from the eighth grade were interviewed. I posed questions that were open ended and aimed at understanding the participants overall experience in the program, for example, "How did you feel making art with/about your classmates? What was your favorite part about the program? What would you change?" Also, specific questions that looked for prosocial tendencies—behavior that is advantageous to the community as a whole (i.e., sharing, acceptance, altruistic behavior, and empathic behavior) were asked such as "How did you respond when you saw another person struggling with something?" or "Did you learn something new about a classmate? How did you show that in your art?" These data allowed for elaboration and deeper exploration of each participant's experiences in the program with focus being on empathic behavior.

Quantitative Data

To measure change in empathy over time, two premeasure surveys, the Basic Empathy Scale (BES) (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006) and the Concern for Others Survey (Child

Development Project, 2005) were utilized. These two surveys were administered 1 week prior to the treatment to measure baseline levels of empathy and prosocial tendencies. The same measures were administered to all participating students at the end of the visual art program to determine any significant change in empathy levels.

Measures

Several forms of quantitative and qualitative data were gathered to measure the dependent variable: empathy. Quantitative measures are described first, including the structure of the measure and the purpose for the selection of that particular measure. Next, qualitative measures are described, beginning with a description of the design and followed by rationale for use. The table following this section helps the reader to more fully understand the multiple measures and their functions in this study.

Quantitative Measures.

Literature indicated that widely used survey instruments employed to measure empathy were as follows: Interpersonal Reaction Index ([IRI], Davis, 1980), the Hogan Empathy Scale ([HES], Hogan, 1969), and the Balanced Empathy Emotional Scale ([BEES], Mehrabian & Epstein, 1972). However, these scales were designed to test empathy levels in older populations; specifically, the frequently used IRI was developed to be used with university undergraduate populations (Albiero et al., 2009; Jolliffe& Farrington, 2006). Another widely used measure is Bryant's Index of Empathy, a measure designed to be used with children in Grades 1–5 (Bryant, 1982). For this study, two measures of empathy were chosen, including the Basic Empathy Scale (BES), which is appropriate for adolescents and measures both affective and cognitive

aspects of empathy, and the Concern for Others Scale, which measures tendencies for prosocial behaviors that are expected as a result of increased empathy.

Basic Empathy Scale (BES). The BES was specifically constructed and validated by Jolliffe and Farrington (2006) to measure empathic responsiveness specific to adolescent populations (See Appendix C). Jolliffe and Farrington (2006) developed the BES to assess both emotional congruence (affective empathy) and the understanding of another person's emotion (cognitive empathy). In addition, the BES is unique in that it measures empathic responsiveness to positive emotions compared to previously mentioned questionnaires that mainly detect dysphoric emotions (anxiety, depression, or unease) (Albiero et al., 2009). This is an important attribute of the instrument in consideration of this study. Specifically, this study attempted to uncover the development of prosocial behavior where the development, identification, and sharing of positive emotions (happiness, acceptance, belonging) is shown in the research to act as a protective factor in adolescent development promoting PYD, including positive civic engagement (Gerdes et al., 2011; Gillham et al., 2002; Gomez & Mei-Mei Ang, 2007; Halverson, 2010).

The final version of the BES is made up of a total of 20 items (Jolliffe& Farrington, 2006). This 20-item scale assesses both cognitive (9 items) and affective empathy (11 items) and was designed to measure the degree to which a person understands and shares the emotions of another using a 5-point Likert scale. The two subscales are aimed at detecting the two different components of empathic responsiveness: the Affective Empathy subscale (AE subscale, 11 items, α=.85), measuring emotional congruence with another person's emotions and the Cognitive Empathy subscale (CE subscale, 9 items, α=.79), measuring ability to understand

another person's emotions. These two subscales had strong internal reliability as seen by their Cronbach alphas. Each item in the BES asks participants to express their own degree of agreement on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”). An example of a cognitive item would be: “It is hard for me to understand when my friends are sad’’ and an example of an affective item would be: ‘‘I usually feel calm when other people are scared.’’ Tests of the validity of the BES have been carried out with French and Italian youth samples and have been found to have a strong degree of validity (Albeiro et al., 2009; D’Ambrosio, Olivier, Didon, & Besche, 2009).

Concerns for Others Survey. The Concern for Others Survey (See Appendix D) was first developed in 1993 by the Child Development Project and then later revised in 2005 (Child Development Project, 2005). The Child Development project was created at the Development Studies Center in California as a program that would focus on the elementary students’ social and ethical development. The purpose of the survey is to assess the impact of the program by measuring young persons’ feelings of concern for, and desire to help, other people. The 10-item survey consists of 10 statements that address concern for others asking participants to answer using a five-point Likert scale: 1= “no a lot,” 2 = “no a little,” 3 = “maybe,” 4 = “yes a little” and 5 = “yes a lot.” Examples of items included are: “When I see someone having a problem, I want to help;” or “Most people who ask for help are just being lazy.” The DSC states that the Concern for Others Scale has an internal consistency reliability of .80.

The purpose of including the Concern for Others Survey was to assess an individual’s tendencies for prosocial behavior which the literature indicates is a likely result of increased empathy. Gerdes and Segal (2009) posit that empathy goes beyond automatic responses and

suggests that the empathic process culminates in a conscious course of action. The addition of this 10-item measure was to provide for additional data that would measure "empathic attitudes" that are linked to prosocial behavior (Lietz, Gerdes, Sun, Geiger, Wagaman, & Segal, 2011).

Qualitative Measures

The following qualitative data were collected and analyzed to address the study's research question. First observation notes including photographs of students' processes as well as final art products were collected throughout the duration of the program to assess the visual art lesson's impact on empathy development with adolescents in a middle school classroom setting. Also, qualitative data in the form of semi-structured interviews as well as participants art products were collected and analyzed using the study's definition of empathy: "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person" (Gerdes et al., 2011, p. 109). This guiding principle of Gerdes et al.'s (2011) definition of empathy has been chosen to guide implementation and analysis of qualitative data because this definition offers specific observable behaviors that can be assessed by the researcher.

Observation notes. To evaluate the visual art lesson had on the development of empathy in the middle school classroom setting observation notes were taken by myself and two research assistants throughout the program's duration. Observation notes were taken each day after facilitating the day's directives. Notes were organized by day and grade-level group. Notes were taken using a standardized template (See Appendix E) that recorded the date/time, observations, and researcher's impressions of observations. Notes focused on the following: evaluating program content and structure, student responses to materials and directives, student

interactions/relationships with each other and their art, student's creative process and student's final art product. We paid specific attention to behavior that may be indicative of empathy to qualitatively measure levels of empathy before and after receiving the treatment.

Semi-structured interviews. I conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews with a total of four students, (two from each grade group). Interview participants were selected from the initial pool of completed quantitative student surveys that indicated high and low levels of empathy. I identified these participants by taking the baseline quantitative survey results and scoring them to show participants with high to low levels of empathy. I then randomly chose one participant that indicated a low level of empathy and one participant that indicated a high level of empathy. I did this for each totaling four participants.

Interviews were approximately 10–20 minutes in duration, conducted on the school site during school hours and were focused on open-ended questioning strategies that questioned the participants overall experience in the program, for example, "How did you feel making art with/about your classmates? What was your favorite part about the program? What would you change?" Also, questions that looked for prosocial tendencies—behavior that is advantageous to the community as a whole (i.e., sharing, acceptance, altruistic behavior, and empathic behavior) were asked such as "How did you respond when you saw another person struggling with something?" or "Did you learn something new about a classmate? How did you show that in your art?" Audio from interviews were recorded and transcribed with intent for analysis, being observation of emergent themes in relation to this study's definition of empathy.

Artwork. Throughout the visual art program students, were engaged in a sequence of art directives designed to correspond with the process of empathy development (i.e., awareness of

self, awareness of other, emotional literacy, communication, and perspective taking) (Hoffman, 2000). The artwork produced by participants visually expressed their thoughts, feelings, and interpretations about their lived experiences as well as the experiences of a partner. On the final day, each participant presented their final piece as well as the piece they made about their partner and adhered it to a large canvas banner that was painted with symbols that represented similarities shared by the whole class. Data were gathered through photographic documentation conducted by a research assistant. Photographs documented the participants' art process as well as final art products.

Procedures

Prior to the implementation of the visual art visual art program, I addressed the students and asked if they would like to participate in a voluntary survey to assess their current thoughts and feelings related to their interactions with peers while at school. I utilized a script to explain to each class separately the purpose of the study, the methods and procedures, information about how the survey data would be collected, and information about their voluntary participation in the study. I explained that each class would participate in the 5-day visual arts-based program, however participation in the survey completion and interviews would be completely voluntary. If the students agreed to participate in the study, they would be given a consent form to be taken home and completed by their legal guardian that consents to survey participation, individual interview participation, and release of artwork. Students were also asked to sign an assent form that asked for their participation in the study, outlined the program, described expectations, and asked for permission to use visual art as data. After consent and assent forms had been collected and participants had been determined, I administered the Basic Empathy Survey and the Concern

for Others Survey to those who had chosen to participate. Both surveys, 30 items total, were in pencil-and-paper format and administered in each grade level's classroom, 1 week before the beginning of the visual art program. Surveys voluntarily asked for the student's name, some basic demographic information, and were distinguishable by grade levels through different colored paper. Upon completion, I collected and analyzed surveys to determine preliminary mean scores for empathy among each grade-level group. One participant from each group (sixth and eighth grade) that represented high and low mean scores with regard to empathy was identified. Participants from each category were asked to participate in the semi-structured interview. These four participants that were identified and had agreed to participate in individual semi-structured interview were interviewed after the visual art program, on the school site during school hours, and in private. Interview questions were open ended and focused on uncovering more fully the participants experience throughout the program. Audio from each interview was recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for emergent themes using this study's definition of empathy and prosocial behavior.

The visual art program was divided into five sections and conducted at the school site for five consecutive days, each session being approximately 1 hour in length. Each day a different topic related to empathy was introduced and students were given different choices of materials to explore this topic. I, along with two research assistants, collected art at the end of each session and stored it in a safe place on the school site.

A week after the implementation of the visual art program, the researcher followed the same procedures outlined above administering the same surveys (BES and Concern for Others,) and conducting four semi-structured interviews with the same interviewees asking similar

questions used in the pre interview to gather data on any possible change in student empathy levels.

Quantitative Procedures

Both the BES and the Concern for Others survey were administered twice: once prior to implementation of the visual art program and once after the implementation of the visual art program. The week prior to implementation of the visual art program, I administered an identical pencil-and-paper survey with each class separately on the same day to ensure consistency and reliability. The survey began with optional inclusion of the participant's name and basic demographic information. Surveys for the two groups were identical with the only difference being two different colored paper copies for each of the two grade levels, allowing me to distinguish between the groups and create grade specific composites. At the end of data collection, I assigned a random participant number to each survey in order to match pre- and post measures.

Qualitative Procedures

Qualitative data in the form of observation notes and photographic documentation was gathered by myself along with an undergraduate art student and Art Therapy graduate student. Observation notes were taken daily using a standardized template (See Appendix E) that recorded the date/time, observations, and researcher's impressions of observations. Observation notes were taken after each day of the program and categorized by grade group and day. Photographs were taken daily by the graduate student research assistant and documented the participants working on their projects throughout the week. Photographs again were organized by grade group and day. I conducted the semi-structured interviews with two participants from

each class both representing either a high level of empathy or low level of empathy. Interviews were conducted on second to last day of the art program on school grounds in a vacant classroom to allow for privacy. Before beginning each interview I thanked each participant for their participation, informed them that I would be recording the conversation but that their name would not be used, and emphasized that there were no wrong answers to the questions that were about to be asked and that I was mainly interested in hearing about their experiences with the art as well as their classmates. Interviews lasted between 10 and 20 minutes and included questions such as "How did you feel making art with/about your classmates? What was your favorite part about the program? What would you change?" In addition, questions that were aimed at uncovering prosocial tendencies—behavior that is advantageous to the community as a whole (i.e., sharing, acceptance, altruistic behavior, and empathic behavior) were posed such as "How did you respond when you saw another person struggling with something?" or "Did you learn something new about a classmate? How did you show that in your art?"

Triangulation

The quantitative data were triangulated post program with observation notes, photographs of art products, and qualitative analysis of participant semi-structured interviews, where I looked for emergent themes focused on empathy development, guided by this study's definition of empathy. Table 4 illustrates how data were collected and analyzed throughout the study.

Table 4
Data Collection/Analysis Plan

Research Question	Data Source	Method of Data Collection	Analytical Plan
How does a visual art program informed by the practice of clinical art therapy impact the development of empathy development in sixth- through eighth-grade students attending an inner-city Catholic school?	Sixth- and eighth-grade low-income, Latino students at a Catholic, inner-city grade school	Student Survey: Pre/post visual art program (Basic Empathy Scale; 20 items Likert scale, Concerns for Others Survey; 10 items Likert Scale) Post: individual semi-structured interviews with students) Observation Notes: Daily, myself and two research assistants Student Artwork: Collected throughout the program	Quantitative: Paired sample *t*-test (comparing mean pre to mean post) Qualitative: Definition of Empathy to Guide in Uncovering Emergent Themes Qualitative: Definition of Empathy to Guide in Uncovering Emergent Themes Qualitative: Definition of Empathy to Guide in Uncovering Emergent Themes, Art Therapist Focus Group

Analytical Plan

Pre/post quantitative student surveys from the sixth- and eighth-grade groups were analyzed via a paired/dependent samples *t*-test to measure any change from before to after the program. The qualitative data, which includes observation notes, student surveys, and photographs of art products, were analyzed by keeping the question for research forefront. Qualitative data were coded for emergent themes and framed through the Gerdes et al. (2011) definition of empathy as "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person" (p. 109).

Last, student artwork was evaluated using a multitiered approach that involved two semi-structured focus groups with other art therapists. The first tier involved reviewing the raw data in the form of photographs from the 5-day program during a preliminary focus group with one of my committee members, a seasoned art therapist of more than 20 years. Together we carefully reviewed each of the photographs taken throughout the week. Through a process of dialogue we determined that we would eliminate all photographs that did not represent the student's art process or art product. The result was a cleaned data set that was focused on solely the student's art as a form of data that offered a rich source of qualitative data to be triangulated with the aforementioned mentioned forms of data. The next tier involved reviewing the cleaned data set in another focus group with two art therapists. These two art therapists were selected because of their experience working in the field of art therapy with adolescents for approximately 6 years. During this focus group, I provided the art therapists with the basic background of the study, the format of the program, the definition of empathy that guided my research, and key terms that embodied that definition. Initially, I asked these two art therapists to review the cleaned data set and first evaluate the images using the various stages of empathy development addressed in the program to guide their evaluation. For example, I asked these two art therapists to review each image and then determine which stage of empathy that they felt each image best represented, namely, self-awareness, awareness of other, emotional literacy, perspective taking, or reflection. However, after attempting this strategy for evaluation it was determined that this approach was restricting the critical dialogue I had intended and was clearly hindering the process of uncovering emergent themes seen in the artwork. In addition, the images that represented the student's art process were confusing to the art therapists as they were unable to determine

distinguish between unfinished and completed projects. This then resulted in the third tier of artwork analysis where it was determined by the group that the richest source of data for the purpose of this focus group came from reviewing each grades completed collaborative art product, this being each class's mural that included each participant's final individual footprint and footprint made about their partner. The art therapists compared and contrasted footprints to one another the same grade level group mural and then also compared and contrasted footprints to the other grade level group mural (See Figure 6). This strategy attempted to illicit rich dialogue that allowed for the group to uncover themes major themes provided by the artwork.

