HOLISTIC APPROACHES TO ART EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF CHOICE-BASED

ART EDUCATION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On a hot September afternoon, I felt my heart sink for the first time as a teacher. While student teaching, a repeat kindergarten student with an impressive record of behavior problems had an outburst when I took away his crayons. The end of art class was devastating to him. His cries were visceral as he threw his body onto his teacher, who began to cry with him. Another student rushed to them with a box of tissue, saying "It's okay teacher, we all cry sometimes." This veteran teacher who was completing her last year before retirement looked at me and my cooperating teacher with tears streaming down her face and said, "He doesn't like anything about school." The three adults in the room shared this child's pain for a few moments. He was being ripped away from experiencing joy. We wept with him because it was clear that this young child does not experience happiness or joy in his daily life. For a brief moment of time, a forty minute art class, he had found it, and was absolutely devastated that it had ended. With a class waiting outside and tears running down my face, I knew in that moment that art experiences for young children mattered deeply.

That moment made me realize that what I did, and what I could do for children was so much more than a basic art education. The end of art class, the end of that child's happiness for the day, was out of my control. Yet, I witnessed something incredibly important that had a profound effect on me as a teacher. The veteran kindergarten teacher, who was months away from retirement and had seen it all within her career in an urban school district, showed incredible compassion. She hugged him and cried with him. The adults in power in this situation showed great compassion for this child, and I knew right then and there that my practice was going to revolve around loving my students.

Topic Development

To those serving students living in poverty, this story is not extraordinary. Time, resources, and stress provide obstacles that interfere with our efforts to serve the whole student. This story shows how time became a barrier in providing this child with what he needed. Though the joy may have purely been kinesthetic in nature- the pleasure of drawing with crayon on paper- it showed me that engagement in art for young children was perhaps something more.

Visual arts have provided humankind a platform for self-expression for many thousands of years. Though we have different purposes for visual creation, which all hold value, I became most interested in the emotional side of artmaking and art teaching which lends itself to meaningful, authentic expression in my own work and my students' work. The human activities of making and viewing art engage our mind, body, and spirit. Specifically, holistic art education theory drew me in as a way to serve and love my students. I looked for examples of holistic art education practices, and I had found much ambiguity exists between theory and practice in a holistic approach to art education. Connecting theory with practice on the topic of holistic art education is a considerable challenge in my research. I was alerted to this when initially designing this case study, but I was fortunate enough for my study to evolve to include the theory that I so desired to research and the practical applications that I needed to justify my research.

Another factor which led me to choose the topic of holistic art education was my undergraduate education at Kent State University. My professors exposed us to a wide range of approaches in art education. Those who know me as a student know that I am enthusiastic about many different possibilities that postmodern art education practice and literature provide to art teachers and their students. As a current practicing K-6 art educator, I embrace opportunities to

try different approaches, including a choice-based approach with my 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students.

I was fortunate enough to be connected with a mid-career art teacher and Kent State Alumna, and I was personally invited to come stay with her and her family during my fieldwork. During my fieldwork, it became apparent that I had to alter my original research questions and research topic, but I had struck gold. My case evolved to include a growing approach in art education that has clear connections in literature and practice to holistic art education. This case illustrates how a holistic approach becomes visible in a choice-based practice, and how a choice-based practice supports a holistic approach. In particular, the setting of where these practices happen also became significant. In my pilot study, I examined holistic practices in an urban charter school. My thesis case study was also performed in an urban charter school.

Significance

Choice-based art education, holistic art education and charter schools are recent phenomena occurring in the contemporary education field and are worthy of more research. This research contributes to a "growing body of literature on holistic art education" and provides a detailed description of holistic art education practices (Campbell & Simmons, 2012). Campbell (2011, p. 20) states that, "while holistic theory is fairly new in the field of art education, there is a growing recognition of its importance." During the 2016 National Art Education Association Annual Convention in Chicago, Illinois, I noticed many conference presenters sharing their experiences shifting to choice-based art education practice. Related, in August 2016, the Choice-Art Educators (CAE) Special Interest group was formed. Their purpose is: "To expand public awareness of choice-based art education and to provide a network for art educators who wish to share their interests in or learn more about teaching art with choice"

(https://www.arteducators.org/community/articles/257-choice-art-educators-cae). With the birth of this new special interest group in our national organization, it is clear that art educators are adopting choice-based art education approaches in their practices all over the United States.

Purpose and Justification

The main purpose of this thesis research is to describe how a holistic perspective supports a choice-based art education program. I also aim to promote a deep understanding of a holistic approach to art education by describing particular ways it is visible in a choice-based art education practice. Furthermore, this thesis will describe how holistic theory manifests in an environment and practice, choice-based art education in a charter school, which is becoming increasingly popular in art education today.

First, I will begin by explaining how theory informs teaching and research in general and within this specific case. Next, I will justify why the research of holistic art education and choice-based art education is relevant to the field of art education today. I have included research on urban charter schools alongside these two topics to further justify why this case is valuable research to the field of art education.

Theory

Theory can be explained as a belief or policy that informs an action or series of actions. In this case, theories informed this art teacher's practice. Theory is important to art teachers because "a teacher's working theory of learning has a profound influence on her or his practice, his or her students, and these students' understandings of art and the world" (Buffington & McKay, 2013). In this case study, it will be evident to the reader that my case is aware of this connection when explaining and reflecting on her practice. Furthermore, Buffington and McKay explain that

teachers who work to be aware of the relationship between theories and their practice "build opportunities for growth and powerful actions in and beyond their classrooms" (2013, p. 11). I believe that this case illustrates how an understanding of the relationship between theory and practice allows for personal growth in a teacher's practice. Formal theories in education offer an explanation of how we believe people learn, yet "in art education, we do not have a large number of well-developed formal theories directly related to art teaching and learning" (Freedman, 2004, p. 283). I believe that choice-based art education theory is an important addition to the field of art education that is gaining recognition in the field today, as introduced by Douglas and Jaquith's online forum *Teaching for Artistic Behavior, Inc.* in 2001. The discussion of holistic art education theory and choice-based art education theory in this research is necessary to understand how it informs this particular participant's practice. I will describe these theories in *Chapter II* and they will become visible in the case study results via the description of my case's practice.

<div align="center">Context</div>

While this study focuses on the holistic approach that appears in this particular art educator's choice-based practice, the context of the charter school is important in understanding this particular case. Historically, holistic education has been practiced in alternative school settings (Miller, 1993). Art teachers work within a variety of different environments, from public schools to private schools, in charter schools and in museums. This case highlights the experience of an itinerant art teacher working in an urban charter school teaching art from a cart.

In the United States today, there are 2.7 million children enrolled in public charter schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). From 2004-2014, students attending public school who switched to charter schools increased from 2 to 5 percent (National Center for

Education Statistics, 2017). Today, we have a growing number of charter schools that serve as an alternative to traditional public schools. There was not a single charter school program in 1990, but in recent years, the "rapid ascension in political popularity has coincided with rapid growth in enrollment," (Frankenberg, Siegel-Hawley, & Wang, 2011, p. 3). A report from the National Center for Education Statistics (2017) states that "as of the 2014–15 school year, charter school legislation had been passed in 42 states and the District of Columbia" (https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgb.asp, 2017). As an emerging player in American public education, charter schools are simply "a form of public school authorized by a governing body, such as a local school board, state department of education, nonprofit organization or (in several states) a for-profit corporation" (Donnelly, 2008, p. 1). Public charter schools do not charge tuition and also receive funding from taxpayers like traditional public schools, but are free of many "bureaucratic entanglements" and are likely to use more innovative educational methods than traditional public schools (Donnelly, 2008). As stated in Paisner (2011), charter schools are "independent public schools that are free to be more innovative" while still being "held accountable for improved student achievement" (p. 21). Further, Paisner explains that, "autonomy also has allowed public charter schools to serve a wide variety of student needs in ways that dramatically differ from the past" (p. 22).

With increasing numbers of children in charter schools, Frankenberg et al. (2011) agree that "much more extensive examination of the educational experiences of charter school students is essential" (p. 9). A quick search on the popular job seeking website Indeed.com yielded 551 art teacher jobs in United States charter schools in the summer of 2017. It would seem that it is in the best interest for the field of art education to learn about the experiences of teaching art in charter schools. This thesis will not advocate for or against charter schools, but highlights this

particular case's environment which is unlike my personal experience teaching in a traditional public school. It is appropriate to suggest that some art teachers in charter schools often enjoy more freedom to implement holistic art education approaches, opposed to public school art teachers who "have less time and few, if any incentives to develop curriculum to deeply apply a holistic approach" (London, 2006, p.8).

With all of this in mind, the issues in this case study are worthy of study in today's changing climate of art education. The encompassing topic of student-choice appears in the environment, theory, and practice in this thesis research.

Research Questions

My initial research question when considering the topic of only holistic art education was: How does an art teacher that self-identifies as being a holistic educator make visible her practice of holistic art education? Yet it was clear when I began my case study research that my case used holistic theory to inform her choice-based practice. Investigating and making visible both the holistic and choice-based approaches in my participant's practice is important to accurately describe this case. This thesis research will describe how each manifest in her practice and uncover how these two approaches support one another.

This case study aims to identify the various ways in which holistic art education theory manifests in a choice-based practice within an inner-city large/metropolitan charter school in the New England area of the United States. The primary research question is, In what ways does a holistic approach to art education manifest in a choice-based practice?

Definitions

The following terms are defined for understanding this case study research and will be discussed in detail in *Chapter II*. Particularly for the topic of choice-based art education, the

following definitions should inform the reader that choice-based practices are supported by a Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB) philosophy, and the Studio Habits of Mind are a research based curriculum framework that supports TAB art educators. The Studio Habits of Mind will be introduced later in *Chapter V.*

   Choice-based art education. This practice is a learner-centered approach to art education where "educators seek to develop the artistic thinking of their students, through centers and choices; encouraging them and teaching them to come up with their own ideas for art making." This approach facilitates differentiation, which easily meets the needs of a variety of types of learners. (National Art Education Association Choice Art Educators. Retrieved from https://www.arteducators.org/community/articles/257-choice-art-educators-cae, 2019).

   Holistic art education. An approach to art education that focuses on teaching to the whole student. It is an approach, not a set of methods, to teaching and learning formed by the teacher to address the needs of their students. According to Campbell (2011), foundational concepts must be integrated in an art educator's approach to be considered holistic. Foundational concepts that are included in a holistic art education approach are: self-inquiry; promoting a sense of purpose; learning empathy for others; spiritual awareness; valuing relationships with all living things; and learning responsibility for the environment and the well-being of others (Campbell, 2011).

   Holistic education. A philosophy of education "based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to humanitarian values such as compassion and peace" (Miller, 2006, p. 20).

   Studio Thinking. A framework for art education and used by choice-based art education introduced in 2007 with the publication of the book *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of Visual Art Education* (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan). The research from 2001-2007 was

funded by the J. Paul Getty Trust and The Bauman Family Foundation through Harvard Graduate School's Project Zero.

Studio Habits of Mind. Eight "broad thinking dispositions" that were discovered researching arts based high school visual art programs which are described in *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of Visual Art Education (2007).* Students are taught these eight dispositions to be able to think like artists. The Eight Studio Habits of Mind are: develop craft, engage and persist, envision, express, observe, reflect, stretch and explore, and understand art worlds.

Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB). The philosophy in art education that the student is the artist. This philosophy is transformed into practice by choice-art educators who may or may not use studio thinking as a framework. In literature, this is sometimes used synonymously with choice-based. (https://teachingforartisticbehavior.org/what-is-tab.html, 2019).

<center>Assumptions and Limitations</center>

<center>Ontological Assumptions</center>

Ontological assumptions in this case study are centered around the context of the case. I had previously conducted a pilot study in a public charter school in Northeast Ohio on holistic art education practice. With similar demographics and school and mission statements, I assumed the climate of the school to include: 1.) Strict rules for student behavior, feeling "parochial" 2.) School staff and teachers to be white and female, lower-middle class to middle-class 3.) Majority of students to be of racial minority and lower-income 4.) High percentage of students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) 5.) Focused on the goal of getting students to participate in higher education 6.) Art class having less time in students' schedules compared to other academic subjects 7.) Visitors observing students is a normal event and happens frequently because of donors and other stakeholders wanting access to the charter school.

Concerning the cases in both studies, the teachers were different in a number of ways. My pilot study participant had previously taught in an urban public school, while my case in this thesis study did not. I situated these assumptions as ontological because then I can accept that there are different realities of experience within art education practice, and can accept that my case study would have a different experience and perspectives about holistic art education, even though the context has similarities.

Epistemological Assumptions

I had communication with my participant to discuss travel and fieldwork arrangements prior to conducting fieldwork. From the information I had gathered about her from a conversation we had on the phone, I assumed that my case: 1.) Would have similar knowledge of contemporary art education because we both attended the same programs at the same university and both worked as graduate teaching assistants under the same faculty, 2.) Had an interest in current art education research and expressed interest in being a research subject, 3.) Show compassion, love and empathy for her students based on her personal history and involvement in the United States Peace Corps, 4.) Be an established member of her school community because of her title as Chair of the Art Department, 5.) Be of assistance in my field work (finding other participants and gathering evidence) because of her own experience of art education research.

These assumptions are epistemological in nature because I wanted to gather as much information as possible about the case and her experience to report as evidence to answer my research question.

Limitations

The greatest limitation of this study was the amount of time I spent during the study conducting fieldwork. I had a limited amount of time to conduct this study, only 4 days, because

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

In this review of literature, I will first begin by presenting historical information on holistic art education and choice-based art education to understand how these two topics developed in the field of art education. Next, the topic of holistic education theory will be discussed and then I will move on to describe holistic art education practices in contemporary art education. I will then introduce choice-based art education theory and then practice. I will follow these sections by highlighting similarities and or intersections in both holistic and choice-based theories and practices. In conclusion, I will discuss implications for the field of art education.

Historical Background

In 1947, Lowenfeld published *Creative and Mental Growth*, and, "was the dominant intellectual force in art education until his untimely death in 1960 at age 57" (Efland, 1990, p. 235). Children's art was now seen as art, and with strong influences from progressive education's approaches to creative self-expression, Rousseau's romanticism, developmental psychology, and psychoanalytic constructs, Lowenfeld bestowed his text *Creative and Mental Growth* on art education. Lowenfeld gave teachers a model based off of developmental stages (Gaudelius & Speirs, 2002; Efland 1990). Efland writes, "Thus, teachers with a minimal knowledge of art could teach if they learned to motivate children and if they had realistic expectations of what children might accomplish at each stage of development" (1990, p. 235).

This became the prominent text used by art educators, and with successive publications, is still used today (Gaudelius & Speirs, 2002; Efland 1990). Alongside Lowenfeld art educators, choice- based art educators began quietly emerging in the field in classroom practice as early as

the 1970s (Crowe, 2009). Crowe, a choice-based educator, explains that "Out of pure necessity of providing authentic art experiences, teachers were inspired to offer real choices to students-- it was simply common sense to them" (2009, p. xi). This change was nurtured by Katherine M. Douglas and Diane B. Jaquith who eventually established Teaching for Artistic Behavior Inc., an organization formally established in 2001 that supports choice-based art educators in practice. According to Crowe, changes in the education system made him radically change his teacher-centered practice to a choice-based practice and described this as his "midcareer renaissance" (2009, p. xii). Even though one could argue Lowenfeld's approach was child-centered in theory, using this approach to teach a wide variety of needs, such as the inclusion of students with special needs heterogeneous grouping, failed some educators, including Crowe (2009, p.xii).

 Around the time that choice-based education's roots were forming, holism developed as a new perspective in Western science, medicine, philosophy, and social theory in the 1980s. This holism provided a way of thinking and a perspective that is essentially a spiritual worldview. In this case, spirituality means "an awareness that our lives have purpose, direction, a goal that transcends our particular physical and cultural conditioning" (Miller, 1993, p. 58). It is important to note that before this, holistic education was already in practice, but greatly ignored the spiritual dimension. Two immediate examples of holistic education that may have already come to mind are The Montessori Approach and The Waldorf School. In the chapter *Pioneers of Holistic Education,* Miller examines familiar educators from the progressive and humanistic movements in early American public education who have influenced holistic ideas in education. Miller argues that Dewey, Pestalozzi, Froebel, and Rousseau all "asserted that education must start with the child's nature rather than with the educator's preconceptions" (R. Miller, 1992, p. 85). Along with these educators, the transcendentalist writers Emerson, Thoreau and Alcott also

promoted a child-centered view. In short, all of these influential educators and writers firmly believed that education should nurture the whole child; the moral, physical, emotional, psychological, and intellectual dimensions. It is important to note that generally the spiritual dimension has been ignored in holistic education examples (R. Miller 1992; J.P. Miller 2005).

More recently, the spiritual dimension has come into concern in holistic education. The Holistic and Aesthetic Education Graduate Focus at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education has hosted and sponsored conferences on holistic learning bi-annually since 1997 (J.P. Miller, 2005). This has led to published papers in the text *Holistic Learning and Spirituality in Education: Breaking New Ground* (2005)*. The inclusion of spirituality in education in this text and others is significant because it was generally ignored in all examples of holistic education previously.

Holistic Art Education

Theory

"Holistic education stems from the philosophy that everything in the universe is interconnected to everything else," (Miller, 1993 as cited in Campbell, 2012, p.77). It is a humanistic approach to education that connects learning to life while "engaging all dimensions of human awareness and thought" (Campbell, 2012, p.77). The different dimensions of physical, sensory, emotional, cognitive, social, moral and spiritual are of concern to the holistic educator (Campbell, 2011). Holistic education recognizes these many dimensions and believes that they all need development and integration within the whole person to extend outward and connect the individuals with humanity, nature, society, and the cosmos (Simmons, 2006).

I need to begin by clarifying that "holistic art education is an approach to teaching and learning- not a set of techniques and methods" (Campbell, 2011, p.23). Campbell (2011) further explains the depth and breadth that holistic art education theory employs:

> Holistic art education potentially brings together, in an integrated manner, various theories in art education synthesizing them into a comprehensive curriculum while addressing a range of goals: encouraging intellectual inquiry, embracing imagination, promoting social change, and helping people to live peacefully with one another. (p. 23)

Holistic approaches are emerging in many fields of study, such as social theory, science, psychology, and medicine (Campbell, 2012). Even though holistic education is a centuries old tradition, support for this approach has "grown significantly in recent years as a means to address a widespread sense of personal alienation and fragmentation, along with other societal issues like the global economic, ecological, and spiritual crises" (Campbell, 2012, p. 77). Holistic art education is an approach that is gaining recognition within the field of art education (Campbell & Simmons, 2012, p. xi). Holistic art education's goal is to "engage learners at the deepest possible levels of meaning-making" (Carroll, 2004 p. 8). The philosophy of holistic art education "is learner-centered, domain specific, and context sensitive" (Carroll, 2006, p. 17).

First, holistic education emphasizes that everyone is made up of mind, body, and spirit. London also explains how "teaching someone as if they did not possess a mind, body or spirit is not to teach the actual student standing right in front of one" (2006, p.8). London (2004) explains that in nurturing the mind in holistic education, we must go beyond reasoning skills. Our contemporary education climate, and even current art education literature, focuses on reason, standards, and state-mandates. London (2004) claims we have abandoned the states of mind that creative people and artists employ, which are: "wonder, awe, intuition, dreams, fantasy, and the subconscious" (p. 3). In regarding the body, London connects the reader with evidence that the

body does in fact hold intelligence, in how it functions on a cellular level to perform and heal itself. The body is the "prime instrument for the artistic enterprise," that uses "dexterity, control, balance, endurance, and tone" to create. "The visual arts can learn a great deal about what the informed, aware, practiced, and attuned body requires from what the community of dancers, musicians, athletes, and theater people know and practice" (London, 2004, p. 4). Addressing the spirit, London defines the spirit as "any quality that we hold to be of ultimate value" and "whatever resides in the core of our belief and value system" (2004, p. 4). We simply need to address these qualities to nurture the spirit. These qualities of ultimate value he writes of are not limited to religious beliefs, and we can nurture the spirit by asking and reflecting on the "great perennial existential, philosophical, anthropological, theological, scientific, and artistic issues that every person in every society in every generation has wrestled with" (London, 2004, p. 5). London claims that when our mind, body, and spirit are not in harmony, there is dissonance within ourselves, and thus our behavior is dampened and inhibited, or warped and distorted (2004). Holistic education is "a search for wholeness in a culture that limits, suppresses, and denies wholeness" of our students who are mind, body, and spirit (Campbell, 2006, p.29). In rationalizing holism, London asks how effective an education system is that only addresses "partial, disjointed, and inauthentic" students, teachers, administrators, and curriculum? (2006, p.8).

