Exploring the Long-Term Impacts of Out-of-School Arts Participation Among Marginalized Youth

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Abstract: The benefit of participating in Out-of-School Time (OST) arts programs has been widely documented in studies that often reflect impact over short timeframes. Youth arts organisations often bear extraordinary claims about the impact of programs, and the value they hold especially in the lives of those who face difficult social circumstances. This paper reports the findings of a systematic review examining the long-term impacts of participating in arts-based OST programs with a particular focus on the experiences of marginalized youth. It provides a nuanced account of the field from the viewpoint of various research disciplines and develops an understanding of how researchers and/or program evaluators approach the challenges of long-term data collection in the face of time and resource constraint. Our review provides an overview of the way arts participation is measured and the types of subjective impacts that emerge as a result. Consequently, we develop a more comprehensive understanding of what constitutes arts education and learning in contemporary life, and a record of the types of impacts that generate change from a long-term perspective.

Keywords: Arts education, out-of-school time learning, youth programs, marginalized youth, long-term impact

Introduction

Out-of-School Time (OST) arts programs have existed for at least 50 years. They typically serve young people from poor(er) and socially marginalized communities, offer education in a diverse range of arts disciplines after school, at weekends and/or during school holidays, and are funded usually outside of mainstream education (Durlak et al., 2010; Halpern, 2002; Malone, 2018). Some young people from more affluent backgrounds access private arts provision often in the form of one-to-one teaching (e. g., musical instruments) but also group classes in dance or theatre for example. This review seeks to determine the degree to which OST youth arts programs, particularly those that cater to marginalized youth sustain impact

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over time. We focus on marginalized youth because OST youth arts programs tend to target marginalized youth, and so programs take the form of intervention or remediation programs structured around engaging young people in arts practices. It is grounded in the view that any analysis of the long-term impact of programs that provide access to the arts to low-income families broadens a vision of education research and can therefore expand the notion of what are commonly recognised as learning or educational outcomes.

In general, societies appear to value arts participation and the positive role it plays in the lives of young people. Arts programs in communities across the globe offer opportunities for children and youth to learn new skills, expand opportunities and develop a sense of self, wellbeing and belonging. Weitz (1996) argues that the most distinguishing aspect of youth arts programs is their ability to take advantage of the capacity of the arts and the humanities to engage students, and that this engagement imparts new skills and encourages new perspectives that begin to transform the lives of at-risk children and youth (Weitz, 1996). Mansour et. al., (2018) report that socially excluded youth who participate in community arts programs feel happier and more confident, reducing feelings of isolation. They argue that both receptive (attendance) and active arts participation (involvement) are related to mental health and life satisfaction; however, it is active arts participation that is the stronger predictor of these outcomes. Catterall (2009) argues that participating in arts-based activity does not only lead to academic success and the development of prosocial behaviours but also increased community involvement, volunteerism, and political participation. Although he finds that young people from under-resourced communities benefit significantly by participating in arts-rich schools seen by improvements in college attendance, grades, employment, and level of higher education, he goes on to also argue that arts participation encourages some young people to form and hold community and political values as well. Henderson, Biscocho, & Gerstein (2016) and Robinson, Paraskevopoulou, & Hollingworth (2019) [discussed below] demonstrate the way in which socio-political consciousness is developed through OST youth arts participation, with the arts being a mechanism by which to feel empowered and to communicate political thoughts and actions.

We examine existing research on youth arts participation for evidence of impact and the way arts education is experienced over the long-term. Consequently, we develop a more comprehensive understanding of what constitutes the long-term impact of education and learning in contemporary life and the role of the arts both to achieve this understanding and to act simultaneously as a domain for the exercise of such impact. We thus begin by asking the following two questions:

1. In what ways has the long-term impact of youth arts participation been measured in the articles reviewed, and how does the impact of participation emerge in the lives of marginalized youth?
2. What claims are made for the long-term value of such provision?

We define ***long-term*** as at least two years beyond participation in youth arts programs; ***impact*** as measurable social, cultural, educational and psychological change (Rapp-Paglicci, Ersing, & Rowe, 2006). We further specify that impact can take the form as either ***intrinsic*** such as that which is inherent in arts experiences or ***instrumental*** such as cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioural, health, economic or education outcomes (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras, & Brooks, 2001, p. xi). ***Out-of-School Time youth arts programs*** is defined as arts participation in activities such as (dance, drama, music production, poetry/spoken word, visual arts) that

occurs outside formal school settings (Rapp-Paglicci, Ersing, & Rowe, 2006). ***Marginalized youth*** are defined as young people that experience or have experienced discrimination and structural disadvantage (Ngo, Lewis, & Maloney Leaf, 2017) predominantly in the form of class, race, gender and sexual inequality. Specifically the groups represented in the literature included Black, Indigenous and people of colour (BIPOC) communities (Betts, 2006; Erstad & Silseth, 2019) low-income families (O'Donnell & Kirkner, 2016; Wright, Alaggia, & Krygsman, 2014) and/or young people "at risk" of or experiencing criminality (Rapp-Paglicci, Ersing, & Rowe, 2006) and/or social injustice (Fauth, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007; Nielsen & Sørensen, 2019).

McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras, and Brooks, (2001) state that very few good evaluations of OST arts programs exist and, very few if any, are longitudinal in scope. They argue that where some evaluation of arts programs exists, the focus tends to be on the structural features and/or process features of programs, with a particularly strong focus on relationships and social skills (McArthur & Law, 1996). This review provides insight into the way the field of youth arts research has in some ways redressed this bias. We synthesise the findings of existing OST arts program research to assert that impact is indeed long-term, instrumental and/or intrinsic, and indicative of change through social, cultural, educational, and psychological outcomes.

Conducting long-term research is challenging for researchers as well as organisations. Sample attrition and a loss of connection with program alumni impacts data collection as does funding (Rapp-Paglicci, Ersing, & Rowe, 2006). Youth arts organizations are under pressure to evidence performance and lasting impact in order to: 1) refine programming and services so that the quality of provision meets the needs of their communities; 2) bring attention to the valuable role they play in the lives of those they engage as well as to encourage those they do not; and 3) support ongoing applications for funding (Poyntz, Sefton-Green, & Fitzsimmons Frey, 2023).We consider this review as a step toward defining the field of OST youth arts education and promoting the benefits of participation in OST youth arts programs in ways that go beyond the immediacy of short term findings.

Method

Our literature search began in October 2020 when we reviewed several databases including Academic Search Complete, Scopus and Web of Science, Humanities source, SocINDEX, SocWork abstracts, ERIC, and Education source for peer-reviewed academic journal articles as well as the US AEP (Arts Ed Partnership) database. We chose these databases because they contain research into the impact of education and learning in OST youth arts programs from various disciplinary perspectives such as health, psychology, education, and social work. We applied the following key word and Boolean phrase searches to these databases.

Database	Keyword searches and Boolean operators
Academic Search Complete, Scopus, Web of Science	((long term "effects" OR outcomes OR impacts) AND (youth OR young people) AND (disadvantage)) AND (arts OR arts programs OR community programs)

Database	Keyword searches and Boolean operators
	(longitudinal OR qualitative OR narrative OR life history) AND (community OR non-formal OR youth (programs)) AND (“effects” OR outcomes))
	(qualitative OR narrative) AND (“long term “effects””) AND youth
	((“life history” OR narrative) AND (youth programs OR community programs)) AND (“effects” OR impact))) AND qualitative)
All of the above plus Humanities Source, SocINDEX, SocWork abstracts	“long-term “effects” of arts programs“
	(((“long term”) AND (“effects”) AND “community arts programs”)) OR “youth programs”))
	((community arts AND (disadvantage)) AND (youth programs)))
	(“longitudinal AND/OR “effects””) AND community arts OR programs) AND youth AND marginalization
	(impact) AND OST) and arts programs))
	((life course) AND ((youth) AND (“effects” OR impact))
	((retrospective longitudinal) AND ((“arts participation”)) AND (“at-risk youth”)))
	((“effects”) AND (OST OR after-school OR non-formal)) AND (youth programs))
	youth+“long term “effects”“+programs or services or interventions
ERIC and Education Source	(learning) AND (youth development) and (longitudinal)
	((“long term “effects””) AND (“out-of-school time”) AND learning)) OR “non-formal learning”))
Google Scholar	“long-term “effects”” AND “non-formal learning”

A search of the literature published between 1995 and 2021 yielded a total of 683 articles. We focused on articles published after 1995 as this time marks an increase in academic focus on OST programs as fields of research and the growth of research into the “creative economy” propelled by Florida’s (2002) work on the ‘creative class’. It also marks a time of increased interest in positive youth development as is seen in the work of Brice Heath and McLaughlin (1994).

The titles and abstracts of the 683 articles were screened according to a list of inclusion and exclusion criteria. We examined titles and abstracts for any references to OST arts programs, long-term impact and/or longitudinal evaluation. At the cessation of the title and

abstract screening only 298 articles remained for full-text review screening. These articles were measured against the following inclusion and exclusion criteria: the degree to which arts practice was the focus of program design; the timeframe within which data was collected beyond participation but not inclusive of participation (two years); and the target population of the program, namely marginalized youth aged between 9–25 years. Of the 298 articles, 81 were excluded under the premise of 'wrong focus' meaning arts education was not the sole focus of the study; 37 were excluded on the grounds of 'wrong study design' which focused on policy impact as opposed to subjective change or impact; 35 were excluded because of 'wrong time scale' meaning data was collected in two years or less, and 34 were excluded for presenting 'insufficient empirical data' including a heavy reliance on anecdotal evidence or a low level of empirical evidence. 11 were handbooks or text books with a focus on theory; 7 were book chapters and so provided insufficient information about the context and method of the research, and 11 were reports that featured secondary sources of research only. 23 presented evidence of "cultural" program participation with only a low level of arts participation embedded within program delivery. 5 reported on adult populations (above 25 years) and 19 on non-marginalized populations, and 23 did not focus primarily on OST youth arts settings so were excluded under the premise of "wrong setting". At the conclusion of this process, only 11 studies remained.