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study that are addressed in this section. First, because there is a lack of consensus in the literature on how to define empathy it was a difficult concept to measure qualitatively. For the purposes of this study it was vital to keep one definition of empathy as the guiding framework measuring all data against the following definition: "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person" (Gerdes et al., 2011, p. 109). This definition was purposefully chosen because it is a definition that considers both the cognitive, affective, and prosocial tendencies, which the summation of the literature suggest as being embedded in empathy. In addition, to accommodate for this limitation, I chose to conduct a mixed-methods approach and triangulate results gained from quantitative inquiry (pre- and post-student surveys) with data attained from qualitative inquiry (pre- and post-student interviews, artwork, and continuous researcher observations).

Secondly, the site where the research was conducted is a Catholic school located in a low-income neighborhood in East Los Angeles. Throughout the years, this school site has earned a reputation for helping their student families to overcome adversity by building community bonds and offering their students an education that appears to promote student success. The site of inquiry can be considered to be predisposed to empathic services—the mission of the school foundation being as follows:

> We strive to serve the families of the greater parish community by offering their elementary school age children the academic and extracurricular programs necessary for them to achieve their fullest human potential in a safe and nurturing environment. By providing a variety of academic and enrichment activities, we hope to develop well-rounded children who are prepared academically, spiritually, physically, socially and emotionally. (School Website)

As seen through the school's mission, this Parish community may exhibit a preexisting predisposition to help their students' healthy social and emotional development and empathy may be a resultant of these factors. Isolating the origin or motivation for the particular variables relevant to this study on empathic behavior was difficult. To accommodate for this limitation, pre- and post measures were utilized to identify the baseline measures of empathy. In addition, the incorporation of the pre- and post-qualitative interviews aimed to measure significant change over time perceived by the participant. Lastly, the student artwork acted as a visual record adding additional data to triangulate the findings. In the future, this study would greatly benefit from research in school sites that have less student support. However, calculated efforts were

made to choose a school site that, from a social justice perspective, represents a population (low-income, urban, Latino families) that has been widely documented as being underserved.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

Providing arts-based programs in educational systems has been well documented to enhance overall student achievement by positively impacting social, emotional, and cognitive functioning in and out of the classroom (Catterall, 2009). Previous literature indicated that although the majority of youth benefit from some engagement in the arts, students who have fewer resources (economic, financial, familial, positive community support) benefit from the arts to a higher degree than their more affluent counterparts. Specifically, the arts offer adolescent populations a venue to explore their identity, which is the main developmental task of adolescence (Erikson, 1980). Having opportunities for healthy identity development has also been termed PYD, the definition being that adolescents are encouraged to uncover and build strengths versus focusing on deficits. Embodied within PYD is the notion that as an adolescent develops a positive identity he/she is more likely to engage in prosocial behavior, defined as behavior that is advantageous to the community as a whole (i.e., sharing, acceptance, altruistic behavior, and empathic behavior). Specifically this study was interested in the development of empathy, defined by this study as: "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person" (Gerdes et al., 2011, p. 109). The term empathy embodies several observable behaviors that this study aimed to assess including cognitive process (identifying or thinking), affective processes (feeling or experiencing) and responding (reacting) where studies have indicated that young people that display higher levels of empathy are less likely to engage in indirect and direct forms of aggression (i.e., bullying and other antisocial behavior) and are more likely to contribute to a prosocial classroom

environment. Linked to empathy is literature that speaks about the benefits of art, suggesting that visual art provides adolescents with not only a means to explore identity, but also encourages emotional literacy, identification of alternative perspectives, and builds imagination—all key ingredients in the development of empathy.

Based on the literature, I attempted to provide adolescents with an opportunity to explore identity in a non-aggressive and accepting forum by way of visual art in their classroom. I anticipated that these students would build insight not only into how their experiences have shaped their identity but witness peers engaging in a similar process. The simultaneous process of verbal and visual self-exploration was thought to increase the empathy amongst a group of sixth- and eighth-grade Latino adolescents attending a Catholic school in a low-income, urban neighborhood. Therefore the purpose of this study was to utilize multiple measures to evaluate and assess the impact of a visual art program aimed at promoting empathy development among middle school students. Guiding this evaluation was the following research question: How does a visual art program, informed by the practice of clinical art therapy, impact the development of empathy in sixth- and eighth-grade students attending an inner-city Catholic school?

This study began by conducting an extensive literature review on the main topics involved in this inquiry; visual art (from an educational standpoint as well as a clinical standpoint) adolescent development (typical development vs. possible stressors to development and PYD), and empathy development (origins and definitions, empathy development theories, empathy development specific to adolescents, empathy training programs, and empathy training specifically incorporating visual art). This information, along with my 6 years of experience as

an art therapist and educator with adolescents, were used to formulate a visual art program that was specifically aimed at addressing empathy amongst low-income, urban, Latino adolescents.

The program was divided into five parts (five approximately 1-hour sessions that happened on five consecutive school days) each day addressing the successive stages of empathy as outlined by the literature, self-awareness, awareness of other, emotional literacy, perspective taking, and reflection. The overall project involved a variety of both two-dimensional (paint, markers, canvas) and three-dimensional (clay, found objects) materials and began by asking students to create two clay footprints. On the first clay footprint, students were asked to identify personal experiences or memories that they felt had shaped their current identity—what feelings, thoughts, or values were associated with those memories and how would they choose to visualize these ideas on their footprint? After spending time engaging in this self-exploration process, students were randomly paired with another classmate and asked to switch the second footprint. After engaging in a semi-structured interview with their partner (a handout with possible questions was provided), students were asked to use the information gained from their dialogue with their partner to create a visual landscape that represented their partner on their partner's clay footprint—what are some important memories or experiences that shape your partner? How might your use color, shape, texture to convey this on their footprint? The goal here was to build awareness of another's experience and deepen this awareness by visualizing it with various art materials. The project culminated by asking the class to identify themes that they all felt they had in common, termed "common ground." These themes were used to create a large-scale mural that represented the classes' commonalities. Students also physically adhered both their personal footprint along with their partner's footprint to the mural as they reflected on the experience.

Prior to beginning the program, I administered a quantitative survey (the same survey that was also administered after the implementation of the lesson). The survey was composed of questions that assessed several components of empathy; cognitive, affective, and concern for others. The purpose of this survey was to evaluate existing empathy levels to compare with post empathy levels. Scores on the baseline survey were also used to identify students that exhibited high and low levels of empathy. Students from each of the aforementioned categories were then involved post-qualitative interviews that aimed to understand their overall experience in the program and specifically uncover any qualitative change in empathy. Throughout the program, I along with both research assistants, gathered qualitative data in the form of observation notes and photographic documentation of the students' processes and products. Following the completion of the lesson, the same survey was implemented and the same interviewees were interviewed.

Quantitative analysis of survey measures did not uncover any significant change in empathy within both groups, however, qualitative data (observations and interviews) indicated that the visual art program prompted some behavior that was indicative of the beginning stages of empathy, specifically that of increased self-awareness. In addition, findings suggested that although the affective components of empathy appeared to be unchanged there were several examples of the cognitive components of empathy being addressed. Preliminary analysis of the art products verified the qualitative findings and also confirmed theories related to adolescent development that seemingly are connected to adolescent empathy development.

Analytical Plan

To answer the research questions, both qualitative and quantitative analyses were simultaneously conducted throughout this evaluation allowing for a greater understanding of the program's effectiveness. For example, to determine the impact of the visual art program aimed at increasing empathy among middle school students, observation notes, and post-interviews were reviewed and triangulated with a preliminary analysis of the art products made throughout the program allowing for emergent themes to surface. These themes were then compared to the current literature (Gerdes et al., 2011; Hoffman, 2000). An analysis of the qualitative data in the form of observation notes and interviews then occurred where I aimed to uncover themes in relation to empathy development (including the cognitive, affective, and prosocial response behavior that makes up this study's definition of empathy) and how these themes were brought about by the visual art program. In addition, I conducted two focus groups where I along with other practicing art therapists reviewed the participant artwork as a form of data. Lastly, analysis of quantitative survey data was conducted. The pre- and post-visual art program surveys were compared to uncover significant changes in the mean scores of empathy. The final step in the analysis of data was to compare quantitative findings from the surveys to the qualitative findings from the observations, interviews, and artwork.

Qualitative Analysis

In order to answer the research question observation and interview qualitative data were analyzed using the following definition of empathy: "the act of perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding to the emotional state and ideas of another person" (Gerdes et al., 2011, p. 109). I focused on the four action terms or variables within this definition to analyze the

qualitative data: (1) perceiving, (2) understanding, (3) experiencing, and (4) responding. Each variable was defined purposefully using a common and well-known dictionary, the Merriam Webster dictionary—this decision was to ensure that the most common definition of empathy would be applied. By defining each verb the researcher was able to determine measurable and observable behavior traits that represented each variable. These measurable and observable traits or empathy variables were used as a coding system to analyze the qualitative observation and interview data. In addition, the researcher paired the main components of empathy, cognitive (thought processes), affective (emotional processes), or prosocial response (positive behavior reactions) to each of the four variables to further create sub categories measuring the main components of empathy as stated by the literature (Hoffman, 2000; Jollife & Farrington, 2009). Taken together, empathy was operationalized as the following variables, aligned to the main components of empathy described in the literature:

1. Perceiving (COGNITIVE): To notice or become aware of something: discern, recognize, see, distinguish, realize, make out, find, identify, hit on, appreciate, sense, notice, observe, detect
2. Understanding (COGNITIVE): To know how someone thinks, feels, or behaves. To know the meaning of something such as the words someone is saying or a language. To know how something works or happens: comprehend, grasp, apprehend, follow, decipher, interpret, figure out, work out, be conscious of, learn
3. Experiencing (AFFECTIVE): The process of doing and seeing things and or having things happen to you. Skill or knowledge you get by doing something: feel, undergo, encounter, come into contact with, be faced with

4. Responding (PROSOCIAL RESPONSE): To act or behave in reaction to someone or something. To say something in return, to make an answer. To act in response. To show favorable reaction: answer, reply to, make a response to, rejoin, retort, counter.

Table 5 illustrates the coding scheme used to analyze the observation and interview qualitative data.

Table 5
Coding Scheme

Perceiving	Understanding	Experiencing	Responding
Cognitive		Affective	Prosocial Responses
To notice or become aware of something	To know how (someone) thinks, feels, or behaves. To know the meaning of (something, such as the words someone is saying or a language). To know how (something) works or happens.	The process of doing and seeing things and or having things happen to you. Skill or knowledge you get by doing something	To act or behave in reaction to someone of something. To say something in return, make and answer. To react in response. To show favorable reaction
Empathy Variable			
Discern, recognize, see, distinguish, realize, make out, find, identify, hit on, appreciate, sense, notice, observe, detect	Comprehend, grasp, apprehend, follow, decipher, interpret, figure out, work out, be conscious of, learn	Feel, undergo, encounter, come into contact with, be faced with	Answer, reply to, make a response to, rejoin, retort, counter

Qualitative Findings

The observation and interview qualitative findings are reported here and are organized by data type (i.e., observation notes, interviews, and artwork). In order to fully uncover the multiple facets of empathy development and whether the program impacted students' empathy, attention was given to each of the four variables of empathy: perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding.

Observation Notes

During the administration of the visual art program, I, along with two research assistants, took observation notes. Having multiple observers allowed various perspectives and insights to be captured in the data, providing the opportunity to truly understand the program's implementation procedures. Notes were taken at the end of each of the five sessions with both sixth- and eighth-grade classes. Notes document both the participants' experiences and interactions with one another, their art, as well as evaluations about implementation procedures.

Perceiving (cognitive). Data in this category appear to be concentrated around themes of artistic process. Students working in small groups observed their peers' artistic process, recognized what was working for them, and attempted new tasks based on what they observed. These two action verbs taken from the definition of perceiving are considered cognitive thought processes. For example, on the first day, researchers reported:

> Students showed a minute of hesitation once given specific directions but quickly approached the task- looking around the room to inspect other's processes. Some students who did not have a bamboo rolling pin segment, utilized spherical glue containers as rolling pins- this innovative strategy spreading throughout the classroom illustrated by others using the same strategy-more evidence that students were very aware of their peers process even if at a different table. (Field Notes)

Students showed an ability to observe their peers process and use cognitive thinking strategies such as problem solving to complete the task of rolling out the clay.

Understanding (cognitive). Analysis of observation notes indicated that the understanding variable of empathy was initially seen when participants would copy the behavior of their peers. Researchers observed participants attempting similar strategies that they understood to be effective by watching someone else at their table. For example as noted above, participants observed others using glue bottles to successfully roll the clay flat. Participants would mimic this strategy, meet success and therefore demonstrate certain cognitive thought processes such as figuring out and learning new strategies based on observations of peers.

As the program progressed what became most notable in this category was the degree of difference between self-understanding and understanding of other. Observation notes uncovered that there was more attention given to the part of the project that was focused on self—the participant's personal footprint vs. their partner's footprint. For example on Day 2 a researcher noted:

> One researcher observed that the students made their partners much simpler than their own and some had trouble at first knowing what to put on their partners footprints. (Field Notes)

Analysis showed that this program appeared to prompt participants to create richer and more detailed artwork based on their own experiences versus the artwork they made about their peers.

There was an observed struggle for students to keep working on their partner's footprints. Many seemed more comfortable (or less resistant) to embellishing their own footprint. This might illustrate how much more they know and understand about their own personal experiences—this being emphasized in the artwork. (Field Notes)

This example shows that students appeared to demonstrate higher levels of motivation and willingness to explore and visualize their personal experiences when compared to their attempts at visually to awareness of other.

On Day 5 this notion that there was limited new information that was gained about the participant's partner was illustrated when students were asked to share their artwork as well as the artwork they had made about their partner:

> I was disappointed in the lack of depth displayed in the majority of the artwork done on the partners' footprint. My suspicions that some of the students were just creating something that was fun on their partner's footprints seemed to be confirmed when several of them had difficulty explaining why they did what they did on their partner's print. (Field Notes)

The above examples seemingly indicate that the program prompted students to engage in a cognitive process that initiated self-exploration by way of visual expression. Further, although there was some beginning attempts at using the art as a way to explore understanding about their partners experience, there was a lack of evidence that pointed to participants exploring their partners experience with as much intensity illustrated by observations that the artwork done about partners was less detailed, flat, and somewhat superficial.

