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Art as an educational tool to improve inner-health within the context of the organization Saturday Art Class in India

*Bild som läranderesurs för att förbättra inre hälsa med
organisationen Saturday Art Class i Indien som kontext*

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Foreword

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Abstract

This study examines how art is used as an educational tool to improve inner-health. The study is conducted in India to gain a cultural perspective different from Sweden. In the study, unstructured qualitative interviews are made mainly with volunteers from the organization Saturday Art Class, but also with the principal at the Sir J. J. Collage of Architecture. The interviews focus on the respondents view on: art as an educational tool, art as a tool to deal with inner-health and the respondent's view on art and emotions from a cultural perspective. A thematic analyze is applied to understand and structure the collected material and John Dewey's theory on art, education and experience is used as a theoretical framework when discussing the result. The study discusses what it is about art that makes it improve inner-health and how art, as an educational tool, can help shape both individuals and the society. In relation to the respondent's experiences, earlier research and Dewey's theoretical approach, the study identifies three different and co-related perspectives within the art practice that can help art teachers conduct their education for it to benefit inner-health among students, which are: the art practice in itself, reflection through an interactive dialogue and emotional aims. The study also discusses the connection between artistic freedom and democratic values as well as the role of the art teacher during the artistic practice. Lastly, the cultural context in India and SAC is compared to Swedish art education.

Key words: art, art education, inner-health, emotions, John Dewey, experience, values, democracy

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1. Introduction

During my five years of studying to become an art teacher within upper secondary schools, I have also had an interest in self-development and how I can understand and improve my emotional and mental health. In relation to this interest, I have worked part-time as a yoga instructor and my own yoga practice and knowledge have inspired me to think about how I, as a future art teacher, can work to develop an emotional and mental understanding among my students. Doing my degree project, I therefore wanted to study the artistic process from a health perspective. Besides having a personal interest regarding health development it is also my responsibility as a teacher to work with student health. According to Swedish school laws, teachers must work to create an environment that benefits the student's knowledge and personal development and must also work to create an environment that provides positive learning situations (Skolverket & Socialstyrelsen 2016, p. 28).

Research shows that the artistic process can benefit students' self-esteem, social relations, cognitive development, emotional understanding, sense of self and individual expression, which implies that art does not only develop artistic qualities but is also a tool to improve well-being (Dorr, 2007; Kim, Wee & Gilbert 2017; Spendlove, 2007; McIntosh, 2015; Marshall-Tierne, 2010). In addition, the Swedish Bureau of Statistics (2017) states that mental problems among youth have increased during the past 30 years in Sweden, more than in other Nordic countries, and the main factor for this development is adolescents' experiences of their environment at home and in school (Statistiska Centralbyrån, 2017). Considering that working with health among Swedish youth seems to be an area in need, and since art is explained as a tool that benefits health, a study on how art educators can work with art to improve student health appears to be relevant.

To gain a cultural perspective different from Sweden, the study was conducted in India. Doing the study in India, I wanted to learn more about how art can be used as an educational tool to improve inner-health within a country where the pre-conditions for health are different compared to Sweden and furthermore draw on my experiences to develop my own art teaching.

India is the world's largest democracy, a federal republic and a multicultural country with a population that exceeds 1,3 billion people (Landguiden, 2016). In India, a majority of the people live in poverty, mostly on the countryside or in slum areas. This means that a huge part of the population is struggling for food, household, clean water, health care and education (Regeringskansliet, 2017). Except from social inequalities, India also has issues such as corruption, ethnical and religious conflicts, discrimination, populism and terrorism (Wibeck, 2012). To continue, the situation for Indian children is difficult. There are eight billion children who don't go to school, even though education is compulsory and free of charge. The quality of the education in governmental schools are generally low, which means that there is a lack of qualified teachers and relevant school supplies. Child labor in India is common and flogging children is legal within Indian homes, and also common within Indian schools. Overall, children (especially girls) is an exposed group in India, because they don't have the same opportunities to claim their rights (Regeringskansliet, 2017).

Considering the issues and difficulties children in India are facing, this study will hopefully provide Indian, as well as Swedish, art educators with new perspectives regarding the potential of the artistic process in relation to inner-health.

1.1. Background: Art education and inner-health

In both India and Sweden, the word art can mean everything from music, drama to visual arts. In this study, the word *art* or *the artistic process* is limited to visual arts. In India, visual arts within the secondary stage of school education (14-16 years old) mean two- or three-dimensional artworks such as: drawing and painting, printmaking, photography and computer graphics, sculpture, installation, papier mache or clay modelling etc. At senior secondary stage (16-18 year old) the students are taught *Fine arts* and focus on creative painting, sculpture or applied arts. Arts education in India is described as an important subject to preserve a unique Indian culture identity. The Indian art syllabus explain, that art education in India is mainly used as an entertaining or prestige-earning activity and that art education is losing its value compared to other subjects. Arts education is described as a mere extra curricular activity or a tool to teach other subjects. According to the art syllabus, art should instead enrich the life of the young citizens through their lifetime and make students appreciate the variety of artistic traditions and create liberal and creative thinkers. The students, from primary to senior school, are encouraged to use art as a tool for free expression, to gain an artistic sensibility and to learn and appreciate the nation's cultural art heritage and traditions (National council of education and training, 2008).

In Sweden, the general aim with art education has been to foster members of a democratic society, but the question how to conduct art education has changed in relation to structural and ideological reformations. Art education was historically a subject that was meant to develop occupational skills, a technical quality and a way to nurture students. This view on art education gradually changed and became a subject that focused on individuals need for artistic expression. Nowadays, the curriculum within Swedish art education instead high-light art as a tool for communication (Wikberg, 2014). The contemporary curriculum states that the visual practice of art is characterized by two- and three-dimensional art creations or digital art making with the aim to understand how the artistic expression is constructed, prepared and used in relation to communication (Skolverket, 2011). The three historical understandings of Swedish art education are called the *technical phase*, the *art psychological* phase and the phase of *art language* (Wikberg, 2014).

To continue, it's not only art that can be understood differently, art education and its relation to inner-health also needs to be clarified to understand cultural differences between India and Sweden. In India, health beliefs are usually influenced by other indigenous beliefs. From an Indian perspective, health is not only seen as an individual problem but as something that affect the social life of the whole community. Health problems is both understood as bodily conditions as well as part of the mental state of the patient. A pre-condition for a person to be healed is therefore to foster positive mental states such as hope, optimism and initiative. The holistic view is deeply embedded in the traditional belief system as well as health practices of the society (Dalal, 2016). In contrast, student health in Sweden means that teachers should work to create a safe school environment, healthy social relations and acknowledge students so that they feel good about themselves. The aim is to prevent illness by having knowledge about the cause regarding why students feel ill and then work to prevent the risk of emotional or mental illness (Skolverket, 2018).

1.2. Aim and research question

The aim of this study is to analyze and make visible the potential of the artistic process to improve inner-health within art education. To approach this aim, a qualitative study was conducted in India. Using India as a cultural context the study will hopefully contribute with new perspectives on art in relation to inner-health in contrast to Swedish art education. The study will be based on the following research question:

1. How do art educators experience and use art as an educational tool to improve inner-health?

1.3. Disposition

In the following chapter, earlier research about art in relation to education and inner-health is presented to give the reader an over-view of the study's research field. In chapter three, John Dewey's theory on art, experience and education is introduced as it is the study's theoretical approach. In chapter four, the study's method is put forward and discussed. Further on, in chapter five, the result is presented and followed by chapter six where the result is discussed in relation to earlier research, Dewey's theoretical framework and Swedish art education.