After addressing the whole student, there are key principles that contemporary holistic education embraces, which are: balance, inclusion, and connection. What does connection, balance and inclusion specifically look like in education? Connection in education means facilitating connection throughout the curriculum, "in every level of learning" and examples are: "integrating analytic and intuitive thinking, linking body and mind, integrating subjects,

connecting to the community, providing links to the earth, and connecting soul and spirit" (J.P. Miller, 2005, p. 2). Inclusion is found in differentiation, a current buzzword in education and an Ohio Teaching Standard in the The Ohio Teacher and Principal Evaluation Systems. Inclusion in holistic education means to "include all types of students and provide a broad range of learning approaches to reach these students" (J.P. Miller, 2005, p. 2). Balance in a school refers to recognizing and nurturing rational and intuitive energies. It comes from the Tao yin/yang theory but in schools today, the yang is the rational and competitive energy while the yin is "fostering intuition and cooperative approaches to learning" (J.P. Miller, 2005, p. 3). I agree with Miller (2005) that in our schools and culture, we value the yang energy over the yin. We place more importance on winning and rationalizing everything and do not value wondering or seeking knowledge from within.

What teacher is better suited to embrace this multidimensional, authentic learning with critical teaching than the art teacher? Does art deal with physical, sensory, emotional, cognitive, social, moral and spiritual dimensions? Of course it does! "Art is a natural venue for holistic teaching and learning" (Campbell, 2012, p. 83). London (2006, p. 9) states, "Authentic, creative undertakings, serious artistic engagements, provide a perfect model of holistic activity in that in their fullest, the artist engages the fullest array of their attributes; their mind, body, and spirit." In the field of art education, there is little literature on holistic art education, yet it seems to be a natural leap art education could take (Campbell & Simmons, 2012).

<center>Practice</center>

Holistic art education synthesizes various approaches in art education today (Campbell, 2011), and I hope to offer the reader more specific practices that are deeply holistic in action.

Next, I will discuss examples of holistic practices in art education from the beginnings of classroom research conducted by a group of scholars led by Peter London in 2001-2002. I will also discuss practices in holistic art education focusing on and alerting the reader to the key themes balance, inclusion, and connection. I will unpack these principles to show how they work together in a holistic approach, to synthesize findings from literature to provide examples of practices and how they are explicitly holistic. I will end with another example of a holistic practice before concluding this section of this dual review of literature.

Foundations of Holistic Art Education Practice

The literature on holistic art education suggests that the first step for an educator to develop a holistic approach is to contemplate and reflect on their practice and curriculum to provide the deepest levels of artistic meaning-making that are developmentally appropriate for the whole student. Art education researchers have contemplated holistic approaches in recent years, in particular at the Maryland Institute's College of Art (MICA). Carroll (2006) said they were interested in holistic approaches in art education for over a decade and created a study group to address approaches in holistic art education. From 2001-2002, "The Study Group for Holistic Approaches in art education included art educators from elementary, middle, and high schools as well as college faculty and a community art program director, each investigating a particular question within a specific context" (Carroll, 2006, p. 17.) Later, in 2004 , this group published their two years worth of classroom research experiences with holistic art education in the work *Toward a Holistic Paradigm in Art Education.* These studies were conducted with a wide variety of students in different settings with different teachers using a variety of media and techniques (London, 2004, p. 79). Carroll (2006) summarizes, in another publication describing the "reports from the study group describe various efforts to create safe communities for learning, offer

examples of developmental and contextual source material that gave purpose to artmaking, and

discuss specific strategies for deepening engagement" (2006, p. 16). The evidence collected from

K-12 classrooms was mainly teacher observations and analysis of student artwork. London

shares that the evidence of this research showed that all classrooms experienced "a shift in joy

and effectiveness in teaching reported by the teachers" and a "shift in general and artistic

behavior of the students" (2004, p. 79). The student work, which was created with a wide variety

of media in these different classrooms, showed:

> ...clear signs of greater complexity, idiosyncratic imagery, less stereotypical schema, more vigorously executed application of materials, more completely realized themes as expressed in compositional devices, more developed personal imagery with associated symbolic meanings, more revealing stories and points of view, more age appropriate types of imagery (compared to adult imposed convention), more coherent and complex yet satisfying color harmonies, broader choice and inclusion of media, and more deliberation and confidence. (London, 2004, p. 79)

This research in holistic art education showed positive results for both teachers and students,

but you might ask why does a holistic art educator work to connect mind, body and spirit in their

students? London explains that when we are our whole selves, we are our most artistic selves.

London calls to our attention of how adult artists work, with a harmonious mind body and spirit,

producing deeper artistic expression. Have you ever worked on a project and felt like this?

> Effort becomes light, ideas flow easily and freely and rapidly, endurance is extended, so is patience; focus becomes more concentrated, time becomes extended, boundaries soften, definition becomes clearer, crisper, the ego retracts, all the senses become more acute; images appear entire, the world seems at the very least pleasant if not joyous, everything seems interesting, everything seems to matter, everything seems to be a portion of everything else… (London, 2004, p. 4)

How many times have you witnessed your art students as fully engaged artistic beings?

Maslow deemed this a "peak" experience, a natural human behavior that artists report all the

time (London 2004, p. 4). Authenticity comes from this flow; artists construct meaning when

they operate on this level of harmony between their mind, body, and spirit. Holistic art educators' goal is to create this experience for students and have students produce authentic works of art. McKenna offers two definitions for *authentic artwork* in holistic practice: "not false or imitation, but rather real and actual, and true to one's own personality, spirit, or character" and "one that is more representative of the young artist who made it, not the teacher who provoked it" (McKenna, 2006, p. 55).

Steps for Implementing a Holistic Approach

One action research study points out the researcher's specific steps she had taken to implement a holistic approach over four years with her whole art department (McKenna, 2006). The reader will see these practices elaborated on more as I unpack the principles of balance, inclusion and connection, and synthesize those within the greater landscape of art education literature in the upcoming sections.

When first implementing a holistic approach in an action research study, McKenna (2006) describes 4 components of a holistic art education practice that her whole department adopted (p. 54). As chairperson, she collaborated with her colleagues at her high school. These steps they took department-wide to create a holistic high school art program are listed below:

1. Creating a safe climate

2. Knowing the learner

3. Creating opportunities for the deep levels of meaning making

4. Reflection, collaboration, integration

To create a holistic art education practice, one must make the environment a safe climate for students to share their beliefs, ideas, and struggles during their art making experiences (Mckenna, 2006; Carroll, 2006). This goes hand in hand with knowing your students, knowing

them personally, and also knowing where they are at developmentally in terms of academic and social development. These teachers collaborated by talking about how they meet their students' needs and challenge students in each course. They discussed how they could integrate each other's content taught, and even rotated teaching assignments to teach all the courses to understand how integration could happen. To provide a holistic art experience for the students, they had to make the program connected and whole from beginning to advanced art classes. Their goal of creating deeper levels of meaning making meant employing holistic practices department wide. To illustrate these practices, McKenna created a chart, which is listed below as *Figure 1*.
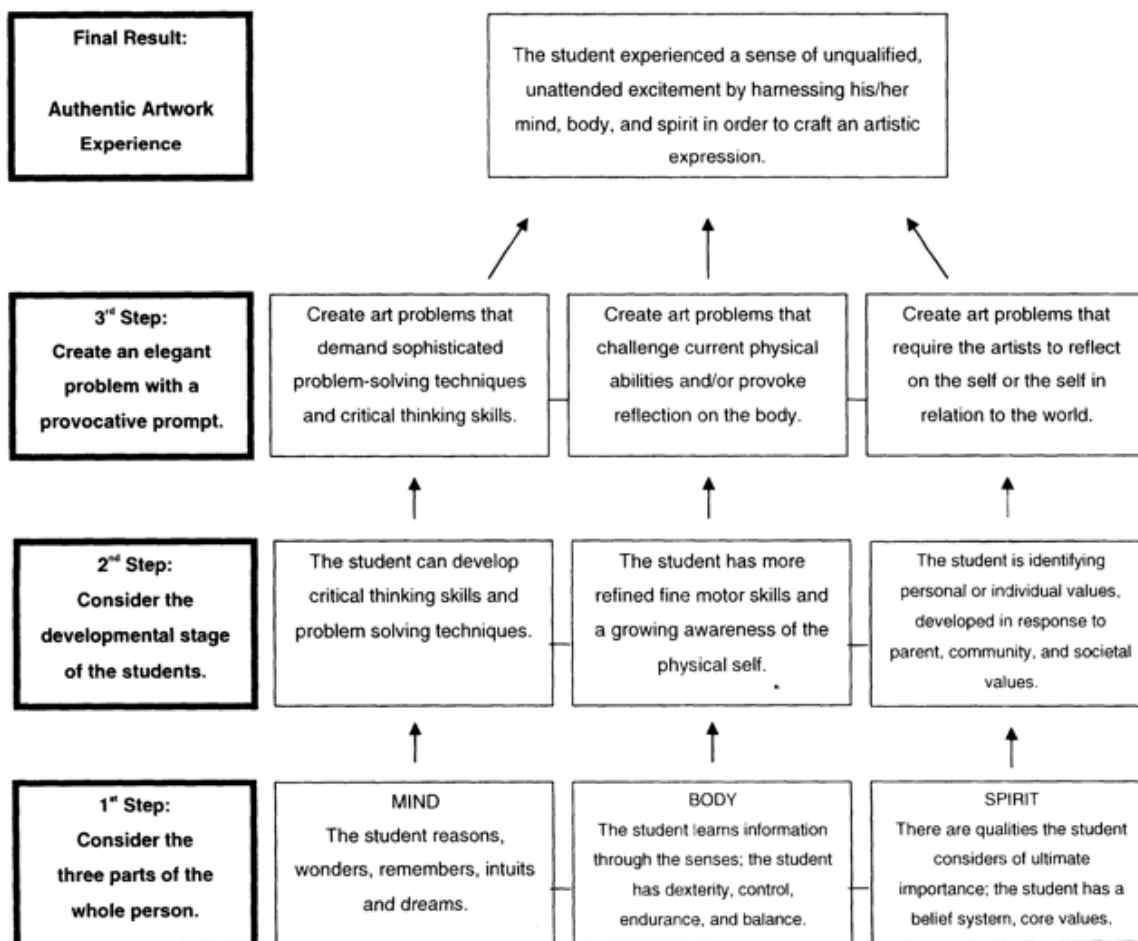
Figure 1. Steps to implement a holistic approach. From: McKenna, S. (2006). Art is possible. *Visual Arts Research*, *32*(1), 53-63.

The major steps to implement a holistic approach are:

1. Consider all parts (mind, body, spirit) of the person

2. Consider developmental stages of the students

3. Create an elegant problem with a provocative prompt

The ultimate goal is: "The student experienced a sense of unqualified, unattended excitement by harnessing his/her mind, body, and spirit in order to craft an artistic expression." (McKenna 2006, p. 54.) The most effective learning will take place, according to McKenna, if the artistic

problem posed is personally important or intriguing and will spark a need to know or intrinsic motivation in the students.

Each step, as I will discuss below in McKenna's words from her chart in italics, is designed so that the mind, body, and spirit are recognized in both considering the developmental stages of students and in the creation of the elegant problem and provocative prompt.

The first step, considering the parts of the whole student, *recognizing that student reasons, wonders, remembers, intuits, dreams; the student learns information through the senses; the student has dexterity, control, endurance, and balance; there are qualities the student considers of ultimate importance; the student has a belief system, core values.* The teacher focuses on these specific needs for teaching the whole student for the planning and instruction.

The second step considers that the student's mind *can develop critical thinking skills and problem solving techniques. The body has more refined motor skills and a growing awareness of the physical self; and the spirit is identifying personal values, developed in response to parent, community, and societal values.* The student is provided with instruction to learn skills that challenge and engage the student's mind, body and spirit.

Creating elegant art problems with a provocative prompt means to create problems that: *demand sophisticated problem-solving techniques and critical thinking skills; challenge current physical abilities and/or provoke reflection on the body; require the artist to reflect on the self or the self in relation to the world.* Elegant problems are "flexible enough to provoke students at different developmental levels, elicits diverse solutions from students, and allows for individual students to elaborate on and personalize their artistic response" (McKenna 2006, p. 55). Using an elegant problem and then provocative tasks or prompts are intrinsically interesting to students, and sparks their natural curiosity. An art example of an elegant problem and provocative task in

McKenna's room was to "make an homage sculptural head using the three dimensional medium of your choice" and "'interview an assigned peer-artist so that the resulting sculptural homage head will express something about them in addition to what they look like" 2006, p. 56). The question and the task must have embedded within them the skills, habits, attitudes, and information the students are trying to learn (Bain, 2004 in McKenna 2006, p. 56).

In analyzing this chart, we can see how teachers may expand upon lessons that include these steps and tweak the art problem or lesson and how it is presented to adopt a holistic approach. This process inherently leads teachers to a learner-centered approach; continuing to teach skills, but the skills in which the whole student needs, and calling upon more of the mind, (like intuition, dreams, and wonder) and the spirit to incorporate deep meaning in their artwork.

Holistic Art Education Practice from the Study Group for Holistic Art Education

Carroll (2006) summarized practices used in the K-12 research studies of holistic art education from MICA's study group on Holistic Art Education led by Dr. London. These teachers asked first how to deepen engagement, and found the practices I will discuss effective.

Carroll (2006) points out that A.P Castro, J.C. Castro, Wittner, and La Perriere (2004) all invited analogical and metaphorical thinking into their lessons. According to A.P. Castro, teaching first graders metaphorical thinking through a lesson titled "How am I like a Tree?" showed that students were beginning to think more deeply about themselves through art (2004).

Roupp found "extending materials investigation shaped by ideas or themes broad enough to go in different directions yet sufficient to maintain integrity as a personal idea" (Carroll, 2006, p. 20) deepened student engagement. Roupp (2004) used a 12 week visual journaling lesson as a way for students to understand their own growth, take ownership of artistic choices, and reveal to them how their art is a way to deeply express themselves. Roupp used many themes in the

journal, but she allowed students to pick their main theme to work with throughout the entire process. One of her open-ended teacher given themes was "Transformation," and another was "Who am I?" Some of the assignments had students connecting with the world and community by reflecting on something they found in the newspaper, and another was to find something squished on the floor at school. These artifacts were included in different pages of the visual journals. The reflective process revealed that students enjoyed: "a new sense of freedom and exploration with use of media," had "self-confidence and pride in the imagery they created," developed "true ownership of the process," and endured "respect for the differences in each other" throughout the project (Roupp, 2004, p. 26). Students enjoyed a wide variety of material and content choices, carefully selected their media from those choices to explore their ideas in multiple ways, and were able to see their progress.

Carroll (2006) revealed that McKenna (2004a) altered a traditional lesson into a holistic lesson by "using imaginative sources for meaning making in non-objective explorations" (Carroll, 2006, p. 20). McKenna revised her Art 1 curriculum, specifically how she taught color and line in non-objective paintings to include making projects that metaphorically explored self using only color, shape and color. She got students to think deeply about how non-objective works could describe their personalities by playing an imaginative game called *Survivor Island*. Students chose colored papers that they felt represented a characteristic about themselves and arranged them carefully into a composition, and then had to sacrifice one at a time to survive being deserted on an island and to narrow down what was most important to them. The lesson took off with teaching color mixing and theory, but was the compositions were directed by the students' color metaphors because their task was to "create a non-objective design using line, shape and color to metaphorically represent the essential aspect(s) of you/your personality"

(McKenna 2004a, p. 43). She also demonstrated many different painting techniques and told students to paint in a way that feels right to them and honors their aspects of their personality they were portraying.

Another teacher in Carroll's study, J.C. Castro, transformed the high school photography curriculum to a holistic practice by "posing existential questions that sufficiently disrupt thinking to make introspection an essential step in the art making process" (Carroll, 2006, p. 20) The first assignment in beginning photography after learning about their camera was to take a photographs that showed how they see the world as if they were going to be struck blind the following day (J.C. Castro, 2004). These questions guided students in constructing photograms: "If your mind was a room, what would it look like? Construct the room… " And "what is your strongest memory?" (J.C. Castro, 2004, p. 56). Castro developed a sequential approach of using existential questions paired with techniques for the corresponding course to guide students to be able to, in their most advanced photography course, create their own questions to inspire and refine into a body of work.

One other conclusion Carroll had drawn from the evidence of these studies was that in teacher's newly adopted holistic practices, offering student choice was an overarching method used in the art making process (Carroll, 2006). Students were offered a wide array of materials in these lessons that were designed to deepen student engagement.

Another more recently published practice written by Jeffers is used in art criticism lessons with kindergarten through preservice art education students in holistic art education settings. Jeffers's (2012) approach to art criticism is called empathic narrative. Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. To Jeffers, whole beings are "empathic and engaged beings" (2012, p. 35). Jeffers elevates traditionally academic training of description,

analysis, interpretation and evaluation of artwork to a holistic practice by connecting artist and subject, viewer and the work using empathy. Jeffers had students select works of art that serve as a personal metaphor and then share a personal narrative through the description of the artwork. "Empathy allows us to interact- even with portrayals of others- through the imaginative acts of perspective-taking, role-taking, metaphor, and character identification (2012, p.33). She claims these performances of empathic narrative invite the whole student into the processes of description, analysis, and interpretation of artworks. The mind, body and soul work together to deeply engage with artwork. The viewer becomes deeply engaged.

Though this discussion of holistic art education practices is context specific, teachers can begin to weave these practices into their teaching once they consciously begin to know their learners and take a learner-centered approach. "Old lessons may be altered or new ones created to make engaging, more meaningful problems" (McKenna, 2006, p. 58) that engage the students' mind, body and spirit to produce authentic works of art.

In the next three sections, I will synthesize practices in contemporary art education with literature on the holistic principles of connection, balance, and inclusion to reveal how holistic practices are found in contemporary art education.

Unpacking the Key Principles of Holistic and Contemporary Art Education as Practice

Connection. The field of art education today focuses on students making meaning, not just practicing art skills and techniques (Pennisi, 2013). In my experience as an undergraduate pre-service art teacher, I have been taught to teach art holding closely onto the idea that art is a communication of our experience, with an emphasis on thematic instruction. Before designing a unit or lesson, we were taught to first come up with the theme, or big idea. Big ideas are "broad important human issues that are characterized by complexity, ambiguity, contradiction, and

multiplicity" (Walker, 2001, p. 1). Later on in my studies, I realized that using this method to create curriculum fosters connection, a key principle in holistic art education (Campbell, 2012). Some examples of big ideas that connect students are: relationships, celebration, and ritual. Using these themes and themes like these, educators can invite personal authentic expression and connections to outside the classroom.

The book *Art for Life: Authentic Instruction in Art* (2005) we used at Kent State University offers holistic art curriculum approaches via using a "big idea" as the central focus of the lesson. The authors discuss making meaningful artwork that resonates with core holistic values of connection and teaching the whole student. "The key to meaning making, though, lies in our ability to make connections- by understanding relationships between one thing and another and between one person and another. In teaching art for life, we must integrate art with students' human concerns" (Anderson and Milbrandt, 2005, p.232). *Art For Life's* assessment strategies also value connectedness and wholeness that I discussed earlier (see *Holistic Education Theory* in *Chapter II*): "teaching, learning, and assessment are intertwined." (Anderson and Milbrandt, 2005, p.35) "Authentic" assessment, as the authors call it, does demand more time, but pays attention to students' own reflection, viewed as the valuable life skill of understanding self and others, which is an example of connectedness in holistic art education.

Using a big idea is a start for fostering connectedness, yet some holistic practices go even deeper with the principle of connection to include the spirit. One practice in particular incorporates the spiritual dimension. It is easy to engage our students' minds with a big idea, and of course art involves students' physical self or body, but how does one engage the spirit? London suggests teachers should "raise the great existential, philosophical, anthropological, theological, and scientific issues with students as bases for reflection and expression in their

work" (London, 2006, 12). These questions found throughout my research in Campbell and London's articles are questions like: Who am I? What is my purpose? Why am I here? How do I matter to the world? Jonathan Kozol (2001) has found that even the young are interested in answering the great, mysterious questions of life (in London, 2006, p13). According to Campbell, art educators should construct curriculum to "explore issues of personal identity, collaboration, and social development" (2006, p.32) to teach to the whole child, including the spirit.

Other ways the key principle of connectedness appears in practice is how art teachers connect to the community and the earth. According to Freyermuth, a holistic art educator "seeks means for direct engagement with the world as a source of inspiration and a sense of wonder" (2012, p. 269) There are many examples of how art educators can connect to community in the text *Community Art in Action.* Connecting to the earth is an important concept found easily in our content we teach: in environmental art, sustainable design, and eco-feminist art. This can be integrated into science courses that students take simultaneously. Taking time to go outdoors and practice observational drawing, creating temporary Andy Goldsworthy inspired sculptures outdoors, or practicing landscape painting en plein air are activities art teachers do to nurture connectedness with the earth.