Experiencing (affective). This variable of empathy development posed the most difficult to observe as the term describes the affective process (feeling and emotional responses) that can be more internal than the previous categories. However, most notable in this category was how participants came into contact with and reacted to their physical space. For example, halfway through the program researchers had to move the lesson from the classroom to the cafeteria. It

was evident that students' experiences with each other, their artistic processes, and affective experiences were highly influenced by this change in space. Here is an example from Day Three after students were moved from their classroom to the cafeteria:

> The change in space appeared to completely change the feeling and tone of what had been occurring with the students on the subsequent days. In comparison to days prior there was less of a calm and focused energy illustrated by high voice volumes and disorganized workspaces. (Field Notes)

This was contrasted with observations from the previous day while students were still working in their classroom. In this space students were observed to be willing to readily encounter descriptions of their peers' experiences (feelings and emotions that were linked to these experiences) and in turn relate those to their own. For example, on Day 2, researchers noted:

> Surprisingly, it was observed that some of the students wanted to answer questions about their greatest worries and the hardest thing they'd ever done, appearing to illustrate a sense of safety they felt with their peers or possibly a desire to share this information. (Field Notes)

Or also on Day 2 when participants expressed pleasure with learning about their peers and wanted to go even deeper into the interview process:

> When it came time to look at the interview questions, the eighth-grade group seemed more interested in the questions and in finding out how other people would answer the questions. At one table, one of the boys said he wanted to know everything on the list about everyone. One research assistant asked "Do

you even like the question about your greatest weakness?" to which he responded, "Yes!" One response to this question, volunteered by a student at the table, stated that being afraid of the dark was her greatest weakness. As soon as this student said this, the whole table chimed in and said "Me, too!" illustrating a possible display of empathy and camaraderie. (Field Notes)

When observations from Day 2 and Day 3 were compared, what becomes evident was that these initial affective experiences of shared experience, willingness, and desire to learn about another's feelings changed drastically when the group was moved into the cafeteria on Days 3, 4, and 5. During the latter portion of the lesson, after participants had been moved from the classroom to the cafeteria, researchers became very aware of the lack of containment, organized process, sharing of feelings, and authentic dialogue about self-expression.

Responding (prosocial response). Examples of how the responding variable of empathy and prosocial behavior was observed was drawn from observations of participants' reactions to one another's artistic processes, i.e., decisions about what experiences were chosen to express or how to use visual materials were used to express an idea or feeling visual expression and lastly evaluation and reactions to the completed artistic product.

There was a lot of variation in this category. Some responses were positive and thoughtful while others were superficial and somewhat disrespectful. The following is an example of both prosocial response versus a non-prosocial response:

Researchers observed the ease at which these students worked together to choose an item on the list of common themes and come up with a visual way to depict it. The sixth graders were very respectful of each other and cooperative–possibly a

reflection of the values that have been instilled in the in the Catholic school setting and may not necessarily be how things would play out in a public school setting. (Field Notes)

Compared to what one research assistant observed:

As the students shared information about their footprints I was disappointed at how disrespectful the other students were by not listening and making a lot of noise. (Field Notes)

Again, as mentioned previously, the change in space seems to have impacted the trajectory of the program and the students' feelings of safety and containment thus making their responses less supportive and authentic and possibly more protective and defensive. For example on Day 5 while sharing their work with the whole group researchers noted:

I found the students fairly unengaged and disrespectful this day. I'm not sure if the students expected something different or were just taking advantage of their time out of the classroom. I wonder if the cafeteria created an atmosphere that was less conducive to disciplined activity. The difficulty with the Velcro and lack of art making may have also contributed to their lack of control. (Field Notes)

Again, though there was much variation in the participants' responses. The following observation articulates the positive behavior responses that were witnessed and how this might be connected to the development of empathy. This is an example of a positive reaction that occurred around the artistic productions taken from Day 3:

There were a handful of students who displayed a lot of thoughtfulness in what they chose to create on their partner's footprint. A few created a similar feel to

their partner's footprint which created a wonderful connection between the two prints. Others were very different but just as complex. (Field Notes)

Observation Conclusions

The observation notes provided data that were valuable to answering the research question. First, observation notes were taken by multiple people, which offered several perspectives and different opportunities to evaluate the overall visual art program. Information about content, implementation, and responses indicated that participants found the art-making activity and empathy content to be motivating and engaging (i.e., readiness to use materials in an expressive way, follow directions, and voice pleasure while working). However, what was most notable from observations was that the change in physical space (the change on Day 3 from the classroom to the cafeteria) appears to have altered the trajectory of the program. Specifically, the change in physical space seemingly changed the participants' responses to their own art-making experiences as well as their responses to their peers' art-making experiences. This change in space altered the way we the researchers distributed materials and the way dialogue and reflection was facilitated, thus is can be surmised this change in space altered the entire program.

Second, observation notes provided information about how the visual art program impacted the main components of empathy; cognitive, affective, and prosocial responses. Specifically, observation notes allowed me to uncover occurrences of the action verbs or empathy variables that represent empathy as defined by this study's definition: perceiving, understanding, experiencing, and responding. What observation notes indicated was that participants showed behavior that represented beginning levels of empathy development. For

example, participants were motivated to engage in self-exploration via art making about personal experiences—this behavior showing an ability to increase their own understanding of self. However, the time spent on attempting to understand the experiences of another was not equal and therefore artistic products about partners were not as detailed as self-representations. Participants showed a willingness to engage in several of the cognitive processes of empathy development but not to the degree that was needed to acquire the affective components of experiencing another's emotional state. This impacted the participants' responses to their peer's creative process and product, where both positive and negative social interactions were observed.

Interviews

Interview questions (See Appendix B) were derived from the Basic Empathy Scale (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2009) and the Concern for Others Survey (Child Development Project, 2005). Questions were asked after the program and were open-ended. Originally, I hoped to interview a total of six participants, three from each class, each representing either a high, medium, or low level of empathy as determined through preliminary analysis of the survey measure. However, due to absences and in addition one student refusing to be interviewed (eighth-grade boy who measured with the lowest level of empathy ironically enough) only four participants were interviewed, each representing a high or low level of empathy. I asked questions about how they felt about the overall program, their own process, and their thoughts on making art with their peers. Students were also asked questions to assess their own levels of empathy by discussing their artistic process. For example, "How did you feel making art with/about your classmates? What was your favorite part about the program? What would you change?" Finally, prosocial tendencies—behavior that is advantageous to the community as a

whole (i.e., sharing, acceptance, altruistic behavior, and empathic behavior) was assessed by this question: “How did you respond when you saw another person struggling with something?” or “Did you learn something new about a classmate? How did you show that in your art?” Responses were coded using the four empathy variables derived from Gerdes et al. (2011) definition of empathy as noted. Pseudonyms are used in the section and are indicated with S.P. after the name.

Perceiving (cognitive).Evaluation of the empathy program uncovered that although there was evidence of participants engaging in the cognitive process of perceiving they are better explained in the following categories. For example, eighth grader Rebecca who presented with higher levels of empathy speaks about how she was able to identify information that was new about her partner but goes on to say that this was a pleasurable experience, thus this example is also included in discussion about the affective process of experiencing. For example, I asked her: “How was it hanging out with your classmates, making art about yourself, and making art about somebody else, how does that feel?” Rebecca responded:

> Ummm, I think it was really cool ‘cause I got to know someone else. Like, she was my friend but I like felt like I knew her better. (Rebecca, S.P., Interview)

Understanding (cognitive).Highly agreed upon by participants was the idea that during this program, participants found opportunities to figure out something new about a peer. Also, another theme that was evident was that participants felt that the program’s emphasis on the art process allowed them to achieve some constructive feedback from their peers and thus understand their own process in a new way, deepening self-awareness. Specifically, participants indicated that it was helpful for their personal creative process and made their understanding of

their own art more informed when they were allowed to test ideas with other classmates. For example eighth grader Chris (S.P.) who presented with lower levels of empathy stated:

> Um, I feel like most of us got to learn a bit of things that most of us didn't know … I feel like it's better when you're doing it [art] with friends and other people, because you can ask them about their critique about it. Yes. And to see where you can improve on, or ask opinions so that everyone could like it. And everyone could understand more. You can get more knowledge about them, they can get more knowledge about you. (Chris, Interview)

Also, participants indicated that the program allowed them to learn new facts about their peers' experiences. For example eighth grader Alexandra (S.P.) during a whole group discussion describes several facts she learned about her peer, Jennifer (S.P.):

> I wanna explain the one I did, Jennifer, which is the one that has the cup with the orange thing around it, uh, I did the cup because it reminds me of an orange tree … because at school … that's her favorite thing to do … The little bottle cap with a flower on top means outgoing … or Las Vegas, that's her favorite place to be, the glasses thing 'cause she wears glasses and this is a little lock that has a J and it's half blue and half pink, because when she was in her mother's stomach they thought it was a boy so then it was gonna be Giovanni. (Alexandra, Interview)

These statements indicated that there was new information that was gained during this program's process of making art. However, this new understanding mainly consisted of the physical facts or cognitive processes and did not include any shared feeling words that might indicate the beginnings of an affective process.

Experiencing (affective).Evaluation of this program illuminates several incidents that indicate some examples of participants experiencing a feeling and possibly a shared feeling. Most occurrences of participants experiencing emotion is related to experiencing their own emotion and not necessarily emotions of other classmates. However, it might be surmised that these students were being influenced by their peers' feelings. For example, sixth grader Joey (S.P.) who presented with low levels of empathy reflects on the experience implying that he felt enjoyment and calmness while creating art with his peers, possibly indicating that he felt this feeling happening with his peers as well. For example, Joey's response to my question "What was your favorite part?" was: "My favorite part was um, working with my friends" (Interview). Here, Joey indicated that his favorite part was the process of being with his peers. Next he goes on to say that this feeling was comfortable and relaxing, a pleasurable feeling. I asked him, "What else is different about making art rather than recess?" and he shared: "Umm well we draw, and we just chill" (Joey, Interview).

Eighth grader Chris (low-empathy participant) also commented on how the overall process of making art with and about other peers was enjoyable:

> Yah, and then I don't like it that like when you're working alone it's that feeling that you don't have anyone like to be around, feeling lonely. (Chris, Interview)

Rebecca (S.P.), an eighth grader with high levels of empathy, spoke about her experience in a positive manner indicting that she built a relationship that may not have existed prior to the program and how she enjoyed the process of sharing everyone's work. Specifically, I asked her: "How was it hanging out with your classmates, making art about yourself, and making art about somebody else, how does that feel?" She shared:

> Ummm, I think it was really cool ‘cause I got to know someone else. Like, she was my friend but I like felt like I knew her better. (Rebecca, Interview).

She indicated that she learned something new about her partner and therefore changed her perceptions of who this person was. In addition, she indicated that her affective experience as a result was that she felt closer to this new person and that this experience was positive. In the next quote this participant went on to expand on this notion. She expanded this idea to include the entire eighth-grade group and discusses that it was pleasurable to learn new information about peers. When asked, “What was your favorite part?” she shared:

> I like, umm, when we got in the big circle and the sun was shining. That um, that everybody like was like happy like they were just talking about each other, like it was real nice. (Rebecca, Interview)

Responding (prosocial response).There were limited data about how the participants interpreted their responses about their peers. Evaluation of this program suggested that there appeared to be some ambivalence about how to make art about someone else. This could be indicative of other data uncovered, mainly in the understanding/cognitive category, in that participants suggested that in comparison, they gained a greater degree of self-understanding versus understanding of other. This would influence how participants experienced or felt hearing their peers’ experiences and therefore likely influenced how they responded. Also, there is an underlying suggestion that if more time was allowed with the peer, more understanding might be gained. For example Rebecca (eighth grader with high levels of empathy) stated:

> Cause art, you wanna know what you're gonna do but in sports it's like a team thing. So you're like helping each other out. With art you can't really help each other a lot 'cause you don't know what they want. (Rebecca, Interview)

This comment appears to speak to ambivalence that this participant felt about creating art about her partner—she wasn't sure what or what not to include because she didn't feel as though she had enough information about her partner. The following participant indicated that she thought this would have been different if she had more time to gather information about her partner:

> Um, maybe like getting to know your partner more because I didn't know what to put on it. Cause like when she was telling me like about her life I didn't know how to like take that out and put it into something. (Rebecca, Interview)

Another interesting aspect within the response variable is that there appeared to be some occurrences of how participants expanded their views of a peer and therefore how to subsequently respond to that peer. Chris (eighth grader with low levels of empathy) reflected on how he was surprised about an interest a peer had that he had not known about:

> And so, um I'm still in remembering about my friend because I didn't really like focus that, he really like, he really likes skateboards until like now that I starting noticing because it was mostly like, I mostly knew him as like, like music and games, when it's just like the skateboard, I wasn't like really sure if he was like into it. (Chris, Interview)

Art Analysis

This study was originally designed to include the art as a form of qualitative data to be analyzed. Due to several unforeseen circumstances (i.e., the change in space from the classroom to the cafeteria) the images of art lack a coherent narrative of the participants' process creating their art. Nevertheless, it is important to include the artwork as it offers a rich source of data that merits a preliminary analysis—one that has deepened understanding of the findings. As such, the artwork was analyzed during two focus groups with practicing art therapists in a preliminary manner where the goal was to use the art to further develop and support themes that emerged from the qualitative data.

The analysis of the art was conducted using a multitiered approach. Analysis first began by sorting the imagery by criteria for inclusion during an initial focus group. This criteria was determined by myself along with my dissertation committee member a seasoned art therapist. Together we viewed each of the images collected throughout the weeklong program and cleaned the data by omitting any images that did not depict either the art process or art product. The resulting data set included 200 images that directly depicted the participant's art process, art products in various stages of completeness, and the final collaborative art project—individual and partner footprints affixed to a group mural.

The second tier involved presenting these images to two other practicing art therapists in a second focus group. Before we viewed the images I provided background on the study, described the art project and also described each stage of empathy I was aiming to address during each day of the program (self-awareness, awareness of other, emotional literacy, perspective taking, and reflection). I then presented the cleaned data set of 200 images to the two art

therapists with the directions to view the imagery in a introductory manner where they might gain a preliminary familiarity with the imagery and/or take note of initial themes. Following this preliminary viewing I provided a checklist that listed the image number vertically and the different stages of empathy as categories horizontally along the top. The purpose of this checklist was to provide a structured format for the art therapists to categorize what element of empathy they felt each image best represented. For example, the art therapists would view the sixth-grade group mural (See Figure 6) and check the column for either self-awareness, awareness of other, emotional literacy, perspective taking, or reflection.

The third tier involved in the analysis of art was developed during the this focus group. As the art therapists viewed the imagery of the students artistic process and artistic products it became apparent that asking them to designate each image to a stage of empathy development on the checklist was an inappropriate form of data analysis. This approach that I had hoped would promote rich dialogue and deeper exploration of the data was in fact hindering conversation. Both art therapists agreed that because they had not experienced the students in their art process, and because the imagery lacked a coherent narrative it was nearly impossible to confidently draw conclusions about the student's artistic process. Therefore what was determined as a group was that analysis would involve viewing just the completed pieces of art as presented by the two collaborative mural pieces. This narrowed the data set down to include just the images that represented the completed products. In addition, because the collaborative mural piece included both a footprint made about the individual and a footprint made about a partner, we now could compare and contrast the footprints within the mural as well as compare the two different murals to each other (See Figure 6).

While viewing the footprints within the same grade level mural and comparing the two different grade level murals dialogue became more free to explore the emergent themes apparent in the completed art products. While keeping both the stages of empathy (self-awareness, awareness of other, emotional literacy, perspective taking, and reflection) and Erikson's theories on identity development as a lens for inquiry several main themes emerged through this last phase of analysis, (1) the artistic products strongly corresponded to Erikson's theories of adolescent development and (2) the beginning stages of empathy specifically self-awareness were apparent when looking at the final collaborative piece.