Results

The eleven articles in this review are categorized under four themes in the following proportion: three articles discuss academic and/or employment outcomes (Betts, 2006; Erstad & Silseth, 2019; O'Donnell & Kirkner, 2016); one article discusses concepts of self and identity (Nielsen & Sørensen, 2019); three articles discuss increased socio-political consciousness and civic engagement (Henderson, Biscocho, & Gerstein, 2016; Robinson, Paraskevopoulou, & Hollingworth, 2019; Ngo et al., 2017); and finally, four articles focus on improved sense of wellbeing and behavior (Fauth, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007; Spiegel et al., 2019; Wang, Mak, & Fancourt, 2020; Wright, Alaggia, & Krygsman, 2014). Below is a summary of the articles discussed in detail in the next section. The work of Soep (2002), DeLuca, Clampet-Lundquist, & Edin (2016) and Macleod (2009) will be used to theorize or further support the findings of studies under review.

Author/s	Title	Target population	Timeframe	Art focus
Betts, 2006	Multimedia Arts Learning in an Activity System: New Literacies for At-Risk Children	Low-income	Six years	Digital media, multimedia, and design
Erstad and Silseth, 2019	Futuremaking and digital engagement: from everyday inter-	Not focused on minoritized grouping but sample is	Mediated future projections of self through creative expression	Creative activities involving new technology: gaming, k-

Author/s	Title	Target population	Timeframe	Art focus
	ests to educational trajectories	racially and ethnically diverse		pop, and Lego robotics
Fauth et al., 2007	Does the neighborhood context alter the link between youth's after-school time activities and developmental outcomes	Low-SES primarily White, high-SES primarily Latino, and high-SES Latino/Black neighborhoods	6 years	Performing arts including cheerleading and also band, theatre, drama, dance, choir, visual art
Henderson et al., 2016	Community Youth Engagement in East Palo Alto: A Study of the Youth Arts and Music Center Initiative	Latinx and Black youth from low-income families	Unclear – sources span 5 years	Filmmaking, music and writing
Nielsen and Sørensen, 2019	Youth on the edge of society and their participation in community art projects	Experiences of abuse, homelessness, criminal activity, early school leaving, substance abuse, social exclusion, mental illness, refugees	4.8 years captured through retrospective accounts and follow up interviews	Music, visual arts, photography, theatre
Ngo et al., 2017	Fostering Socio-political Consciousness With Minoritized Youth: Insights From Community-Based Arts Programs	Minoritization based on race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, and dis/ability, among other dimensions	Review of programs spanning 10 years	Literary arts, theatre arts, and digital media arts
O'Donnell & Kirkner, 2016	Helping Low-Income Urban Youth Make the Transition to Early Adulthood: A Retrospective Study of the YMCA Youth Institute	Low-income	Variable – but some interviewees were ten years post-participation using life history method	Digital media and web design, and music
Robinson et al., 2019	Developing 'active citizens': Arts Award, creativity and impact	A range of ethnic backgrounds but not explicitly minoritized youth	3 years	Visual arts, music, dance and theatre, hip hop, digital art and/or games design

Author/s	Title	Target population	Timeframe	Art focus
Spiegel et al., 2019	Social transformation, collective health and community-based arts: 'Buen Vivir' and Ecuador's social circus programme	Street and other minoritized groups	5 years	Circus arts
Wang et al., 2020	Arts, mental distress, mental health functioning & life satisfaction: fixed-"effects"s analyses of a nationally-representative panel study	Poor mental health and distress, and poor life satisfaction	5 years	Dance, singing and playing and writing music and poetry, theatre and drama, carnival/street arts, visual art, photography, filmmaking as animation and digital media, craft
Wright et al., 2014	Five-Year Follow-Up Study of the Qualitative Experiences of Youth in an Afterschool Arts Program in Low-Income Communities	Low-income communities, multicultural communities, and Aboriginal/native Canadian communities	5 years	Theatre but also visual arts (mask making, set design) and media arts (digital filming and editing)