2. Earlier research

This chapter brings forward and explains research connected to art in relation to education, emotions and inner-health. The research presented gives an overview of the study's research field as well as different health benefits that comes with the artistic process. When presenting earlier research, art therapy is included even though none of the respondents are educated art therapists. Connecting art therapy to art education is in other words problematic considering that education and therapy are two completely different areas. Still, in this study, viewing art as a therapeutic tool is considered as an important research field, because it addresses both benefits and approaches regarding work with art and inner-health. To continue, the study also brings forward research that state different benefits of using art as a tool for inner-health. However, it's important to know that these benefits can be hard to measure because they either rely on the art teacher experience of the children improvement, as in Kim, Wee and Gilbert's (2017) study, or it's hard to clarify if art is the reason for the beneficial development, as in Marshall-Tierne's study (2010). Regarding the Swedish research field, I only found research connected to art and inner-health within the field art therapy. This means that the result is discussed mainly from an international perspective, which is problematic when reflecting about the result in relation to art education in Sweden. At the same time, the lack of Swedish research implies the study's relevance.

2.1. Art therapy

There are plenty of studies regarding the benefits of using art to work with inner-health. A common practice and research field is art therapy. Art therapy is a multifaceted field with branches in many areas, but according to Ulman, one of the founders of art therapy, "Anything that is to be called art therapy must genuinely partake of both art and therapy" (Rubin 2010, p. 25). This means that an art therapist needs knowledge about both artistic materials, products and processes as well as clinical practice of therapy. Within the art therapy research field there is an ongoing discussion whether art or therapy is dominant. Ulman argues that the primary goal of the art activity is *therapy*, and that the art therapist must know who and what they are treating and at the same time understand ways in which art can aid therapeutic understanding (Rubin, 2010).

In Sweden, most research regarding art in relation to inner-health, is connected to art therapy. For example, Holmqvist (2018) investigates how art therapy can contribute to inner-change and improve health, Öster (2007) examine the use of art therapy in relation to women with breast cancer, Wide (2005) present different possibilities with art therapy and Konarski and Theorell (1998) explore art therapy as a form of healing. Furthermore, the Swedish National Association for Art therapists' (SRBt) list high qualitative RCT studies (randomized, controlled studies) that show different benefits with art therapy. In these studies, people with psychiatric dysfunctions and Alzheimer as well as people in prison and war veterans have, for example, lower levels of anxiety, apathy and depression, better social interaction and explain themselves having more inner control (Englund, 2015). At the same time, SRBt points out the lack of valid research regarding art therapy (Englund, 2015) and the American Art Therapy Association's (AATA) summarize different research areas that still need to be investigated such as cross-cultural/multicultural approaches to art therapy assessments and practice (Kaiser & Deaver, 2013).

2.2. Art with an emotional aim

Dorr (2007), Kim, Wee and Gilbert (2017) have both conducted studies about how art can develop self-esteem. Dorr did a study at a suspension school program that worked with art therapy groups for anger management, conflict resolution and to develop self-esteem among youth and Kim, Wee and Gilbert studied an art intervention program for school children, specially designed to boost self-esteem.

According to Dorr (2007), the adolescent's faces a world full of conflicts and violence in their families, neighborhood, with authority figures and most of all within themselves, which affects their mental, emotional and cognitive well-being. Living under those circumstances and not having any alternative modes of expression consequently make the students "hold it in" or "acting it out", which further on repeats a negative cycle. When adolescents act out their emotions in school it can result in feelings of anger, rage, revenge, injustice, confusion, guilt and sadness, that leads to low self-esteem. The art therapy groups therefore work to provide the members a place where they can communicate in an alternative way than words. Dorr argues that words imply that the students have communication skills, but if they don't know how to express themselves in words the conflict will instead escalate, where art can respond to conflict with more distance and safety (Dorr, 2007). Regarding art as a medium for communication, Knight (2014) states that artistic activities can create more space for students to communicate with each other, while verbal dialogues are often governed by dominant groups and agendas and also limited by, for example, language barriers and cultural differences. The artistic process can instead be a communication that bridges these difficulties. Knight claims that art has the ability to communicate and transcend beyond subjective boundaries and verbal obstacles and artistic activities thus become a safe place where young people can ventilate emotions, without pressure (Knight, 2014).

Kim, Wee and Gilbert (2017) argue that art benefits self-confidence because the children learn how to trust themselves by getting clear knowledge about their strength and limitations as well as confidence that they can handle a variety of situations. In contrast, a lack of self-esteem has been shown to lead to physical, mental and emotional problems, which result in academic and social underperformance and behavior problems. Furthermore, the artistic process gives children a sense of emotional satisfaction because they can freely control the material and freely take decisions connected to the process.

In both Dorr (2007) and Kim, Wee and Gilbert (2017) studies, the process of art is described as meaningful for the student's emotional development. Dorr (2007) explains the students having difficulties working with artistic material such as clay, and by working through those difficulties the members redirected their conflicts towards the clay. Dorr states that it was important to give all members individual encouragement and support regarding their art creations and that the art therapy groups resulted in the students becoming more open, sharing, trusting and supporting towards each other (Dorr, 2007). To continue, Kim, Wee and Gilbert (2017) claim that, because the artistic process requires discovery, exploration, experimentation and invention it fuels the children's imagination and free creativity. The children also learn how to share space and materials, taking turns, interacting, being responsible for cleaning up and making positive choices regarding personal behavior, which makes art contribute to social development, especially when

having group projects. In the art intervention program, the teacher focused on open-ended assignments and asked open-ended questions, while giving the children positive encouragement and reinforcement as well as emotional support. The environment was also intentionally created to support autonomy and thought in the creative expression. After the ten week program the children showed “increased development of fine motor skills over the ten-week period as well as increased language and cognitive development which impacted children’s abilities and products” (Kim, Wee and Gilbert 2017, p. 6).

2.3. Art and reflection

According to Metzger (2010), the artistic space constitutes a place where emotions and opinions can be viewed under more open circumstances. He states that artistic rooms can offer the viewer to take a step back, relax, observe, reflect and listen to others' arguments as well as experiment with new perspectives and thoughts. Thus, the artistic space can potentially create a place where people who otherwise need to prove their prestige and credibility are given the opportunity to ponder (Metzger, 2010).

Furthermore, Marshall-Tierney (2010) explains the process of art psychotherapy as a triangular relationship between the art psychotherapist, the client and the artwork. The artwork is made by the client in the context of a “supportive, bounded relationship, where the art psychotherapist is carefully watching, listening, processing, and reflecting, on both the relationship and the artwork being made.” (Marshall-Tierne 2010, p. 162). When both the therapist and the client view the artwork it is possible to find meaning and explore the art process together. In other words, art is understood as a way to introduce and explore aspects of people to themselves and develop a positive change in their sense of self, which then lead to a more fulfilling quality of life. Marshall-Tierney express that, in her experiences “art can be a place where the internal emotional mess can be externalised and looked at symbolically and metaphorically within a therapeutic relationship” (Marshall-Tierne 2010, p. 163).

In the art project Room 13, children collaborate on different art works, continue on each other's art works or leave, build on and reconstruct their own art works, in discussion with each other or the artist that is employed to assist them. The children argue that the learning model itself is a philosophical and moral education generated through art. In agreement with the artist, the children state that they don't need talent to act creatively, and the art making is therefore not performance-oriented. The goal of the creation is to encourage intellectual and artistic development for all ages, but what one learns and how depends on the individual (Drummond, 2006).

When observing children's art works, Engel (1996) encourage the viewer to think about the questions: what is it made of? what does the observer see (lines shapes colors)? what does it represent? how is it organized? what is it about (humor, sadness, experimentation)? And where does the idea come from (story, an outing, imagination)? According to Engel, looking at children's art this way gives information about the child's interest, viewpoints and concepts. If adults take the children's art seriously, they are then more likely to put greater investment in their art, they will think, explore and invent more and the conversation will give the artistic process meaning (Engel, 1996).