Holistic art educators pursue "opportunities to authentically connect learners with traditions, histories, and concepts of art" Freyermuth (2012, p. 269). One example from literature that comes to mind about authentic connection is a holistic lesson by Cast (2012). Her students created Islamic mosaic glass tables in a Catholic school setting. A classmate who happened to practice Islam served as the expert (with prior planning and consent of the student) for the unit. She graciously shared parts of her spiritual life, bringing in personal belongings to share. Not

only did Cast and her student work together to connect students authentically to the tradition and history of Islamic art and religion, but also she created a lesson that connected students with each other. Cast reports that students became more interactive with the student who was Muslim, who was previously observed as "on the fringes" and did not have much interaction with her peers. She became a mentor and respected and "important part of the group" (Cast, 2012, p. 281).

To conclude, connection in the art room can appear in many ways. It is important to remember that the holistic art educator actively seeks out connection within all aspects of teaching and learning. With that said, connectedness between students and the teacher, students and each other, and students and the community and world can only authentically take place in a safe, encouraging community environment.

Balance. Balance in a school refers to recognizing and nurturing rational and intuitive energies and also refers to reaching all dimensions of the whole student (mind, body, spirit). It comes from the Tao yin/yang theory; the yang is the rational and competitive energy while the yin is "fostering intuition and cooperative approaches to learning" (J.P. Miller, 2005, p. 3). To create a cooperative atmosphere that welcomes students to take artistic risks by using their intuition, the classroom environment must be one in which students feel free of embarrassment when making mistakes (Cummings, 2012). For art teachers to foster intuition and cooperative approaches to learning, Freyermuth points out actions that holistic art educators make in the list below, which I will elaborate on further. According to Freyermuth (2012, p. 269), a holistic art educator:

- Demonstrates and expresses genuine care for those she teaches

- Is tolerant of ambiguity and encourages risk-taking and invention

- Welcomes imagination, intuition, and expressions of the heart

- Is willing to forgo a position of 'power over' and adopts the attitude of care in the role of facilitator, catalyst, guide, fellow learner, and fellow-traveler

First, caring in education needs to be described in detail to be fully understood in the following examples of holistic art education practice. Most teachers would agree that they care about their students. In the holistic perspective, caring is defined as "a commitment to act in behalf of the cared-for, a continued interest in his reality throughout the appropriate time span, and the continual renewal over this span of time" (Noddings, 1984, p.16 in Babiuk, 2005, p. 121). Thus, caring and feeling cared for develops over time, through building relationships and honoring the commitment made to care for students.

Creating positive interactions with students and between students is important to ensure a cooperative learning environment where students feel safe to imagine, wonder, and take risks. Cummings shares her practice of building relationships with students and fostering peer relationships in her high school art room in her chapter *Classroom Culture: Fostering Relationships in the Art Classroom* (2012). She discusses how she connects with students, before and after class about what is going on in their lives and then with students about their art during class time. She makes the point that she talks with each student daily and is constantly "talking *with* students not *at* students" (2012, p. 200). This is significant in addressing students as whole persons, and is indeed a challenge for educators when instructing learning and monitoring behavior. Cummings also shares her practice of fostering peer relationships in how she structures interactions in her class. Her learning activities are always organized by student determined small and large groups in which everyone must participate, and everyone belongs to a group. She also has students write their answers down before discussing questions she poses on a unit of learning to alleviate anxieties about sharing. She models and demands respectful conversations

and always close monitors group activities and encourages "students to challenge and question their peers, but to remain respectful and tolerant of differing points of view" (Cummings 2012, p. 201). Cummings structures the learning environment so that students feel safe to take risks, and has tracked progress of student relationships through student journals and interviews of her past students, and has determined that her class is indeed a caring community in which students feel they are part of. Cummings admits that her relationships take time to foster, but in a balanced classroom where the teacher cares and uses cooperative learning strategies in their practice, the environment is safe and supportive of all student learners.

Intuition is the ability to understand something immediately, without the need for conscious reasoning. Intuition welcomes ambiguity, because it is about discovering possibilities and relationships, innovation and creativity. For balance in our schools, intuitive learning is opposite of fact based learning and rote memorization; in the art room, step by step art projects take away the natural use of intuition that is the hallmark of creativity in visual arts. We have little time to allow students to wonder or naturally come to a solution to a problem.

This next practice shared opens up space for wondering, and comes from Nordlund who had spent 10 years teaching art in public schools and studied art in Waldorf Schools for her Ph.D. program. "My experience with affording students a space for wonderings is that class inquiry about art and art education has greater depth and breadth, because the students are connected to the wonderings in a personal way" (2013, p. 16). Nordlund incorporates a Wonderings Board in her practice. She explains the Wonderings Board is a tool

> …Where students offer their wonderings to classmates (and self) at the start of every class, any time during class, or even outside of class through electronic discussion boards such as Wallwisher. Wonderings can stem from readings, class materials, discussions, homework, dilemma scenarios, or any experiences both in and outside of class. We, as a class community, commit to discovering the answers to posed as wonderings... Our inquiry becomes ongoing, as do our discoveries. (2013, p. 16)

Lastly, the role of the teacher is very much a classroom practice. Each and every second a teacher is with their students, the role they play determines whether the environment is learner-centered or teacher-centered. As a guide or facilitator, the teacher consciously works alongside students. Thus, holistic art educators practice the key principle of balance of energies in their classrooms when they take the role as "guide on the side" instead of "sage on the stage" and let students direct their own art making (Stewart & Walker, 2005, p. 15). This, as the reader will find, is a key practice and underlying theory to choice-based art education that will be discussed in an upcoming section of this chapter.

A connected and balanced curriculum, environment, and practice leads to the last key principle in a holistic art education practice, which is inclusion.

Inclusion. With a balanced learning environment as discussed above, all learners are included socially and emotionally. Inclusion in holistic education means to "include all types of students and provide a broad range of learning approaches to reach these students" (J.P. Miller, 2005, p. 2). Again using Freyermuth's list (2012, p. 269), we are alerted to certain practices that the holistic art educator uses to incorporate inclusion of all learners:

- Provides opportunities for choice on the part of learners that is appropriate to their developmental needs

- Promotes experiential learning

- Cultivates a learning environment that is abidingly safe, respectful, and supportive for all learners

In many positions, including my own, we are responsible for the art education of an entire school of students who learn in different ways. Art teachers are no strangers to adapting lessons for a wide array of students and their different learning styles already. One-size fits all

instruction is even discouraged by current state mandates. Differentiation is a standard area for teachers to show in their practice to successfully retain their licensure in the State of Ohio Teacher and Principal Evaluation system. Holistic educators are aware of providing kinesthetic, auditory, and visual instruction, providing extra support, and even space when needed. Experiential learning provides visual, kinesthetic, and auditory to serve all learning styles. Modifying instruction to reach all students also includes offering choices. Opening up the curriculum with choice can include learners of all artistic abilities. Discipline-based studio lessons or school-art style lessons allow for little experimentation and creation or thinking and planning on the student's part. Some examples of the choices that teachers can give to students are: offering different art materials and techniques for an art project; offering different ways students can respond to works of art, class discussions, and written assignments; and allowing for students to choose the theme or art problem to work under. Lastly, students will feel like an outsider if they do not feel safe and respected enough to share their ideas, experiences, and artwork. The idea of inclusion in a holistic art room incorporates creating a safe climate for all students while differentiating instruction and offering choices.

Implications

Campbell and London focus on critical holism when defining for the reader what exactly represents holistic art education. Campbell defines critical holism as "a view of the person as a culturally and socially constructed being who can benefit from personal, spiritual, transformation through cultural and political critique," (2012, p.77). What if we took time to review and reflect our curriculum and practice at all levels in the field to see how the physical, sensory, emotional, cognitive, social, moral and spiritual are included, valued, missing, or incomplete? I wonder why this is not an initiative of an enterprise serving human beings. Yet, in the current climate of art

education, it can be said for many teachers "we have less time and few, if any incentives to develop our curriculum to deeply apply a holistic approach" (London, 2006, p.8). Though that may be, some of the practices in this section described can be easily implemented into a classroom in which the teacher knows their learners. Another issue I see with holistic art education is that it not a set of techniques easily transferable. This means that practices must be created by the teacher for their specific context, even if one was to adopt ideas straight from the literature, there is no worksheet, lesson plan, or short activity that would make a holistic approach. As discussed, The Study Group for Holistic Art Education took much classroom and planning time to implement changes in practice.

Even planning for lessons that foster connection in a holistic sense can be challenging. For some art educators, selecting works of art and artists that relates to student human concerns "will demand a knowledge of historical and contemporary art well beyond what they learned in college art history survey classes and even in classes focused on distinct periods" (Simmons, 2006, p. 47). Expanding our knowledge demands time and resources that are not generally given to busy classroom teachers. "Those interested in the identity and mission of the profession might consider how a holistic vision of a field facilitates coherence and integration among learner based, content-based, and issues-based approaches while leaving plenty of room for increasing complexity, creativity, inquiry, and critical dialogue" (Carroll, 2006, p.26).

Today, the main issue with holistic art education is that in the current climate of art education, "we have less time and few, if any incentives to develop our curriculum to deeply apply a holistic approach" (London, 2006, p.8). Another issue is that holistic art education is not a limited set of techniques or methods to teaching art. For a teacher to have a holistic approach,

they must hold the comprehensive needs of students at the center, developing not only a curriculum that addresses a variety of relevant social, moral, physical, sensory, spiritual, and emotional concerns that connect learning to students' lives, but also connect the students to each other, their schools and communities, nature, and the world. Holistic art education can be described as "a search for wholeness in a culture that limits, suppresses, and denies wholeness" (Campbell, 2006, p.29).

Conclusions

To conclude, Campbell illustrates *Five Emerging Themes of Holistic Art Education* which are: "student connecting art experiences; the human spirit; transformative models for teaching and learning; democratic, cooperative and safe classrooms; learning compassion and empathy; and working for social justice." (Campbell, 2012, p.). These themes can be seen in the practices discussed in this paper, and are visible in contemporary art education literature and pedagogy. They also strongly resonate with teachers who face challenging contemporary issues, making the exploration of holistic art education a natural leap for postmodern educators who hold the belief and work to promote the idea that education is transformational for self and society.

Choice-Based Art Education

The field of art education has seen many movements surface and resurface. A current approach that is gaining recognition in art education is choice-based art education or Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB). As mentioned previously, I attended the 2016 National Art Education Association Annual Convention in Chicago, Illinois, and noticed many conference presenters sharing their experiences shifting to choice-based art education practice. In August 2016, the Choice-Art Educators (CAE) Special Interest group was formed. In this section, I will discuss choice-based art education theory and then practice.

Theory

The guiding philosophy of choice-based art education is that students are artists. The learner is given extensive choices in the content and materials for artistic creation, and time to experiment with different content and materials, plan out works, and display their own art works. Its is a learner-centered practice in which teachers focus their intention on creating experiences that immerse students in the processes of creating art in ways that adult artists work. "Choice-based art educators assume that students bring their own agenda to art making and provide space for them to work on that agenda" (Gates, 2016, p. 16). Time, space, and materials have always been of concern to artists and art educators. The theory of choice-based art education ensures that space is made in the curriculum for students to work on their own agenda as an adult artist would. The physical environment or space of a choice-based art room differs much from a traditional teacher-directed practice, and will be discussed later in this section.

In postmodern art education, Gates (2016) observed that many teachers have shifted from Discipline-Based Art Education to using Postmodern Big Ideas as an approach. This approach also welcomes in student choice, but the theory and implementation is different from what will be discussed in this review of literature about choice-based art education. It is important to mention this now to show the shifting in the field toward theories of learning that include student choice. The difference in these approaches is that students working under a big idea or thematic approach asks students "to make their own meanings and allows them to work in their own style and ways" and students are demonstrating "their exploration of the big idea" (Gates, 2016, p. 16). In choice-based art education, students are the artists so they determine the big idea in which they will work under.

Teaching for Artistic Behavior

The teacher creates a learning environment in which students' artistic behaviors are encouraged and develop through their work as an artist. Artistic behaviors are numerous and varied, so they are not directly taught, but "instead choice educators teach *for* artistic behavior" (Douglas and Jaquith, p. 2, 2009). Although, there is a framework that does allow for TAB teachers to teach explicitly teach artistic behaviors that were uncovered and classified in research, called The Eight Studio Habits of Mind. They do this by "offering instruction in materials and techniques by providing resources, time, and space" for students to discover and develop a personal creative process. Teaching for artistic behavior or TAB and choice-based art education are used interchangeably in art education literature. In choice-based theory, the teacher must "identify what artists do, and then ask how to create a learning environment where these types of behaviors can be supported" (Douglas and Jaquith, p. 3, 2009). Douglas and Jaquith (2009, p. 3) provide a list of ways that adult artists work to help identify artistic behaviors to encourage in the art room:

- Play with materials

- Dream and mentally plan

- Conceive and expand ideas for art making

- Risk false starts, abandon failed attempts

- Utilize materials in traditional and idiosyncratic ways

- Combine materials and genres (e.g., sculpture with painting)

- Complete several pieces in a very short time or work for weeks on one piece

- Follow a particular line of thinking over time, sometimes repeating a series of similar works

- Accept mistakes as the springboard for new directions

- Comment on one's life, beliefs, popular culture, politics and history

With teaching for these artistic behaviors, the goal is to have students do the work of artists, because they are expected and encouraged to behave, think and perform as artists (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009). Three essential goals in practice-theory for choice-based art education outlined by Douglas and Jaquith (2009) are: student independence, acquisition of artistic behaviors, and generation of ideas. All of these goals feed into the main philosophy of choice-based art education, which is that the student is the artist. Choice-based teachers have a framework that they may or may not use that was introduced in the 2007 book *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of an Arts Education,* (Hetland, L., Winner, E. Veenma, S., Sheridan, K. & Perkins, D.N.) which describes the Eight Studio Habits of Mind. For the choice-based teacher, these Studio Habits do not cover every artistic behavior, but do indeed provide a helpful framework to teach students to think like artists. Douglas and Jaquith (2012, p. 33) explain the expectations of students as artists in a list in *Engaging Learners Through Artmaking*:

- Find an idea

- Select materials to express the idea

- Arrange those materials in a workspace

- Pace themselves

- Create the image or structure

- Overcome obstacles

- Return materials and tools to their proper location

- Discuss artwork and reflect on progress

These authors point out that there are many numerous artistic behaviors we can observe and encourage. A research based framework of artistic behaviors emerged during the same time, around 2001, called the Studio Habits of Mind.

Artistic Behaviors. Additional research-based support and curricular organization for choice-based methods exist because of Harvard Graduate School of Education's Project Zero. Project Zero was founded by philosopher Nelson Goodman in 1967. Project Zero began "with a focus on understanding learning in and through the arts" (Retrieved from http://www.pz.harvard.edu/who-we-are/about, 2019). From 2001-2007, research was conducted through Harvard's Project Zero to uncover "What is taught in visual arts classes?" with Lois Hetland and her team. The research team identified eight Studio Habits of Mind, which are: *Develop Craft, Engage & Persist, Envision, Express, Observe, Reflect, Stretch & Explore, Understand Art Worlds* (Hetland, et. al. 2007). The findings were published in *Studio Thinking: The Real Value of Arts Education* (Hetland, et. al. 2007). Studio Thinking "provides art teachers with a research-based language for describing what they intend to teach and what students actually learn" (Retrieved from http://www.pz.harvard.edu/who-we-are/about, 2019).

The Studio Habits and Their Definitions

Develop Craft	**Technique:** Learning to use tools, materials, and artistic conventions
	Studio Practice: Taking care of tools, materials, works, and space
Engage & Persist	Finding personally meaningful projects and sticking to them
Envision	Imagining new artworks and steps to bring them to life
Express	Making works that convey personal meaning and interpreting meaning in the works of others
Observe	Looking closely and noticing
Reflect	**Question & Explain:** Talking about students' work and working processes
	Evaluate: Talking about what works well, what does not, and why, in works by self and others
Stretch & Explore	Playing, trying new things, making mistakes, and learning from them
Understand Art Worlds	**Domain:** Learning about what artists make
	Communities: Learning to collaborate and understanding that artists often work in groups

The Studio Structures and Their Definitions

Teacher Presents	Teachers present information to the whole class, often about an assignment or artist
Students at Work	Students work individually or in groups on projects while the teacher circulates the room and has informal conversations with students that serve as a means of formative assessment
Talking About Art	Students look at each other's works or works of artists from outside the classroom and offer descriptive and evaluative comments
Showing Art	Artworks (both drafts and finals) are publicly displayed, often outside of class, and students are involved in planning, installation, and hosting

Figure 2. Adapted from Studio Thinking from the Start: The K–8 Art Educator's Handbook, by Jillian Hogan, Lois Hetland, Diane B. Jaquith, and Ellen Winner. © 2018 by Teachers College, Columbia University. Retrieved from: http://www.pz.harvard.edu/resources/eight-habits-of-mind

Since choice-based art education works with an emergent curriculum that is very specific to the context and student needs, this framework serves choice-based art methods (Harmon in Hogan, Hetland, Jaquith, & Winner, 2018).

Real choice. Hathaway (2013, p. 11) emphasizes how TAB's philosophy of the student as artist conflicts with school-art style and teacher-centered pedagogy:

> The art teacher, not the child, is the inventor, the selector, the decision maker, the problem finder and the problem solver. She chooses the project, decides what materials are used, and plans how long students will toil. She may even choose the subject, color palette, style, and purpose of her students' artwork. Through careful study, thought, experimentation, and a period of incubation, a no-fail art activity is crafted by the teacher in which students are asked to perform.

Choice-based art educators are the educators who dared to ask the question, who is doing the learning? "Choice-based art education provides for the development of artistic behaviors by enabling students to discover what it means to be an artist through authentic creation of artwork" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 3). This authentic creation of artwork under the teacher's belief that the student is the artist demands that real choice is present. *Figure 3* shows a continuum of choice-based teaching and learning (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 12). In a *Full Choice* setting, students are consistently offered full choice of materials and content and even the choice of how to work. "Practice and mistakes are honored when teaching for artistic behavior" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 41). Choice-based teachers also support students identifying their own learning styles and discovering their own artistic process through giving them real choices and support. The choice room is inquiry and problem solving in action. Jaquith states: "intrinsic motivation and student interest are central to creative problem finding and solving" (2011, p. 15). Real choice in choice-based art education environments lends to intrinsically motivated, and therefore, engaged students.

This chart also exhibits how "developing classroom choice encourages a greater degree of personal engagement with instructional content" (Perkins & Carter, 2011, p. 22). To find and solve art problems, students must engage with instructional content. Giving real choice lends to cultivating "learners who control their art making" and are "guided by intrinsic motivation to find and solve problems of their choosing" (Jaquith, 2011, p. 15). Therefore, real choice lends itself to engaged and motivated learners.

Explicit Curriculum Teacher-Directed	⟵⟶	Emergent Curriculum Student-Directed
No Choice	*Modified Choice*	*Full Choice*
• Teacher assigns content and media	• Teacher chooses content, student chooses media *or* • Student chooses content, teacher chooses media • Teacher is flexible with curriculum in response to student interests and needs	• Students are problem finders and problem solvers • Students select content and media all of the time • Students have full ownership of process, direction, outcomes

Figure 3. Continuum of Choice-Based Learning. From Engaging Learners Through Artmaking, Douglas and Jaquith (2009, pg. 12).

No Choice, Full choice, Modified Choice Spectrum. In an action research study, McElhany (2017) transitioned to a student-centered learning environment from a *No Choice* and teacher-directed practice into a *Modified Choice* environment. She took her mask lesson from her district curriculum and opened up choice of materials and used a big idea, identity, and accepted the role as a guide. She found that her students were more engaged and produced authentic artworks. She summarizes this experience: "When I stepped aside to become a guide, I cleared space for my students. Not only did they fill it, they made it their own" (McElhany, 2017, p. 35). For the theory of student as artist to play out in practice, students must have real choices like artists.

In this next section, I will provide an overview of practices in the choice-based art room and provide examples from literature of choice-based practice. The book by Douglas and Jaquith (2009) *Engaging Learners Through Artmaking: Choice-based Art Education in the Classroom* explains in detail how to transition to a choice-based art education practice.

<div align="center">Practice</div>

Planning, Instruction and Assessment

Class time is separated into 4 structured segments: "demonstration, studio, cleanup, and sharing and reflection" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 25). The majority of class time in choice-based art education is used for studio work. In choice-based classrooms, studios are centers or stations that hold materials and resources for students. Though students work at studios for the majority of their time in art class, art teachers must plan their instruction, and this comes in the form of demonstrations about techniques and concepts in art history. "Teacher decisions about demo content originate in district curriculum, national and local standards, art history, and also in emergent student needs and interests" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 27). Gates reiterates that, "Although TAB arguably offers students a wider range of choices than any other formal method

of art education, it is important to note the ways TAB teachers still function as architects, making continual decisions not necessarily left to students" (2016, p. 16). Choice-based art educators surrender control as "sage on the stage" to become a "guide on the side" but this shift comes with many decisions about student learning, such as the content of teacher demonstrations (McElhany, 2017, p. 33).