Findings

Academic and/or Employment Outcomes

Academic and employment outcomes are frequently cited measures of success. They represent tangible, instrumental change measured by the formation of aspiration, the acquisition of a job or the (re)engagement of people in education or further study. They are critical measures of what are often deemed successful youth transitions (DeLuca, Clampet-Lundquist, & Edin, 2016; O'Donnell & Kirkner, 2016) and are instrumental to providing young people with a sense of agency over their lives (MacLeod, 2009). Although impact within these domains often aligns with formal schooling measures (see Betts, 2006 below), Soep (2002) argues that the learning experienced within community arts settings is transferable: 'Learning thrives in these places; accountability is mutual, interdisciplinary practice is mandatory, and high stakes are interactively sustained' (Soep, 2002, p. 12). Arts learning provides a safe space for young people to take risks and push boundaries and allows researchers to delve deep into what are deemed valid, appropriate, and useful educational experiences.

O'Donnell and Kirkner (2016) identified employment and academic outcomes in their study of the US-based YMCA of Greater Long Beach Youth Institute, an OST program aimed at engaging vulnerable youth from low-income families. Youth participated in two phases of

the program: an eight-week summer program followed by a yearlong academic support program and then opportunities to attend adult retreats, holiday events or take on paid staff positions at some point in their lives. The sample consisted of alumni that were asked to reflect on their experiences with some participant's reflection covering ten years. The first week of the summer program involved attending a wilderness retreat whilst the remaining seven were dedicated to learning technology skills in the form of graphic design, media, web design, video editing and music creation.

The authors found that participation positively influenced participant's life choices and educational and occupational trajectories. For example, those who participated in the program went on to college or built a career from the skills they learnt; gained support in the form of encouragement and life skills; became more resilient which in turn led to them to pursue a particular college or career pathways (2016, p. 21–23). The degree of impact reported in this article ranges from broad life benefits such as career and educational achievements to specific tangible skills such as technological and media skills in animation to soft skills such as communication, leadership, conflict resolution and creative thinking skills. Some participants reported increases in resilience because of participating in the program whilst others reported being able to persevere and adapt to change in the face of adversity. Some examples include the ability to adapt when "thrown into situations outside our comfort zones", the courage to "try different things and to make mistakes" and the "program taught me to not give up" (O'Donnell & Kirkner, 2006, p. 22). The role technology and creativity play in program design is also a theme in the next two articles (Betts, 2006; Erstad & Silseth, 2019), both of which reflect nuanced understandings of what constitutes arts-based learning and practice as well as impact.

Betts (2006) examines the impact of the Multimedia Arts Education Program (MAEP), a US federally sponsored program aimed at developing job skills, art technology skills and multimedia literacy in low-income youth. The MAEP settings brought together subjects, objects and/or goals, tools, and roles, which through interaction lead to a series of intended and unintended outcomes mediated by computers, computer programs, art supplies, and the language and discourse of aesthetics and art technology. Codes of conduct, conventions and social expectations and rules as well as the division of labour contribute to the culture of the program. "All of these things" the authors argue, "interact and change over time" (Betts, 2006, p. 4), and this process of the subject acting on object and vice versa via a process of mediation through computers, makes an individual's history, context, and agency visible.

Betts' (2006) six-year study took place between 1996 and 2002, with the first stage of research occurring in the first eighteen months and second occurring when students exited the program. The on-site research occurred over five semesters or two and half years with the off-site occurring four years later when students had transitioned into further education or work. The study set out to measure how participation in an arts technology program impacts perceived *self-efficacy*, that is a person's judgment about their ability to succeed, attitudes toward school, work, art, community, collaboration and communication, and literacy skills, and art experiences. The study found that students felt more capable, confident, and willing to share ideas and demonstrate skills and literacies both within the program and at home. Whilst their attitudes remained stable with a slight increase in data that correlates job success with hard work, outcomes in reading and writing varied. New literacy skills were also developed such as the ability to use apps and computers to create and design objects (calendars, booklets, film animation and electronic portfolios). The impact of participation became evident in the ease

with which program graduates could discuss multimedia concepts and skills beyond their involvement in the program. Impact was measured through an analysis of post-school transitions by inquiring about success in high school including graduation, and the effect of the program on extended families, and on college and career choices. The research participants were given a computer to take home on completion of the program, which meant that students could transfer and demonstrate knowledge within family systems.