2.4. Art education and emotional development

Spendlove (2007), investigates the place of emotion within the artistic process by examining how emotions are related to a person, process and product. He emphasizes the importance of emotional literacy in schools, which he understands as a growing field of recognition, instead of being a neglected area compared to other scientific subjects. He claims that people nowadays react on events with ambivalence and emotional rationalization, which creates a lack of engagement and superficial existence (Spendlove, 2007).

In agreement with Spendlove, Esther McIntosh (2015) uses John Macmurray's view on art and emotions to argue that emotions are something that need to be trained and that emotional education is connected to art training. To achieve emotional maturity and to appreciate the nature of objects and persons, Macmurray explains art as necessary. Yet, in the global west the growth and development of science is prioritized. McIntosh states that "we are more focused on material gain than on human flourishing". Even though, the outcomes of science are more easily measured, she argues that emotional training is needed for the student's self-motivation and social relations. McIntosh claims that contemporary schools work with high-cliché emotions, such as emotional experiences and relationship problems, and that education instead should engage in a wide range of arts to be able to teach adequate emotions and value-judgements, which will enlarge the scope of appropriate emotions and resist emotional stereotypes. McIntosh concludes that education should go beyond the measured advantage of subjects such as science and broaden people's conception of what constitutes and benefits the society (McIntosh, 2015).

2.5. Art and democratic abilities

Gude (2012) claims that students' commitment to a democratic society is based on whether they feel they have the power to influence and if they share the belief that they can shape the world. In order to conduct democratic education, learning should not provide students with facts about democracy, but create approaches whereby students through experience gain responsibility for their democratic life. Gude argues that artistic reflection can break the boundary between one's own experience and others. In other words, students can use the artistic process to absorb the minds of people who have lived at different times and in different places. Using art the students can also situate themselves in bodies within different ethnicities, gender, classes, ages and opportunities. Thus, through art, students not only deal with problems that exist within themselves but can also use art to understand others (Gude, 2012). In agreement with Gude, Adams (2013) suggest that art education should be based on social involvement that inspires and convey knowledge through the creation of art. According to Adams, the artistic process should be connected to social engagement, cooperation as well as critical thinking, because these abilities are important when maintaining a democratic society (Adams, 2013). Moreover, Metzger (2010) claims that it is artistic freedom that gives space for democratic abilities, which contradicts having democratic aims. In other words, if art already have a democratic purpose, then the artistic process will be controlled towards democratic aims, which means that the artistic process is no longer free (Metzger, 2010).

3. Theoretical approach

John Dewey's theory on art, experience and education is chosen as a theoretical approach to understand how the artistic process can generate emotional understanding and how artistic experiences can be related to education and society. The study therefore focus on Dewey's view regarding the concepts emotions, reflection, freedom, growth and society. Dewey's theory on teaching developed the so called progressive pedagogic, which became an influential movement during the first half of the 1900 century, and Dewey himself has been described as one of the most important American philosophers, besides being a well-known pedagogical theorist (Burman, 2014).

The theoretical approach was meant to mainly rely on Dewey's (2005) theory on *art as experience*, to understand how an artistic process can help communicate inner-experiences. Though, after reading his theory, I understood that Dewey's focused more on the nature of experience than on the artistic process in relation to education and society, which also goes in line with Burman's (2014) critic on Dewey. I therefore continued to read Dewey's (2015) theory on *experience and education*, which in combination with his thoughts on art gave the study a theoretical framework regarding both the art process and the art process connection to education and society. This connection is possible because the essence of Dewey's philosophical framework concerning both education, art (and democracy), is human experience. To continue, I read Dewey's book *Democracy and education* (2007), but I found that the content was either similar to *experience and education*, or irrelevant in relation to the study. Instead I used Burman's (2014) review on Dewey 's theory about democracy to broaden my understanding and to get a more inclusive explanation. Though, using Burman as a primary source suggest that his thoughts on Dewey shaped my interpretation. To understand Dewey's theories and get different perspectives on his work, I also read articles by Lappalainen and Schwarz (2014), and Burman (2014; 2007).

3.1. Experience and growth

Dewey (2005) states that the individual is not separated from society. Instead, he explains the individual as a social being that continuously develops by interacting with the environment. From this point of view, Dewey understands *experiences* as the never-ending relationship between humans and their environment and thus part of humans' way of living and learning as well as the source to human knowledge (Dewey, 2005). According to Dewey (2015), experiences are continuant, which means that every experience lives on in further experiences. The principle of continuity means that an experience is influenced by older ones and modifies in some way the quality of future ones. For example, a burglar becomes a burglar because of different experiences, and the experiences of being a burglar means that he perceives the objective world in a certain way. In other words, experiences can make people grow in different directions. This doesn't mean that experiences automatically make people grow. Growth only occurs when experiences are shaped so that people develops physically, intellectually and morally. Dewey, therefore tries to answer the question, how should education be conducted for people to grow, and what is the direction and aim with that growth? (Dewey, 2015).

3.2. Freedom and society

Freedom for Dewey (2015), is freedom of intelligence, which means that learning should not be forced upon students but integrated in relation to their environment and earlier experiences. By giving students freedom to control and develop their own aims, education is not dictated but based on the social intelligence of the group, which moreover give students the freedom of self-control. Within these aims, the teacher should get to know every student to be able to intellectually challenge them on their individual level and in relation to the student's earlier experiences (Dewey, 2015). According to Burman (2014), Dewey states that all living creatures have a natural urge to find balance and inner-peace in line with their environment. Children have therefore a natural need to grow so that they can develop their inner capacities. From Dewey's perspective, the natural longing to develop never ends, people are continuously growing throughout their life, because humans constantly live and learn. Thus, nurturing should be a process of socializing children in line with the community spirit, as well as encouraging children's own traits, actions, impulses and learning (Burman, 2014).

Instead of teaching knowledge, Dewey (2015) explains education as shaping experiences so that knowledge naturally becomes part of the experience. A pre-condition for this kind of education is that teachers develop social rules that rest upon democratic values. According to Burman's (2014) interpretation on Dewey, the process of individual development is similar to the development of society and community. When individuals develop so do the community, and a democratic society is thus based upon a positive development of individuals. Democracy is, in other words, not a way of governance, it is instead explained as:

[...]a community ethos and a way to live together with other humans, and it is something that must pervade the whole society. What is crucial, is the way individuals and society are organically connected and fulfilled by a collective democratic community spirit. (Burman 2014, p. 27, [my translation])

Burman (2014) explains that Dewey, from this point of view, argues for the importance of communication and interaction between people. Communication is the mean through which knowledge and experiences are spread and shared, and therefore the starting point for the development of society (Burman, 2014).

3.3. Emotions and reflection

Dewey (Lappalainen & Schwartz, 2014; Dewey, 2005) states that human existence is based upon a rhythm of harmony and disharmony. Humans, in relation to their environment, are exposed to life challenges, which creates disharmony but also a strive to create harmony. The awareness of tension between the rhythm of disharmony and harmony is what makes people grow as individuals. Thorough disharmony humans start to reflect and this reflection is a search to restore life balance (Lappalainen & Schwartz, 2014; Dewey, 2005). Dewey (2005) explains emotions as the connection between having an urge for harmony and the action to create it. Emotions are the engagement in an object or a situation that consequently leads to action. Dewey explains art in the same way, the essence of art is a rhythm of reflecting, feeling and acting from a state of

tension to a state of balance. Thus, art is an emotional, intellectual and practical search for harmony (Dewey, 2005).

Furthermore, the emotional phase of an experience is the bond that brings the practical and intellectual parts together into a single whole. Emotions in relation to an experience means that when an object is perceived it is emotionally pervaded, which signify that emotions are not separated from an experience, they move and change as qualities within an experience, as it develops. From this perspective, experiences are emotional but there are no separated things called emotions in it (Dewey, 2005). But, when humans reflect on their emotions they shape them and give them meaning. In other words, emotions are not primitive impulses that are uncontrolled. When feelings are actively worked with, they become expressions of human interaction with the world, and this interaction is usually the aim with the artistic process (Lappalainen & Schwartz, 2014; Dewey, 2005).