Figure 6. Group Murals. This figure illustrates the group murals created by the student participants. The top image depicts the sixth-grade group mural. The bottom image depicts the eighth-grade group mural. Photo copyright Jessica Bianchi, 2013

Art Analysis Findings

Erikson's theories of identity development. Art therapists became very aware that the data in the form of artistic products corresponded strongly with Erikson's psycho-social theories on adolescent identity development. In such this offers a valuable resource to more deeply evaluate the participants psychological processes while engaged in this visual art program aimed at promoting empathy. Erikson's seminal theories on adolescent identity development posited that as individuals develop, they must pass through several stages and navigate a series of "crisis" where there is a desired outcome. Relevant to this study are stage three; industry vs. inferiority the desired outcome being competence and stage four; identity vs. role confusion the desired outcome being fidelity. In both stages, Erikson stated that as adolescents are gradually seeking to gain more independence from parental units peer relationships begin to become forefront. This is illustrated in the art products where art therapists clearly identified similar symbology being depicted amongst the two groups. These symbols included representations of the school site and sports teams—both being content that is heavily peer related and indicative of Erikson's theories.

In addition, when comparing the sixth-grade mural to the eighth-grade mural there appears to be more conformity amongst the individual footprints. This is contrasted with the sixth-grade mural that illustrates more diversity among the footprints. Again looking to Erikson this makes sense in that the desired outcome of this earlier stage of development is competence and that children at stage are becoming more aware of themselves as individuals, hence the diversity in artistic expression. Contrast this with later stages of adolescence where the desired

outcome is fidelity or being loyal to a concept. We see this in the eighth-grade art mural where footprints show more similarities to one another, representations of its member appearing to be loyal to collective identity, for example navy blue color scheme and Dodgers symbology. This relates to Erikson's theories where he notes that in later adolescents individuals begin to develop a strong awareness of self through the eyes of other and a need to "fit in"—this seen in the conformity of the footprints in the eighth-grade mural (See Figure 6).

Self-awareness and cognitive empathy. Taken from the discovery that the imagery strongly ties to developmental theories we then turn to look at how the artistic products corresponds with empathy development specifically. The preliminary analysis of the art parallels themes that were seen in the analysis of qualitative data namely that students appeared to be engaging in the early stages of empathy development, that of self-awareness, and in addition also are displaying elements of cognitive empathy.

While viewing the art it became very apparent that footprints that were made by the individual about their experiences and thus their identity showed more development compared to the footprints made about a partner's experience. The individual footprint literally embodies more dimension compared to the footprints made about the partner. Below is an example of how the individual spatially composes the piece to be three-dimensional versus the footprint made about his/her partner which is two-dimensional and flat (See Figure 7). This illustrates the type of thought processes that the individual engaged in to create a representation of self vs. other.

*Figure 7.*Three-Dimensional vs. Two-Dimensional Interpretations. This figure illustrates the difference between a 2-D and a 3-D interpretation. Photo copyright Theresa Crooks, 2013.

When viewing the content of the footprints made about the individual and comparing those to footprints made about a partner what was apparent was that individuals appeared to be defining their identity by space, for example memories of where they had traveled with family, where they lived or have lived (See Figure 8). This composition allowed for a rich narrative to develop within the piece. This was contrasted with the themes that were shown about the partners' footprints. Here what was seen was a collection of somewhat clichéd and flat symbology. For example, many participants appeared to paint the surface of their partner's footprint with their partner's favorite color, or presumed favorite color based on gender (pinks and rainbows for girls and greens and blues for boys).

Figure 8. Identity Defined by Space vs. Identity Defined by Color. This figure illustrates the use of space and color to define identity. Photo copyright Theresa Crooks, 2013.

What this analysis posited is that individuals are exploring self in a much more complex, introspective manner when compared to the type of thought that is going into creating art that represents their partner. However, what is evident is that there is some initial attempts to understand their partner. This initial understanding is indicative of the cognitive components of empathy. Themes that are seen in the art products about partners are again favorite colors, types of sports, or sports teams (See Figure 9). This content represents facts that were learned about their partner compared to emotional experiences that were shared. The analysis of the art is in agreement with what was found when analyzing the interview data, where participants discussed how they had "figured out" or "learned" something new about their partner—both of these being signifiers that cognitive empathy was at play.

*Figure 9.*Examples of Cognitive Awareness. This figure illustrates participants' cognitive awareness of their partners' interests and preferences, such as favorite colors or sports teams. Photo copyright Theresa Crooks, 2013.

Summary of Qualitative Data

Overall the qualitative analysis of this program indicated that the visual art program prompted behavior representing the beginning stages of empathy development, namely increased self-awareness. Qualitative data analysis indicated that the program enabled students to experience a parallel process of self-discovery in the form of artistic expression, meaning that participants engaged in a simultaneous process of self-exploration through visual expression. Students witnessed their peers exploring personally relevant content that was connected to lived experiences. By being witness to their own self-discovery experiences, students became more aware that their peers were engaged in similar processes. When comparing these findings to the

art analysis it was evident that there were examples of participants to engaging in self-exploration vs. exploring that of another. What was seen was that participants were aware of their peers' artistic endeavors but more from a self-interested perspective, this being developmentally appropriate according to Erikson's theories on adolescent identity development. Therefore self-awareness was developed as the participants appeared to gain awareness of self through other not necessarily about the other. Therefore, the more advanced levels of empathy development, specifically being able to share a similar affective experience and responding in an informed manner, did not appear to be substantial.

More specifically, students were more likely to demonstrate an ability to perceive and understand their peers' processes versus the emotional content their peers were attempting to communicate. This initial component of empathy was demonstrated by the students copying and attempting successful strategies they saw their classmates using. Students were observed to show a greater ability to engage and understand their own self-reflective art making and less of an ability to understand and create art around the experiences of their peers. When looking at the art this can be seen by comparing the visual content seen in the footprints made about the individual compared to the footprints made about a partner, the former displaying environments that represented complex explanations versus the latter that represented simple facts such as favorite color schemes and favorite sports teams. Evidence of students experiencing the feelings of their peers was difficult to determine through observation and was overshadowed by the observed feelings of anxiety and unrest when the program was moved to a less confined space and the two grade groups were combined. This change in space appeared to greatly influence the trajectory of the program. Specifically, students appeared to be enjoy the authentic dialogue

about personal experiences and the safety to go deeper into conversation that the classroom provided. This was contrasted with the verging disrespectful behavior observed after students were moved to the cafeteria. Lastly, responses varied in their degree of prosocial tendencies. Some students demonstrated an avoidance to respond to peers' personal artistic expressions in an engaged and open manner, where others showed a desire and willingness to witness and consider their peers artistic expressions.

Interview analysis uncovered multiple dimensions of the students' experiences and the variety of experiences that several of the students underwent. Most evident is how students appeared to enjoy the parallel process—simultaneous engagement in self-exploration processes of creating art side by side with their peers. Highlighted in the findings was how students seemingly built a greater degree of self-awareness while making and dialoguing with peers about the art in connection to their own personal experiences. Again, this is seen in the analysis of the art products where imagery about self literally has more dimensions vs. the imagery made about partners. In addition, there appears to be beginnings of an ability and willingness to hear and share in another's experience, the art displaying facts learned about a partner (favorite color or sports team). Yet, there was a lack of necessary time and space necessary to facilitate a true empathic process within the weeklong program.

Quantitative Analysis

To further evaluate this program's impact on empathy development among a group of middle school students, levels of empathy were measured quantitatively in a pre- and post-visual art program survey. Paired-samples *t*-tests were conducted, looking for significant change in mean scores of empathy from before to after the program. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the sixth

and eighth graders were merged together during the art lesson due to school reasons. As such, the nature of the program shifted from within classrooms to both classrooms combined together. Given this change, paired sample *t*-tests were run with both groups combined and then conducted within each group individually. The dependent variable of empathy was defined as three components of empathy development: cognitive, affective, and prosocial response/concern for others. The pattern of findings for both groups of students combined followed the pattern presented below by grade level, in that there were no significant changes except for the dependent variable, concern for others. However, this finding is better explained when groups are separated in that it only occurred among eighth graders and not sixth graders. As such, the findings are presented by grade level below.

Sixth Grade

The paired-sample *t*-test indicated that there was no significant increase or decrease in empathy development within the sixth-grade group. Specifically for affective empathy, there was no difference [t (23) = .21, p= NS] in the mean scores from pre (M = 2.50, SD = .39) to post (M = 2.48, SD =.29) survey. Additionally, for cognitive empathy, there was no difference in the mean scores from pre (M = 2.97, SD = .36) to post (M = 2.84, SD =.43) survey [t (23) = 1.71, p= NS]. Lastly, for concern for others, there was no difference in the mean scores from pre (M= 2.71, SD = .47) to post (M =2.64, SD =.31) survey [t (23) = .84, p= NS].

Eighth Grade

The paired-sample *t*-test indicated that there was no significant increase or decrease in empathy development within the eighth-grade group, except for concern for others. For concern for others, there was a significant decrease in the mean scores from pre (M = 2.92, SD = .50) to

post (M =2.67, SD =.46) survey [*t* (23) = 3.03, *p*< .01], such that eighth-grade students decreased in their concern for others from before to after the program. However, for affective empathy, there was no difference in the mean scores from pre (M= 2.66, SD = .44) to post (M =2.71, SD =.51) [*t* (23) = .63, *p*= NS]. For cognitive empathy, there was no difference in the mean scores from pre (M = 2.82, SD = .49) to post (M =2.94, SD =.33) survey [*t* (23) = .97, *p*= NS].

Based on these quantitative findings no significant conclusions can be drawn about the visual art lesson regarding empathy. The only area of significance occurred among the eighth-grade class and related to concern for others. Data from interviews and observation notes helps to explain this finding such that the space change that occurred mid program may have disrupted the students' sense of containment and safety. Being moved from familiar, smaller groupings of peers to a larger, louder, less structured room and combined with another class was noted:

> I found the students fairly unengaged and disrespectful this day. I'm not sure if the students expected something different or were just taking advantage of their time out of the classroom. I wonder if the cafeteria created an atmosphere that was less conducive to disciplined activity. The difficulty with the Velcro and lack of art making may have also contributed to their lack of control.(Field Notes)

This quote clearly shows a research assistant's observations about the change in behavior when students were moved to the cafeteria. The next quote goes on to articulate more specifically the type on negative behavior that the research assistant witnessed.

> As the students shared information about their footprints I was disappointed at how disrespectful the other students were by not listening and making a lot of noise. (Field Notes)

The abrupt change in space and group dynamic could have heightened students' defense mechanisms causing students to react in a more anxious, defended, protective, and less emotionally vulnerable manner.

Additionally, analysis of the art sheds light on these quantitative findings as well in that the art highlights the developmental stages that the participants are experiencing. Specifically, Erikson's theories of adolescent identity development indicate that the adolescent participants in this study are more concerned with developing a sense of self—thus making exploration of other a challenge.

Concern for others is likely a result of increased empathy and an increased ability for prosocial behavior. Therefore, quantitative findings suggested that there was no significant change in empathy thus it makes sense that results indicated that there was little concern for others. Further, developmentally speaking, empathy is a process that requires time to develop. It is likely that the short 1-week duration of this program may not have been a sufficient amount of time for participants to develop a significant increase in empathy that was measurable by the quantitative measures. Analysis of the art points to adolescent development that is primarily focused on exploring one's place in their community and limited attention paid towards understanding another's experience. Qualitative findings suggested that the program prompted behavior that was indicative of the early stages of empathy, self-awareness however significance was not found in the quantitative data.

Conclusion

To conclude, the evaluation of this visual art pilot program aimed at promoting empathy uncovered multiple avenues for exploration to further program development for social and

emotional learning in the arts with adolescents. However the program's aim to develop empathy among adolescents is inconclusive. Both quantitative and qualitative data showed no significant change in empathy over the course of this program. What the evaluation did uncover through qualitative analysis was that there appeared to be beginning elements of empathy development: increased self-awareness and examples of cognitive components of empathy. However, evaluation showed limited instances of affect sharing amongst peers- this being a necessary and more difficult to measure component of empathy. This last component may have been influenced by the unpredicted change in space and how this shifted the students' abilities to undergo sustained engagement with emotional content, and also the developmental stage of adolescents which is heavily focused on self-exploration. Additional insights and explanation for these findings are presented in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION

Literature taken from both the field of educational research as well as art therapy indicate that adolescents who are involved and encouraged to use visual art as a means of self-expression develop in healthy and positive ways. The field of art therapy has extensively subscribed to the idea that through the process of creating and reflecting on personally made visual imagery, the preeminent task of adolescence, or healthy identity development, is addressed. Young people are encouraged and supported in an effort to understand who they are, what skills they have to offer, and how they fit within their community and the world as whole. This research is highly beneficial for educational settings that are dedicated to educating the student in a holistic manner. The visual arts allow for a verbal and visual dialogue that increases understanding of self and other. In an ever-expanding global economy, understanding those who may be different is of vital importance. The arts, and visual arts specifically, can act as a vehicle for social justice by increasing our abilities to be compassionate, accepting, and tolerant of diversity. Specifically, empathy is a trait that can be developed that embodies this notion of understanding another. Students who have higher levels of empathy are shown to be less likely involved in antisocial behavior, such as indirect and direct forms of aggression, and bullying behavior. Stated simply, the arts offer society a tool for building socially minded communities that are supportive and encouraging of all its members.

A visual art program grounded in theories of art therapy, empathy development, and adolescent development was created to be implemented with predominantly Latino, middle school students at an urban Catholic school in East Los Angeles. The art program asked students

to use two clay footprints as a base and create two visual landscapes: one that represented their own personal experiences and a second that represented a fellow classmate's experiences. The clichéd phrase "To understand another you must walk a mile in their shoes" inspired the design of this program where the aim was to encourage the students to first uncover how certain life experiences have shaped their identity and then transfer this towards understanding how a classmate's experiences have shaped their identity. The study aimed to utilize a mixed-methods approach to assess this program's impact on promoting empathy among middle school students. Guiding this evaluation was the following research question: How does a visual art program, informed by the practice of clinical art therapy, impact the development of empathy in sixth and eighth-grade students attending an inner-city Catholic school?

In order to best answer this question, I gathered both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data was collected in the form of daily observation notes, photographs of participant's process and art products, and post participant interviews. Observation notes, participant interviews, and artistic products were used to more fully explain results gained from quantitative measures. Quantitative data were collected in the form of pre- and post-program survey measures. Quantitative survey measures were utilized to uncover any significant changes in empathy among sixth- and eighth-grade students as a result of participating in a visual arts program. Findings are organized in this chapter based on the research question that guided this study. First, discussion is aimed at explaining the findings related to quantitative findings. Next, these findings are expanded upon by triangulating the quantitative data with the qualitative findings. The chapter concludes with recommendations on how this research can be connected to educational research, and what future research must consider.

Quantitative Findings

Quantitative findings indicated no significant conclusions that the visual art program impacted the levels of empathy amongst either the sixth-grade or eighth-grade groups. The dependent variable of empathy, measured by the survey, included three components of empathy development: cognitive, affective, and prosocial response/concern for others. The pattern of findings for both groups of students indicated no significant change in affective or cognitive empathy. However, when analyzing the sub-scale of prosocial response/concern for others, amongst the eighth-grade group, the findings indicated that there was a small decrease in concern for others from before to after participating in the art program.