Erstad and Silseth (2019) examine the impact of participating in creative activities including new technology: gaming, k-pop, and Lego robotics. This study presented empirical data from a larger ethnography conducted in Oslo with young people from diverse ethnic backgrounds. The participants resided in a village in Oslo, an industrial and working class community with one of the largest migrant populations in Norway, encompassing a diversity of origins and languages. The focus of the study was to show how ethnically diverse young people take advantage of digital technologies in pursuit of learning based on interests developed outside of school. Specifically, the research explored how digital technologies create new possibilities for "futuremaking" or 'a combination of past, present, and future orientations of the self, especially as expressed in times of transition from one level of schooling to the next or during life changes' (2019, p. 311). Methods used to collect data included observations/field notes, interviews, and data gathered by the participants themselves. Two aspects of "futuremaking" featured in this article are "choice" and "trajectory"; the former defined as a series of decisions that foreclose or open up possible narratives about the future, and the latter as the pathways and resources used in various situations by an individual in an effort to move and progress through time (2019, p. 312). The term "learning lives" is used to describe a process of identity formation and negotiation that lies as the heart of what it means to be a "learner" in both contemporary society and within multiple life situations and settings. It describes what it means for young people to be "in motion across contexts of learning and how they connect different domains of knowledge in their emergent practices of social and mediated learning and living" (2019, p. 312). This term also describes processes of identity formation and negotiation that occur when communities of learners come together to create or produce artifacts, and the degree to which agency and reflexivity shape representations of self. The next article and section focus on the types of practices and conditions that support identity formation.

Concepts of Self and Identity as Outcomes

Nielsen and Sørensen (2019) conducted a two-year qualitative study of "youth on the edge" of society (experiences of abuse, homelessness, criminal activity, early school leaving, substance abuse, social exclusion, mental illness, refugees) participating in five different community art projects (music, visual arts, photography, theatre) in different regions of Denmark. The research involved three phases of data collection: life story interviews with people that participated in the program for at least four years before the interviews took place; field observations that examined patterns in participation followed by more semi-structured interviews with a focus on participants art work, and follow up interviews seven to eight months later, which involved a discussion about participant artwork thus using the production of art as a mechanism for dialogue. The authors identified six conditions for effective participation including "little publics" or the public exhibition of work; "rituals, routines and rules" such as

drinking tea and discussing current art projects; "community" such as relationships between themselves and with other professional artists; "shaping" or exploring the way emotion and a sense of self can shape one's approach to practice and/or the material form of the art work being created; "experimental approaches" or the ability to make mistakes and try new techniques, and "open-ended works" or the way artworks are subject to change or exist in a state of flux.

The impact of these conditions include development of self-understanding, identity, and future projection. 'Little publics' for example saw participants overcoming prejudices or limiting conceptions of self thus giving space or creating opportunity for new futures to appear much like the findings of Erstad and Silseth (2019). Rituals, routines, and rules created a sense of predictability and a framework for structuring participation – a collective frame through which artistic and community participation is contained and ordered yet pliable enough to enable the artistic process to occur. "Community" generated inspiration, support and mutual interest and a sense of belonging and connection between community members – conditions created through talking with each other, personal messaging, and humour (2019, pp. 206–208). These findings are also reflected in several other articles reviewed in this paper such those by Fauth, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn (2007), Spiegel et al., (2019), Wang, Mak, & Fancourt (2020), and Wright, Alaggia, & Krygsman (2014) and illustrate the degree to which conceptions of self and identity in relation to time are important to studies of youth arts participation.

This article clearly identifies the capacity of the arts and OST youth arts programming to achieve intrinsic but also instrumental impact through art. "Shaping" for example, provided participants with an opportunity to find or work through new ways of being and performing artistic identities through arts practices. This is particularly relevant for marginalized youth as many have experienced a trajectory of failures in the traditional schooling system. The "experimental" approach to art creation saw participants feel safe to try new things, to create new objects and to make mistakes or fail and thus to become reflexive, problem-solving individuals (cf Soep, 2022) above). The third is the experience of "open-endedness" whereby artwork, once complete, is a mechanism for future artworks and future manifestations of self and expression through art, "the flux of what is yet to come" (2019, p. 210). All these conditions, the authors argue, make way for a new sense of self deriving from "being someone in the context of something" (2019, p. 211), and that supports them to leverage opportunity when it arises, the possibility of "better beginnings" as one young participant put it, whether it be normalized trajectories or new orientations of self.

The articles presented thus far collectively present an understanding of how time and impact is measured through the lens of youth arts participation from various disciplinary perspectives. They also present a picture of the types of arts programs that exist, and the way that arts and technology intersect to create a context for the developing transferable knowledge and skills to prepare people for adult life such as further education and employment. The next section discusses articles and research that seek to capture the impact of OST arts programs within socio-political frameworks, where young people attempt to become agents by advocating for others and their communities.

Increased Socio-political Consciousness and Civic Engagement

Henderson, Biscocho, & Gerstein (2016) and Robinson, Paraskevopoulou, & Hollingworth (2019) argue that participation in community-based arts programming improves and/or increases young people's socio-political consciousness and civic engagement over time. While the scope of what constitutes a social and political consciousness varies by study and theoretical orientation, the studies in this sub-set argue that participating in creative activities such as those within community-based arts programs leads young people to develop a sense of purpose and internalize the confidence to successfully examine and act upon the world around them. The two articles discussed in this section align because of their argument that OST youth arts program participation increases young people's likelihood of becoming informed and active lifelong members of their communities.