3.4. A critical approach on Dewey

According to Burman (2014; 2007), Dewey's theory about aesthetics is not original, in contrast he describes it as strikingly traditional, due the many familiarities his thoughts have with older esthetic thinkers. He claims that Dewey approached the esthetic field in an older age without having an understanding about art. Burman (2014) argues that Dewey was not specifically interested in art, instead he describes that the importance for Dewey was, above all, the strong connection between art and experience. When reading Dewey's book *Art as experience* one should therefore focus on learning more about the experience as a phenomenon, instead of his thoughts about art.

4. Method

This study relies on qualitative research conducted by doing unstructured interviews at the organization SAC and Sir J. J. School of Art Campus. A thematic analyze was used in relation to the research questions and the theoretical framework. This chapter will present the study's selection of organization and respondents, the study's implementation, analysis, validation and reliability, ethical responsibilities, and lastly discuss the method's difficulties.

4.1. Qualitative approach

Qualitative research is a strategy that emphasize, for example, words rather than quantifications in the collection and analysis of material. In contrast to quantitative research, the qualitative approach is applied to understand the social world from the eyes of the people that are being studied. Thus, participants can elaborate upon their own reflections which, in larger scale, may result in a more in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences (Bryman, 2016). In relation to the study's research question, a qualitative approach is used to understand art educators' experiences of art as an educational tool to improve inner-health.

4.2. Selection

The original plan for this study was to learn more about art therapy and in relation to my future occupation, as an upper secondary art teacher, I wanted to focus on art therapy among youth or teenagers. I also wanted to do the study in a country where the context and culture pre-conditions for inner-health are different compared to Sweden. Having art therapy, in mind, I used the website *Art therapy without borders* to contact organizations that worked with art therapy around the world. I also googled art therapy within different countries and contacted different organizations found through google. Only one organization agreed with my selection and welcomed me to conduct the study, which was an organization that worked with art therapy to rehabilitate street children in Mumbai, India. Arriving in Mumbai, I had problems arranging interviews at this organization, and I therefore had to search for a new one. The study was therefore conducted at the organization SAC instead, which I found through a contact I met during my time in India. The change of organization also changed the focus of the study. Because SAC doesn't work with art therapy but art education, the study focus on art a as an educational tool to improve inner-health instead of art as therapeutic practice, and since SAC works with children around the age 6-10, the focus was no longer on youth or teenagers. The original plan was also to conduct both interviews and participating observation, but because the semester at SAC was finished there were no art sessions to participate in, and the study therefore only relies on interviews.

To understand the experience of art as a tool to improve inner-health, interviews were conducted with volunteers from the organization SAC. Since the volunteers are the ones who teach art at SAC and interact with the children, I assumed that they both had an insight of the children's needs and development as well as an experience on how art education work as a tool for inner-health. The volunteers were selected randomly by my contact person at SAC during the organization's art exhibition. To deepen my knowledge concerning art education and inner-health

from a cultural perspective, I also interviewed Mr. Rajiv Mishra. Mr. Mishra was selected as a respondent because of his high position regarding art and education, which implied him having a wide cultural understanding within these areas. The interview with Mr. Mishra was managed through a contact at the organization Fulora Foundation.

Since the study mainly relies on interviews with volunteers that work at the organization SAC, a presentation of the organization follows.

4.2.1. Saturday Art Class

SAC is a non-government organization that was founded by Chhavi Khandelwa and Manasi Mehan in 2017 (Vipra, 2017). Because the attendance in school on Saturdays were low the founder Manesi Mehan started an art class as a one-time endeavor to encourage children to attend school. According to her, the response from the children was so overwhelming that she had to continue with the art classes (Mehta, 2018). Today Manesi and her co-founder organize Saturday art classes for 1216 children across nine schools with the help from 194 volunteers which is a development mainly funded by an online crowd-funding page (Saturday Art Class, 2017a; 2017c). The art classes are conducted in government schools (BMC), low-founded private schools and orphanages throughout the city of Mumbai and the children attending are from socially and economically less privileged backgrounds (Saturday Art Class, 2017a). According to SAC's website (2017b), the children who join their classes are burdened with responsibilities and are exposed to situations that make it difficult for them to "just be children", and SAC is therefore striving to create a space for them to "act their age and revel in everything that they deserve" (Saturday Art Class, 2017b).

The organization has its own curriculum that facilitate every class and is designed for the children to achieve pre-determined learning curves. The organization also work with the core values patience, sharing, gratitude, teamwork, respect, cleanliness and equality which are implemented in the art classes (Saturday art class, 2017b). In every art class, there is a team of coordinators, mentors, volunteers and fellows. As a volunteer one can join the mentor program which means that the volunteer dedicates six weeks with SAC, a mentor can further on become a coordinator in agreement with the founders. The fellows are usually the children's school teacher who joins the art classes to make the children feel comfortable and to learn more about art. The working team is provided with supplement material and a lesson plan that gives them information about the weeks' theme, artistic inspiration, artistic technique and values. Once a month the working team also visit a gallery in Mumbai to learn more about different artists and art techniques¹.

4.3. Interviews

May (2001) states that the unstructured interview is a method that provides deeper subjective and more qualitative knowledge about specific experiences, which agrees with the study's aim and research question and unstructured interviews was thereby selected as the study's method. The unstructured interview is characterized by open questions to which the respondent answer freely (May, 2011). Even though open questions are beneficial when understanding the respondents

¹ Interview. Rishita, volunteer at SAC. Saturday art class, art exhibition. 2018-04-15. Mumbai.

perspectives, a critic towards the unstructured interview is that open questions can make the interview change within different subjects, which later can make the material hard to compare (Kvale & Brinkman, 2014). In agreement with Bryman (2016) the interviews were recorded and transcribed because “It helps to correct the natural limitations of our memories and on the intuitive glosses that we might place on what people say in interviews” (Bryman 2016, p. 479). Before conducting the interviews an interview guide (see appendix 1.) was made that thematically organized open question in relation to the study’s aim and research question. Thus, the interviews focused on the topics: the respondents’ view on art as an educational tool, art in relation to inner-health and the respondents’ cultural perspective on art, emotions and inner-health in Mumbai. The study was conducted during two months, April-May.

The volunteers interviewed at SAC were two boys, Jash and Aditiya, and one girl Rishita, in the ages 20-26. Aditiya works as an artist and has been volunteering at SAC since the beginning. Jash studies law and volunteer at SAC as a coordinator and Rishita studies economics and she also volunteer at SAC as a coordinator. I also interviewed Mr. Rajiv Mishra, directorate of art in Maharashtra state, and the principal of the Sir J. J. Collage of Architecture, in Mumbai.

The volunteers at SAC were interviewed in a separate room at SAC’s art exhibition and lasted between 45-60 minutes. The interviews followed an interview guide presented in appendix 1. The art exhibition took place the 15th of April 2018 at Jamnabai Narcee school and showcased a selection of the children’s artworks from the last year. The exhibition was organized so that it presented how SAC had worked with the children week by week. At every week, visitors could read about the specific week’s theme, artistic inspiration, artistic technique and values. The exhibition also had a selection of artistic techniques, used during the year, for visitors to try. Before the interviews, I got a guided tour by Rishita who gave me information about the weekly classes and I tried two of the artistic techniques used during the year. Mr. Mishra was interviewed at his office at the Sir J. J. School of Art Campus, in relation to Fulora Foundation’s art exhibition. Fulora Foundation rehabilitate street children through art therapy and also sell the children’s art at a yearly art exhibition with the aim to create a group home. This year’s exhibition was held at the J. J. School of Art Campus in collaboration with Mr. Mishra, and others. His thoughts about art, education and inner-health in Mumbai was, in others words, within the context of his work with Fulora Foundation.