The choice art educator carefully plans out whole group, small group, and individual demonstrations to include the content that must be taught and should be taught. The whole group demonstrations are done in the first few minutes of class. "The purpose of the demo is for students to receive exposure to varied art concepts over the school year" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 13). During the beginning of art class, teachers may also plan for mini art history lessons, titled "The Five-Minute Museum" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 26). The purpose of this is to expose students to a range of works from artists who connect with a certain concept or medium that is relevant to the students. Just like students have choice in their own art works, students can choose to stay longer at whole group demos or discussions for further instruction. "Students in all classrooms make choices on what to remember, what to forget, and the level of involvement to bring to the work. Children in learner-centered classrooms are encouraged to make their own connections and 'form their own purpose'" (Eisner, 2002, p. 51 in Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 27). Students who need more information or need guidance in making their own choices are helped by the teacher, other peers, exemplary work examples, books, technology, and at studio centers in the form of menus. Giving real choices and carefully planning instruction time for students, students begin to "access what they need to do their work" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 27).

During studio time, the art teacher can instruct in numerous ways. They know when to pull back, and when to offer support. Douglas and Jaquith (2009, p. 24) provide a list of actions to take for instruction during studio time:

- Offer small group and individual assistance

- Facilitate solutions

- Provide additional instruction and reinforcement for those ready for more information

- Highlight an interesting piece of student work

- Make connections between their work and adult artists' work

They also mention that teachers can work on their own pieces alongside students, as time allows, modeling as a way of instruction. The authors Douglas and Jaquith (2009) emphasize that students need structure during the entire class time, and teachers should develop routine so that students know what to expect for each segment of art class in the choice-based art room. This is especially important in cleaning up the room.

Sharing and reflection time in class is meant to give students a "sense of closure" and it is also purposefully brief to get to the essence of what is important, like the demo portion of class (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 28). Sharing artwork can be done in many ways, like a pair-share, or groups of students working at the same studio can be chosen to share. Instead of sharing work, Douglas and Jaquith (2009) also recommend sharing *how* students worked by asking questions like: "Who made an amazing discovery today?" and "Who learned something new from a classmate today?" (p. 29). For students in intermediate grades, journals serve as a means of personal reflection on their own creative processes. It is recommended that when time is short, students should create small drawings and notes to document the day's work, and refer back to

this throughout the year (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009). The teacher may allow more time when needed for deeper reflection.

Assessment in choice-based art education oftentimes goes hand in hand with instruction. The teacher must be a keen observer and know their students well. Douglas and Jaquith (2009) assert that students are constantly demonstrating what they know as they work at their studios. Teachers assess during individual conferences with students and during conversations with students about what they choosing to create in art class. Documentation is up to the teacher, some teachers track which centers students visit and others have students track which centers they have visited and have students monitor their own progress (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009). Electronic portfolios are another way to track student work. Douglas and Jaquith (2009) recommend making the portfolios multidimensional, and adding video, word documents, pictures of students working, sound clips and of course photographs of student work. In a learner-centered environment, students are doing the learning, and the teacher must capture it. Douglas and Jaquith (2009, p. 36) reiterate that choice-based art education empower students to take ownership of their learning Surveys conducted by the students or the teacher are a tool that can be used to reflect on curriculum decisions. Teachers can also use journals to collect assessment data. Well thought out prompts that students answer quickly can clue the teacher in to what specific growth they should be looking for. Students will also show that they can write and talk about their own work, like artists do, in conversations and journaling. Rubrics in choice-based art education are "designed to evaluate artistic behaviors" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 37). "Perseverance, resourcefulness, time management, and responsibility are criteria that could appear on an artistic behavior rubric" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 37). Rubrics are meant to be completed by the students and are sometimes developed by the students.

The Learning Environment

The choice-based learning environment is much different from traditional art classrooms. The art room is arranged into different studios that include materials and resources for art making. There are menus, which detail different techniques that can be achieved with the studio's materials. Students are taught how to utilize menus. Basic studios include: drawing, painting, sculpture, and collage, but they can also be expanded to include permanent centers such as printmaking, ceramics, fiber arts, digital arts, and others that may be appropriate to the student populations. Students choose which studio to work at, and the teachers can track progress and experimentation at each center. Douglas and Jaquith (2009, p.27) warn, "there is no do nothing center!"

Choice-teachers must carefully arrange furniture and materials at centers so that students can navigate throughout the art room easily, and materials are easy for students to find, use, and return. Douglas and Jaquith (2009) challenge art teachers to become "architects" and warn that more furniture may be needed to set up a choice0based learning environment.

Douglas and Jaquith (2009) provide instruction for teachers in many different kinds of situations, including teaching art on a cart. Studios can be organized into different boxes and transported on a cart. Teachers without adequate room for all the centers may employ a buffet approach, where supplies and resources are set up in one section and students grab from the buffet what they need for their work.

Exhibitions. In the learning environment, the classroom and school, exhibiting student work is purposeful. "Exhibition lets artists receive feedback and communicate ideas with viewers" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 47). Exhibitions can be used to: reward and celebrate learning,

advocate for the art program, or as a teaching display. Students help curate the exhibits, and reflections, artist statements and photographs of the students working are included. Exhibition deadlines can encourage students to complete a body of work. Douglas and Jaquith suggest exhibiting: thematic displays, Internet art shows, district art shows, community art shows, and all school art shows. In all of these exhibits, though, students curate the exhibits, choosing the artworks and how to display them.

   Advocacy. In the choice-based environment, the classroom is an advocacy tool. It is important to be able to clearly articulate, and show what students are learning. With documentation (photographs, student work and exhibitions), administration, parents, and other stakeholders can learn about choice-based art education and can see what students are doing. Teachers also invite administration into their classrooms to observe student artists at work (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009).

 Implications

   "Visual art education has the unique opportunity to promote learner-directed experiences without compromising the content of the discipline" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 91).
It has been my experience that the more I open up choice in my classroom, the more students become invested and engaged with their work. They begin bringing their work home, and coming into art class before school and during recess to work. This was also the case for McElhany (2017), when she changed her teaching approach and opened up choice in her mask-making lesson. We must ask, when designing curriculum and reflecting on our practice, "who is doing the learning?" Douglas and Jaquith remind us, "mimicry does not ensure understanding" (2009, p. 91). Though one could argue that giving students choices in their projects already happens in a teacher-directed classroom, like allowing choices about color scheme, "those

choices are so narrow they are less likely to engender student's feelings of freedom or power" (Gates, 2016, p. 17).

Change is hard. Choice-based art education is difficult for teachers to implement. Setting up centers takes a lot of time, writing a new curriculum that focuses on only the most important learning takes a lot of time and planning. Giving students control over their artmaking may provoke anxiety. This change can also be hard for students. Many students have never been given freedom to make choices about their learning. Gates states: "Unfortunately, the opportunity for students to make choices about their education is not the norm in American schools" (2016, p. 16). Gude (2013) states, "most students today could not initially make good use of this sort of freedom without a great deal of individual support" (p. 6). A choice-based approach, like other changes that teachers are forced to make during their career or implement themselves, requires growing pains for the teacher and students. Gates reveals that her "friends who work in democratic schools discuss the period of shock or "detox" that students experience when they move from traditional to democratic educational contexts" (Rietmulder, personal communication, August 11, 2014 in Gates, 2016, p. 16).

Another obstacle that choice-based approaches must overcome is administrator and parent support. Student artworks will not likely look like it has in the past. Advocacy and communication via documentation and assessment can show student learning. Being proactive and sending a newsletter home about the change to choice can get parents on board. Meeting with administrators and providing them with the new curriculum and allowing them to be a part of the transition to choice can garner their support. There are vibrant social media communities that offer support and help for choice-based art teachers. The Choice-Art Educators group on Facebook has over 2,500 members as of June 2019. People ask for help on issues, provide lesson

templates, and direct others to their new blogs. There is also a mentorship program available in the group that connects choice-art teachers to teachers wanting to implement or experiment with choice. In another Facebook group, Teaching for Artistic Behavior (TAB) Art Educators, there are 6,600 members as of June 2019. These are both active forums with lots of sharing resources and offering advice and support.

A very promising area that choice-based art education clearly shows benefits for teachers and students is differentiation of instruction. Differentiation is constantly happening in a choice-based art room. Students work at their level and raise each other up through peer coaching and teachers constantly intervene to ensure progress. Documentation of this progress may seem daunting, but finding assessment tools like reflective journals, surveys, and studio trackers, a teacher can assess how he or she sees fit. Differentiation is a part of the Ohio Teaching Standards, and teachers are assessed on how they differentiate instruction to meet student needs. Choice-teachers simply must clue their administrators or evaluators into how they are tracking students, and the evaluator can see how students are supported in many different ways at studio centers and by the teacher to work towards their own determined goals.

Conclusions

Should one learn with their students, or for their students? Opening up choice allows for authentic student work and student engagement, and teachers can meet the needs of all of their students. At the heart of choice-based art education, the philosophy that students are artists plays out in how the teacher transforms the classroom into studios, the school into a gallery, and organizes time, space, and materials for optimal student use. "If we wish for our students to do the work of artists, we must offer them the opportunity to behave as artists, think as artists, perform as artists. If not in art classrooms, where?" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 93).

Intersections of Holistic and Choice-based Art Education

In this section, I will highlight areas of theory and practice in which choice-based and holistic art education intersect. Both approaches are learner-centered. There is respect for the child in how the choice educator treats students as artists, and the holistic art educator nurtures the mind, body, and soul of their students. Both approaches also make space for emergent themes generated by the students. Students naturally make meaning as they "look within to examine relationships and construct understandings" (Jaquith, 2012, p. 165) in both a choice and holistic setting. Meaning-making and student engagement intersect in choice and holistic environments. Teachers garnering a learner-centered approach must learn about their students.

Jaquith, an author in both areas of literature lists values that holistic and choice-based teachers share: "Respect for the child's point of view, Authenticity in art experiences; Differentiation for ability, learning styles, and personal interests; Flexibility with time, space, and resources" (2012, p. 164).

Summary

In Chapter II, I have discussed two major approaches in art education that are gaining recognition today: holistic art education and choice-based art education. These both have implications to the field of art education as teachers increasingly want to include more student engagement, ownership, and meaning making in their art rooms. The next chapter will explain the research design and methods used to collect and analyze data for this case study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology and research methods used to collect data during this case study. Along with the purpose of using case study methodology, specific bias, transferability, triangulation are addressed. This chapter also discusses in detail the participants, setting, role of the researcher, and finally the data collection methods used.

Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research methodology is used to investigate how things work, while quantitative methods "tell us more exactly how things work" by using "linear attributes, measurements, and statistical analysis" (Stake, 2010, p. 11). According to Stake (2010), qualitative research "relies primarily on human perception and understanding" (p. 11) and therefore it is important to recognize the "interpretations of qualitative research are constructed by the researcher" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 34). "Qualitative researchers seek to understand a phenomenon in-depth, and because knowledge generated is situated in a specific context, it does not claim to be value-free or generalizable" (Buffington & McKay, 2013, p. 40). Furthermore, "qualitative researchers assume that social reality is constructed and assume that it is continuously constructed in local situations" (Buffington & McKay, 2013, p. 40). Plainly, I understand qualitative research as a way to derive knowledge from the world; from people, situations, and systems. Qualitative research was chosen as my research methodology because I wanted to understand how specific approaches and practices in art education manifested. Therefore, to understand the phenomenon of a holistic approach in a choice-based practice in depth, a qualitative research methodology

was employed. To do this, I needed a context or situation in which this phenomenon was occurring.

Case Study and Transferability

The purpose of using a case study method to research choice-based art education is to obtain a deep understanding of how a holistic theory is implemented in the teaching of art in a choice-based practice. This case study investigates a mid-career art teacher who routinely implements a choice-based practice with her 8th grade students and a holistic approach to art education. "The purpose of the case study is to present a detailed description of the case and the researcher's interpretation of its significance to the field of study" (Tollefson-Hall, 2013, p. 204). As a pre-service art teacher exposed to an array of postmodern art education pedagogy, I immediately saw value in studying this particular case in-depth. Often, theories are presented as singular ways of teaching, while actual teaching practice embodies an array of a teacher's personal understandings of those theories and/or personally constructed theories.

Stake (2008) identifies different types of case studies, which are: intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. Intrinsic case studies are used because the researcher has a particular intrinsic interest to understand the particular case. He warns that the goal is not to build a theory, but "other times the researcher might just do that" (p. 137). Instrumental case studies differ from intrinsic studies because the researcher is pursuing an external interest to the case, and is using the case to "provide insight to an issue or to redraw a generalization" (p.137). When an instrumental case study is expanded to include multiple cases, it is a collective case study.

This case study is intrinsic. The goal is not to build a theory or generalize. Stake alerts that intrinsic case studies can possibly lead to generalizations, when evidence presented "encapsulate(s) complex meanings into finite reports" (p. 141). Stake also points out that not

everything about the case could possibly be understood, and the "researcher has choices to make" in terms of presenting findings (p. 141).

To examine this case in-depth, I investigated situations, relationships, and perceptions in order to understand how my topics of interest are applied in a specific educational practice. I also needed to investigate the overall context where the case is situated to accurately describe the case under investigation (Tollefson-Hall, 2013). As a researcher, I realized that the knowledge I gathered during fieldwork will be constructed and is neither "value-free or generalizable" (Buffington & Mckay, 2013, p. 40). In case studies, limitations include time and access to a case, researcher bias, and the inability to generalize findings (Tollefson-Hall, 2013).

Bias, Transferability, Triangulation

   Bias. Though researcher bias is a criticism of case study research, "one way of decreasing the presence of researcher bias is for the researcher to honestly and straightforwardly state in the writing his/her background, beliefs, known biases, and assumptions" (Tollefson-Hall, 2013, p. 207). In *Chapter I*, I discussed assumptions I held about the case. At the time the research was conducted, I had zero experience as an art teacher in my own classroom beyond that gained during student teaching, and course-based field experiences. I did not carry any bias from my experience because I did not have any contractual experience at the time of fieldwork. My teaching perspectives as a K-6 art educator in an elementary school will be discussed in my implications of my research findings in *Chapter V*. My student teaching in Akron Public Schools left me with new feelings of my role as a future art teacher and my ability to serve students more fully than just delivering art content. This comes from a deep part of my personality, and is not a learned behavior. We often look for our own traits in others, but I needed to remain in a neutral

state while conducting research. This led me to detect my confirmability bias during my personal reflection as an art teacher.

Bias arose during the planning of my research when I realized I was very anxious about proving my topic's worthiness and significance. The topics of this case-study have only been experienced by the researcher in studying theories and research. I had a confirmability bias; I wanted to see only what would answer my research topics and further validate their significance before doing fieldwork. I needed to bring with me an open mind to fieldwork. To have an accurate description of this case study, I needed to be open to all possibilities of what was being made visible in my participant's work. Although I wanted answers to my research question, I had to exert a degree of patience and faith that it would be answered and other information would reveal itself to be of value, even if I did not see the value during my time doing the fieldwork.

Transferability. "Transferability refers to implications of the findings for others that may be in similar settings or circumstances" (Buffington & McKay, 2013, p. 54). Transferability occurs when the researcher provides thick description of the case and the reader is able to find relevance in the findings for their own similar setting or circumstance. Thick description is extensive and provides rich details about the methodology and context of the case (Buffington & McKay, 2013). "Thick description includes details regarding participant attitude and motivation as well as possible meaning behind their actions" (Greer in Buffington & McKay, 2013, p. 55). Stake (1995, p. 85 in Tollefson-Hall, 2013, p. 208) defined "naturalistic generalization" as something the "researcher and reader make based on the case presented by connecting with previous experiences and knowledge of related cases."

In this case study, thick description on the researcher's (my) part in *Chapter IV* and *Chapter V* is how I will try to create transferability in my findings. Thick description also aids in reliability,

or the trustworthiness of the reporting of the case. Transferability is unlikely to occur if the reader does not find trustworthiness in the writing, which may occur if the research seems to lack quality or rigor (Buffington & McKay, 2013, 20 p. 40).

Triangulation. I was able to gather data from a number of different sources within the school setting. Erica (pseudonym provided to preserve her identity) provided me with interviews and I observed her during her daily workday. I also interviewed two of her colleagues, the guidance counselor and the special education teacher, using the same set of interview questions I generated for my formal interview with Erica (see *Appendix A*). I recorded field notes during observations of several art classes, homerooms, break times and arrival and dismissal time, collaborative meetings, an art department meeting, and a math class. I did this by hand and then had several small breaks throughout the day in which I sat in the break room and typed up these notes.

Participant Selection and Participants

Purposive sampling was used to gain access to this participant. My thesis advisor originally made contact with the participant over other matters, but the participant expressed a desire and willingness to be a subject of research from a Kent State University graduate student during Skype conversation. My thesis advisor made the connection between my interests and the participant's interest in being involved in research. I submitted proper documents for approval to Kent State University's Internal Review Board and was granted permission from the IRB and my participant and her school to conduct research in May 2015.

Participants. The participant is a self-identified holistic art educator who at the time of research was teaching art to students in grades 5-8 in an urban charter school in Boston, Massachusetts. She practiced a choice-based approach with her 8th grade classes. Erica taught

art on a cart to 5th-8th grade students. This research took place in May 2015, near the end of their school year.

Erica also served as the Art Department Chair for this particular network of charter schools. She is White, female, and in her 30s. She holds her bachelor's and master's degrees in art education from Kent State University and has experience in the Peace Corps Teacher Training program. She has maintained contact with art education faculty from Kent State University during her career. She had also attended a TAB workshop in Massachusetts and regularly reads art education literature supplied to her as a member of the National Art Education Association.

I also used the snowball method to gain access to other participants in the school. Erica gained access for me to observe a math class, and interview the school's special education teacher and guidance counselor. This was to provide me with evidence about the context in which the phenomena of choice-based and holistic art practices were situated.

Other Participants. Erica connected me with the special education teacher and the school guidance counselor for interviewing to further my understanding of the context of the school. I asked questions about the services they provide to their students and also used the same interview questions with the guidance counselor as I did with my case's formal interview. They explained that they have a great student need in their school for special education and counseling services. Twenty five percent of students have an IEP. They also shared that there is a huge social and emotional need that all teachers are encouraged to address.

Role of the Researcher

I was graciously invited into my participant's home to stay for the duration of the study, which occurred in May 2015. During this time, I was a Graduate Teaching Assistant at Kent

State University-- a common experience I shared with my participant, Erica. It is important for the reader to know, in terms of reliability, that Erica provided me with housing, transportation, meals, and friendship during this study. More so, she and her husband treated me like family, welcoming me into their daily life with their impressive careers and their time nurturing their adorable infant son. We had no previous collegiate, co-worker, or friendly relationship previous to this study. To thoroughly explain my role as a researcher, this case must be recognized in this research for her sincere hospitality, openness and accommodation to a probing stranger, and wholehearted commitment to being a participant in this research. Rapport developed quickly with the participant because she offered herself as a participant, and evidence of her reflective and honest nature is apparent in the data analysis.

Erica provided me access to her school and home. At her school, I first took a role as strictly observer, and then transformed to a participant-observer during art classes later on in the study. I conducted formal interviews, but the environment also generated conversational interviewing. My role as a researcher evolved from that of objective observer to participant-observer later in the study. It should be noted, too, that given the rapport I built with the participant that formal interviews also evolved into more informal conversational interviewing.

Constructivist Paradigm

Qualitative research methods are built around experiential understanding (Stake, 2010, p. 20). Buffington and McKay (2013) explain the constructivist research paradigm by noting the underlying beliefs of a constructivist researcher are that "reality or truth is constructed" while "numerous truths and realities can exist simultaneously" and they are not objective (p. 28). Constructivist researchers also place importance on knowing and disclosing their own values and beliefs and how they influence their research. For case study methodology, a constructivist

paradigm worked because I was "mainly concerned with understanding a phenomenon" (Buffington and McKay, 2013, p. 28). Constructivist researchers strive to "understand participants through the participant's point of view" (Buffington & McKay, 2013, p. 28). In my case, my research question and interview questions and the setting all called for finding the participant's point of view. In constructivist research, "knowledge changes over time" and "it is constructed by people and may come through interactions with people" (Buffington & McKay, 2013, p. 28). With a constructivist lens and a case study methodology, my role as a researcher was to find as much information about my case as I could, including her perspective, interactions, and relationships.

Settings

School. This research took place in a large/metropolitan tuition-free public charter school in the state of Massachusetts serving students in grades 5-8. This charter school served 200+ students. Almost 80 percent of students are Latino/a. The majority of the student population is classified as low-income. About 25 percent of the student population in this school was on an Individualized Education Program.

Commuting. A recorded interview and unrecorded conversations were held as Erica commuted to work in her sedan. The commute lasted about 25 minutes and included stopping at her son's daycare and coffee shops. This time was valuable and noteworthy because I could ask questions and openly reflect in conversation about what I had seen at the school. Erica also drove me around the community surrounding the school. She pointed out the enormous salt pile for the city that was just blocks away from the school.