Henderson, Biscocho, & Gerstein's (2016) qualitative study of youth's participation in a community-based arts centre in East Palo Alto, California, revealed the program's impact on increasing participants' active involvement in civic life, post-program, with the ultimate impact of promoting community change. The report used a case study approach to better understand if and how the Youth Arts and Music Center was facilitating the conditions for predominantly Latinx and Black youth from low-income families to meaningfully engage in their communities. These sources span from 2010 to 2015 thus providing an assessment of program impact over a five-year time period and giving insight into how participating in the arts, specifically filmmaking, music and writing influence people's lives. The study's analysis, which relies predominantly on youth interviews and focus groups that are curated into case studies, concludes that youth's participation in the program enables a range of positive youth development outcomes, including routine opportunities for youth to exercise voice and leadership, and ultimately to support youth to adult civic engagement over time.

Similarly, Robinson, Paraskevopoulou, & Hollingworth's (2019) study argues a primary outcome of youth's participation in the arts is "agency and active citizenship." Using a subset of data collected from a larger British study exploring links between the impacts of Arts Award[1] (visual arts, music, dance, theatre) and young people's (from a range of ethnic backgrounds – BIPOC, Eastern European, South Asian and mixed heritage) paths to education and employment, Robinson's analysis shows "how improvements in soft skills can give young people opportunities for agency, which shape progression pathways leading to measurable change" (2019, p. 1203) in the areas of one's ability to know the world around them, and contribute to it in meaningful ways. The two studies here focused on the impact that OST arts programs have on the individual participant as an actor in their community(ies)– that is, how participation promotes the development of social and political consciousness within young people over time, and in some cases how that lends itself to increased community or civic engagement.

1 "Arts Award is a suite of unique qualifications for young people aged up to 25, managed by Trinity College London in association with Arts Council England. The awards support young people to grow as artists and arts leaders: they aim to develop arts knowledge and understanding, foster creativity and build skills in communication, planning and review" (Robinson et al., 2019, p. 1216).

Improved Sense of Wellbeing and Behaviour

Fauth, Roth, and Brooks-Gunn (2007), Wang, Mak, and Fancourt (2020), Spiegel et al., (2019), and Wright, Alaggia, and Krygsman (2014) detail the impact of community-based arts program participation on socioemotional characteristics—such as individuals' mental well-being and functions, as well as behaviours among their peers. These four articles are categorized together here because their impact reflects a variety of mental health and externalized behavioural factors. These programs are often presented as an intervention through which youth in lower income communities occupy their after-school hours—during which they are otherwise possibly susceptible to risky behaviour, a sentiment long echoed by critical youth development scholars (e. g., Halpern, 2002; Kwon, 2013).

Fauth, Roth, and Brooks-Gunn (2007) examine the impact of afterschool time activity participation on various "developmental" outcomes including "anxiety/depression, delinquency, and substance abuse" (p. 760). Using longitudinal multilevel analysis on a set of survey data from youth of diverse backgrounds from 80 Chicago neighbourhoods, the authors examine varying types of programs (sports, arts, community-based clubs) and find varying relationships amongst participation in those clubs and their outcomes of interest. Of relevance to the present discussion, "participation in the arts were negatively associated with average substance abuse and attenuated increases (sic) in usage over time" (Fauth, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007, p. 760).

Focussing on different outcomes of interest, Wang, Mak, and Fancourt (2020) examine the impact of community-based art participation on "mental distress, mental health functioning, and life satisfaction" (p. 1). Also using a large set of longitudinal survey data spanning five years and two waves, they find that "frequent arts participation and cultural attendance were associated with lower levels of mental distress and higher levels of life satisfaction, with arts participation additionally associated with better mental health functioning" (p. 1). Spiegel et al's., (2019) mixed-methods study on the impact of participation on a social circus program for "street-involved" (p. 899) and other marginalized youth in Ecuador demonstrates a range of transformative outcomes, including "personal growth, social inclusion, social engagement and a health-related lifestyle" (p. 899). Embedded across these studies appears the assumption that participation in arts programs can serve as fertile ground for improvement in a wide arena of psychosocial domains, with projected implications for enhancing collective wellbeing and self-understanding within the context of community. Wright, Alaggia, and Krygsman (2014) research below suggests something similar but at the level of the individual.