4.4. Analysis

When collecting and analyzing the material, a thematic analysis was conducted. According to Bryman (2016), it is important to justify why the themes are important and significant, otherwise the themes have a tendency to become vague and insufficient. In agreement with Bryman, I will therefore try to justify the themes by being transparent about their relation to literature and key decisions.

Firstly, the interview-guide were structured into three main themes, art as an educational tool, art as a tool to deal with emotional health and art and emotions from a cultural perspective. The first two themes are directly related to the research questions and the third theme was selected to gain understanding about the study’s cultural context. When analyzing the material, the transcripts were then read and reread to find topics that recurred, to find concepts related to the research questions and the study’s theoretical approach and to find similarities and differences between the respondents (Bryman, 2016).

This resulted in six different subthemes that derives from coding the transcripts. The subtheme *A culture perspective on art and emotions* gives the reader a cultural background, in relation to art and emotions, to provide a deeper understanding regarding the volunteers' experiences of SAC. The theme *Lesson structure* explains how SAC conduct their art classes. This theme connects to a discussion in relation to earlier research about how to conduct art classes that is beneficial for inner-health. The second theme *Values and fun* was a recurring description of SAC among the volunteers, and the theme therefore highlight's what the volunteers find important within the organization. The values also relate to the study's theoretical framework and earlier research about freedom, growth and society. The theme *Art and emotional energy* was a perspective all respondents used when speaking about emotions, which contrast to Dewey's view on emotions and the theme thereby laid ground for a later discussion. The fourth theme *Art as a medium for expression* is connected to the research questions and is thus important when comparing SAC with earlier research. The sixth subtheme *Art as a tool to foster better citizens* connects to the study's theoretical approach and a discussion about how art education and inner-health relates to society. Lastly,

The relation between the material, earlier research and Dewey's theoretical framework was circular, meaning that the themes from the material, the concepts taken from Dewey's theories and earlier research was repeatedly processed in relation to how they could co-relate or differ from each other.

4.5. Validity and reliability

Doing qualitative research, it's important to understand the complexity of culture and especially how one's own cultural background, gender and foreign gaze effect the interpretation of culture. The relationship between the researcher and "the Other" is an ongoing struggle that depends on time, space, history and social connections (Johnsson, 2014). To advocate these issues, Johnsson (2014) suggest a strong reflexivity that recognizes power, context and personal changes in researchers themselves.

Bryman (2016) presents the validity and reliability of qualitative studies. Reliability means, how qualitative material can be controlled by repetition and validity means how the study can be measured. Kvale and Brinkman (2014) state that validation is a way to control, question and theorize the result and for the study to have validation, the researcher must have a critical approach during the whole research process to verify that the material's reliability, credibility and plausibility. In agreement with Bryman (2016), Kvale and Brinkman (2014) and Johnson (2014), representative examples from the empirical findings are presented and a critical interpretation is conducted in relation to the empirical result. A copy of the study has also been shared with the participants and the organization SAC for them to be able to comment, but none of the participants responded.

4.6. Ethical responsibilities

There are four main ethical responsibilities when conducting a study. The first ethical responsibility is *the principle of information*, which means that the participants must get information about the study, the use of the study and their role in the study, and be able to end their

participation whenever they want, without any negative consequences. *The principle of confirmation* means that the participants must confirm their participation in the study and if people are under the age of 15, the study needs approval from parents. *The principle of confidentiality* states that, if the study handles material that are ethically sensitive, everyone involved in the study needs to sign a contract of confidentiality. The participant's identity should also be undefinable in the study. Lastly, *the principle of usage* state that the study must not be used in any commercial or non-scientific contexts and not as material that can cause actions or decisions that will affect the participants (Vetenskapsrådet, 2002).

In agreement with the study's ethical responsibilities, the organization SAC and respondents has been given information about the study's aim, background, method as well as information about where the study is being publicized and the organization's and respondents' role in the study. The respondents agreed to not be confidential, still the study only uses their forenames, except from Mr. Mishra. All respondents have also been given a copy of the study and thereby have the possibility to comment and change their statements. Conducting the study abroad, the ethical responsibilities regarding children might be different from Sweden and because the children come from struggling, low-income areas, confirmation from their parents would have been difficult. To avoid ethical complications, children were therefore not interviewed. Since I haven't collected material about specific persons or ethically sensitive material, this wasn't an ethical issue.

4.7. Method Discussion

May (2001) argues that participating observation, in contrast to interviews, prevents language and cultural barriers and is thereby a method that in larger scale acknowledges the researchers own ethnocentric views or prejudices. Participating observation also focus on actions and changing behaviors, which means that the study lost the perspective of how the children approach and change their behavior during the artistic process and how the children and the volunteers interact with each other. In other words, by just doing interviews the study neglects a behavior perspective, which means that if participating observation had taking place at the art sessions, the analyze might have had a different outcome.

Since participating observation wasn't conducted, this also problematize my choice of not interviewing any of the children at SAC. Leaving out the child perspective is problematic because it gives the volunteers power to speak for the children regarding how they feel and think in relation to the artistic process. From this aspect, participating observation could maybe have helped verify the volunteer's experiences, being able to observe the children's reactions within the art classes. It is therefore important to remember that this study only gives the teacher perspective.

The main cultural difficulty, when conducting this study, was the contact I had with different organizations. I was repeatedly promised or told one thing, that constantly got delayed or cancelled. This was very time consuming and made the material collection a struggle. Finding SAC and being able to do three interviews was therefore a relief, but at the same the result can be understood as limited in comparison with the study's original plan. Considering that the study builds upon the experience of the volunteers, I would have preferred to interview more volunteers or complemented the interviews with a focus group of volunteers as well as

interviewed the founders. But because of time limitations both for me and SAC, this wasn't possible.

A consequence regarding the lack of interviews is that the age of the children never was revealed. The age of the children is therefore an appreciation based on the pictures at SAC's website, and that SAC works and had their art exhibition at a primary school. Because the study had to change focus from youth to children this also means that the study compares art education for Swedish upper secondary school with art education for children in primary school, which is two different levels of progression. The lesson structure and art assignments at SAC are, in other words, customized for children, which means that the progression level of teaching at SAC cannot be applied on Swedish upper secondary schools. In relation to the study's aim, I still argue that Swedish art educators for upper secondary schools can gain new perspectives regarding the potential of the *artistic process* in relation to inner-health.

To continue, I also want to address that SAC is a non-governmental organization with its own art curriculum. The organization is in other words not obliged to follow the Indian art syllabus (National council of education and training, 2008). In this study, the Indian art syllabus therefore works as a contextual background from which SAC has developed their own art teaching.

Furthermore, the interviews were recorded and transcribed. My experience was that the respondents answered very relaxed and freely to the questions and didn't mind the recorder. Though, a problem during the interviews was that people were coming in and out of the room where the interviews were conducted, listening to the interview which I experienced might have affected some of the respondents, who sometimes started to speak quieter. This also effected the recording, making it hard to hear what they were saying in combination with me having trouble to understand their accent when listening to the recordings. The respondents English were otherwise fluent, and the communication with both respondents and the organization was without any problem.

Considering that the volunteers represent SAC, there is also problem regarding the validation of the interviews regarding if the volunteers answered to promote the organization or if the answers are their genuine thoughts. Since the interviews took place at SAC's art exhibition with people from SAC coming in and out of the room, this also indicate that it might have been hard for the respondents to answer openly. What speaks for the validation of the interviews is that the respondents freely work at SAC, without salary, and also freely participated in the study and they all spoke about SAC with great enthusiasm. Still, I would have wished to repeat the interviews with the respondents in a more "natural" place, which would also benefit the studies reliability.