This finding along with others are better explained after triangulating this date with the other qualitative data from interviews, observation notes, and artistic products. The analysis uncovered several factors that could have contributed to the quantitative results and also represent the emergent themes uncovered by this study. These themes are as follows: the developmental stage of the participants, lack of time; lack of resources in the form of low facilitator to participant ratio; lack of consistency in scheduling and physical space. These findings, illuminated by the qualitative data sources, are described below.

Qualitative Findings

To more fully understand the impact the visual art program aimed at promoting empathy had on a population of middle school students and to critically examine the results gained from the quantitative findings, the qualitative data in the form of observation notes, student interviews, and artistic products were analyzed. Findings are consistent with the literature. Specifically, analysis showed that visual arts is an effective modality for encouraging adolescent populations

to engage in identity exploration (Block et al., 2005; Emunah, 1990; Fliegel, 2000; Landgarten, 1985; Linesch, 1988; Moon, 1999; Riley, 1994; Wallace-DiGarbo, 2006). Further, findings suggest several themes that are related to empathy development through visual art with adolescents. These themes include, self-awareness and adolescent empathy development, attention and consistency given to space, high student-to-teacher ratios, and adequate time for students to engage in the artistic process including independent and group reflection time. These themes are discussed in detail as follows.

Visual Arts is an Effective Modality for Adolescent Populations

First and foremost, qualitative findings confirmed and are in agreement with education and art therapy literature that visual art when grounded in theories of art therapy and developmental theory is a highly engaging modality for self-exploration amongst adolescents. Stated simply, the participants of this study enjoyed themselves and were highly motivated throughout the art-making program. This study agrees with what I have found in previous professional work that expression through visual imagery acts as a less threatening form of healthy identity exploration and expression—this posited by Erikson to be an essential component of human development (Erikson, 1968, 1980; Riley, 1999; Wallace-DiGarbo& Hill, 2006). For example, a theme that was evident and communicated via interviews was that participants felt that the program's emphasis on the art process allowed them to achieve constructive and informative feedback from their peers and thus understand their own process in a new way, deepening self-awareness and identity. When analyzing the artistic products, the attention to details on a number of the footprints indicated that most participants engaged in thoughtful exploration of self by way of visual exploration.

Originally, this study aimed to specifically target low-income, urban, Latino adolescents. As stated above the population of this study enjoyed the artistic process and was motivated throughout the program. However, there was no specific data that indicated that this population enjoyed the artistic process in a greater or different degree compared to different populations.

Connected to adolescent populations and what was very evident according to analysis of the qualitative data was that the art process prompted the participants of this study to look more deeply at their identity—a developmental task that is desired at this age.

Self-Awareness and Adolescent Empathy Development

Analysis of the qualitative data in the form of interviews, observations, and artistic products gathered throughout this program indicated that the visual art program prompted behavior that is indicative of the beginning stages of empathy development, namely: self-awareness. Analysis of the art indicated that participation in this program appeared to encourage participants to create richer and more detailed artwork based on their own experiences versus the artwork made about their peers' experiences. This was specifically seen in the artistic products where footprints made about the individual are literally multidimensional versus the footprints made about their partners which were flat and depicted somewhat clichéd content. In other words, I found that students demonstrated higher levels of self-awareness in comparison to awareness of other and ultimately concern for others.

Participants readily engaged in artistic self-expression that communicated their own personal narrative. Participants organized their compositions in a way that defined their identity by space. For example, participants created miniature environments that represented memories of family vacations, where they lived, and their schools. This type of composition elucidated a

narrative element that when compared to footprints made about their partner was much more complex. However, participants showed a willingness to begin to understand and artistically express the experiences of their partner/peer. For example, participants attempted to learn new information about their partner however this information was mainly consisted of facts (favorite color or sports team) which was developmentally appropriate yet lacked depth. Analysis of work done about partners was that there was evidence of a lack of sustained engagement with their partners' content and thus the artwork reflected this by appearing less developed (i.e., limited details, low craftsmanship, and difficulty describing why artistic decisions were made). It is important to note that this was not the case for all participants, however, and when asked during qualitative interviews, some participants commented that they learned something new about their partner.

Current literature can provide a possible explanation. Literature on empathy development with adolescents suggests that empathy development begins with a clear sense of self (Hoffman, 2000). In addition, during this stage of development the preeminent task is to develop identity (Erikson, 1980). Adolescents are using advances in cognitive development to become fully aware of themselves and where they fit within their community. At this developmental stage, teens are separating from the parental units and are looking to understand their identity through social settings, for example school and team sports thus it makes sense then that this would be the content they would depict when creating art about a peer. Erikson's theories speak to the importance and need for adolescents to explore their identity via social interactions stating that healthy adolescent development primarily focuses on the adolescent's ability to feel a sense of safety in exploring their environment including members of their

community, the outcome being a mastery of her/his environment and place in society (Erikson, 1968). The adolescent participants involved in this study acted in a way that is developmentally typical. Adolescents showed a greater desire to explore how their personal narrative impacts their identity versus their peer. By engaging in this process of self-expression by creating visual representations of experiences allowed participants to begin to increase their sense of self, the first step in empathy development. In addition, several participants stated that they enjoyed and benefited from getting feedback from another peer including hearing their peer's perspective of how their work was interpreted.

Connected to this idea that students enjoyed creating art together is something that I have can best describe as a parallel process of artistic self-discovery. In other words, students engaged in a simultaneous process of developing self-understanding through creative expression side by side with their peers who were also developing self-understanding through the creative arts. This experience allowed the participants to learn about self through other. For example, I learn about myself by watching another learn about themselves. This parallel process can be explained as being similar to a developmental milestone seen in early childhood development called parallel play. In this case, parallel play means that young children play similarly near each other, even if they do not necessarily play, interact, or engage the other. During the art lesson, participants were observed to make art side by side with their peers, much like parallel play. Participants were engaged in similar activities (creating art about themselves next to another doing the same), which prompted them to experience similar feelings. Participants witnessed their peers exploring personally relevant content that was connected to lived experiences. By being witness to their own self-discovery experiences, students were more aware that their peers

were engaged in similar self-discovery processes. However, students did not necessarily share their peers' affective experience.

Lastly, adolescents are heavily involved in a process that is marked by substantial advances in cognitive growth. Goldstein and Winner (2012) stated that cognitive growth such as perspective-taking skills which underlie empathy continue to develop throughout middle childhood and early adolescence and therefore this is a "prime developmental period for empathy training where it will most likely have an impact" (p. 22). These authors highlighted that certain cognitive skills, necessary for empathy development, are in varying levels of development and still being honed during adolescence. Therefore because these skills are still in developmental stages and in addition focused on self-discovery, my assessment of empathic advances was difficult to measure with a quantitative tool. To accommodate for this I utilized qualitative measures, (observations, analysis of the art products, and pre/post student interviews) where as noted above the more intricate and multilayered aspects of empathy development became visible during this process, specifically increased self-awareness.

Attention and Consistency Given to Space

Due to unavoidable changes in the school schedule, and much to my dismay the location of the visual art program was changed mid program. This change in location seemingly impacted the trajectory of the program and may shed light on what was discovered in the quantitative analysis. As recalled from the previous analysis section, quantitative findings indicated that a significant change in empathy did occur amongst the eighth-grade group—a decrease in prosocial response/concern for others. When consulting the literature, the space change might have disrupted the students' feelings of containment and also heightened their

defenses, resulting in more competitive and self-serving behavior compared to prosocial behavior (sharing, assisting others, concern or attention given to another's needs)—therefore resulting in a decrease in prosocial behavior as seen in the quantitative measure. The following will discuss in more detail how the change in space might have impacted the development of empathy as seen through the art therapy literature.

Originally, we were meeting with each group separately in their classrooms. In this environment students appeared to be at ease, seemingly enjoying making the art while in the comfortable and predicable environment of their day-to-day classroom. Due to the change in schedule and in order to complete the program and accommodate for the larger group we had to meet with both groups simultaneously now in a larger space—the cafeteria. The change in space seems to have greatly impacted the outcome of the program and thus the development of empathy. It is speculated that because of this unplanned, yet major disruption, the students' initial feelings of safety and containment were altered and therefore their interactions with each other became guarded vs. open and accepting, the latter a climate more conducive to empathy development. This was evidenced in the drastic change in the participant's behavior from one day to the next. We observed feelings of anxiety, unrest, and general chaos when the program was moved from the students' classroom where they had been seated in a familiar configuration with their classmates to the drastically less confined, noisy, cafeteria space. This change in space appeared to greatly influence the authentic dialogue and safety in expression that students appeared to feel prior to the space change. In addition, the change in space altered how we were able to attend to the participants. The layout of the cafeteria did not afford an environment where we could attend to the individual students as well as we had when we were in the

classroom. The long tables made it difficult to keep work spaces organized and distribute supplies and the now open seating arrangements noticeably changed the dynamics of both groups where participants were now more focused on socializing than introspection through art. Also, from our perspective it became very difficult to observe and document the participants' artistic process, find time to interview the interviewees and thus engage in dialogue about artistic decisions. At the end of each session my research assistants and I commented on how tired we were and how it almost felt like we had been waiting tables versus leading and explorative art project.

Prior to the space change we observed students to be—compared to the cafeteria, quietly—enjoying dialogue in small groups about personal feelings that might be difficult to discuss, namely, greatest fears. The abrupt change in space and group dynamic appeared to have altered the participants' behavior, seemingly heightening their defense mechanisms, causing students to react in a more anxious, defended, protective, and less emotionally vulnerable manner. This is relevant to this study because empathy requires a willingness to make yourself vulnerable and open (Johnson, 2009; Maynard et al., 2011; Moon, 1999). One must feel comfortable authentically sharing personal experiences in order for empathy to develop.

I sought to understand this drastic change in behavior by referring to the art therapy literature. Judith Rubin (1984, 1999, 2005), a widely respected practicing art therapist, researcher, and writer, discussed the "critical artistry" of "setting the stage," or arranging the space in preparation for art therapy groups. With regards to physical space she stated, "[It's the] the actual arrangement of furniture, easels, and art supplies within the available space. This should be done thoughtfully and as consistently as possible from session to session (Rubin,

1984,p. 79) otherwise “the physical stage which is set by the art therapist has a much more significant effect on what happens during the session than is generally supposed” (p. 81). This same author continues by stating that by creating a space that is consistent, has adequate light, and limited interruptions, the facilitator is creating a space that is more conducive to authentic engagement with the arts. This element is key. Authentic engagement with the art means that the creator is thoughtfully creating art about personal content. In most cases the individual will take positive risks to accurately represent a desired visual result. In addition, relevant to the findings of this study were Rubin’s (1984) commented about how the physical space must exhibit a balance of organization and stimulation. Rubin maintained that “the ideal is an environment that is both orderly and stimulating, which looks and feels inviting” (1984, p. 80). Prior to the space change, students were seated in an environment that offered more structure and thus organization. Their classroom environment was set up so that students were organized in small groups seated at multiple round tables. Materials were located along the back wall of the classroom and were collected as needed. This composition during the former part of the program was more conducive for myself and my research assistant to facilitate the program. After the students were moved to the cafeteria they now were seated at long cafeteria tables where they were grouped with different configurations of peers and materials were distributed down the length of the table making them at times difficult to see and keep organized. Because of this change in space, subsequent peer grouping, the way materials were distributed, and the way we were able to interact with them it is likely that the students experienced an upheaval midway through the program. This upheaval appeared to greatly change their relationship to their artistic expression where momentum was interrupted and comfort was disrupted. Observations of the art

making indicated an internal process that shifted from a calm state to a more anxious state. For example, the artistic products before the space change appear more detailed and neater compared to artistic products after the space change that appear rushed, messy, and disorganized.

In a more recent publication, Rubin (1999) wrote specifically about how the facilitator must be aware of the physical properties of space in order to evoke authentic and creative work. "What is added is a need for clarity and consistency in offering materials, evoking their use, facilitating expression, and dealing with artistic products." This was relevant to what we found in the interactions between participants—their dialogue as well as their artistic process, appeared to be more deliberate and authentic when they were stationed in their classroom. After the space change, dialogue became loud and tangential amongst the participants and their artistic processes appeared disorganized and rushed. In addition, our dialogue with the participants became rushed and I would argue anxious as well. Rubin offered a possible hypothesis for this change in behavior: "Creating an environment in which people can feel metaphorically "held" and secure is as much an art as a science, regardless of the actual setting" (Rubin, 1999, p.142). Rubin pointed to the importance of creating a space that is consistent and safe feeling for participants to comfortably engage in exploration of personal content.

Rubin's recommendations on space were highly relevant to a program aimed at building prosocial behavior in the form of empathy in a school setting. When attempting to build empathic relationships in the classroom there is a clear need educators to give strong attention to the physical space in which in this case an art program is conducted and how this affects behavior. In addition, attention to how not only physical space but emotional space might evoke responses in participants should be as deeply considered. Providing consistency in the space

would be optimal for a program aimed at empathy development because consistency enables participants to feel less anxious and more relaxed in the environment. However, the nature of school settings is that teachers and students must frequently endure change. Consistency is not always possible and flexibility is a skill that is often needed to accommodate the many schedules, deadlines, and unintended events that schools face. However, what research on art therapy might provide educators with is this notion of attention to space and how to work with space in the best possible way. Creating a safe space does not have to be solely defined by the physical aspects of the space. For example, I have found that creating rituals in the way content is presented or how materials are distributed provides students with a sense of control (they know what will happen next) which in turn allows for a feeling of safety. Or as the facilitator, setting expectations that social interactions and behavior will be respectful and positive is also key in creating a safe place for empathy to develop. These expectations allow participants to feel supported by the group and less vulnerable when exploring personal content. Rubin stated, "And it is true that setting things up in a facilitating fashion will help patients to feel less anxious and usually less confused" (1984, p. 86). Therefore there are other strategies that would allow educators to create a space that feels safe and supportive.

High Facilitator to Student Ratio

The absence of significant change in affective and cognitive empathy could have been influenced by the lack of resources in the form of low facilitator to participant ratio. Related to the idea of "setting the stage" for artistic production, a significant amount of literature focuses on how specifically the classroom leader—whether that be a general education teacher or teaching artist, has an impact on the development of prosocial behavior amongst groups of students.

(Gerdes et al., 2011; Orzulak, 2006; Phillips, 2003; Stout, 1999; Ridette-Moore, 2009).With regards to this study, connected to the change in space and empathy development is how the program facilitators tended to the needs of each student. The group size went from two groups of approximately 25 participants to one group of approximately 50. The outcome was utter chaos. We spent the majority of our time gathering and delivering supplies to students instead of assisting them to focus on their artistic process, make deliberate and thoughtful decisions, reflect on why they chose what they chose, discourage any dialogue that was unhelpful and anxiety provoking, and document the program. Because the visual art program embodied multiple steps and asked the students to engage in deep self-exploration, it was crucial that there be a high teacher/facilitator/instructor to student ratio. I had hoped to have helped the participants to converse and reflect on artistic choices and let them know that their choices and thus artistic processes are seen and valued. This is connected to empathy in that Jeffers (2009) clearly stated that a sustained interaction must occur in order for empathy to develop. It is possible that empathy was negatively affected because we were unable to spend time with participants individually and collectively. The environment just became too chaotic for us to circulate in the manner we would have preferred. What we had hoped for was that we would have been able to ask questions the participants about their choices and help them to make connections between their affective and cognitive processes and their artistic products (i.e., why did you choose to use this color to represent this experience?). Knowing this, future arts programs focused on empathy development are encouraged to embed a higher teacher-to-student ratio and promote greater student reflection.