Participant's home. My first and formal interview was conducted in my participant's home after my first day of observing her in her school. She lives outside of her school community in a

middle-class neighborhood. I had a comfortable and private bed and bath, and shared meals with my participant and her family. During the formal interview, we sat next to one another in her living room on the couch under a large window with her infant son. The atmosphere was quiet and relaxed. I was able to type up my field notes and more questions in the evening hours.

Guidance Office. I interviewed the school guidance counselor in her office. It was in the basement, a very quiet part of the school. The room was small, and she had created a peaceful, secure feeling environment. She used soft lamps to light the room instead of typical overhead lighting, and had plants and tapestries. A small water fountain gave off a relaxing sound. She had comfortable armchairs arranged around a glass table that we sat at. She generously gave me plenty of time to conduct the interview. I used my pre-determined interview questions with her that I also interviewed my case with. She gave me a hug and wished me good luck upon leaving. This interview was recorded on my laptop computer.

Teacher's Lounge. The interview I conducted with the special education teacher was held in the teacher's lounge. The room was on the second story and had two large windows, two small tables and a kitchenette. The room was open to the hallway. We only had about 20 minutes to meet, so this interview was changed to accommodate time. I limited my original questions. I set out to ask about the students and the support they receive.

Classrooms. Each homeroom is named after a University, and the classroom is decorated with the colors, banners and posters of that University. The classrooms were large, and had large windows, and did not include a teacher's desk. There was only a stool for the teachers, since they use a communal office with a personal desk there instead of in the classrooms. Teachers changed classrooms throughout the day. I observed in different classrooms. One was downstairs in the basement, a modern and large room lit with florescent lights. Two were upstairs with the large

windows and older woodwork that included benches under bay windows. I also observed a math class taught in the auditorium/gymnasium, a large square room with student desks and only a white board.

The Teachers' Office. At this school, teachers do not have a home classroom with their desk in it. They have a communal office, with desks that surround the perimeter of the large, square room and fill the middle. The word 'bull pen' comes to mind. It is noisy with chatter, and desks are messy. Most of the desks were different, and look to have come to this school used from different places.

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Data Collection Methods

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Data was collected via observation, interviews, and document analysis, which included student artwork. Participants gave consent before participating in interviews and observations. Erica was granted permission from her school to allow me access to observations.

Observations

Observations are important for the researcher "to experience the research setting and activities" (Greer in Buffington & McKay, 2013, p. 55). It is important to note that the participant's behavior may be altered due to the presence of the researcher (Greer, in Buffington & McKay, 2013). Other disadvantages to case study observations include: access to sites, limited generalizability, and researcher bias (Greer, in Buffington & McKay, 2013, p. 55).

Data from observation was collected over a three-day period, following the participant in her typical day's schedule at the school at which she was an art educator. The observational data collected in field notes covered a 5th grade printmaking lesson, homeroom assignments, prep times, art club, 8th grade classes, and 7th grade classes. I also observed a math class in the school.

I was able to write and type on my laptop computer in the teacher's lounge during breaks, reflecting and elaborating on field notes I had taken. Below is a photograph of my handwritten fieldnotes. *Figure 4* is an example of how I attempted to capture everything happening, and shows why I needed to immediately review and elaborate on my fieldnotes for future data analysis. This was one half of a page in three total pages of notes I took during a 45 minute art class.
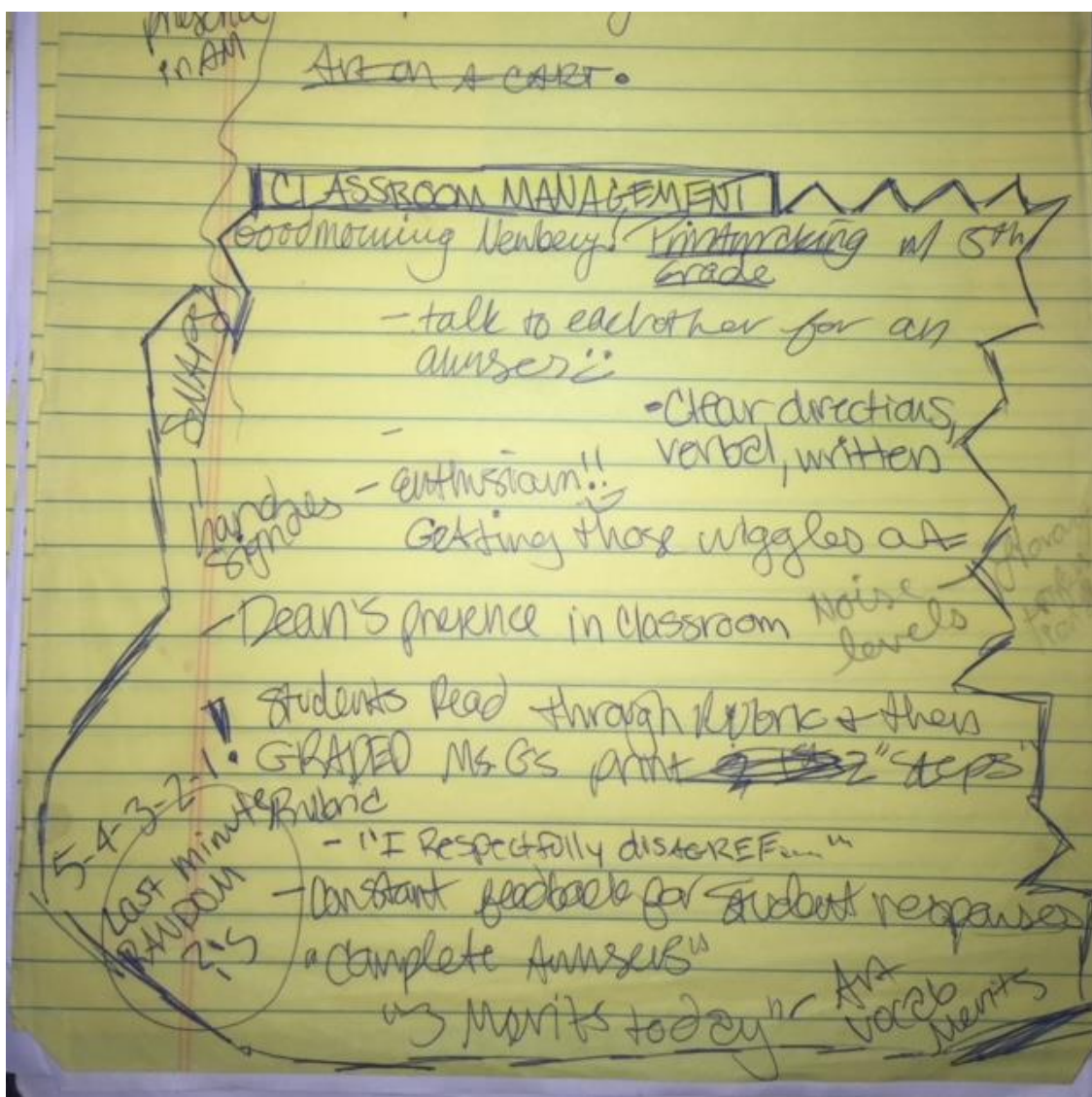
Figure 4. Example of fieldnotes taken during an observation.

Interviews

"Interviews are useful when a researcher is seeking a person's perceptions about something or a person's internal experience of something" (Nolte, in Buffington and McKay, 2013, p. 56). In this case study, I had prepared a set of open-ended interview questions that were asked and answered in a specific order. I also generated questions for a semi-structured interview halfway through the study for an interview recorded during our commute from school to home. Both of these interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Interview questions See *Appendix A*.

<div align="center">

Data Analysis

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To begin analyzing the data collected in this case study, I began by identifying "major recurring topics" (Cera, 2013, p. 63). I simply circled recurring topics on my printed field notes and interview transcripts upon the first several times I read through the data. I then jotted down recurring themes from my first impression of the data circled. Next I color coded all of the data by highlighting on Microsoft Word into major domains. These domains were read through and divided into more themes. As I coded, I intentionally looked for themes aligned with choice-based art education and holistic art education practices, and specific actions, statements, characteristics and contextual information that would guide me to answer my research question.

During my fieldwork, I was also able to use member checking. "Member checking is a technique used to gain information on the perceptions of others involved" (Cera, 2013, p. 63). I conducted interviews with school staff who work with my case, the school guidance counselor and the special education teacher, to gain more information about the context in which my case carries out her practice. These interviews were conducted after a day of observing my case and doing my first formal interview with my case. I also conducted a confirmability audit with the help of my thesis advisor, Dr. Linda Hoeptner-Poling.

Summary

This chapter explained why a qualitative research methodology was used for this case study. Bias, transferability, and triangulation were addressed. Participants and settings were described in detail to provide thick description needed in a case study. Finally, research methods used to gather data were described as well as the methods for analyzing the data. The following chapter reveals my findings from this case study research.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

Overview

The data revealed that my case operated her practice in alignment with both choice-based and holistic approaches. I will describe this through six codes that were generated from the data. These topics recurred throughout the data collected via interviewing, observations and field notes. I began assigning titles to my codes almost immediately, because my case revealed in her language during her time teaching her students and in her interviews, consistency in her language. It also addresses my conformability bias and is in the true nature of a constructivist research paradigm. While a case study is still the researcher's interpretation of their participant, using my participant's own words as codes to analyze the data was helpful in reporting what was occurring in her classroom practice and her own teaching philosophy together, as they were made visible in both interviews and observation. The reader will see how this language is turned into specific actions observed in my participant's practice.

In my beginning stages of coding, I assigned the simple titles: 1.) space, 2.) collaboration, 3.) engagement, 4.) connection 5.) knowing students, 6.) loving students. These appeared in her language inside and outside the classroom frequently.

In the following section, these topics provide insight and answers to my research question: In what ways does a holistic approach to art education manifest in a choice-based practice? Each of these codes are described in detail in the following section in their expanded titles: 1.) Space for Holistic Approaches , 2.) Symbiotic Relationships of Collaboration and Trust, 3.) Whole and Engaged Students 4.) Balance, Inclusion, and Connection 5.) Knowing Our Students is Loving our Students. I also decided to include a topic about my participant's disposition, 7.) The

Disposition of a Holistic Art Educator, because her disposition is present in her actions and beliefs, and contributes to how holistic art education plays out in her choice-based practice. Many examples that are telling of her disposition are also evident in the preceding six sections.

Space for Holistic and Choice-Based Approaches

My participant opened up space for students to think, created space for students to make choices in their learning, and makes the most of the physical space she is allotted at her school. Space will be discussed in four different categories below.

Contemplative Space. I noticed that Erica consistently gave a fair amount of wait time when asking a question. My case used the word "space" to describe how she utilizes her wait time after asking her students a question. She stated that many things were happening during this time. "Wait time is a complicated thing-- there are actually a couple of relational things happening in that space" (personal communication, May 13, 2015).

"First of all, it's that expectation, and we talk a lot about taking risks, so even if you are not 100% sure on this answer, my expectation is that you care enough about this class to raise your hand and try" (personal communication, May 13, 2015).

Erica also thinks about where her students are developmentally as well as holistically. She is honoring the fact that students have a mind that needs time to process information. Answering a question is an expectation of her students, so each student is processing the information, and deciding whether or not to take a risk and answer. "Sometimes that wait time is just literally giving kids time to think. A lot of times what else is happening in that space is that kids are thinking- they are sort of getting the confidence to speak or sorting their thoughts out" (personal communication, May 13, 2015).

Contemplative space is also an assessment tool, during the space given to students, it is also a

space where my case reflects on the learning in the moment. Erica said:

> I'm also thinking and watching what kids are slow to respond, I'm considering I don't want
> to call on the same kid the same time. This idea of, 'how do I engage the whole class' so in
> that time, I'm also doing a fair amount of active assessment in the room. What do kids need
> and who needs me to call on them right now, and who needs to take that risk? (personal
> communication, May 13, 2015)

The actual art making experience lends itself to a contemplative space for students to think

differently. My case describes this:

> So I think in making art, kids are sort of forced to do some thinking that there is not often
> space for in other classes. They can sort of step into the driver's seat sometimes in what they
> choose to think about within the parameters of a project. (personal communication, May 13,
> 2015)

She elaborates:

> I think that when you open up your curriculum, you open up space for kids to bring a broader
> complexity of themselves to school. So um, I'm giving them space to express the things that
> they are thinking that they don't normally have the space to in school…I think all of this
> is just opportunities to be a more complex little person within the space of our school, and
> certainly in the space in my curriculum. (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

Physical Space. Every art educator is aware of time, space and materials in their particular

situation. They are constraints that art educators work under. In my case's physical space, she

teaches art on a cart, going to different classrooms throughout the day. The space she has with

students, and the time, are limited like they are for most art educators. She states that her

students:

> get one hour or fifty minutes of art every week… Just the sort of the competitive space given
> for what I do is obviously smaller, and that is reflective of the institutional value of what I do,
> and so advocacy has become this huge piece of my job. (personal communication, May 13,
> 2015)

Giving students physical space is something that is not possible at her current school. She

teaches art on a cart and says that an art room would not only be professionally fulfilling space to

have, but she "would like to have a space where kids could come into and identify that as their

studio space, as their space, where they are safe to explore some of these ideas" (personal

communication, May 13, 2015). She also stated that "it would be an awesome space of

connection, a shared space" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). Instead, Erica has to

transform multiple rooms into a safe space of shared connection. She wishes she could provide

the physical space, a classroom, for students because it would be a home base.

> It's also important for kids to have chosen home bases, and some kids choose the home base of the basketball team or they choose the debate team. My colleagues like to joke that I sort of attract the misfits. One of my good friends always jokes that my enrichment choice classes on Friday are like the island of misfit toys, and those are my babies… (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

Space for Choice. Erica spoke about how she evolved in her practice to make more space for

student choices:

> I think when I was a young teacher I felt like I had to design lessons that I created that were relevant to students, and I think as I grow in my practice I realized more and more what I need to do is to create space for students to bring that relevance to the table. So it's not sort of like "ok guys give me your family's ethnicity, give me your family's flag" but it's more like, you know, tell me more about who you are or tell me about what home is for you, tell me about what changes you hope to see in your life. (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

Curriculum, too, relates to opening spaces. As department head, she spoke of how she changed

the curriculum by "opening up space for choices within the curriculum" (personal

communication, May 13, 2015). She asked, "Is it essential that all the students address the same

subject matter in their work? If not, open it up for their choice" (personal communication, May

13, 2015).

   She showed me an art exhibit in the front lobby of the school that 8th grade students had curated

from their choice unit. I was able to photograph the artworks, and sent consent forms home after

having Kent State University translate the form into Spanish as well. Erica explained it might be

very hard to get forms back from students, even though they were translated into Spanish. We did not receive any forms back stating that photographs of student work could be included in this thesis research study. Erica explained that this school's population may not have the experience to understand what the consent form meant.

Eighth grade students voted on the artworks to be hung in the show. They chose locations to hang the artwork with artist statements explaining their work within the theme or big idea of Change. Eighth grade was her focus for implementing choice-based art education. She explains:

> …in the eighth grade curriculum, we've opened it up in a really broad way. So we're doing thematic units and the unit that you saw a show for was this Change unit. I opened it up by showing examples of artists working within the theme of Change and we looked at some *Art 21* videos and we looked at some other video examples and images and kids really got this experience of how lots of different people looking at the theme of change worked. (personal communication, May 13, 2015).
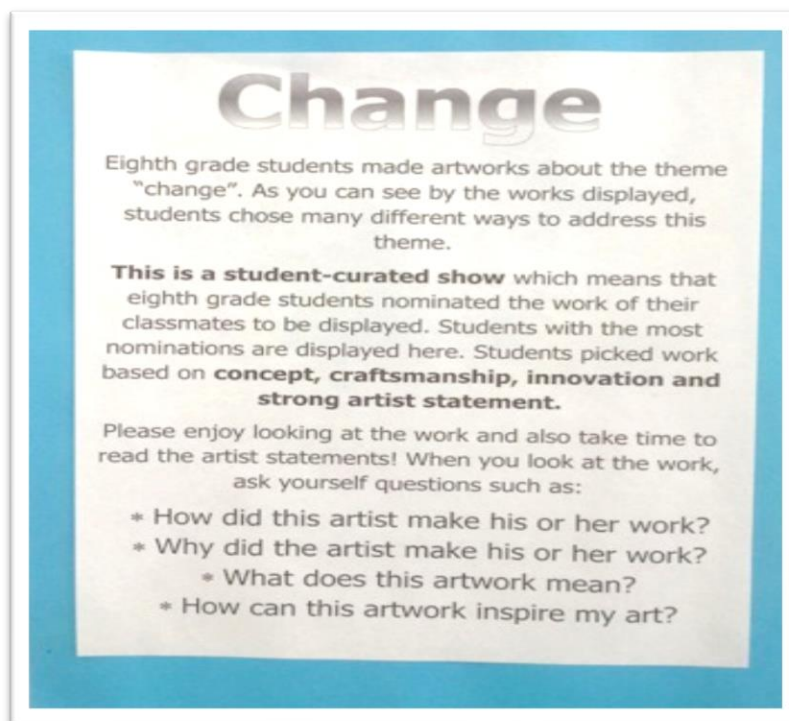

Figure 5. Change Exhibition Sign. The 8th grade choice exhibition sign explaining that art work was nominated based on certain criteria for their artwork under the theme Change.

As we looked at these artworks, she pointed out to me how some of these students were

examining change in very surface level ways and very deep ways. One artwork featured two

figures, an older woman in a business suit holding a young girl's hand. It was a beautiful mixed-

media piece, and the artist focused on her feelings of leaving childhood and looking towards the

future. She revealed that her classmates are always trying to act older, but they are missing out

on still being a child. This artwork went deeper into the theme of Change than another featured

work that simply depicted the physical change from being a 5th grader to now being an 8th grader.

Erica reflected on opening up space for choice, and how she continually shifts her practice to

make even more of this space for choice for her students:

> And I think that's like this incredible gift to me as an art educator is that I get to see all those
> little spaces, but also I think that it really does act as this moment of affirmation as kids'
> identities and their humanity, and their right to those spaces. And so as I push my practice,
> one of the things I am seeking is to have lessons where there is far more studio space and far
> less of my yapper yapping. …I recognize that every time I pull back, I am making space for
> them, because we together fill the space. (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

Symbiotic Relationships of Collaboration and Trust

   During my time observing Erica at work, she spoke with colleagues throughout the day in
passing about students.

> I work really closely communicating with other teachers. So communication between teachers
> at our school is really clear and plentiful, and we do a lot of emailing about kids. And that's
> sort of centered around the fact that we really care about kids, and we want them to be doing
> well (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

"Clear and plentiful" described these interactions. They were not typical "Hi, how are you?"

conversations. These quick conversations were about student learning and their personal lives.

She reported that there is "constant reflection and discussion in a way that is respectful and

loving of our students" and it is "incredibly awesome for building my practice, and becoming a

better teacher, and maintaining constant reflective practice" (personal communication, May 13,

2015). I noticed that personal conversations took place after the school day was over. She also spoke with students in passing throughout the day.

> So kids hear things from us all the time like, "Hey I heard from Mr. X that this is going on with you, we're both really worried about you, can you talk to me about it?" and in that, they are understanding that we are not going to play mom against dad, but also we are spending our time talking about them (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

Erica made it a point to share that they are "all on the same team" and that she can trust her colleagues to make decisions about students (personal communication, May 13, 2015).

> I trust them, like, I love this kid, you said you were going to do this for this kid, I'm not going to worry about it anymore. I'm just going to trust you to do it-- and that actually is incredibly important when you're trying to meet the needs of kids… (personal communication, May 13, 2015).

During an interview on one commute home, we conversed about trust in her workplace. She replied that they spend a fair amount of time in the beginning of the year working on colleague communication, which they call organizational norms. One of these is to "address problems face-to-face" (personal communication, May 14, 2015). She even feels comfortable to go to her Dean of Students and tell him she is not comfortable with a decision he made and says that: "he'll be very willing and open to talk about it" (personal communication, May 14, 2015).

I recorded in my field notes that my case receives almost 200 emails per day, mostly relating to students' lives and what the teachers are concerned with from academics to behavior. They are "all up in their business," meaning their family situation, their dating life, friendships, conflicts, and struggles (personal communication, May 13, 2015). That amount of emails really speaks volumes about how closely the teachers connect to students' lives, and how communication is really clear and concise. Yet, the issues that come up with students do not end just because it is the end of the school day. Having all of this information in your inbox is overwhelming. Erica and her husband frequently discuss her worries about students at home.

It was visible that there was a mutual, professional respect between Erin and her colleagues. I had asked her if she felt empowered teaching in her school, and she answered that for the most part, yes. The competitive space that visual art is given is far less than other subjects like math and English, so "advocacy has been a huge piece" of her job. She feels that institutionally, art and the value of arts education is not given as much respect as other subjects. Yet underneath the common feeling which art teachers experience in many schools, that art just is not as important as other subjects, Erica has found that in her school, her teaching and her work to meet students' needs are admired and respected. Her content area may not garner that same respect as math in her school, but she as an educator garners that same respect as other educators.