5. Result

In the result chapter, the material is presented in six themes. The first theme, *A cultural perspective on art and emotions*, present the respondents cultural view on art and emotions in Mumbai. The theme *Lesson structure* gives the reader an insight of how the organization SAC works with art and *Values and fun* provides information about the organization's main intentions when conducting art education. The theme *Art and emotional energy* explains how the respondents understands inner-health and their work related to that understanding, and the theme *Art as a medium for expression* brings forward how the children learn to deal with emotions and why that is important. Finally, in *Art as a tool to foster better citizens*, the respondents' thoughts on art, inner-health and society is presented.

5.1. A cultural perspective on art and emotions

When asking the respondents about their cultural perspective on emotions in India, Aditiya sums up the main experience:

No you don't speak about mental health in India, You don't speak about sex in India you don't speak about a lot of things in India, Its just taboo you don't talk about depression, because I don't know, it's just a thing here but I don't mind. India is not a very open place. (Interview. Aditiya. 2018-04-15)

According to the respondents, art education in Mumbai is not a subject that is given true attention in comparison with for example subjects as science or math. Other subjects are given more status because they score marks that give the children acknowledgement for higher education. Art is, in other words, not viewed as a subject of importance. This means that the respect of learning art is reducing, and that art teachers are not equally valued as other teachers.

To continue, all of the respondents except from Jash, explain inner-health as a topic that Indians don't speak about. Indians don't communicate their feeling or thoughts, because the topic it's not accepted in India as it is in other countries. Mr. Mishra explains that if Indian talks about emotions they will feel that people are making a joke out of them, or they will not be taken seriously and that's why Indians don't open up. In agreement with the volunteers, Mr. Mishra says that Indian people are very emotionally shy and that is why they don't express themselves verbally, instead they find other mediums to show their emotions. He gives a historical example about the Indian people by mentioning the famous architecture Taj Mahal, which was built as a love gift from the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan to his wife Mumtaz Mahal. Mr. Mishra say:

[...] so he used architecture as a medium of art to express love. So he had no other medium to express, he could have written I love you but that doesn't make sense. So how do I make my love eternal for my wife, I do something as eternal as the Taj Mahal so that it represents my love for her for the centuries to come. If I want to express love I can use architecture as a tool to express my love for her. So art is so powerful. (Interview, Mr. Mishra, 2018-04-20)

According to the volunteers, the norms regarding how to speak about inner-health at SAC are different. In contrast to the society, the children are encouraged to speak about their inner-experiences so that the teachers can give them advices and consul them.

5.2. Lesson structure

According to the volunteers at SAC, an art class sometimes starts with a meditation to calm the children's minds. After that the volunteers introduce the theme for the class as well as an artist. The volunteers speak about the artist background and let the children communicate their own experiences in relation to the artist's life. The artist is also used as an inspiration for the artistic technique that will be used during class. The art assignment is presented and the volunteers also show an example of the different steps connected to the art technique and assignment. Lastly the values are introduced and explained in relation to the theme, artist and art assignment. The volunteers at SAC states that it is important to give the children a context for the assignment and for the children to express their own thoughts as well as breaking down the artistic technique into small steps so that everyone is clear on what to do. During class the children work with the assignment individually or in group and after class the children can decide freely if they want to show, explain and interpret their artwork in front of the class. The individual art making and interpretation is explained as important because it allows the children to express their own perspective. So instead of copying a picture, the children are encouraged to interpret artistic techniques in their own way. In comparison with other subjects in school, such as history or English, the children at SAC can do whatever they want, there is no good or bad, which gives them more freedom. The art class is also free from academic pressure and grades, making SAC a place to feel peace and joy. The volunteers describe themselves not as teachers, but as role models and the children's brothers and sisters.

The difference is when they are giving a certain amount of freedom and when they have no like grades, stress, attached to them there is no stress of scoring and it's not a competition they perform like they have nothing to lose, they just want to enjoy. (Interview, Jash, 2018-04-15)

When the lesson ends, the volunteers at SAC repeat the values and what they have learned during class, before collecting the children's artworks. The artworks are collected throughout the year and then showcased at an art exhibition. The art exhibition is for the public, parents and for the children to show each other what they have created during the past year. Mr. Mishra argues that the art exhibition is an important part of the children's inner development, because when they show their artwork they get proud and feel honor of what they have created, which also make them feel good about themselves.

5.3. Values and fun

The volunteers at SAC express art as a medium for the children to have fun. Since the children come from disadvantaged backgrounds they have a lot of grown-up responsibilities such as cooking, house holding and picking up their siblings from school, which means that they don't have the same time to play and have fun compared to more privileged kids. SAC is therefore explained as an alternative place for them to joke around and express themselves, in contrast to their communities and houses. Aditiya claims that a pre-condition for the children to deal with their emotional life is that they have fun and to catch their interest the teaching needs to be exciting.

Having fun through art is combined with teaching the organization's values. The core values are implemented in every class both verbally and through action, which means that the values are explained and has a movement connected to them. The values are also related to the week's specific theme. Teaching about the Indian festival Holy is for example connected to the value cleanliness and during the art class the teachers have an interactive dialogue with the children concerning the festivals effect on nature and animals.

What do we do when we play holy, do you think that it harms the environment? Do you think it harms animals? Just questions like that. ...They love talking, they love telling us stuff and we love hearing it, so it's very interactive the theory part of the class we ask questions they answer we give them more information, how holy was initiated and like back information. (Interview, Rishita, 2018-04-15)

The value cleanliness is afterwards integrated in the lesson by the teachers who repeatedly encourage the children to clean up after themselves. According to the volunteers at SAC, there is a visible growth and development in the children who start to learn and show the values through their actions. The volunteers describe a change regarding how the children share their emotions, thoughts and art material with each other, how they clean up after themselves and how they act and communicate during the art classes. The values are also explained as an alternative way to teach in contrast to standardized art education in regular schools. By implementing values in the art education, the volunteers states that the children learn more than just artistic techniques, such as drawing or painting, the children also learn how to become better people.

We are making art fun. We are teaching through art, we are having fun through art. We use art as a medium and we are just using that medium to get values in to get fun in to get discipline in to get a better future for the kids and we are using art as a medium for the parents to understand what the kids are trying to say. And that's why I think art class is different, Saturday art class is different because we do so much with just one medium of art and it all come together today in this exhibition. (Interview, Jash, 2018-04-15)

Jash describe the art classes as a stress-free environment where the children have a constant smile on their faces and that art and values help them, it's a toolkit for them to grow.

5.4. Art and emotional energy

The respondents describe art as a way for the children to deal with emotional energy. According to Mr. Mishra, art makes children communicate their desires and dreams and is thus a channel for them to express a creative energy that otherwise would have been sublimated in their minds. But, a pre-condition for the children to be able to use art to express themselves freely and gain emotional matureness, is that they realize how art can help them. Once the children know how to use art to express themselves they can remove creative energy that is trapped within them, which consequently can change their life.

If children have a problem with aggression at SAC, they are asked to show that aggression in their artwork instead of, for example, hitting a wall. Rishita and Aditiya mention an art class inspired by the artist Jackson Pollock. In this class the children were asked to slap the paint on the canvas, and according to the volunteers this technique makes it possible for the children to remove bad energy. The children at SAC also deal with emotions that comes with the artistic process, such as sadness or anger. For example, if they are not happy with the result or they can't

handle the artistic technique they get angry, but with the teachers support and encouragement they learn how to overcome these feelings.

So you know the Pollock, so children, some of them have such bad experience they have a lot of aggression up in them, they are very aggressive in class so we just we want them to show that aggression we want them to show that aggression in the artwork, so you just slap the painting and you just remove everything, bad energy, good energy, you just remove, you just express yourself on the artwork. (Interview, Rishita, 2018-04-15)

To continue, Rishita says that SAC also have an art class where the children connects feelings to colors, which means that every feeling is connected to a certain color. In the artistic process the children are then asked to show how they feel through colors.