Adequate Time

Qualitative data gained from the participant interviews suggested that if more time was available, their artistic work, and more specifically, the artwork made about their peers, would have been more detailed and thoughtful. In addition, when looking to the literature on adolescent development, several theorists state that at this developmental stage adolescents are in the midst of cognitive advances where thought processes are primarily focused on self-exploration.

Several participants commented that they felt that in order to truly make art about their peer more interaction needed to have happened. This is connected to the literature on empathy where Jeffers (2009) recommended that in order to develop empathy there must be a sustained interaction. In other words, there needs to be adequate time for participants to reflect and connect emotional content not only about their artistic creations but about those of their peers. The participants' comments appear to indicate that the program instigated some initial attempts at understanding a peer's experience yet there was a lack of sustained interaction necessary for their developmental needs. This lack of sustained interaction ended up leaving the artwork and descriptions flat and somewhat superficial and possibly explains why there was no significant change in empathy. Possibly stricter time management of when to work on individual footprints vs. partner footprints might have prompted more sustained focus on investigation of information to include on the partner footprint. More focus on the partner footprint might have allowed for greater understanding of their partner and increased empathy towards their partner. Rubin (1999) offered further explanation stating that "time and frequency are also important elements of the framework. Many kinds of art activities need adequate time as well as sufficient space,

and in some require continuity" (Rubin, 1999, p. 142). Other literature paralleled what the participants stated in that "the process of visualizing, problem solving and talking about art may not produce immediate results, but it does provide children with the options of alternative ways of representing experience" (Veale, 1991, p. 4). Simply put, making meaningful pieces of art takes time and focus—especially if you are an adolescent that is just developing a sense of identity. In addition, traditional school classrooms do not tend to spend significant time on curriculums that ask students to focus on self-exploration. Therefore, the particular participants of this study were engaged in a task that was new and also very intriguing given their developmental state. Asking them to complete their introspection during only a 1-hour long segment can presumably be interpreted as not being enough time. For example, Goldstein and Winner (2012) found that early adolescent students needed to be involved in a visual and performing arts program for 1 year before there was a change in behavior- specifically empathy.

Also embodied within this criterion of adequate time is sufficient time to reflect on process. Literature on empathy development specifically through the arts frequently discusses how the act of dialoguing and sustaining a reflection process on one's own art as well as a peer's impacts empathy development (Ridette-Moore, 2009; Stout, 1999). Given that empathy has been established in the literature as a concept that is developmental in nature, time is an essential component necessary to capture growth in empathy. As such, it is possible that the art program did not afford enough time for empathy to development especially with this population and within the studies context. Therefore, with regards to the quantitative data, the time between pre- and post administration of surveys may not have been substantial enough to capture change.

Summary of Qualitative Findings

In summary, qualitative findings uncovered several themes involved in facilitating an effective visual arts program aimed at promoting empathy with an adolescent population in a school setting. First, findings were consistent with education and psychology literature where visual art was found to be an effective modality to motivate this population of students to explore self-identity. However, further studies would benefit from comparing and contrasting how this particular process of identity exploration via visual art is received by different cultural groups of student populations. In addition, the developmental stage of the participants was found to be highly influential in the development of empathy. Next, literature taken from the field of art therapy assisted in explaining qualitative findings and helped to more clearly articulate how the physical space and time restrictions might impact the art making of adolescent population and be relevant to educational settings. Space was found to be a large factor in determining the type of engagement participants had with each other as well as their artistic process. Being consistent with where an arts program is facilitated or if that is not possible setting up other elements that can be consistent (distribution of materials, schedule of events, seating configurations) was important in creating a safe place for participant expression conducive for empathy development. Also, this study found that a high teacher/facilitator to student ratio influenced the way participants reflected on their process. This therefore impacting the development of higher level thinking about their artistic process and product which impacts the sustained engagement necessary to promote empathy. Lastly, time appears to be a factor that impacted empathy. Adequate time is necessary especially for this population of adolescents to engage in the artistic process including independent and group reflection.

Limitations

Developmental Stage

There are a number of limitations in this study. Primarily, empathy is a very difficult concept to measure. Existing literature on empathy conveyed that empathy was difficult to define (Gerdes et al., 2011; Ridette-Moore, 2009; Phillips, 2003) and also embedded in a variety of descriptions on self-processes. In addition, empathy is developmental and thus empathy will vary from person to person based on their developmental level, external and internal factors. Ridette-Moore (2009) observed that "empathy, [which] is never static and stable but always relational and dynamic" (p. 3). Further, Gerdes et al. (2011) stated that empathy "has not always been well- articulated as a communicable and teachable concept" (p. 109). Specifically, when looking to the literature on adolescent development, theorists note that adolescents are developmentally primarily focused on self. This appropriate cognitive preoccupation then makes developing an awareness of other and thus empathic interactions more difficult.

To better accommodate for the fact that empathy might be difficult to evaluate multiple measures were put in place including a quantitative pretest and posttest, along with qualitative measures in the form of observation notes, pre- and post-semi-structured interviews, and actual art products made throughout the duration of the program. The triangulation of multiple forms of data allowed for a more thorough and multidimensional evaluation.

Quantitative Measure

When choosing a quantitative pretest and posttest assessment, the BES was seemingly the best option to test empathy levels amongst the specified population as it was designed to be used specifically with adolescents (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006). In addition, the BES measured the

two subscales of empathy, cognitive and affective. Although the BES showed good internal reliability, the language of the survey along with the Concern for Others survey may have been foreign to this specific population. The Concern for Others survey, also designed for adolescent populations, posed questions in a format that may have been confusing for the participants as the majority of questions were posed using negative language. For example, "Everybody has enough problems of their own without worrying about other people's problems." or "I should just take care of myself and let others take care of themselves"(Child Development Project, 2005). Also, during the posttest there seemed to be some resistance to filling out the same survey measure and this may have led to some carelessness in answering authentically. In addition the length of the program and thus the time in between the pretest and posttest may not have been long enough for participants to manifest any change in empathy that would be recognized by the quantitative measure.

Visual Art Program

When looking critically at the visual art program itself there were several limitations that surfaced after analyzing the quantitative and qualitative data. It is my feeling that the curriculum that I implemented may have involved too many steps and thus was too complicated to be used with this particular population (adolescents) in this particular setting (a middle school). The change in physical space then exacerbated an already complicated process causing the participants and our research team to react with anxiety and thus in some instances defensively—the exact opposite of empathy. Also, because of this change in space the research team had difficulty attending to the participants' needs making the steps in the program even more difficult for the students to navigate. As noted earlier, research showed that empathy development in part

required that an individual be able to show some emotional vulnerability (Johnson, 2009; Maynard et al., 2011; Moon, 1999). This is difficult for the adolescent, theories speaking to how at this stage in development the adolescent is undergoing an immense shift in cognitive, physical, and emotional processing, making this a tumultuous and uncomfortable developmental stage. Because of this discomfort, adolescents may protect themselves with defense mechanisms such as, humor, avoidance, and resistance, (Linesch, 1988). The space change mid program likely instigating a feeling that is less safe for expression of personal content. This combined with a project that involved numerous steps that were both independent and collaborative may have heightened already present defense mechanisms to a point where becoming emotionally vulnerable was no longer an option.

The design of the visual art program combined with the space change mid program also impacted how the data were collected. Because the environment became so chaotic mid program researchers had a hard time collecting the data to the degree that was desired. For example, research assistants were asked to participate in the program with the instructions that they would be primarily collecting date by taking observation notes and taking photographs of the participants' artistic process and product. However, when both sixth and eighth-grade groups were combined in the cafeteria we found ourselves frantically trying to distribute materials to the group as well as manage a shortened time frame—therefore collecting data to the degree I had intended (especially data in the form of artistic process) became much more difficult.

Recommendations for Future Arts-Based Programs Aimed at Empathy Development

Recommendations for further study on how the arts can assist in the development of empathy through visual art include, consistency given to space, high teacher/facilitator-to-

participant ratio and research on facilitator knowledge, how to standardize assessment of the art to add to data collection, including participant feedback, considering cultural influences, altering the design of the study, extending the study to span a greater length of time, further research on the construct of empathy specifically looking at multidimensional approaches.

Visual Arts Programming

A well-organized consistent learning environment with engaging, developmentally appropriate content, facilitated by a high ratio of informed adult instructors, is key to building productive learning communities. This study emphasized that the students have a strong desire to learn about themselves and how they fit within their community and that artistic creation was an appropriate vehicle to do so. However, facilitators must be cognizant of what an arduous task this might be for young people and how we can best promote a climate that is conducive and supportive of this exploration. Providing a balance between structure and exploration in learning objectives and physical materials builds initiative yet limits feelings of being overwhelmed. Also it is optimal to be consistent about all aspects related to the learning process, including location, time, configurations of students, how materials are distributed, and how/when artistic expression will be reviewed and discussed. These recommendations may also provide implications for other educational practices with adolescents. For example, when working with large groups of adolescent aged students simplifying the project would be beneficial and also being sure to allow for adequate amounts of time with enough facilitators to help participants focus on the project at hand.

Space. Connected to program development, the fields of education- and art therapy would benefit from continued research on how physical and emotional space can influence the

behavior responses of participants engaged in artistic exploration. Specifically, this element of creating a safe and contained space for personal exploration has been studied extensively in the art therapy literature and appears to be useful also when looking at classroom environments. Future research that is aimed at understanding how a student's social and emotional needs can be met by providing consistency in space, be it physical space or psychological space (clear expectations, daily rituals) would be an interesting area for further study.

Facilitation. Also, future research that looked more deeply at the role of the arts program facilitator would prove useful. Understanding the role of the facilitator in helping students in a classroom environment to authentically express personal content via visual art would be useful for both educational fields as well as art therapy fields. It is recommended that future programs and research on the implementation of arts programs specifically aimed at addressing empathy development train educators to be aware of social emotional learning opportunities. Interventions in isolation do not impact cognitive and affective changes in empathy amongst adolescents. Those that facilitate the program, how they present content, and respond to participant expression will likely determine the level of empathy developed by the group. Being able to clearly delineate what is involved in being an arts instructor versus an art therapist has been a continual debate within the art therapy community. Continued research from an educational standpoint might offer both fields a framework for how to facilitate expression of emotional content in a way that is beneficial to the student yet appropriate and ethical for the classroom.

Art as assessment. Future research would benefit from a framework or criteria that allowed the actual art product to be used in the assessment of the program and student learning.

For example, developing a strategy or set of guidelines for educators to use when assessing how to view an artistic product, and in turn how to efficiently collect this type of data would allow for an increased understanding of how the content was being received by the participants. Researchers could then be afforded the rich data provided by the visual products made by participants, assessing how the participants' artwork was a direct reflection of their ideas by being able to ask questions throughout the process.

Participant feedback. Arts-programming would benefit immensely from continued feedback offered by the student participants themselves throughout the duration of the program. For example, budgeting time within arts programs for personal reflection in the form of personal journals or discussions would provide an abundance of information that is relevant to the target population. Allowing students to reflect and assess their process in the form of journal entries would be a valuable tool for both student self-expression and facilitator knowledge and assessment. Students can adjust their participation and facilitators can make efforts to accommodate the needs of participants to best ensure the environment is conducive for authentic self-exploration.

Cultural considerations. In addition to participant feedback, it is recommended that future visual arts programming aimed at empathy development strongly consider cultural backgrounds of the participants. Also, comparing this populations reactions to a more affluent population looking for differences in impact of empathy. The population of this study included low-income, urban, Latino, adolescents who may have added pressures that are related to their cultural environments; immigrant backgrounds, single parent homes, financial instability, and higher instances of community violence. The research site is a school that serves largely

immigrant families coming from Mexico and other Central American countries. Approximately half of the families are single parent homes, headed in most cases by the mother who also must work. The average education levels of the participants' parents are 45% having some high school. Lastly, 200 out of the 215 students receive free/reduced lunch and all but a few receive assistance from the school's development program. These additional pressures may evoke a heightened defensive emotional state according to the literature (Barone et al., 1995; Bolland et al., 2001). It is safe to assume that the neighborhoods that these participants inhabit are represented by low SES. Research stated that neighborhoods that are lower in economic status tend to present with higher occurrences of stress and violence and youth inhabiting these areas would likely be in need of greater empathic community support (Barone et al., 1995; Bolland et al., 2001; Burdett Schiavona, 2009; Goldstein et al., 2007; Hart et al., 1998; Weigner, 1998; Wilson, 1987). Speaking specifically to issues related to immigration and development, the literature indicates that immigration can cause significant stress on an adolescent where there is tremendous pressure to acculturate to mainstream American norms while maintaining traditional cultural values. Umana-Taylor and Updegraff (2007) found that Latino adolescents demonstrate the highest risk for depression when compared to other ethnic groups due to perceived discrimination associated with cultural and ethnic identity formation. As stated earlier, empathy development requires an individual to be emotionally vulnerable, to let down defenses in order to understand the experiences of someone else. This might be difficult for a population that is insecure due to their developmental stage and in addition feels additional cultural pressures such as ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Therefore it is recommended that this line of research

investigate more specifically how visual arts programming specifically designed to impact empathy development varies in its effectiveness with different cultural groups.

Study design. Future research would benefit from altering the design of the study to a comparative study, including distinct experimental and control groups. Orchestrating a comparative study where there is an experimental group compared to a control group might further highlight the impact of the intervention (visual art program) on the changes in empathy components; affective, cognitive, and prosocial tendencies. Empathy is developmental in process and difficult to measure. All studies should consider using multiple measures of empathy to assist with the definitional variations in the concept. Future research might also consider extending the study to span a greater interval of time. Barr and Higgins-D'Alessandro (2009) suggested that "future research should investigate the longitudinal change and relationships of empathy and prosocial behavior with a younger population and with a population across a wide range of ages from grade school youth through adulthood" (p. 765). Because empathy is still in development in adolescence it would be beneficial to extend the length of the study so that the change in the dependent variable, empathy could be better monitored.

Empathy processes. In addition to methodological differences in future research studies, future research might also benefit from conceptual work on the construct of empathy. Future studies, for example, should research the construct of empathy further to understand how cognitive, affective, physiological, and developmental processes play into the overall adolescent experience in educational settings. Further research on the construct of empathy development and the variables that influence empathic behavior are necessary because there are many layers of empathy development that can occur in human development based on biological,

physiological, and environmental factors. There continues to be confusion on how to distinguish the cognitive and affective components of empathic process making any change difficult to measure. Currently, research indicates a growing consensus that presents a multidimensional approach to empathy—one that considers both the cognitive, affective, and developmental nature of empathy (Hoffman, 2000). Continuing to develop theories that are similar to and more multidimensional such as Hoffman's (2000) model of empathy would serve the educational community well. This approach takes into consideration how cognitive, affective, physiological, and developmental factors come into play during empathy development.

Conclusion

The arts allow for a deeper look into a person's emotional and psychological experience. When we have a greater awareness of how we are shaped by our own experiences we are more likley to make decisions that will serve us in a positive manner. In addition, reflecting on how personal lived experiences have influenced our life trajectories will more likely build compassion and acceptance towards how another has been shaped by their experiences. This shared understanding creates an empathic interaction that prompts the support and investment we have in one another's success. What I found through this study was that the visual art program I implemented with two groups of adolescents at their school prompted beginning stages of empathy development. Based on the qualitative data the participants showed an increased awareness of self evidenced by observations, interview responses and the detail that was clear when looking at their personal art pieces. Additionally, participants were oberved to have begun to cognitively grasp how another's expereince might impact their identity. Participants showed

an interest in learning about their partner however were not actively observed to share the affective or emotional experinces of their partner.