> I feel like I work with these incredibly passionate and skilled educators- people that I really admire as teachers, and teaching is the thing I value most. They are people I love to work with, because they are super skilled at their practice, and I feel like I've gained their respect as a teacher, and also as a teacher who connects very closely with students and puts students' needs first. (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

Collaboration and trust work together in how my case experiences support from her Manager and Dean of Students. She uses the words "thought partner" to describe their role, as they are constantly collaborating with her about students and her practice. She reported:

> There is a constant stream of communication and also a constant stream of collaboration, and I am super supported by my manager, so unlike a lot of schools, I am observed like once a week, and my manager is in and out of my class all the time- this is something I love. I love this accountability point. (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

She spoke highly of her Dean of Students, and how he is an excellent resource for her in supporting student needs:

> His whole day is focused on building really strong relationships with kids and supporting them to be their best selves, and sometimes that looks like a consequence. For sure, he is definitely the one that has hard conversations with kids but it is also because a lot of thinking about how to build kids up- having him as my thought partner is this incredibly valuable thing. (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

In return of the trust Erin gives to her colleagues and administrators, she is trusted with making big decisions within her school. She has been empowered to make curricular changes, and finds the flexibility and freedom to make decisions for the art program empowering. She has the power to hire who she wants for open art positions in their district, and has supportive relationships with her art department colleagues.

> Can I make curricular changes that I want to make? Can I make this philosophical change of choice in my curriculum? Like yeah, I just did it, as the department head I hire people I think that fit a certain philosophy and I work with a department of three people and we're really tight and it's like we just make decisions and we make them together and we support each other and just do it. So that flexibility that comes with working in a charter is fantastic. Some of the other things about working at a charter are more complex for me, but the flexibility is really a positive. (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

Whole and Engaged Students

Recognizing students as whole humans. My case routinely calls her students her "little humans" and she explains:

> … I sort of do this purposefully. It started as this attempt to avoid gendered language so like I rid myself of the bad habit of saying "hey guys," but it became this reminder about who these little people are. They are little people and they are humans. (personal communication, May 14, 2015).

Even in her language she recognizes that her students are whole beings with needs. We spoke about meeting students needs, and Erin told me how their school does a lot of work to meet as many needs as possible of the whole student.

> At our school, if you look at our school holistically, we are actually trying to address lots of that and we're giving kids counseling at our building and we are talking to kids about nutrition and we're talking to them about healthy lifestyles and they are experiencing this complex intellectual life and we're giving kids opportunities… (personal communication, May 14, 2015)

She spoke about how art can meet the need of just being human, that art "gives students this opportunity to be fully human and sort of reflect on these big ideas within the art making space, and also gives them opportunities to affirm who they are" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). She elaborates about her personal beliefs about art:

> I very sort of deeply believe that art making and experiencing other people's art is this very human thing. I've lived in lots of different places and experienced lots of different cultures, you know, all of those places have this representation of humanity through the arts, and I do mean the arts sort of broadly- music and dance and the visual arts- is like this really human thing, and I think that because it is this very basic human way to express identity and experience and beauty and fear and all of these different things that make up the human experience (personal communication, May 13, 2015).

These experiences she spoke about affirm her belief that art is a human need. She recognizes that her students are full human beings with needs, and she strives to reach them through her practice.

Mind and Body. It was evident that Erica was aware of how she nurtured her student's minds because she was aware of how the content should be developmentally appropriate for her students' age, yet rigorous. She admits, "I'm very strict that kids show me what I've asked them to do; they need to show me what they have learned" (personal communication, May 15, 2015). She explained that "In our school, we talk a lot about load and who is doing the heavy lifting in our lessons all the time" and always reflects on her lessons by asking: "Am I doing the thinking or are the kids doing the thinking?" (personal communication, May 2015). With that in mind, she admits that some of her skills-based projects were very rigorous. She used skills-based teacher led lessons before they have choice-based units because:

> I also think there is value in some of the basic technical things; like I have patience enough to sit with a drawing for six weeks, which is what my 7th graders do and it is like a superhuman act for a 12 year old to work on something for six weeks. It's 6 hours when you look at it. For them to have that in their mind for like six weeks is like ahhhhhh! but it's like really good for them to have that experience and for them to walk away from it

and be like 'I worked really hard on this drawing and I am proud of what I made.' (personal communication, May 15, 2015)

I helped her hang some of these artwork she discussed. It was evident that her students learned the technical drawing skills with these artworks and from a 7th grade drawing class I observed, which taught value using scratchboard and their choice of animal. Serving students' minds is also made evident by Erica's questioning skills and in her choice-based practice.

Wait time was previously discussed in the section c*ontemplative space*, and it serves her students well to give their minds time to process their learning. Erica's questioning strategies challenged students to explain their thinking rather than come up with one correct answer. Artist statements for choice units made students' thinking visible**,** as they were required to write about what they made, how they made it, and why they made it.

It was apparent that my case was concerned with students' minds, but she also acknowledges the kinesthetic needs of students. I noticed that she would ask students, "who needs to get a wiggle out?" when asking for help to pass out materials. She said involving students' bodies: "it's about recognizing I want them to know that I know that it's hard to sit in that chair all day. So like part of it is just that - simple and clear" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). Additionally, the norm in the school is for students to snap their fingers when they like something, like a well thought out response to a question, or a teacher given direction. My case also has students pump their arms in the air when they were ready to begin, or "ready to rock and roll!" I wrote in my field notes that I observed that kinesthetic involvement is purposeful-students get those wiggles out by cooperating with one another and helping the class run smoothly. I noticed that posture is important as well, to stay engaged in the learning. Students are also given a 15-minute break to use the restroom and walk around. These kinesthetic strategies serve to help students stay fully engaged.

Intellectual, Social, and Emotional aspects. My case's school has an advisory program. She advises 9 students and explained that the staff works on coaching children in intrapersonal and interpersonal skills- teaching students how to make friends and how to socialize appropriately. Intellectually, students reflect on their performance and must come up with a plan on improving in their academics. Teachers document and track homework, behavior, year-to-date grades, year-to-date attendance, and give students a numerical score based on their performance in those categories. They work with their advisory teacher to make goals, and my case provided written feedback and continual support for these particular students on their intellectual and social and emotional growth. She showed me a worksheet that they were working on presently, and one question stuck out for me. *What values or beliefs are most important in your life right now?* This question directly engages the spiritual dimension, though my case and her school admit that the spiritual is not part of their philosophy or practice. One student answered this question by stating that he plans to make more friends because it is really important for him to reach out and have friends for life. Helping students realize their own beliefs may reach into the spiritual dimension, but they choose to look at it as behavioral, social, and emotional skills they are developing.

An example of how Erica promoted social engagement was observed during a 5th grade printmaking lesson. I observed that students worked in "wolf packs." Erica stressed cooperation during her printmaking unit, and said you "Don't want to be a lone wolf!" I noted that students were in fact helping one another throughout their first printmaking experience.

Engagement. To attend to students' minds, bodies, and intellectual and social dimensions, the students must not only be present but be engaged. I asked about the word *engage* because I had heard it throughout the day during her teaching. She reported that "…In our school, because we

are talking about kids, and we're talking about their developmental stage, we're talking about really concrete things." For example, her expectations for concrete engagement in art class were summarized as these questions she stated: "Physically, are you looking? are you being respectful? and then there is also intellectual, are you thinking, are you processing, are you internalizing what were talking about?" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). This combination of being physically and mindfully engaged is actually taught to students:

> So like I, our school, we talk about all these very sort of surface level pieces of engagement but we also coach kids to what does real engagement mean, not just listening and parroting back what we've said, but like really thinking through…(personal communication, May 13, 2015).

Balance, Inclusion and Connection

In numerous ways, it was evident in the data collected that Erica's choice-based practice nurtured and made visible the holistic principles of inclusion and connection. With balance, I created an interview question to uncover how that principle worked in her practice.

Balance. Erica was resistant to the idea of balance "as a tool for changing kids" and made clear that "what choice-based art stuff does open up is not opportunities for me to balance my students, but for the balance that is inherently in my students to become more apparent within the spaces of my classroom" (personal communication, May 15, 2015). With inviting students to bring their whole selves, Erica explains that she is aware of the different facets of her students and what they bring to school. So within her classroom, she makes sure she is "giving them space to express the things that they are thinking that they don't normally have the space to in school." A balance in power is also evident in the way she communicates with students, by talking *with* them, not at them, and giving them space in the art curriculum by opening up

"opportunities to be a more complex little person within the space of our school" (personal communication, May 15, 2015).

It was clear to me that there exists a balance of choice and skill in Erica's curriculum. "So we have this tension that we are sort of nurturing and fostering in our curriculum, of sort of this balance of skill and choice" (personal communication, May 14, 2015). The evidence that there was a balance between these in her students' curriculum was visible in students' artworks and in my observations. I witnessed technical skills lessons in printmaking, observational and grid drawing. In the choice-lesson, students were not shy about using their art skills. Students chose to create portraits and full human figures in detail. In my field notes, I wrote down the themes that were present in the fantasy themed choice lesson. They were: peace, future society, social issues, body image, and fears.

Inclusion. Erica clearly has made a safe environment to include and support all learners and reports that even her least successful students in her choice-practice are still succeeding. "Even my least successful students are still creating meaningful work, that still expresses something important about themselves, and they are doing it in a way that uses some of the skills in my classes" (personal communication, May 15, 2015).

Aside from having a choice-based practice that is ideal for all levels of learners, Erica makes space in her practice to include the complex identities of her students. She reports that about 75 percent of her students' families speak Spanish only at home, but students "believe the Spanish speaking part of themselves is not appropriate to bring to school, similarly like swearing" in school would be inappropriate. Erica made the effort to communicate with students that their Spanish is welcome, and even throws out little Spanish phrases to make sure it is known. She said, "you'll hear teachers at our school throwing little Spanish phrases and stuff and this is to

indicate to children that this is something that is welcomed and valued here" (personal communication, May 15, 2015).

Connection. Erica sees connection happening in her choice-based practice between students and within students. Erica also makes it a point to connect with her students' community and home culture. She stated: "connection is about kids and letting them teach me, and using what they have taught me to show them: this is *real*-- and I was *hearing* you-- and I was *valuing* what you had to say"(personal communication, May 15, 2015). An example of this in action is how she connects with students who dance in a Colombian dance company. She had plans to see their performance, and reflected on how they have connected over dance by her listening and learning from her students, and has learned some cultural background information on her own. "I learn more about Colombia and Colombian culture, and it helps me make references to it in my classroom and it also helps me connect with these three little human beings" (personal communication, May 15, 2015).

For Erica, "giving kids these moments to bring their true self into what they are doing in the classroom space and then share their true self with others is where connection happens" personal communication, May 15, 2015). She also stated that that is where connection between herself and her students really happens, and she looks at it as a gift. She said that "a gift that students give me is when they are willing to bring their true selves in to their work and then share it" (personal communication, May 15, 2015).

Erica explained that in her school students are expected to be at a high level of academic engagement all day long and are not very social with each other, so her choice-based practice "gives them these moments of connection" that may be surface level relations, like two students finding out they both have Colombian families, or deeper connecting conversations.

Erica gave an example of a recent conversation between two female students in her class. The conversation began by a student noticing that what the other girl's work was about how she used to wear a hijab, and now she does not. She said, "talk to me more about why you made that choice, because your work was about that." Erica explained that "it was this really meaningful conversation between these two young women. They got very real very fast, and it wouldn't have been a topic of conversation otherwise" (personal communication, May 15, 2015).

How connections happened in Erica's practice are best summarized in her own words:

> I think one thing I do in my practice is giving the opportunity for students to bring their whole selves into the work they are doing in my class. And when they do that, I'm both affirming who the individual is and I'm giving students the opportunity to know each other on new levels (personal communication, May 15, 2015)

Knowing our Students is Loving our Students

In the last section, *connection*, it is clear that Erica cherishes and intentionally creates moments to know her students on a deeper level. She stated that she believes that "life is richer when you know people completely" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). Another way that she gets to really know her students is through communication with their families. "I do phone calls home quite a bit, so I have connections with parents that can be quite revealing" (personal communication, May 13, 2015).

In regards to her choice-based practice, Erica said that,"Every time I open up to choice, I learn my students a little better" (personal communication, May 15, 2015). Erica's skills-based projects also allow her to know her students better because she intentionally plans skills-based teaching in "a way that allows you to bring yourself into it" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). She admits that, "this is something that I continue to grow at as a teacher, but it's something that enables me to know my students better." An example of this that I witnessed is a

grid drawing lesson with 6th grade students who were drawing photos of people that they love. A large amount of work was done by Erica to collect student's personal photos and get them blown up and in grid form for them, and then handle logistics of teaching students to lay out their grid, but she said the project is "always 100 percent worth it" and believes having students bring in their personal photographs creates a "more authentic artmaking experience" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). She explains how teaching skill and getting to know her students co-exist in this lesson:

> I move in to give a little coaching on drawing or guidance to get their right values in certain areas, and then I have this moment to say, so is this your Grandma, oh cool! Tell me more about your Grandma! Why did you choose her? (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

It was clear that Erica makes many decisions and creates situations where she can get to know her students. She also intentionally and purposefully loves them.

Love. "To put it clearly- I love my students" she stated. "I love them and I tell them that I love them" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). She even uses the word *Love* when she signs emails at work. This is all intentional. She said that she does this purposefully and "it's a really purposeful thing, because it is about love- it is about a love for individual children who I care very much about" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). She also says that she has "love for the community that they have" in their school, and that it nurtures her love for those relationships that happen within that space. Her purposefully loving students is also "about a love for the relationship between teachers and students, and how that can be a really powerful thing in both lives" (personal communication, May 13, 2015).

Loving her students also means high expectations of their behavior. She explained, "I have a very friendly relationship with almost all of my students, but it is also a stern and strict

relationship" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). This is because she cares enough to "want to see them as their best selves" (personal communication, May 13, 2015).

She reported that: "I do a fair amount of coaching kids on just sort of like who they are as little people" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). I heard her say numerous times "Ladies and gentlemen, you need to remember you are what you do" while giving behavioral directions, like lining up to switch classes. She explains:

> Students are hearing these kind of messages from me all the time, and they recognize from me in those messages, even sometimes when they are rolling their eyes and sort of hating me for them, that they are messages of love. (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

Loving her students is visible in how she taught and expected students to be their best selves. With loving her students so much, Erica is also reflective of how she may or may not be meeting their needs. She admitted:

> I spend a lot of time thinking about my students, thinking about their needs and how those needs are being met or not. I think a lot about how I am doing for my students -am I giving them what they need from me? It's hard because I love 215 kids, and I can't possibly do for them what I'd like to do. (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

It was clear that loving her students was evident in many ways in which Erica interacts with her students. It is also revealing that she continually reflects on who they are as whole persons, and having a hard time facing reality that it is not always possible to meet their needs.

Respect. While Erica shows that she loves her students, she is also very careful to respect her students. She said, "I try to be very reflective. Am I respecting in the moment? I really work to not shame students" and "I work to see them and hear them" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). This work is not only happening in her classroom, but in the hallways and on breaks. I observed her checking in on a student who was in in-school suspension, asking other students in the hall if they completed assignments for English class, and one student about his homework.

These check-ins were conversations, not just a teacher talking at a student. Respecting students

to her also means active listening, and not jumping to conclusions, which she admits, is very

hard as a teacher.

> I spend a lot of time one-on-one with kids. I do a fair amount of check-ins with kids, like in the hall I do a fair amount of saying things like: 'this is not the Joshua that I know you are… what's going on? What's going on with your behavior?' and I feel that I learn a lot about who they are and what's going on with the kids in those moments. (personal communication, May 13, 2015)

I also noticed that she has a habit during discussion in her class, instead of saying "no" to an

incorrect answer, she says, "I respectfully disagree, but can you tell me more?" This prompted

more ideas from other students, too.

The Disposition of a Holistic Art Educator

Not only was there a friendly, respectful, and plentiful communication system established in

the close relationships she had with her students, Erica's genuine efforts to connect with students

made me notice her energy. I wrote in my field notes:

> Enthusiasm in greeting students was met with typical middle school kiddos' shy smiles, but I could tell they felt *special*- her energy and enthusiasm as mentioned was genuine, and she called students' name's out/checked in with them, "do you have your plan ready? No – get it done today!"

On one occasion, we went out for recess duty with a class of students. The playground was an

old basketball court fenced in, and there was no playground equipment. Erica participated in the

game they played, running, laughing, and tagging students.

She walks quickly, and with purpose throughout the school. She began her art classes by

pumping up the students, yelling "Good morning!" and getting right to the lesson. It was evident

that students were excited about art class. This energy, I found, was contagious. Her excitement

was contagious as we walked, or rather ran, to the next class. As I observed, I was actually

having fun, and Erica's humor was part of that fun I experienced. I would describe her as a teacher who is upbeat, energetic, funny, and kind.

Caring in action. Erica made it no secret about how deeply she cares for her students. The school also has programs that support a long-term commitment to caring for their students. Erica showed me these programs and had a positive attitude about her involvement in them, like the advisory program previously mentioned in *Intellectual, Social, and Emotional Aspects.* Her involvement in school wide programs or 'other' duties showed she cares about student success outside of her content area.

Her school even has a whole department for Alumni services. The office in particular offers these young adults resources through/ up until they are in college. I recorded in my fieldnotes: I witnessed groups of returning Alumni come back around 3:30 pm to say hello to teachers. Sweet conversation about future plans and where they are now occurred.

Summary

This chapter presented data collected from interview transcriptions and fieldnotes, which was coded and analyzed to create seven significant topics: 1.) Space for Holistic Approaches, 2.) Symbiotic Relationships of Collaboration and Trust, 3.) Whole and Engaged Students 4.) Balance, Inclusion, and Connection 5.) Knowing Our Students is Loving our Students. 7.) The Disposition of a Holistic Art Educator. These broad categories included specific and detailed accounts of Erica's holistic approach in her choice-based practice. Key points that stand out are how actively reflective of her practice my participant was, and how involved in the school culture she was, and how she does both with intention and purpose. In *Chapter V's* discussion of my findings, I will refer to much of the data presented in this section.

CHAPTER V

IMPLICATIONS: BRINGING A CHOICE-BASED HOLISTIC PRACTICE INTO FOCUS

Overview: New Understandings of Holistic and Choice-Based Art Education: Portrait of a Holistic Art Educator

This chapter brings forth a discussion of the data presented and analyzed in this case study, and will provide answers to my research question. Implications of this research will be discussed by highlighting several distinct factors that are present within current research in art education and the field of education that relate to facets of this research study.

I have also had a 4 year period of my own teaching experiences to garner new perspectives from, or with a new lens, for critically evaluating my results. I will also make recommendations for the field of art education and specifically choice-art educators. This section will focus on the harmonies I uncovered researching two different approaches and conclude this case study. It highlights examples in my participant's case, my own practice, and in literature. These examples serve to broaden the understanding of holistic and choice-based approaches for the field of art education. It must be noted that my case study had a profound effect on my own teaching practice, and I very much have used what I have learned to inform my own teaching.

Research feels like taking a small snapshot of my participant's practice and studying the photograph a million times over. The same picture can be interpreted in many different ways. Further, our conversations brought forth special moments, like snapshots, about Erica's teaching experiences. These became revealing and enlightening. Erica's interviews created a picture of her identity as a teacher and her teaching practice.

Focal Point: The Nexus of Holistic and Choice-Based Art Education

In what ways does a holistic approach to art education manifest in a choice-based practice? This research has detailed the ways that Erica has made holistic principles evident in her practice, and in this section I will broaden those understandings by discussing the harmonies uncovered in my findings and supported by my review of literature. I chose to use the word *harmony* because these philosophies and practices do not conflict, oftentimes complement one another, but are not causal. These particular harmonies are outlined in the chart below (*figure 6*). They will be discussed in pairs. These harmonies serve to illustrate new understandings of how these approaches support each other. New questions that come to mind for this discussion are: *In what ways does a holistic approach support a choice-based practice? In what ways does a choice-based practice support a holistic approach?*

Choice-Based Art Education	Holistic Art Education
Philosophy- Students as artists	Philosophy- Students as whole human beings
Space for choice	Safe space
Differentiation	Meeting developmental needs
Role of the teacher	Balance
Differentiation, experiential learning	Inclusion
Emergent curriculum	Connection

Figure 6. Identified harmonies between holistic and choice-based approaches to art education.

Philosophy. *How does holistic philosophy support TAB philosophy? How does a TAB philosophy support a holistic philosophy?*

Both choice-based and holistic approaches are learner-centered. To begin, a review of definitions and some clarification is necessary. TAB and choice-based are sometimes used

synonymously in literature. TAB has become a more prevalent term to describe a choice-based

practice, yet TAB (Teaching for Artistic Behavior) is the philosophy of choice-based art

education. It seems as though in the field of art education, the term choice-based is more of an

umbrella that encompasses TAB, and that TAB is becoming the nomenclature of full choice-

based practice. I believe future literature will need to clarify, but for the purpose of this thesis,

TAB is used as the philosophy of choice-based teaching.