5.5. Art as a medium for expression

The volunteers at SAC claim that the children usually don't have a medium to express themselves, or that they aren't allowed to express themselves. Art therefore becomes a way for them to share their thoughts and emotions. Considering the children's difficult backgrounds, art is in other words used as a tool to make difficult experiences have less impact. Being a channel for the children to express themselves, art also becomes a way to for the teachers and the parents to understand what is going on in their minds and their emotional life. By letting the children express themselves freely and allowing them to interpret and talk about their art work, the volunteers can reach the children on a deeper level. Mr. Mishra claims that by observing children's art, people will get more sensitized concerning the children's situation, which gives an opportunity for people to talk about what is happening in the children's minds, because it creates a platform for the teachers, parents and the society to understand them.

Yes, we teach art in certain way to actually understand what is going on in their mind and to improve their mental health. All the drama that they are going through in their childhood or in their community, we try to make the impact of that lesser and just improving their mental health making them happier human beings, nicer human beings, better people. (Interview, Rishita, 2018-04-15)

All the volunteers at SAC agree that there is a need for the children to work with their inner-health. By letting the children express their inner-experiences they learn how to speak about their problems and thereby practice how to handle them. Jash described the children as being more expressive with their art than verbally, which agrees with Mr. Mishra who explains the artistic expression as more powerful than the verbal. Being at SAC, the respondents describe the children progression as becoming more open, eager to learn, happy, playful, focused and interactive.

5.6. Art as a tool to foster better citizens

Besides being an artistic process, art is articulated as a way to mold the children to become better human beings. The volunteers state that they want the children to feel that there is no difference between them and the art teachers. In relation to the children's background, the art classes are explained as a space where it doesn't matter where you come from. Rishita claims that art is a

way to bind people together, which consequently binds the society together. Society is a better place when people respect each other, and to make the society develop people need to show gratitude, love and respect, which is what the volunteers at SAC are teaching the children. Overall, the volunteers explain art not just as a medium for creativity, by integrating values and knowledge about the artists, the festivals and information connected to the assignment such as difficult words or geography, art also becomes a method to teach the children how to be good people, to teach them life lessons and for the children to learn more about the world. The volunteers argue that the pedagogical view on teaching art is different at SAC compared to regular schools, because SAC also works with the children's mental health. The organization's way of teaching art is making the children happier and at the same time SAC is developing qualities which are not only good for the children as individuals but for the society.

These are the children that are going to be our future. So by incorporating this values and life lessons in them we are making them the people that they are going to be. Like we might not, we don't know the impact, it might be small, it might be big but we do play some part in their life because we are there every Saturday, we know that we are molding them, we are part of molding them, into the people that they are going to be. (Interview, Rishita, 2018-04-15)

Further on, Aditiya understands art as a medium for people to become more sensitive. In the same way as a melody can't be explained verbally, so can't art. Art needs to be felt. Hence, by creating a deeper connection with color and shape and viewing it from an emotional perspective one can become a more sensitive person. From this point of view, Aditiya argues that art increases emotional intelligence, which is something both the children and the society need.

6. Discussion

The respondents' experiences of art as an educational tool to improve inner-health are in this chapter discussed in relation to earlier research and Dewey's theoretical framework. The discussion focus on what it is with the artistic process that creates the potential to improve inner-health. The chapter also discuss the connection between artistic freedom and democratic values, as well as the role of the art teacher. Finally, my personal reflection and further research are presented.

6.1. Art, reflection and emotional aims

When analyzing the respondent's experiences of art as a tool to deal with inner-health, they explain art education primarily as a fun, joyful, safe, peaceful, stress-free place where children can just be themselves, without difficulties or responsibilities. From this perspective, it possible to question if art is the significant tool when working with the children's inner-health, or is it the context, interaction and environment that help the children. In relation to earlier research (Kim, Wee & Gilbert, 2017; Knight, 2014), and SAC, art is explained as an alternative way of communication that goes beyond words and as a medium that can transcend beyond subjective boundaries. This suggest that art can be understood as a tool among others, but with benefits that separate the practice from other forms of communication.

The volunteers at SAC as well as, Kim, Wee and Gilbert (2017) and Dorr (2007), explain the act of doing art as something that in itself help people deal with inner-health. The artistic components such as working innovative, creatively, discovering or having artistic struggles etc., are described not only as a tool to deal with inner-health, but a process where the *dealing* with inner-health is a natural outcome (Kim, Wee & Gilbert, 2017; Dorr, 2007). At SAC, the artistic process is experienced as a method to release emotional energy. In assignments, such as connecting emotions with colors or painting as Jackson Pollock, the children are asked to show their emotions in their artwork and in that way communicate or remove emotional energy. Aditiya and Rishita argues that is better to paint than to get angry and hit a wall, hence art is explained as a more peaceful way of ventilating thoughts and feelings. Dorr (2007) describe the artistic process in a similar way, arguing that art can communicate emotions and thoughts that the students otherwise would keep inside or act out in an unhealthy manner.

In contrast to the view that the artistic process in itself improve inner-health, Dewey (2005) states that thoughts and emotions need to be intellectually reflected on to become a tool for health improvement. In agreement with Dewey (2005), earlier research such as Metzger, (2010), Rubin (2010), Marshall-Tierne (2010) and, Engel (1996) explain reflection, exploring and dialogue as necessary components during the art process, because they help people process thoughts and emotions as well as make the art process meaningful. Their perspective also suggests that art, as a resource to deal with inner-health, is not an individual act but an interaction. The art teacher's role is thereby not just about providing art assignments that can help students release emotional energy, the art teacher should also teach students how to use reflection to be able to understand their own emotional development, while being creative.

In relation to the volunteers' experience of SAC, art education can also be understood as having different emotional aims. The volunteers explain the art teaching as having an emotional

aim, they want the kids to have fun and “just be kids”. They describe SAC as an emotional space, a place where the children can feel safe, stress-free and peaceful. They also describe the art education as intentionally having an emotional input as well as outcome, the children are learning different values (input) to become more sensitive and better beings (outcome). Moreover, Kim, Wee and Gilbert (2017) and Dorr (2007) explain self-esteem as an emotional goal that pervades the students’ art process, and furthermore, both SAC, Kim, Wee and Gilbert (2017), Dorr (2007) and Marshall-Tierne (2010) emphasize that the teacher should give positive reinforcement and emotional support. The volunteers and earlier research thereby imply that, except from the artistic process, and except from reflecting about the artistic process, art education might also need an emotional aim for it to improve inner-health.

Dewey (2015; 2005), earlier research and the respondents, thus imply three different and co-related views regarding how to conduct art education for it to become a tool for inner-health. The first perspective is that the artistic process, in itself, is a tool for inner-health because the components in the artistic act deals with emotional energy. The second perspective is that reflection needs to be applied for the artistic process to become a tool for inner-health and that an interactive dialogue with the art teacher helps students know how, or finally, the artistic process needs an emotional aim to encourage the process of emotional development. When viewing earlier research, it is thereby possible to once again examine how the research presented work with art and inner-health. For example, the studies by Kim, Wee, Gilbert (2017) and Dorr (2007) focus more on emotional support than intellectually reflecting about the student’s thoughts and emotions. While, studies by Marshall-Tierne (2010) and Rubin (2010) highlight reflection and therapeutic understanding, but don’t work towards specific emotional aims. This study won’t be able to tell if one way is better than the other, but will instead suggest that art teachers combine both the act of creating, reflection and emotional aims in their teaching.

6.2. Freedom, growth and society

In relation to Dewey’s (2015), the artistic process should be characterized by individual freedom, the reflection should focus on thoughts and emotions and lastly the emotional aims can be understood as democratic values.