Wright, Alaggia, and Krygsman (2014) conducted a study on National Arts and Youth Demonstration Project (NAYDP) which ran from 2001 to 2004 across five sites in Canada and engaged 183 youth aged 9 to 15 years old. The free program targeted young people from low-income communities, multicultural communities, and Aboriginal/native Canadian communities with transportation and food provided. The NAYPD project had three objectives: a) to evaluate the extent to which community-based organizations can successfully recruit, engage, and retain youths in a 9-month artistic endeavour (focused on theatre but also included visual arts (mask making, set design) and media arts (digital filming and editing); b) to assess their in-program progress in terms of artistic and social skills; and c) to determine whether involvement in arts programs is related to improved psychosocial functioning, thus attenuating behavioural and emotional problems. The findings of research undertaken at the time, and shortly after, indicate a high and sustained level of participation throughout the NAYDP, and

by the end, a statistically significant improvement in artistic and social skills. When compared with the findings of the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY), which acts as a control group, those that participated in NAYDP also indicated a statistically significant reduction in emotional problems (depression, anxiety, and unhappiness) and a strengthening in art and social skills.

Wright, Alaggia, and Krygsman (2014) set out to examine the experiences of past NAYDP program participants five years post-participation to determine the extent to which the impact outlined above was sustained in the five years beyond participation. In turn they covered four themes: benefits of participation, key elements of positive outcomes, present school engagement and hopes for the future (2014, p. 142). 32 of the initial 183 participants were interviewed and cited the following outcomes of participation: completing a project inspired them to continue practicing art and provided them with a sense of validation and achievement; participating increased their desire and ability to participate in the arts both in formal schooling and/or outside of it. For some, the desire to continue existed but opportunity did not. In line with previous research, another impact was the ability to build and sustain prosocial relationships and skills, and to engage in higher levels of tolerance and conflict resolution so whilst some reported maintaining long-term friendships with peers and instructors, others cited experiencing ongoing stronger socioemotional skills including decreased verbal and physical aggression. The flexibility and openness of program leaders were cited as significant as was the degree of expertise and professionalism indicated during program delivery. This contributed to continuing involvement in school activities as well as out-of-school activities, and mood changes such as more happiness and positivity at school leading to further school engagement and the forming of aspirations to move into post-secondary education and into a well-paying job.

The articles discussed here indicate the range of impact arts participation can have in the lives of young people – from the intrinsic to the instrumental as well as from the collective to the individual. At the heart of the studies discussed is the ability of young people to develop long-standing relationships with adults, peers, and communities and to therefore develop a sense of who they are and who they'd like to become. This can be seen through a commitment to social causes and increased socio-political consciousness, which enhances civic citizenship and the ability to regulate and improve human emotion and mental health both for themselves and others. A key finding was that themes covered here intersect in ways that inform or underpin each other. This intersectionality is indicative of why capturing and/or recording long-term impact is challenging.

Discussion

To gain a full understanding of the extent to which arts-based programs generate long-term impact, we employed a series of keyword searches [see table 2] to locate studies that not only measured the "effects" of OST youth arts participation but the "effects" over time without focussing specifically linear notions of causality. We settled on eleven papers that were weighted in favour of qualitative methods namely because they allowed for nuance. The following table demonstrates our methodological classification of the final corpus.

Method	Authors
Quantitative	Fauth et al., 2007 Wang et al., 2020
Qualitative	O'Donnell & Kirkner, 2016 Erstad & Silseth, 2019 Robinson et al., 2019 Wright et al., 2014 Henderson et al., 2016 Ngo et al., 2017
Mixed Method	Betts, 2006 Nielsen & Sørensen, 2019 Spiegel et al., 2019

We chose these studies because together they provide a holistic picture of the way existing research captures long-term impact, and how they are methodologically organized and conducted. What is clear from the literature is that, with the skills young people develop, the outcomes they achieve, and the way art intersects with their social and cultural backgrounds, comes a sense of empowerment and achievement. In turn young people develop an idea of who they are now and who they can become in the future.

O'Donnell and Kirkner (2016) highlight the degree to which change is made apparent through increases in civic engagement and participation. In turn, the hard skills (technical and academic) coupled with the soft skills (interpersonal and creative) needed to participate in a particular art form supported participants to become active citizens for their communities. Betts (2006) and Erstad and Silseth (2019) both indicate the way that technological skills allow for a future self to be imagined and created, and to achieve agency. Erstad and Silseth's (2019) study highlights a formal/informal nexus, and the way variations of self are governed by choice and trajectory mediated through technology and processes of informal education whilst Betts (2006) discusses the power of technology know-how and access to impact education outcomes and improve familial relationships. Finally, for Nielsen and Sørensen (2019), it is art and the way it helps people to become part of a community of practice and to gain legitimacy in that community that indicates impact. All three of these studies highlight the importance of developing a sense of self, and the knowledge and skills needed to assert that identity.