    Both choice-based and holistic approaches are learner-centered. TAB philosophy states that

the student is the artist, and holistic philosophy is that the student is a whole human being. These

two philosophies play out in Erica's practice in harmony: she sees students as whole human

beings and artists in her choice practice. She said opening up to a choice curriculum is giving the

"opportunity for students to bring their whole selves into the work they are doing in my class"

(personal communication, May 15, 2015). The way I see these philosophies working together in

harmony is if you treat students as artists, opportunities to recognize the whole student will

present themselves. Recognizing students as whole human beings also gives valuable

information to a choice art teacher to curate art content and art choices for specific learners and

classes.

Space. *Does a holistic education's safe environment support having space for choice?*

 A powerful and beautiful quote from Erica was, "Every time I pull back, I am making space for

them, because we together fill the space" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). There are

demands of space for materials, time, and emergent curriculum for students to work as artists.

Erica's "opening up space for choices within the curriculum" meant making space for studio

time (personal communication, May 13, 2015). Further, for Erica, this meant adjusting class

time: "If I talk for an hour, then I've taken all of their space- and if I don't talk at all, they are

sort of alone in their space" (personal communication, May 13, 2015). A choice-based approach demands this opening of space, but how does a holistic approach to making a safe space support this? Does choice-based art practice make creating a safe learning environment difficult with all of the freedom students are given?

In choice-education students learn by taking artistic risks, and part of a holistic environment is welcoming students to take artistic risks. According to Carroll, (2006, p. 8) holistic practice is created and nurtured by certain conditions, the first being "a safe climate is created in which each learner is met with genuine regard." In holistic terms of being a safe space, the teacher must create a cooperative atmosphere that welcomes students to take artistic risks, and the classroom environment must be one in which students feel free of embarrassment when making mistakes (Cummings, 2012). In a choice-based classroom, "Young artists need to be given freedom to follow their ideas and to learn by taking risks. They need to know that their teachers trust them to make good choices" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009, p. 5). Therefore, a safe classroom environment becomes necessary for students to behave, think and perform as artists. This leads to a more critical question for art teachers-- *does a choice-based environment, giving students this freedom and space, interfere with a holistic safe climate?* It is not hard for any teacher to imagine how conflicts between students could arise if given too much freedom. Yet it must be pointed out that there is real structure in choice classrooms, and students are supported in their own learning. This freedom is given for directing their own learning. In a choice-based art room, the students are responsible to behave as artists, and the teacher is responsible for teaching them how to behave. This means along with real choice, there are rules on how to behave as an artist. Furthermore, teaching for artistic behavior necessitates adapting the learning environment to modify behaviors (Douglas & Jaquith, 2012). The book, *Choice Without Chaos,* (Bedrick, 2012)

is a resource for teachers to see choice classrooms in action through videos and photos. Both *Choice Without Chaos* and *Engaging Learning Through Artmaking* provide choice-art educators with how to structure the class, what rules to set, how to teach and encourage artistic behaviors.

A missing factor in holistic safe spaces and space in choice-based art education is really the art teacher's own awareness and self-awareness in their interactions with students. Examples from my case study show specific actions my participant, Erica, took to ensure a safe climate for choice were evident, and very much directed by her own reflective nature, disposition, and personal responsibility. I agree with Erica that you need to actually work to not shame your students. This takes mental energy, stamina, and self-awareness. Though teachers do not come to work with an intent of making their students feel badly about their work, this may happen unintentionally. Erica also clearly creates a safe space from a place of love for her students. Her perspective of her strictness and high expectations are that it shows students she cares for them, or they are "messages of love." These holistic flavored actions she takes, along with the overall discipline structure of the school, maintains a safe environment for space for choice to be opened up.

From this discussion on holistic and choice perspective on the idea of space uncovered in my data analysis, I determined that space for authentic art making must be safe for students to take risks. Using a holistic lens, choice-based art teachers can create this safe learning environment. Choice with enduring structure and classroom management is key. I also want to add that teacher's own awareness of their interactions with students is critical in maintaining a safe climate for choice.

Differentiation and meeting needs. *Does trying to meet students' needs conflict with trying to differentiate learning?* Choice-based practices are inherently differentiated and teach skills to

assume learner independence for the same day or in the near future. Differentiation for all learners is created through choice-based practices via instructional methods such as: "whole group, small group, individual, peer, and collaborative, as well as indirectly from visual references" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2012, p. 5). Students make choices and can access information when they need it. This is how a choice-based teacher meets their varying learners' needs. Further, choice-based art education claims that it is teaching students' needs for their future, such as how to think critically, collaborate, plan, persevere, think divergently, interpret and apply understandings (Douglas & Jaquith, 2012).

In what ways is holistically meeting students needs the same as differentiating for student needs? Is holistically meeting students' needs too much for a choice-based teacher to take on? Does trying to meet students' needs take away from teaching art content or teaching for artistic behavior?

  Meeting students' needs holistically can happen by the interactions between students and teacher, and knowing their students. Erica had a wealth of knowledge she researched herself about her students' community, and their home lives, revealing specific needs. Choice-based art certainly can reveal student needs, and information about students. Whether students are showing you that they are not ready for a particular art skill, or may need more support to be an independent learner, in choice classrooms students are showing you what they need through their work and work habits. Their work is personal, so there is an ever present possibility that students will reveal other emotional, social, and basic human needs through their artmaking. The holistic art educator remains ready to address these needs. Of course you cannot meet every student need, but you can validate it, and recognize the whole student by doing so. Erica does this by making sure she communicates to students that she sees them and hears them. Meeting student

needs is context specific to the community and school in which a teacher works. My rural high poverty students have different needs from Erica's urban students, and different needs from middle-class White students. In my own choice practice, it is not uncommon to refer students to do more practice with a certain skill, or pull students for small group reinforcement demonstration. It is also not uncommon for me to fix shoes, sew back together backpacks, allow students to take a nap, or bring in new clothing. As a school staff, we run a food bank that gives food bags out for around 90 students on the weekends, communicate with a local agency when we identify students as homeless (which is usually around 35 students at one time), purchase and donate clothing to students, refer students to counseling, practice Trauma Informed Care practices, and frequently have to communicate with Children's Services. I also created a mentoring program to help students with their social skills that is centered on Growth Mindset, and we have collected funds to be able to take students out into the community. This is supported by our Parent Teacher Organization and my principal's school fund. Many of the students did not know how to eat at a sit down restaurant, and were confused that they stay in their seat to be served their meal. Many students had never gone bowling and did not know how to bowl, and did not know what to do in the movie theater their first time. Advocating and caring for our students is a norm in my school, through teacher created programs. These are responsibilities not laid out in my board-approved art teacher contract. I really do not believe we have any choice not to act on these needs, if learning is our goal for students.

Job requirements of teachers have been unofficially extended to include mothering, counseling, protecting, and defending yourself and your students. With a nationwide call for mental health resources, it is obvious that student needs are not met, even in well-to-do communities. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is familiar to educators. From his 1954 text,

Motivation and Personality, the hierarchy of needs presented as a pyramid, showing that without meeting basic human needs we all have, we cannot achieve the higher levels of human emotional well-being. If food, shelter, rest, and protection from harm are not acquired, how do you expect a child to demonstrate that they have mastered art skills?

In the case of my participant's school, there were norms in place that encouraged her communication with her students. Her advisory period, for example, did not have anything to do with her responsibility of teaching art, but required her to coach students in social and emotional learning, and set personal goals. Inside her choice-based classroom, students' needs were met by differentiation practices.

To answer my questions about meeting students' needs, I assert that some teachers do not have a choice in attending to their students' needs in a holistic manner, due to contextual factors of their schools and students' lives. In a choice-based practice, teachers get to know their students on deeper levels, making needs visible. Using a holistic approach ensures attending to those needs in whatever way possible. This may occur through art making or must be done with support from outside the art room. This is an added responsibility for an art teacher. I believe that everyone has their own capacity they should be aware of when dealing with student needs. Erica and I both agree that this is hard. Stress from your professional life crosses over into your personal life when deeply caring about and committing to the care of your students. Some teachers may not have the capacity to take on a holistic approach. Some teachers do not believe that it is part of their profession to take on a more holistic approach or try to meet students needs. Yet there are professional responsibilities that come with the job that encourage and require teachers to meet the needs of their students. Teachers are mandated reporters, making completely ignoring some situations unlawful. The Ohio Teacher Evaluation System in particular evaluates

teachers in the areas of Classroom Environment and Professional Responsibilities. To secure an Accomplished rating in the area of Classroom Environment in Ohio, the rubric states: "The teacher engages in two-way ongoing communications with families that results in active volunteer, community, and family partnerships which contribute to student learning and development" (Ohio Teacher Evaluation System Model, 2015, p. 20). Therefore, in public education, it is not possible to completely ignore the needs of students.

   Differentiation and inclusion. *Are these topics in perfect harmony?* The idea of inclusion in a holistic art room incorporates creating a safe climate for all students while differentiating instruction and offering choices. The holistic art educator "provides opportunities for choice on the part of learners that is appropriate to their developmental needs" (Freyermuth 2012, p. 269). Choice art educators meet students' needs at their developmental levels with a constant stream of choice, while in a holistic art education approach it is implied that choices are given to meet students' needs (Douglas & Jaquith, 2012). So the way I interpret it is that choice-based art education is a constant stream of choices working for differentiation, while a holistic approach looks at student needs' first and works in the principle of inclusion to determine how to differentiate instruction, but uses choice heavily to do so.

 Student-centered learning is still at the center of both approaches, but choice-based art education has more specific ways of instructional methods for differentiation. One example is using menus, or resources at each studio center, that students can freely access when they need a resource. Another way is by having mini skills lessons or challenges as some choice-educators call them. Erica's skills based lessons were opened up to choice as much as possible, while still challenging each student and teaching them fundamental technical skills. This I observed, but a limitation to my research was that I did not witness the 8th grade students that I observed learning these skills

the previous years with Erica. I can only speculate that the work I observed in the 8th grade

choice curriculum was influenced by a strong background in technical skills that reached all

learners. Students were engaged and working hard on their fantasy themed artworks. I did not

witness any students' behaviors that would make me believe that they were avoiding work

because it was too hard, or ignoring completing the project because it was not challenging

enough. Erica described jumping into choice with her 8th graders, and how successful it was:

> It was sort of like diving in the deep end of the pool and they just rose to the occasion in
> really beautiful ways, and they just really impressed me. Out of 60 students there were only
> two that didn't turn it in on the day that it was due, and one who I would say was just not
> super successful, he was not using his time well and ended up really rushed; but 59 students
> turned in work that was incredibly meaningful to them, and really varied- varied in media,
> subject matter, and style- really all over the place, and students really dug in and really
> explored this idea of change, and you saw this developmental spectrum. (personal
> communication, May13, 2015)

Another observation that she made was that she had "seen kids grow in their comfort and their

ability to drive their own learning and their willingness to recognize where they need help"

(personal communication, May13, 2015). Choice-based art education can indeed reveal a

spectrum of student development and tune students into when they need help. Another practice

that reveals developmental needs in students and aids differentiation and inclusion is time for

experimentation.

Experimentation is a topic in which art teachers may face some criticism. It may not look or

feel that you are teaching a rigorous lesson or meeting standards. Experimentation fosters an

inclusive classroom environment. Students work on their process, not product, and it allows a

teacher valuable observation time. I have used experimentation time to introduce many new

materials at once, observe student behavior, and observe my new Kindergarten students' stage of

development when they first enter my classroom. I have observed how my students learn from

each other and teach me new ways to use materials. I have also used it to pre-assess my students

and just as a way to get to know them more by sitting down with them and also doing my own art experiments. The products produced in experimentation are also wonderful tools for class discussions. Letting students explain their process and asking "how did you make that happen" allows for rich discussion that motivates my learners to use materials in multiple ways. I also can compare their mark making to adult artists', opening up art history discussions to talk about how the artist may have achieved a certain technique. Planned experimental time has a tremendous value to my practice, but I can easily see why art teachers may not want to try it, or feel that they cannot practice this in their classroom. They may fear that parents and principals may not see this as an appropriate teaching method, or they may not have enough materials or time with students.

   I believe these two concepts from choice and holistic art education really do work in harmony, and I saw it in Erica's practice and I see it in my own. When I began teaching in my rural elementary school, my Director of Curriculum and Instruction stressed about meeting students where they were at. I had already learned that from Erica, and what it looked like in practice, or rather the result of her hard work trying to meet developmental needs of her students.

   My last thought in this section is *what about gifted students?* When we think of inclusion and differentiation, sometimes we do not think of our gifted students, since they are already succeeding and exceeding expectations. In my own experience, the choice-based environment really helps our gifted students because the gifted students become creative leaders in the class. I often have them do a demonstration or rely on their help with other students. Thinking of differentiation and inclusion with different student developmental levels, it would be an interesting study to look in depth at two different students over a long period of time. What

would one find if they tracked a least and most successful student in a teacher-led class, and then continued to track them in a learner-centered choice class? Perhaps teachers transitioning to choice would want to research this.

Role of the teacher and balance. *How does the holistic principle of balance support the role of a choice-based teacher?* Holistic art educators practice the key principle of balance of energies in their classrooms when they take the role as "guide on the side" instead of "sage on the stage" and let students direct their own art making (Stewart & Walker, 2005, p. 15). In choice-based practices, a teaching for artistic behavior philosophy demands that a teacher step aside for students to be the artists. A visible holistic behavior in Erica's practice is how she is constantly "talking *with* students not *at* students" (Cummings, 2012, p. 200). This is significant in addressing students as whole persons, and is indeed a challenge for educators when instructing and monitoring behavior. Actively listening to students when asking them more about their work is also part of the role a choice-based and holistic teacher does. Choice teachers, like Erica, give individual feedback for students. Artist statements are a great way for a teacher to uncover more about student artwork.

  The role of a teacher is to also make decisions on what happens with student work. An example of Erica stepping aside for the students to be artists was how she stepped aside in their exhibition of their choice-based artworks. She said:

> To be honest, some of the pieces that were shown were not pieces that I would have chosen to show if I was curating- but it wasn't my choice, and I tried really hard to honor the choices of students. And so the show that ended up happening was their show. Not mine. It makes me really proud of them. (personal communication, May 15, 2015)

It is assumed that there is a more balanced power exchange between students and teacher in a choice-based learner-centered environment, but the holistic principle of balance also incorporates

intuition. In a choice-based classroom, "Teacher roles include demonstrating, modeling, facilitating, coaching, providing curriculum content, and altering that content based on observations made in class" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2012, p. 11). I believe that teachers can model how to use intuition, and a choice-based classroom is a perfect arena for this. In the art room, step by step art projects take away the natural use of intuition that is the hallmark of creativity in visual arts. Encouraging students to work as artists invites their intuitive nature to be used in the artmaking process. Erica's own words about how choice-based art is a necessary balancing factor in her school really showed me how the principle of balance supports her choice-based practice:

> I think in a space that is really strictly structured like my school, it becomes essential for students to have these creative spaces to experiment and express and flounder and get frustrated and dig in and get dirty and all of those things within the space in one of my lessons, and all of those things are really essential to these little human beings that are growing and being complex and wonderful and expressing that wonder. (personal communication, May 15, 2015)

Emergent curriculum and connection. *In what ways does the holistic principle of connection support the emergent curriculum in a choice-based practice?*

In a choice based practice, "The teacher is flexible with curriculum in response to students' interests and needs" (Douglas & Jaquith, 2012, p.12). Instead of adult interests and passions being explored, student passions and interests are investigated and explored. Connections happen in this space. Erica said that choice allows her to let students connect with each other on deeper levels. What other holistic connections happen in this space?

Connection to other subjects often arises, when students find that they are inspired from their learning in a different subject area and continue and expand upon it in their art class (Douglas & Jaquith, 2012). Holistic education pushes the emergent curriculum a bit farther. Holistic theory is that everything is interconnected. If you have this perspective while teaching a curriculum that is flexible in response to student needs or if students are the problem finders or problem solvers, I

think it becomes natural to make connections to the outside world. The art world is rich with examples to provide connections to self, others, nature, different cultures, societies, histories, herstories, religions, the cosmos and more. Art works, artifacts, contemporary issues and visual culture are resources that a holistic teacher can utilize to provide connections.

On the topic of curriculum, it seems choice-based art education in particular is eager to share studio practices. The literature about choice-based art education and teacher's TAB practices is mostly studio-centered information. The disciplines of art criticism and art history are areas in which choice-based art education has a chance to grow in theory and practice. More research on types of student-led learning art history and art criticism activities would be valuable for many choice teachers who feel that their practice is lacking in the disciplines of art history and art criticism.

From my section in Chapter 4, *Balance, Inclusion and Connection*, choice-based art education allows for real connections to be made. I think a choice-based curriculum really supports the holistic principle of connection. Connection requires a holistic perspective on the content presented in the classroom; in an emergent curriculum, students are determining this content, so it may not always be something an art teacher can easily create connections for. A problem in emergent curriculum and connection is that sometimes the subject matter that is student created may be inappropriate. Inviting in connection and choice must be done with care and communication to students about what may not be acceptable subject matter in the classroom. Yet, sometimes these incidents actually create connection. A personal example I had in my 6th grade choice practice was a male student who decided to create the confederate flag out of clay. I was then responsible for making connections about why it was inappropriate, even though some students had one in their house or front yard. A discussion and some research ensued, and I recall

students also connecting it to the swastika symbol. We talked about how the meaning of emblems and symbols can change over time, and looked at the work of John Heartfield. Sometimes the emergent curriculum is complex and messy, but when we all, students and teachers, take time to explore the connections our world begins to make a bit more sense. Students can also use that experience for future learning, and continue questioning what messages our visual world is giving us. This story implies that teachers must be ready to research connections that are created, whether it connects directly to art content or other subject areas.

Complications. If holistic approaches can potentially support choice-based practices, in what ways would they hinder or complicate a choice-based practice? Can a holistic approach put more of a burden on teaching art? Is there an emotional toll that this takes on a teacher? Erica admitted that it is hard. It is hard loving so many students and knowing that she wants the best for them but she can't give every student what they need but wishes she could. I feel the same way, and wish I could do more, but I personally feel content knowing that I do what I can with what I have. It can be said that there is a burnout possibility for every career centered on interacting with people. Most advice for avoiding burnout is centered on having a balance between personal and professional lives. My perspective is different. Tending to my personal life is necessary if I am going to care deeply for my students and bring my best self to work to create positive relationships with students. Building strong relationships with students through a holistic approach in a choice-based classroom brings me a sense of hope, instead of despair. I can view students as more than their problems and struggles and commit to caring for them. Euad states: "Relationships with trusted adults who care for them—and opportunities to care for others (Noddings, 2013)—are necessary if children are to thrive and become empathetic with other

people" (Eaud, 2019, p. 65). This quote brings me hope that relationships built on trust with a commitment to care and opportunities to care for others will help my students thrive.

London states that art teachers "have less time and few, if any incentives to develop our curriculum to deeply apply a holistic approach" (2006, p.8). I cannot think of any incentives in my current position as an art teacher to apply a holistic approach. What I do have is feelings of personal accomplishment and peace from knowing that I can take actions that serve my students inside and outside my art room. I have a supportive school in which to operate a holistic practice.

In this next section, I will examine the Eight Studio Habits of Mind to further understandings about a holistic approach in the widening arena of choice-based teaching. I will provide suggestions for the field of art education from these understandings.

Perfect Lighting: Harnessing Mind, Body, and Spirit to Create Authentic Artwork

My case study provided me with data uncovering how a holistic art educator made her approach visible in her choice-based practice. It can be concluded that the transition to choice opened up ways for her to invite students' whole selves into the art room. Yet in literature, the goal for choice-based art education is for student-directed learning and acquisition of artistic behaviors. Authentic artwork, or profound and powerful pieces of art, are often created in choice-based art classrooms because the fundamental theory is that the student is the artist. In this section I will further investigate artistic behaviors to uncover possibilities for holistic approaches to manifest and further show how students' mind, body and spirit are engaged in artistic behaviors. The research-based Eight Studio Habits of mind will also provide a resource for these implications for the wider field of art education. Like finding the perfect lighting to take

a photograph, art teachers create an environment for learning with the perfect lighting to invite students' whole selves into the picture.

Framing: Artistic behaviors and Authentic student artwork

Can artistic behaviors support a holistic approach? The authentic artwork structure in holistic art education presented by McKenna (2006) in *Chapter II* begins with considering all parts of the student, then considering the developmental stage of the student, and finally creating an elegant problem with a provocative prompt. According to Campbell, art educators should construct curriculum to "explore issues of personal identity, collaboration, and social development" to teach to the whole child (2006, p.32). With this in mind, how might teaching artistic behaviors through the researched based Eight Studio Habits of Mind (Hetland et. al, 2007; Hetland et. al., 2013) facilitate a holistic approach to art education? Could this framework offer help to holistic art educators?