According to the volunteers at SAC, and earlier research (Kim, Wee & Gilbert, 2017; Drummond, 2006), a pre-condition for art to become a process to improve inner-health, is freedom. For example, by letting the students freely express thoughts and feelings and freely handle the artistic material, their artwork becomes a tool for students to communicate and share their inner-experiences. The teacher should also teach art through open-ended assignments and questions to encourage the students own expression. Moreover, the volunteers and earlier research (Kim, Wee & Gilbert, 2017; Dorr, 2007; Drummond, 2006) explain the environment as free from academic pressure, grades and formed to encourage autonomy. In agreement with Dewey (2015), art education can be described as supporting the students natural urge to find inner-balance and peace.

Dewey (2015) claims that freedom is connected to the artistic process, but the education’s social and environmental context should be controlled by democratic values. Instead of having strict physical and social control over students, Dewey describe democratic values as a key to both frame the rules conducted at schools as well as a way to make students grow in line with a

democratic society (Dewey, 2015). In agreement with Dewey (2015), both the volunteers at SAC and Gude (2012) argue that values should be integrated in the education for the students to create democratic abilities. So, instead of just learning democratic values, the students should learn how to act democratic (Gude, 2012). Both Gude (2012) and Adams (2013) also describes democratic values as abilities that come with the practice of art, if the artistic practice is shaped by, for example, social relations, cooperation and critical thinking. This view agrees with Metzger (2010) who indicates that artistic freedom should not be controlled by democratic aims, but be viewed with democratic qualities.

When interpreting the connection between artistic freedom and democratic values, the free artistic process can be understood as a method to help students work with inner-experiences. And even though Gude (2012), Adams (2013) and Metzger (2010) study art in relation to democracy, and not inner-health, their view on democratic values can be viewed as an emotional map or abilities that guide and help students when dealing with outer-experience, such as interaction with the society.

Considering that the discussion so far has viewed different perspectives on how art education can be conducted to benefit inner-health, I also want to address the role of the art teacher. Dewey (2015), the volunteers at SAC and earlier research indicate that art teachers should know how to support artistic freedom for it to become a tool for inner-health and also know how to work with values so that they shape the students, but don't control their art making (Adams, 2013; Gude, 2012; Metzger, 2010). Further on, earlier research and the volunteers at SAC claim that art teachers should know how art can be used as an alternative way of communication (Knight, 2014; Dorr, 2007), be able to ask certain questions to promote emotional and intellectual reflection (Engel, 1996), shape the environment to become joyful, peaceful and support autonomy and creativity (Kim, Wee & Gilbert, 2017), art teachers should work with emotional understanding (McIntosh, 2015; Spendlove, 2007) and lastly be able to give emotional support and positive reinforcement (Kim, Wee & Gilbert, 2017; Dorr, 2007). Since this is a lot things for art teachers to comprehend, it is relevant to question if earlier research and SAC take for granted that art teachers' have pre-knowledge about inner-health, emotional development and values, or maybe it is implied that art teachers don't need to have any pre-knowledge?

The volunteers at SAC are not therapists and they are not described as having any pre-understanding about how to work with inner-health, they don't even need a background in art (although they follow a pre-made lesson-plan). Still, their work is explained as beneficial and the children are experienced as emotionally developing. The volunteers at SAC therefore works as an example of art educators that use art to improve inner-health without having any pre-knowledge of emotional development or therapeutic practice.

6.3. Personal reflection

Using India as a cultural context when conducting this study, I now want to draw on my experiences to discuss how art educators in Sweden can work with art to improve student health. When comparing Swedish art education with SAC and an Indian context, it is important to remember that SAC's art education and Swedish art education have different obligations regarding how to teach art and different views on why art should be taught. To begin with, the

Indian traditional view on health focus on a holistic, emotional and mental development of people (Dalal, 2016), which also can be seen at SAC who strives to create a fun, happy, peaceful place with the aim to teach life skills and values within art education. In contrast, Sweden can be understood as having a more pragmatic view on inner-health. Teachers should create an environment that prevents bad health by limiting causes for emotional or mental illness. Thus, Swedish education emphasize that teachers should work to create a positive school environment and encourage positive social relations and participation, instead of working with students' inner-experiences (Skolverket, 2018). Considering that the volunteers at SAC, the traditional Indian health belief systems, as well as earlier research describe multiple benefits when working with inner-experiences, Swedish education should maybe widen the view on what student health means and include work regarding emotional and mental understanding.

Moreover, I argue that there is a discrepancy between the art curriculum and the regulatory documents for student health. The regulatory documents describe how teachers should work with student health in school (Skolverket, 2018) and the art curriculum describes how art teacher should work with art (Skolverket, 2011), but the documents do not imply that art teachers should use art to work with student health. In relation to how art education has been viewed historically and how art is viewed today, the potential to use art as tool to improve student health is instead close to invisible (except from the art psychological phase). In contrast, SAC's curriculum clearly shows how the organization use art to improve health among their students, how they integrate values in the art education and how the artistic process is valuable for the students psychological and educational development (Saturday Art Class, 2017b). Having SAC's curriculum in mind and the health benefits described by earlier research in relation to the artistic process, there is a visible lack of information (and maybe knowledge) about the artistic health benefits both in Swedish research and within Swedish schools.

6.4. Further research

SRBt (Englund, 2015) and AATA (Kaiser & Deaver, 2013) state that art as a therapeutic tool is a field that still needs more research and Spendlove (2007) and McIntosh (2015) argues for the importance of emotional health within education and that this area is not equally acknowledged in comparison with scientific subjects. To continue, there is a lack of Swedish research regarding art as a tool to improve inner-health, that is not connected to art therapy. Further research is in other words needed to examine the importance of inner-health and how art can help provide health benefits within contexts such as art education. Hence, this study can contribute to both Indian, as well as Swedish, schools and organizations regarding how to work with art to gain health-improvement.

In relation to this study, it would also be interesting to investigate how art teachers can create artistic experience for students to get emotionally, artistically and intellectually engaged. It would, in other words, be interesting to continue research about how art teachers can use their own artistic talent to create artistic experiences in the class room that can inspire the students own emotional and artistic process as well as inspire discussions about values. That sort of research would also go well in hand with Dewey's (2005) theory regarding the development of an aesthetic experience.

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Appendix 1.

Art

What is your artistic background?
What is your relation to art? What does art mean to you?
How would you describe an artistic process?
How would you describe an artistic experience?
What is the (different) view(s) on art in Mumbai?
What is the view on art within the organization?
How is art viewed within the educational system?

Art and education

How do you work as an art teacher?
What sorts of lessons do you have (examples from project)?
What is your pedagogical view on teaching art? (ideology, responsibilities, inspiration)
Why do you teach art?
What do you want to teach children by working with art?
Do you think teaching art help the children? Why?
Do you think teaching art helps the society? Why?
How would you explain a better society?

Artistic affects

How do you experience that art affects the children?
Do you experience that art is beneficial for the children's health? How?
-Is art education always beneficial for the children's health or do you have to teach it in a certain way? How do you think teachers should pursue their education for it to be beneficial for the children's health? Do you teach art with the aim to help children from a health perspective?

Do you think art can be a tool to communicate inner experiences (emotions and thoughts)? What kind of inner-experiences? Why and How?

Do you experience that the artistic process help children deal with their inner experiences? Why and How?

Do you believe that there is a need for the children to communicate and deal with their inner experiences? Why?

Mumbai and inner experiences

Are there any norms considering how to speak about emotions in Mumbai?

How do you work with inner experiences in Mumbai? Is art a normal tool for working with health?

- Who do you speak to, when and where?

Do you think that people in Mumbai have a need to communicate their inner-experiences?
Is there anything that is tabu to talk about? In what situations?

How do you believe that the Indian norms of talking about inner experience affect the children? What different kind of emotions do you experience that the children are dealing with in relation to their background?