Throughout the implementation of the program, what struck me the most was that visual art with adolescent populations is a motivating tool for self-exploration—in mental health settings and seen in this school setting as well. I find this to be relevant to both of my fields of study, education and mental health. Self-exploration is the key developmental task of young adults where healthy identity exploration leads to positive transitions into adulthood. In addition, the population that I focused were made up of low-income, urban, Latino adolescents. Prior literature stated that this specific culture may be in greater need of opportunities for identity exploration as they face additional stressors compared to other teen populations, such as ethnic identity development, stressful home environments and neighborhoods that have high instances of violence. Although the results of this study did not determine if this population benefitted more than other populations it is safe to assume that because of their consistent motivation throughout the program an arts-based curriculum might provide underserved youth with needed opportunities for PYD—something I am very interested in further exploring with comparative studies. When considering PYD what I specifically aimed to impact throughout this weeklong visual art program was empathy. My hypothesis stated simply being that when a group of adolescents created art about their experiences and then subsequently a partners experiences the visual art would deepen the dialogue between the partners and empathy would be increased. What actually happened was a different story, one that was not so simple and dissappointed me at first. However, as I dove deeply into the analysis process I came out stregthening my understanding of both my work in education as well as art therapy.

What I did discover was that because the visual art is such a motivating tool to use with adolescents it is teaching strategy that requires a high level of structure and consistency. Our current education culture is one that does not ordinarily promote introspection and self exploraton via visual art as an important skill to be learned in school, especially when compared to the other subject areas for example, math, language arts, and science. However, encouraging students to tap into their emotions and learn what makes them unique can be used as a driving force to motivate learning in all content areas. Using visual art to explore self is highly stimulating to teen cultures and because it is not a typical teaching strategy students get excited at the novelty and may easily become overwhelmed. Therefore, a balance between stucture and exploration including consistency is crucial for adolescent students in order to promote an emotionally safe and focused environment.

However, structure and consistency are not always possible in a school setting and most general eduaction teachers are skilled at changing directions at a moments notice. What I noticed was that the trajectory of this program was significantly impacted when our team was asked to change the location of our instruction. Initially my team and I met with one grade at a time in each students' classroom. However, due to last minute scheduling issues we had to move into the school's cafeteria where we met with both grades at the same time. The result was quite honeslty chaos as you can imagine a large room full of 50 teenagers, emotions, and paint might be. As I sorted through the data after the program it became quite clear that the participants interactions with their art, with their peers, and thus their empathy towards one another was influenced by this change in space. Additionally, this change in the program layout changed my interactions with the students, my research assistants, and the way I was able to collect data.

Evaluation of this program shed light on how important it is to carefully consider the details of how and where the program will be implemented, by who, and what types of materials will be provided. Most vividly what I recall is the lack of attention I could give each student and thus the way I understood their experiences and the art they were creating. Based on my professional work as an art therapist, I have seen that visual art provides an effective vehicle for self-exploration and empathy building if the facilitator can give individuals adequate attention and keep participants authentically engaged in the process. What can be taken away from this experience is confirmation that in order for education environments to have student success it is necessary to have adequate resources in the form of high teacher-to-student ratios.

Because of the design of this study where I was the researcher and the facilitator, I struggled with collecting the qualitative data to the degree that I had intended, especially the art data. As I mentioned above I was not afforded enough time to be able to dialogue during the art-making portion of the program with the students about their artwork. When it came time to analyze the art I did not feel ethically right about making conclusions about a student's art because I had not witnessed the process including their words about their art. I struggled with how to include these data in the analysis knowing that the art definitely held within it a rich source of data. I became very aware of the importance of including opportunities for relfection when creating visual art programs—this process allowing the creator and the viewer to have a deeper understanding of their choices and thus themselves. It became more difficult to include the art as a form of data and easier to abandon my original hopes to present the art as a valid form of qualitative methodology. Thankfully I was supported and encouraged to hold on to the integrity of the art as data and arranged to have a focus group with several working art therapists.

What was gained from this focus group was valuable information that verified what I had begun to see in the other forms of qualitative data and what was invisible when just looking at the quantitative survey analysis. What was learned here is that there is still a lot of work to be done on how to incorporate visual art as a rigorous form of data. Creating tools, rubrics, and other assessment strategies that the general educator as well as the creative arts educator can quickly refer to would open the door to a whole wealth of information about our students' learning processes.

I think that what can sum up this study was an expereince I had on the last day of the program. Feeling somewhat defeated by how chaotic the art making had become I was approached by a young man in eighth grade. This young man had initially measured on the quantitative survey measure as having the lowest levels of empathy in eighth grade. When asked to be interviewed as part of my qualitative data collection, he not surprisingly declined. However on this particular day, he approached me hesitantly and awkwardly asked if there might be another opportunity to be involved in group art-making activity. This I feel is an appropriate way to end discussion of this study. What this visual art program was able to do was spark a desire to learn about self and other and with more time and more research we will continue to see that informed implementation of visual arts programming really does promote a desire in our young people to grow and understand themselves and their peers.

APPENDIX A

Brainstorming Worksheet

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

Lines can be used to visually express your emotions.

The way we visually express ourselves is unique and different, there are no right or wrong answers.

Please look at these lines and reflect on what feelings they remind you of or how they make you feel.

Below each expressive line write a descriptive word about what the line expresses for you.

Now create your own expressive lines!

Use colors that correspond to emotions to draw lines that express a time when you felt:

Proud of yourself	Lonely	Relaxed	Angry	Loved

APPENDIX B

Partner Interview Questions

What is one of the hardest things you've ever done? or What has been one of your biggest challenge?

What is one of the best gifts you've ever received?

When was a time when you were really excited?

When was a time when you were really nervous?

What is a story your family likes to tell about you? or What is one of the funniest or most embarrassing stories your family tells about you?

What is your biggest fear or worry?

What is the something that makes you unique? or What is the most amazing thing about you?

Where were you born?

Do you know how you got your name? or Do you like your name?

What is your greatest strength?

What is your greatest weakness?

How do you show your love for others?

Have you ever been to a hospital? Why?

What is something you've done that you are most proud of?

What is one word you would use to describe yourself? or How would your friends describe you?

What was one of happiest moments of your life?

What was one of the saddest moments of your life?

If you could hold on to just one memory from your life forever, what would that be?

When in life have you felt most alone?

When you feel sad, what cheers you up?

APPENDIX C

Basic Empathy Scale (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2006)

The following are characteristics that may or may not apply to you. Please check one answer for each statement to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Please answer as honestly as you can.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My friend's emotions don't affect me much.					
2. After being with a friend who is sad about something, I usually feel sad.					
3. I can understand my friend's happiness when she/he does well at something.					
4. I get frightened when I watch characters in a scary movie.					
5. I get caught up in other people's feelings easily.					
6. I find it hard to know when my friends are frightened.					
7. I don't become sad when I see other people crying.					

8. Other people's feelings don't bother me at all.					
9. When someone is feeling 'down' I can usually understand how they feel.					
10. I can usually work out when my friends are scared.					
11. I often become sad when watching sad things on TV or in movies.					
12. I can often understand how people are feeling even before they tell me.					
13. Seeing a person who is angry has no effect on my feelings.					
14. I can usually work out when people are happy					
15. I tend to feel scared when I am with friends who are afraid.					
16. I can usually realize quickly when a friend is angry.					
17. I often get caught up in my friend's feelings.					

18. My friend's unhappiness doesn't make me feel anything.					
19. I am not usually aware of my friend's feelings					
20. I have trouble figuring out when my friends are happy.					

APPENDIX D

Concern for Others Survey(Child Development Project, 2005)

Internal Consistency (α)= .81

Item

Most people who ask for help are just being lazy. [R]

I only care about my family and my friends; other people can take care of themselves. [R]

People should look after themselves and not try to solve other people's problems. [R]

I should just take care of myself and let others take care of themselves. [R]

People should work out their own problems by themselves. [R]

A student has enough schoolwork to do without worrying about other students' work. [R]

Problems in other parts of the world are not my concern. [R]

When I see someone having a problem, I want to help.

Everybody has enough problems of their own without worrying about other people's problems. [R]

When I hear about people who are sad or lonely, I want to do something to help.

Response scale: 1 = disagree a lot, 2 = disagree a little, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree a little, 5 = agree a lot. [R] indicates reverse-scored item.

APPENDIX E

Observation Template

Date:
Time:
Participants:
Location:

Time	Observations	Notes to Self

REFERENCES

Albert, R. (2010). Being both: An integrated model of art therapy and alternative education. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, *27*(2): 90-95.doi: 10.1080/07421656.2010.10129713

Albiero, P., Matricardi, G., Speltri, D., & Toso, D. (2009). The assessment of empathy in adolescence: A contribution to the Italian validation of the "Basic Empathy Scale." *Journal of Adolescence, 32*(2), 393-408.doi: 10.1016/j.adolescence.2008.01.001

Ang, R. P., & Goh, D. H. (2010). Cyberbullying among adolescents: The role of affective and cognitive empathy, and gender. *Child Psychiatry Human Development, 41*, 387–397. doi: 10.1007/s10578-010-0176-3

Barr, J. J. & Higgins D'Alessandro, A. (2009). How adolescent empathy and prosocial behavior change in the context of school culture: a two year longitudinal study. *Adolescence 44*(176), 751-772.

Barone, C., Weissberg, R., Kaprow, W., & Voyce, C. (1995).Involvement in multiple problem behaviors of young, urban adolescents. *Journal of Primary Prevention, 15*, 261-283.doi: 10.1007/BF02197475

Baxley, G. (1993, March). *Building resiliency in youth: Imagine the difference!* Paper presented at the National Conference of the Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse Prevention, Washington, DC.

Bedolla, L. G. (2000). They and we: Identity, gender, and politics among Latino youth in Los Angeles. *Social Science Quarterly, 81*(1), 106-122.

Block, D., Harris, T., & Laing, S. (2005). Open studio process as a model of social action: A program for at-risk youth. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association, 22*(1), 32-38.doi: 10.1080/07421656.2005.10129459

Bolland, J. M., McCallum, D. M., Lian, B., Bailey, C. J., & Rowan, P.(2001).Hopelessness and violence among inner-city youths. *Maternal and Child Health Journal, 5*(4), 237-244.

Brice Heath, S.,& Roach, A. (1999).Imaginative actuality: Learning in non-school hours. In E. B. Fiske (Ed.),*Champions of change: The impact of the arts on learning* (pp. 19-34).Washington, DC: The Arts Education Partnership.

Bryant, K. (1982). An index for empathy for children and adolescents. *Child Development, 53*(2), 413-425.Doi: 10.2307.1128984

Burdett Schiavona, D. (2009).The effects of exposure to community violence on aspects of adolescent identity development. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing, 22*(2), 99-105.doi: 10.1111/j.1744-6171.2009.00178.x

Burnette, G., & Walz, G. (1994).*Gangs in the Schools* (Rep.No.EDO-CG-94-28). Greensbro, NC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services.

Burton, J., Horowitz, R., & Abeles, H.(1999).Learning through the arts: 5-part visual art lesson Implications. In E. B. Fiske (Ed.),*Champions of change: The impact of the arts on learning* (pp.35-46).Washington, DC: The Arts Education Partnership.

Calley, N. G., & Gerber, S. (2008).Empathy promoting counseling strategies for juvenile offender: A developmental approach. *Journal of Addictions and Offender Counseling, 28*(2), 68-86.doi: 10.1002/j.2161-1874.2008.tb00034.x

Cartwright, P. & Noone, L. (2006). Critical imagination: A pedagogy for engaging pre-service teachers in the university classroom. *College Quarterly, 9*(4).

Catterall, J. S. (1998).Does experience in the arts boost academic achievement? *Art Education, 5*(3), 6–11.

Catterall, J. S., Chapleau, R., & Iwanaga, J. (1999).Involvement in the arts and human development: General involvement and intensive involvement in music and theater arts. In E. B. Fiske (Ed.), *Champions of change: The impact of the arts on learning* (pp.1-18).Washington, DC: The Arts education Partnership.

Catterall, J. (2009).*Doing well and doing good by doing art: A 12-year national study of education in the visual and performing arts effects on achievements and values of young adults.* Los Angeles, CA: Imagination Group/I-Group Books.

Catterall, J.(2011). *A neuroscience of art and human empathy: Aligning behavioral and brain imaging evidence* [Working Paper].Retrieved from the California Institute for the Arts: http://www.croc-lab.org/

Child Development Project (2005).*Concern for others*.[Developmental Studies Center].Retrieved from http://www.devtu.org/sites/default/files/media/pdfs/cdp/DSC_MidSch_scales.pdf.

Chin, R.J., Chin, M. M., Palomba, P., Palomba, C., Bannasch, G., & Cross, P.M. (1980).Project reachout: Building social skills through art and video. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 7*, 281-284.doi: 10.1016/0197-4556(80)90007-6

Cockroft, E., Weber, J., & Cockroft, J. (1997)*Towards a people's art.* New York, NY: E. P. Dutton.

Cohen, C., & Strayer, J. (1996). Empathy in conduct-disordered and comparison youth. *Developmental Psychology, 32*(6), 988-998.doi: 10.1037//0012-1649.32.6.988

Comerford Boyes, L., & Reid, I.(2005).What are the benefits for pupils participating in arts activities: The view from the research literature. *Research in Education, 73*, 1-14.

Ciornai, S.(1983).Art therapy with working class Latina women. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 2*, 63-65.doi: 10.1016/0197-4556(83)90032-1

D'Ambrosio, F., Olivier, M., Didon, D., & Besche, C. (2009). The basic empathy scale: A French validation of a measure of empathy in youth. *Personality and Individual Differences, 46,* 160-165. doi:10.1016/j.paid.2008.09.020

Damon, W.(2004).What is positive youth development? *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 591,* 13-24.doi: 10.1177/0002716203260092

Darell, E., & Wheeler, M.(1984).Using art therapy techniques to help underachieving seventh grade junior high school students. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 11*, 289-292.doi: 10.1016/0197-4556(84)90027-3

Davis, M. H. (1980). A multidimensional approach to individual differences in empathy. *JSAS Catalog of Selected Documents in Psychology, 10,* 85.

Deasy, R. J. (Ed.).(2002). *Critical links: Learning in the arts and student academic and social development.* Washington, DC: Arts Education Partnership.

Decety, J. (2012). (Ed.). *Empathy.* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Dissanayake, E.(1995). *Homoaetheticus: Where art comes from and why.* New York, NY: Maxwell Macmillan International.

Dryfoos, J. G. (1990).*Adolescents at risk: Prevalence and prevention*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Eisenberg, N., & Strayer, J.(Eds.).(1987). *Empathy and its development.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Eisner, E.(1998). *The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill.

Eisner, E.W. (2003).The arts and the creation of mind. *Language Arts, 80*(5), 340–344.

Emunah, R. (1990). Expression and expansion of adolescence: The significance of creative arts therapy. *The Arts in Psychotherapy, 17,* 101-107.doi: 10.1016/0197-4556(90)90019-M

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York, NY: Norton.

Erikson, E. H. (1980). *Identity and the life cycle*. New York, NY: Norton.