The authors of *Studio Thinking 2: The Real Benefits of Visual Arts Education*, Second Edition (Hetland et. al., 2013) describe the Eight Habits of Mind as non-hierarchical. They are presented in a numbered list below for organizational purposes.

1. Develop Craft

2. Engage and Persist

3. Envision

4. Express

5. Observe

6. Reflect

7. Stretch and Explore

8. Understand Art Worlds

Like composing a photograph by framing in a subject, I will frame holistic approaches in the Eight Studio Habits of Mind. It became clear that holistic and choice-based approaches can work together in harmony. Further implications of this exist in the Studio Thinking framework, or the Eight Studio Habits of Mind which outline processes that an artist uses to create artwork. What does holistic art education have to offer this research-based practice, or how does holistic education show up in each category? I will draw on my own experience and my research to compose this picture of holistic art education in a research based framework.

Develop Craft (Technique and Studio Practice). Technique and studio practice refers to learning how to use materials and techniques and taking care of art room materials, space and resources (Hetland et. al, 2013). Developing craft in a holistic practice would focus on student interactions and collaborations and take into account students' developmental levels. For example, taking care of studio spaces in my own room leads to discussions about how the school community uses the space. Taking care of materials helps take care of each other. My students do not have assigned seats, but I regularly refer to who they are sitting with as their "table family" and require students to help out their table family members during clean-up. Collective responsibility, because we are all connected even by the art materials we share, is addressed instead of any competitive incentives for students to learn how to use, clean, and store materials.

Erica used the term "wolf packs" with her 5th graders to create small communities of students helping each other instead of competing for space and materials.

It is important to note that the authors observed from teachers using the framework and were teaching the habit of developing craft, they were "inculcating one or more of the seven other habits of mind" whole doing so (Hetland, et. al. 2013, p. 15).

Engage & Persist (Finding Passion and Sticking with It). This habit of mind concerns developing engagement with art problems pertaining to the art world or personal interests while developing focus and perseverance during art making (Hetland, et. al., 2013, p.6). Holistic educators encourage wonder and intuition when working during studio time. This can be an avenue to find a passion and stick with it, and holistic education embraces finding purpose and meaning. It is in the holistic spirit to engage students with art problems that are personally meaningful. For example, I have extended "what do you want to be when you grow up" to include questions for students to consider such as: What kind of person do you want to be? What do you have to offer the world? I also encourage intuition and perseverance when students are stuck or are indecisive about how to continue their artwork. Questions such as: "what feels right?" and "what can you imagine this looking like when finished?" coincide with basic suggestions such as completing the background, adding emphasis, or adding detail. This leads to the next habit of mind, envisioning.

Envision (Imagining and Planning). This habit of mind teaches students to imagine what is not yet created and planning the next steps in the art making process (Hetland, et. al., 2013, p.6). I cannot ignore how adding choice to this habit of mind and in holistic education supports the development of envisioning. Holistic art educators work to cultivate imagination (Fryermuth, 2012). Art students require imagination and planning in general, but when a teacher-led project lays out all the steps for students, the habit of envisioning cannot be deeply developed. Even in skills-based lessons, imagining and planning can be fostered. An example Erica told me about

envisioning is when she taught her 7th graders implied texture as required by Massachusetts

Visual Art Standards. She asked students to close their eyes and imagine how their comforter

felt, and how their moms face looked, to bring implied textures that they would be drawing into

their imagination.

Express (Finding and Showing Meaning). This habit of mind teaches students to express

feelings, ideas, or personal meanings in their artwork and recognize them in other works of art

(Hetland, et. al., 2013). Holistic art education already does this by inviting the whole person into

the artmaking experience (London, 2004). Social, moral, spiritual aspects are welcome in a

holistic art room. Holistic art educators can keep in mind that beyond expressing these deeper

meanings, we are teaching students *how* to visually represent these ideas and how to recognize

them.

Observe (Looking Closely). Observation is no doubt an artistic behavior for students while

making and viewing artwork, but this habit of mind stresses teaching students to observe closely,

as opposed to just looking (Hetland, et. al., 2013). I believe this skill, observing, can help foster

other skills holistic art education strives to teach, such as: divergent thinking, reflection, looking

at different perspectives, and

invention.

Reflect (Question and Explain and Evaluate). This habit of mind focuses on teaching

students how to discuss and reflect on the quality of their own work and works of their peers

(Hetland, et. al., 2013). Holistic art education demands a safe environment for self-expression.

Students explaining, listening, judging, and evaluating each other's work in critique and in

conversation while working is a valuable skill that can be extended to service the holistic

principles of balance, inclusion, and connection. Connecting students to each other, including all

learners, and welcoming all parts of mind, body and spirit in these conversations would put this

habit of mind in the realm of holistic art

education.

    Stretch & Explore (Play, Use Mistakes and Discover). This Habit of Mind encourages

students to reach beyond their own capabilities (stretch) and learn by mistakes and experiments

(explore) (Hetland et. al. 2013, p. 6). Experimentation and inclusion in holistic art education

align with this habit of mind beautifully. One thing for a holistic art educator to consider would

be is: how do we teach our students to stretch? What specific ways can we help students reach

beyond their own believed capabilities?

    Understand Art Worlds (Domain and Communities). Communities refers to how

students interact as artists with other artists" in the classroom and in society, while domain is

specifically art historical content (Hetland et. al., p.6). This habit aligns with the holistic

principle of connection beautifully. The holistic art educator must be ready to be a connection

maker, beyond what this Habit of Mind connects with.

    The Eight Studio Habits of Mind are researched behaviors that art educators teach their

students, aside from their written curriculum. The authors describe finding these habits as the

"hidden curriculum" in visual arts education (Hetland et. al., 2013, Hetland et. al., 2007). I

believe this framework is absolutely a tool that holistic art educators can use to validate and

organize how they are serving their students in a holistic way. I have utilized this in my classroom and it has helped in two ways. First, I use a set of posters, each one with a Habit of Mind, to refer to when we are focused on one of these skills. I refer to them as our artist skills, making students aware of what else we are learning besides the current lesson content. Second, you can see how these habits overlap and occur simultaneously in the classroom, and it helps to be able to point out specific behaviors as students are working. Giving them specific praise about their working habits teaches them how I want them to work and reminds me to view them as artists.

In the next section, I will discuss some of the challenges in holistic and choice-based practices and include what future research may be valuable to the field of art education.

Adjusting Aperture: Obstacles to Holistic and Choice Practices

Letting go. A major obstacle in choice-based programs with a holistic approach is letting go of teacher-directed planning and instruction. A holistic perspective changes how a teacher interacts and reacts with their students. Opening up time, space, and materials for students to have control over can come with a total overhaul of an art teacher's day to day responsibilities, classroom environment, student interactions, and assessment practices. Erica described her transition to choice as jumping into the deep end of a pool (personal communication, May 15, 2015). Throwing aside tried and true lessons and practices to have students fill the space with their own learning demands a lot of trust in your students and support from stakeholders. Again, the role of choice-based teachers is that they are a facilitator, which comes along with a need for flexibility. Teachers must gather resources to further learning, curiosities, and connections made by

students. While choice-teacher let go of their teacher-led lessons, they are required to create choice-based lessons to demonstrate materials and techniques and introduce adult artists and other art content. Choice-based teachers craft assessments and are constantly monitoring student progress. Teacher created resources accompany materials so students can take learning into their own hands. These must be carefully crafted to be effective for the developmental levels of their students.

I believe more research on transitioning to a choice-based program would be helpful to art educators wanting to experiment with a choice-based approach. Another area for more research would be how choice-based art education works in different settings.

Setting. Where can choice-based art education and holistic practices exist? In my case study research, Erica was able to create a choice-based practice even while teaching art on a cart style without a physical classroom space. Her charter school setting provided an environment where students knew and were taught behavior expectations. A firm discipline structure was in place, as well as social and emotional supports. Though these approaches give students much control and freedom, there needs to be structure in the classroom environment. If a school's climate is one where student behavior is already disrupting learning, you can imagine that issues may arise when allowing students to freely work in studio centers. Holistic approaches demand a safe climate for learning, and choice-based art demands a safe space for student choice. Creating this can be a challenge for some teachers considering their current school culture and environment. In Erica's holistic approach, she relied heavily on trusting relationships with her colleagues and her colleagues' support. She was willing to communicate consistently with her colleagues about many different aspects of her students' lives. She also played a role larger than just teaching art.

This may not be possible in larger schools or for teachers traveling to different buildings, or a

school without a culture of communicating about students in a holistic aspect.

More research should be conducted on the setting in which choice-based art education can be

used as an effective teaching approach. This case study adds an important setting that other art

educators may be able to relate to. Erica teaches choice from a cart in an urban charter school.

My practice differs in that I have my own large art room and teach in a rural district. Douglas

and Jaquith's book Engaging Learners in Artmaking (2012) provides different suggestions and

photographs of the classroom environments choice-based art is practiced in, but more research

would be interesting to compare how choice-based practices operate in different settings.

Buying in. Another obstacle in particular for a choice practice would be administration, parents

and caregivers, and other stakeholders' support. The products of choice-based art do not look the

same way as a teacher-directed lesson's product does. Parents may question the artwork brought

home and ask why it does not look like art. Administrators may wonder what is hanging in their

hallways. Student artist statements become critical in sharing and documenting learning. Making

this learning visible through documenting the process is a way that a teacher could help others'

understand. Advocacy plays a huge role in the transition to choice. Communicating with

administrators and parents about what changes are being made in the classroom *before*

transitioning can help. Exhibitions are a wonderful visual tool, too, to share student learning.

Erica's students' *Change* exhibition is an example of this.

  A holistic approach may find obstacles in that art teachers are not only responsible for serving

their students. Time and energy are often taken to fulfill other requirements of the job that are not

directly related to teaching art. This may hinder attempting a holistic approach, or one could use

that time in another holistic way. For example, I have to teach typing to students one day per

week. I have support from my principal (who advocates that I should not have to teach typing) to use this typing time to support my art curriculum and my holistic approach. I often have students type their artist statements, reflect in writing on a piece of art, or give them a writing prompt like goal setting or what is most important to me to help get to know them better. I learned this approach from Erica, to have a positive attitude and take other responsibilities as an opportunity to love and serve your students.

Self-Portrait

Early in my own practice I determined that I am going to teach children first, and then art. This may not be a statement or philosophy that others agree with, but in doing this I know that I am not simply going to a job everyday. A powerful lesson that Erica taught me is to reflect on who is doing the learning in your classroom. I want my students to do the learning, and I can facilitate this through choice, and make sure it is what they need through my holistic approach. In my formal teacher observations my principal approves that the students are the ones doing the learning in my class. I find I cover more art content by teaching choice-based art education, and am able to navigate through all the day to day responsibilities of teaching because I have my students prepared to gather materials, put them away, clean up, re-stock materials, without a different set of directions each class period. I have more time to teach, even though I have given them more time to work. Further, opening up my own practice to choice-based art has offered me ways of learning my students and has personally tuned me into using a holistic approach. My school community is a supportive atmosphere and I am provided flexibility to make changes as I see fit. A choice-based and holistic approach helps me focus my lens on what is important to me personally and professionally while teaching art, which is loving and serving my students.

Another important lesson that I learned from Erica was how to teach skills-based lessons in meaningful ways, as well as scaffold that learning for student success.

Conclusions: Bringing it all into Focus

This case study provides additional research into two approaches gaining recognition in the field of art education. It has influenced my own practice and philosophy of teaching as I enter my fifth year teaching K-6 art in a rural elementary school. Choice-based approaches are already influencing the field of art education, and with it I hope that others' will see the value of adding a holistic approach to a practice that is centered on student-led learning.

What can choice educators learn from a holistic approach? Holistic approaches demand student authenticity that comes along with a choice-based curriculum. Even more, they can bridge the gap between skills-based practices and choice-based blended practices like Erica had demonstrated in making skills-based learning personally meaningful for her students. A holistic lens may not be what every choice-based art educator might use in their practice, but there is harmony between them that allows for deeper meaning making.

In the words of Ansel Adams, "There is nothing worse than a sharp image of a fuzzy concept." My topics of study in this thesis still remain under investigation in the field of art education. This thesis serves the field of art education in clarifying emerging approaches centered on making more meaningful art experiences for art students. Case studies such as this show how the art teachers' personal practices constantly add to our broad field of art education. It is a testament on how art teachers are bringing into focus various approaches simultaneously into class rooms to not only teach art content, but teach our students.

APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

1. In what ways do you engage the whole student? (social, spiritual, emotional, sensory…)

2. How do you design your lessons so that students make authentic and meaningful works?

3. How do you connect students' to each other, the school, community, nature, and beyond?

4. What is the nature of your relationships with your students? How do you create relationships with students?

5. Do you have any examples of how a holistic approach has been transformational for either you or your students?

6. How does art education help students find meaning and purpose in their lives?

7. Do you have adequate resources (time space, materials) to meet the various needs of your students?

8. Do you feel empowered teaching at your school? Why or why not?

9. What challenges do you experience trying to meet various needs of your students?

APPENDIX B

Kent State University
CELEBRATE CENTENNIAL
1910·2010

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Study Title: *Holistic Art Education*

Principal Investigator: Dr. Linda Hoeptner Poling, **Co-Investigator:** Lauren J Lutkus

You are being invited to participate in a research study. This consent form will provide you with information on the research project, what you will need to do, and the associated risks and benefits of the research. Your participation is voluntary. Please read this form carefully. It is important that you ask questions and fully understand the research in order to make an informed decision. You will receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Purpose:

The purpose of this case study is to satisfy master's thesis course requirements and reveal the various ways in which holistic art education manifests. Both holistic art education and charter schools are recent phenomena occurring in the contemporary education field and are worthy of more research. Campbell (2011, p. 20) states that, "while holistic theory is fairly new in the field of art education, there is a growing recognition of its importance." Frankenberg et al. (2011) agree that "much more extensive examination of the educational experiences of charter school students is essential" (p.9). While this study will only focus on the holistic approach that appears in this particular art educator's practice, the context of the charter school is important to understanding this particular case. This research can contribute to a "growing body of literature on holistic art education" and provide a detailed description of holistic art education practices (Campbell & Simmons, 2012).

Procedures

This case study will involve observations of a holistic art educator, audio-recorded interviews, and photographs of her students' work. Students will remain unidentified. Observation and in-depth interviewing methods with the holistic art educator will allow me to gain an understanding of this art teacher's holistic approach. Data will be collected over a three-day period, following the participant in her typical day's schedule at the school at which she is an art educator. Field notes, audio recorded interviews, and photographs of student work will be collected. All interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed for data analysis. During

observations, the researcher will remain as inconspicuous as possible to not interfere with the daily routines of the art teacher or her students.

Other participants' interviews (recommended teachers or administrators in the school) and publically available information about the school will serve to describe the context in which this case of holistic art education is occurring.

All participants will receive interview questions via email/hard copy prior to interviewing.

Any identifying information of setting and participants will be kept confidential. Data will be stored on a flash drive in a locked file cabinet.

Audio and Video Recording and Photography
Interviews will be audio recorded for transcription and data analysis for my master's thesis. You will have the option to listen to the recorded interview prior to their use. Any identifiable information will be kept confidential and will not be published or presented in any manner. Photographs of student artwork will be taken, but student names or any other identifiable information will be kept confidential. No video recording will take place. During classroom observations, the researcher will take field notes.

Benefits
The potential benefits of participating in this study may include helping the co-investigator and holistic art educator participant to articulate holistic art education practices for personal professional growth and future contributions to the field of art education.

This research will not benefit you directly. However, your participation in this study will help us to better understand how holistic art education practices may benefit students and art teachers and possibly contribute to the field of education.

Risks and Discomforts
There are no anticipated risks beyond those encountered in everyday life.

Privacy and Confidentiality
Your study related information will be kept confidential within the limits of the law. Any identifying information will be kept in a secure location and only the researchers will have access to the data. All audio recorded interviews will be kept in a locked filing cabinet on a flash drive. Research participants will not be identified in any publication or presentation of research results; only aggregate data will be used.

Your research information may, in certain circumstances, be disclosed to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), which oversees research at Kent State University, or to certain federal agencies. Confidentiality may not be maintained if you indicate that you may do harm to yourself or others.

Compensation

Participation in this research study is voluntary and will not be compensated.

Voluntary Participation

Taking part in this research study is entirely up to you. You may choose not to participate or you may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You will be informed of any new, relevant information that may affect your health, welfare, or willingness to continue your study participation.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, you may contact Dr. Linda Hoeptner Poling at 330.672.7895 or Lauren J Lutkus at 724.809.4358. This project has been approved by the Kent State University Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or complaints about the research, you may call the IRB at 330.672.2704.

Consent Statement and Signature

I have read this consent form and have had the opportunity to have my questions answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand that a copy of this consent will be provided to me for future reference.

_____   _____

Participant Signature   **Date**

APPENDIX C

CELEBRATE CENTENNIAL
KENT STATE
U N I V E R S I T Y
1910·2010

AUDIOTAPE/VIDEO CONSENT FORM

Holistic Art Education
Dr. Linda Hoeptner Poling & Lauren Lutkus

I agree to participate in an audio-taped/video taped interview about holistic education as part of this project and for the purposes of data analysis. I agree that Lauren J Lutkus may audio-tape/video tape this interview. The date, time and place of the interview will be mutually agreed upon.

_____
 Signature   Date

I have been told that I have the right to listen to the recording of the interview before it is used. I have decided that I:

____want to listen to the recording   ____do not want to listen to the recording

Sign now below if you do not want to listen to the recording. If you want to listen to the recording, you will be asked to sign after listening to them.

 Lauren J Lutkus may / may not (circle one) use the audio-tapes/video tapes made of me. The original tapes or copies may be used for:

____this research project _____publication _____presentation at professional meetings

_____
Signature   Date

APPENDIX D

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Study Title: Holistic Art Education

Principal Investigator: Dr. Linda Hoeptner Poling & Lauren Lutkus

Your child is being invited to participate in a research study. This consent form will provide you with information on the research project, what your child will need to do, and the associated risks and benefits of the research. Your child's participation is voluntary. Please read this form carefully. It is important that you ask questions and fully understand the research in order to make an informed decision. You will receive a copy of this document to take with you.

Purpose:
This research study is being conducted for a master's art education thesis. The purpose of this case study is to satisfy master's thesis course requirements and reveal the various ways in which holistic art education manifests in the art classroom.

Procedures
Photographs of your child's artwork will be taken. Your child will not be photographed.

Audio and Video Recording and Photography
Photographs of your child's artwork will be taken. Your child will not be photographed.

Benefits
This research will not benefit you or your child directly. However, your child's participation in this study will help us to better understand a holistic education approach in the art classroom.

Risks and Discomforts
There are no anticipated risks beyond those encountered in everyday life.

Privacy and Confidentiality
Photographs will only be taken of students' artwork. Your child will not be photographed. The photographs will not include your child's name. No identifying information about your child will

be collected. This signed parental consent form will be kept separate from study data, and responses will not be linked to your child.

Compensation
Participation or non-participation will have no effect on your child's grade in the classroom.

Voluntary Participation
Taking part in this research study is entirely up to you and your child. You and/or your child may choose not to participate or may discontinue their participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which he/she is otherwise entitled. You will be informed of any new, relevant information that may affect your child's health, welfare, or willingness to continue participation in this study.

Contact Information
If you have any questions or concerns about this research, you may contact Dr. Linda Hoeptner Poling at 330.672.7895 or Lauren J Lutkus at 724.809.4358. This project has been approved by the Kent State University Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or complaints about the research, you may call the IRB at 330.672.2704.

Consent Statement and Signature
I have read this consent form and have had the opportunity to have my questions answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to grant permission for my child to participate in this study. I understand that a copy of this consent will be provided to me for future reference.

_____   _____

Parental Signature   **Date**

APPENDIX E

KENT STATE
UNIVERSITY
1910·2010

CELEBRATE CENTENNIAL

FORMULARIO DE AUTORIZACIÓN DE FOTOGRAFÍA

Educación holística por medio del arte Dra. Linda Hoeptner Poling & Lauren Lutkus

Estimado padre o madre,Le estoy enviando la presente autorización para pedirle permiso para fotografiar la obra artística de su hijo/a para mi proyecto de investigación sobre educación holística por medio del arte. Las fotografías serán utilizadas en mi tesis de Maestría y también podrían ser usadas para presentaciones sobre mi proyecto.

- No tomaré fotografías de su hijo/a.

- Las fotografías no incluirán el nombre de su hijo/a u otra información que permita identificarle.

- De igual forma, le preguntaré a su hijo/a si está bien que fotografíe su obra artística y solamente tomaré fotos de su obra artística si dice que está de acuerdo. El que me permita o no fotografiar la obra artística de su hijo/a no afectará las calificaciones de su hijo/a en el salón de clases. Al firmar este documento, usted indica que está de acuerdo con que yo tome fotografías de la obra artística de su hijo/a para usarlas en mi investigación. Gracias por considerar esta petición.

Nombre del niño/a_____ [SEP]

Firma del padre/madre_____Fecha:_____

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