Socio-political consciousness developed particularly through art and music (Henderson, Biscocho, & Gerstein, 2016) provides people with a sense of purpose and the ability to act with internalized confidence. In instances like this, people act on the world, they become agents by developing a sense of purpose and sense of civic responsibility. They situate themselves in contexts whereby they help others and themselves by owning and identifying the hardships felt at the level of their broader communities, and they make sense of their pasts, of their marginalization, by becoming active in their communities and attempting to rectify future ills. As made clear by Ngo, Lewis, & Maloney Leaf (2017) art and poetry provide people with an opportunity and a process to make sense of life, of memories and events, and to structure their narratives of self so that they are no longer "marginalized victims" but actors and agents, of whom develop across time and space, through retrospection and technology,

and to develop a narrative of identity that empowers rather than diminishes their lived experience. Impact like this improves the outlook and the potential of people to take forward steps in their lives. We argue that to establish the complete value of community arts programs and to represent the extent to which they affect people's lives in years beyond participation, a long-term approach to data collection is required. A vast majority of research and evaluation conducted across many fields focuses on immediate impact that occurs within short timeframes. Furthermore, these types of studies or evaluations have the potential to unintentionally homogenize young people, imprint values of labour productivity and sideline marginality. This paper is our attempt to redress some of that.

To mitigate the risk of bias, researchers in the field attempt to control their findings by using national longitudinal datasets and to contrast and compare findings using control groups, and by using freely available established data collection tools to either perform evaluations or to supplement other methods (Fauth, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007; Robinson, Paraskevopoulou, & Hollingworth, 2019; Wang, Mak, & Fancourt, 2020; Wright, Alaggia, & Krygsman, 2014). This occurs primarily in quantitative studies, and although, does prove to a greater degree, cause and effect as is expected in traditional effect studies, it tends to downplay the power of people's stories and circumstances, and the agency of those people that experience change (Erstad & Silseth, 2019; Nielsen & Sørensen, 2019). We draw attention to the impact of change that is indicated by the long-term research conducted in the studies cited here, and the way OST arts participation strengthens young people's sense of self, identity and belonging in this world, and their positions of marginality.

Concluding Remarks

OST community arts organizations provide young people opportunities to learn and develop by providing them with access to arts-based activities. The aim is to teach young people the knowledge and skills needed to leverage their own lived experiences alongside teaching them how to express themselves through art. The transformative and healing power of artistic and creative practice is well documented, as is the capacity for it to be a preventative measure, particularly for marginalized young people or those in the justice system (Betts 2006; Fauth, Roth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2007; Halpern, 2002; Kwon, 2013; O'Donnell & Kirkner, 2016). In this paper, we reviewed literature that indicated the impact of participating in OST arts programs from several disciplinary perspectives. In turn, we identified the various ways that arts participation is measured, and the value attributed to its impact. Impact can only be rendered such when an actor is given the power to develop and grow. In this way the full impact of arts education and learning becomes apparent. For those that do not have access to the arts, OST youth art programs are a salve. Where structural disadvantage limits people's opportunities to take up positions of power in their lives, and where traditional schooling fails them, programs like OST youth arts programs provide the skills and resources needed to generate power and the confidence needed to use it. The more value that is attributed to the work OST arts providers do, and the more the impact is seen to be longstanding, the more communities and participants will benefit and the greater the impact overall.

The literature reviewed for this article mostly began from a common standpoint: that arts participation generates positive impact; that creative self-expression affords participants the power needed to question, challenge and to express themselves within the lived reality of cultural and structural disadvantage. The outcomes discussed here were achieved to various degrees, with the impact manifesting in mostly two ways, as intrinsic and/or instrumental (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras, & Brooks, 2001).

Whilst many researchers agree that arts education can be socially and culturally affirming, Holden (2006) cited in Wearring et al., (2021) argues for a broadening of the value ascribed to the arts. This, he claims, can be done by noting diversity in value attribution mainly intrinsic value, being the subjective impact that arts and cultural experiences have on someone; instrumental value, including outcomes such as employment, education or wellbeing for individuals and communities; and institutional value, placed on arts and culture by society. To broaden the value of the arts and therefore community-based arts provision, we are reminded by Holden (2006) that the way arts and cultural institutions interact is important. While instrumental value may be the focus of government funders and thus community arts organization, arts and culture proponents such as community arts providers need to consider methods through which they can accentuate intrinsic and institutional value as well. They must, he claims, conduct 'methodologically robust evaluations, evidencing a relationship between intrinsic value and tangible, beneficial outcomes such as improved education, mental and physical wellbeing, and social cohesion – in a sense, making the intrinsic also instrumental' (Wearring, Dalton, & Bertram, 2021).

To conclude, we recognize that community arts organizations operate within institutional frameworks and must report on their progress and impact to justify their existence. For many this means speaking to a human capital paradigm and economic policy. Often this means evaluating impact over short timeframes. In this article, we hope to offer a slightly different view, and one that is related to the value of their work– how these programs shape and continue to impact people's lives for years beyond participation.

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