Feshbach, N. D. (1978). Studies in empathic behavior in children. *Progress in Experimental Personality Research, 8,* 1-47.

Fine, M.(1991). *Framing dropouts.* Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Fiske, E.(Ed.).(1999).*Champions of change: The impact of the arts on learning*. Washington, DC: The Arts Education Partnership and the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

Fliegel, L. S. (2000). An unfound door: Reconceptualizing art therapy as a community-linked treatment. *Journal of Art Therapy, 38*(3).

Freire, P.(1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Seabury.

Gallese, V. (2009).Mirror neurons, embodied simulation, and the neural basis of social identification. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues, 19*, 519-536.doi: 10.1080/10481880903231910

Gasman, M.,& Andersen-Thompkins, S.(2003).A renaissance on the eastside: Motivation inner-city youth through art. *Journal of Education for Students Placed At Risk, 8*(4), 429-450.doi: 10.1207/S15327671ESPR0804_4

Gerdes, K. E.,& Segal, E. A. (2009).A social work model of empathy. *Advances in Social Work, 10*(2), 114-127.

Gerdes, K. E., Jackson, K. F., Mullins, J. L., & Segal, E. A.(2011).Teaching empathy in social cognitive neuroscience and social justice. *Journal of Social Work, 47*(1), 109-131.

Gillham, J. E., Reivich, K., & Shatte, A. (2002).Positive youth development, prevention, and positive psychology: Commentary on positive youth development in the United States. *Prevention and Treatment, 5*(18), [no pagination]. doi: 10.1037/1522-3736.5.1.518c

Goldstein, A., Walton, M., Cunningham, R., Trowbridge, M., & Maio, R.(2007).Violence and substance use as risk factors for depression among adolescents in an urban emergency department. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 40*(3), 276–279.

Goldstein, T. R.,& Winner, E. (2012). Enhancing empathy and theory of Mind. *Journal of Cognition and Development, 13*(1), 19-37.doi: 10.1080/15248372.2011.573514

Gomez, B. J.,& Mei-Mei Ang, P.(2007).Promoting positive youth development in schools. *Theory into Practice 46*(2), 97-104.

Goodenow, C. (1993). Classroom belonging among early adolescent students: Relationships to motivation and achievement. *The Journal of Early Adolescence, 13*(21), 21-43.doi: 10.1177/0272431693013001002

Greenberg Garrison, E., Roy, S. I., & Azar, V. (1999).Responding to mental health needs of Latino children and families through school-based services. *Clinical Psychology Review, 19*(2), 199-219.

Greene, M. (1995). *Releasing the imagination: Essays on education, the arts, and social change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Grushka, K. (2009).Meaning and identities: A visual performative pedagogy for socio-cultural learning. *The 5-Part Visual Art Lesson Journal, 20*(3), 237-251. doi: 10.1080/09585170903195860

Gullatt, D. E. (2007) Research links the art with student academic gains. *The Educational Forum, 71*, 211-220. doi: 10.1080/00131720709335006

Halverson, E. R. (2010).*Artistic production processes as venues for positive youth development* (WCER Working Paper No.2010-2). Retrieved from http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/publications/workingPapers/papers.php

Hart, D., Atkins, R., & Ford, D.(1998).Urban America as a context for the development of moral identity in adolescence. *Journal of Social Issues, 54*(3), 513-530. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.1998.tb01233.x

Heath, S. B., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1993). *Identity and inner-city youth: Beyond ethnicity and gender*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Hoffman, M. L. (2000). *Empathy and moral development: Implications for caring and justice*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Hogan, R. (1969). Development of an empathy scale. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 33*, 307-316. doi: 10.1037/h0027580

Johnson, L. S. (2009). School contexts and student belonging: A mixed method study of an innovative high school. *The School Community Journal, 19*(1), 99-118.

Jolliffe, D., & Farrington, D. (2006). Development and validation of the Basic Empathy Scale. *Journal of Adolescence, 29*, 589-611.doi: 10.1016/j.adolescence.2005.08.010

Jeffers, C. S. (2009). On empathy: The mirror neuron system and art education. *International Journal of Education and the Arts, 10*, 15.

Jencks, C. (2001, November 29).“Who gets in?” *The New York Review of Books*.

Jennings, P., & Greenberg, M.(2009).The prosocial classroom: Teacher social and emotional competence in relation to student and classroom outcomes. *Review of Educational Research, 79,* 491-525. doi: 10.3102/0034654308325693

Jensen, A. L. (2003).Coming of age in a multicultural world: Globalization and adolescent cultural identity formation. *Applied Developmental Science, 7*(3), 189-196.

Kahn, B. (1999). Art therapy with adolescents: Making it work for school counselors. *Professional School Counseling, 2*, 291-299.

Kramer, E. (1971). *Art as therapy with children.* New York, NY: Schocken Books.

Kroger, J. (2004). *Identity in adolescence: The balance between self and other.* (3rd ed.). London: Routledge.

Kohlberg, L. (1981). *Essays on moral development, vol. I: The philosophy of moral development*. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row.

Kulis, S. S., Marsiglia, F. F., Kopak, A. M., Olmsted, M. E., & Crossman, A. (2012).Ethnic identity and substance use among Mexican-heritage preadolescents: Moderator effects of gender and time in the United States. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 32*(2), 165-199.doi: 10.1177/0272431610384484

Larose, M. E. (1987). The use of art therapy with juvenile delinquents to enhance self -image. *Art Therapy, 4*, 99-104. doi: 10.1300/J358v04n02_15

Landgarten, H.(1981).*Clinical art therapy–A comprehensive guide*. New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel, Inc.

Lietz, C. A., Gerdes, K. E., Fei, S., Mullins Geiger, J., Wagaman, M., & Segal, E. A., (2011). The empathy assessment index (EAI): A confirmatory factor analysis of a multidimensional model of empathy. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research, 2*(2), 104-124. doi: 10.5243//jsswr.2011.6

Linesch, D.(1988).*Adolescent art therapy.* New York: Brunner/Mazel, Inc.

Lowe, S. S. (2000). Creating community: Art for community development. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 29*, 357-386.doi: 10.1177/089124100129023945

Ma, X. (2003).Sense of belonging to school: Can schools make a difference? *The Journal of Educational Research, 96*(6), 1-9. doi: 10.1080/00220670309596617

Maat, M. B. T. (1997). A group art therapy experience for immigrant adolescents. *American Journal of Art Therapy, 36*(1), 11-19.

Mason, M. J., & Chuang, S.2001.Culturally-based after-school arts programming for low-income urban children: Adaptive and preventative effects. *The Journal of Primary Prevention, 22*, 45-54.

Martinez, R., & Dukes, R. L. (1997). The effects of ethnic identity, ethnicity, and gender on adolescent well-being. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 26*, 503-516.

Maynard, A. S., Monk, J. D., & Wilson Booker, K. (2011). Building empathy through identification and expression of emotions: A review of interactive tools for children with social deficits. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, 6*,166–175. doi: 10.1080/15401383.2011.579874

McIntyre, A. (2000*). Inner-city kids: Adolescents confront life and violence in an urban community*. New York: New York University Press.

Mehrabian, A., & Epstein, N. (1972). A measure of emotional empathy. *Journal of Personality, 40*, 525-543.

Merrell, K. (2010). Linking prevention science and social emotional learning: The Oregon resiliency project. *Psychology in the Schools, 47*(1). doi: 10.1002/pits.20451

Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mitchell, J. J. (1986). *The nature of adolescence.* Calgary, Alberta: Detselig Enterprises Limited.

Moon, B. (1999). The tears make me paint: The role of responsive artmaking in adolescent art therapy. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association, 16*(2), 78-82. doi: 10.1080/07421656.1999.10129671

Moreno G., & Wadeson, H.(1986).Art therapy for acculturation problems of Hispanic clients. *Art Therapy, 3*, 123-128. doi: 10.1080/07421656.1986.10758683

Naumburg, M. (1987). *Dynamically oriented art therapy: Its principles and practice.* Chicago, IL: Magnolia Street Publishing.

Ntsayagae, E., Sabone, M., Keitshokile, D. M., Seboni, N., Sebego, M., & Brown, M.S. (2008). Cultural consideration in theories of adolescent development: A case study from Botswana. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing, 29*, 165-177. doi: 10.1080/01612840701792571

Orzulak, M. M. (2006). Arts integration enlivens teaching and learning. *The English Journal, 96*(1), 79-83.

Pecukonis, E. V. (1990). A cognitive/affective empathy training program as a function of ego development in aggressive adolescent females. *Adolescence*, *25*(97), 59-76.

Phillips, L. C. (2003). Nurturing empathy. *Art Education, 56*(4), 45-50.

Phillips, T. M.,& Pittman, J. F.(2003).Identity process in poor adolescents: Exploring the linkages between economic disadvantage and the primary task of adolescence. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research, 3*(2), 115-129. doi: 10.1207/S1532706XID030202

Phinney, J. S., Cantu, C. S., & Kurtz, D. A. (1997).Ethnic and American identity as predictors of self-esteem among African American, Latino, and White adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 26*, 165-185.

Piaget, J. (1950). *The psychology of intelligence.* Oxford, UK: Taylor & Francis.

Prelow, H. M., & Loukas, A. (2003).The role of resource, protective, and risk factors on academic achievement-related outcomes of economically disadvantaged Latino youth. *Journal of Community Psychology, 31*(5), 513-529. doi: 10.1002/jcop.10064

Respress, T., & Lufti, G. (2006).Whole brain learning: The fine arts with students at risk. *Reclaiming Children and Youth, 15*(1), 24-31.

Ridette-Moore, K. (2009). Encouraging empathy through aesthetic engagement: An art lesson in living compositions. *International Journal of Education & the Arts, 10*(2). Retrieved from http://www.ijea.org/v10p2/

Riley, S. (1994). Rethinking adolescent art therapy treatment. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Group Therapy, 4*, 81-97. doi: 10.1007/BF02548482

Riley, S. (1999). *Contemporary art therapy with adolescents.* London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Rink, E., & Tricker, R. (2005). Promoting healthy behaviors among adolescents: A review of the resiliency literature. *America Journal of Health Studies, 20*(1), 39-46.

Rizzolatti, G., & Craighero, L. (2004). The mirror neuron system. *The Annual Review of Neuroscience, 27*, 169-192.doi: 10.1146/annurev.neuro.27.070203.144230

Robinson, K. (2010, February). *Sir Ken Robinson: How schools kill creativity.* Retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity.

Rubin, J. (1980). Art therapy today. *Art Education, 33*(4), 6-8. doi: 10.2307/3192412

Rubin, J.(1984).*The art of art therapy.* New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel.

Rubin, J. (1999). *Art therapy: An introduction*. New York, NY: Brunner/Mazel.

Rubin, J. (2005).*Child art therapy.* Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Ryan, G., & Lane, S. (Eds.). (1997). *Juvenile sexual offending: Cause, consequences, and correction*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Santos, V. M. (1977). *Effects of biculturalism on the development of self concept in Hispanic and white adolescents.*(Unpublished master's thesis). Immaculate Heart College, Los Angeles, CA.

Slayton, S. C. (2012). Building community as social action: An art therapy group with adolescent males. *The Arts in Psychotherapy 39*, 179-185.doi: 10.1016/j.aip.2011.12.010

Stiles, G. J.,& Mermer-Welly, M. J. (1998). Children having children: Art therapy in a community-based early adolescent pregnancy program.*Art Therapy: Journal of the American Association, 15*(3), 165-176. doi: 10.1080/07421656.1989.10759319

Stout, S. J. (1999). The art of empathy: Teaching students to care. *Art Education, 52*(2), 21-34.doi: 10.2307/3193759

Umana-Taylor, A. J. (2004). Ethnic identity and self-esteem: Examining the role of social context. *Journal of Adolescence, 27(*2), 139-146.doi: 10.1016/j.adolescence.2003.11.006

Umana-Taylor, A. J.,& Fine, M. A. (2004). Examining ethnic identity among Mexican-origin adolescents living in the United States. *Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 26,*36-59. doi: 10.1177/0739986303262143

Umana-Taylor, A. J.,& Updegraff, K. A. (2007). Latino adolescents mental health: Exploring the interrelations among discrimination, ethnic identity, cultural, orientation, self-esteem, and depressive symptoms. *Journal of Adolescence, 30*(4), 549-567.

Umana-Taylor, A. J., Yazedjian, A., & Bamaca-Gomez, M. (2004). Developing the ethnic identity scale using Eriksonian and social identity perspectives. *Identity: An International Journal of Theory and Research, 4*(1), 9-38. doi: 10.1207/S1532706XID0401_2

Unger, E. (1995). One thousand penises: Working with adolescent groups. *Art Therapy, 12*(20), 132-134. doi: 10.1080/07421656.1995.10759144

Vasquez Heilig, J., Cole, H., & Aguilar, A. (2010).From Dewey to no child left behind: The evolution and devolution of public arts education. *Arts Education Policy Review, 111*, 136-145.

Veale, A.(1991, August).*Equity and art.* Paper presented at the 19th National Conference of the Australian Early Childhood Association, Adelaide, South Australia.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1987). *Thinking and speech.* In R. W. Rieber & A. S. Carton (Eds.),The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky: Volume 1: Problems of general psychology (N. Minick, Trans.) (pp. 39-285). New York, NY: Plenum Press.

Wadeson, H. (1980). *Art psychotherapy.* New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons.

Wagaman, M. A.(2011).Social empathy as a framework for adolescent empowerment. *Journal of Social Service Research, 37*(3), 278-293. doi: 10.1080/01488376.2011.564045

Wallace-DiGarbo, A., & Hill, D. C. (2006). Art as agency: Exploring empowerment of at-risk youth. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association, 23*(3), 119-125. doi: 10.1080/07421656.2006.10129627

Weigner, S. (1998). Poor children know their place: Perception of poverty, class, and public messages. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, 25*, 100-118.

Wentzel, K. R., Looney, L., & Filisetti, L. (2007). Adolescent prosocial behavior: The role of self-processes and contextual cues. *Child Development, 78*(3), 895-910. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8624.2007.01039.x

Werner, L. R. (2002). *Artist, teacher, and school change through Arts for Academic Achievement: Artists reflect on long-term partnering as a means of achieving change.* Minneapolis, MN: Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement.

Wilson, W. J. (1987).*The truly disadvantaged: The inner city, the underclass, and public policy.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Wix, L. (2009). Aesthetic empathy in teaching art to children: The work of Friedl Dicker Brandeis in Terezin. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association, 26*(4),152-158. doi: 10.1080/07421656.2009.10129612

Wright, R. (2006). Community-based arts program for youth in low income communities: A multi method evaluation. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal, 23*,635-652. doi: 10.1007/s10560-006-0079-0

Wright, R., John, L., Duku, E., Burgos, G., Krygsman, A., & Esposto, C. (2009). After-school programs as a prosocial setting for bonding between peers. *Child and Youth* Services, 31, 74-91.doi: 10.1080/0145935X.2009.524461

Woodworth, K. R., Gallagher, H. A., & Guha, R. (2007). *An unfinished canvas.Arts education in California: Taking stock of policies and practices*.(Summary Report).Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

Wolfer, R., Cortina, K.S., & Baun, J. (2012). Embeddedness and empathy: How the social network shapes adolescents' social understanding. *Journal of Adolescence, 35,* 1295-1305.