

**AGENCY THROUGH ART:
EXPLORING SELF-EFFICACY IN GRADE TEN TO TWELVE ART
LEARNERS AT A PRIVATE SCHOOL IN THE FREE STATE**

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Declaration

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Abstract

This research explored results pertaining to adolescents' agency over their artistic practice. After working with grade ten to twelve art learners in a private education setting, I noticed insecurity with the learners through their increased reliance on educators for both creative and procedural directions. This paper explores the internal and external aspects that influence the development of the learners' self-efficacy. The study investigated the possible change of self-efficacy over three weeks after integrating self-compassion, self-reflection, and affirmation into the grade lessons. The researcher collected data through open-ended questionnaires, colouring and collaging activities, an in-depth interview with the art educator, feeling cards, and class observations. The data collected from the pre-study reflective questionnaire and the educator interview confirmed that learners had negative emotions about their artistic practice and capabilities. However, the other data collected through the post-study reflective questionnaire, the affirmation activities, the class observations, and the feeling cards, demonstrated that by creating a classroom environment that incorporates mindful colouring, affirming collaging, and reflective writing, learners' self-efficacy might be affected and in turn, learners' agency over their artistic practice was influenced.

Opsomming

Hierdie navorsing het resultate rakende die agentskap van adolessente oor hul artistieke praktyk ondersoek. Nadat ek saam met graad tien tot twaalf kunsleerders in 'n privaatonderwysomgewing gewerk het, het ek onsekerheid by die leerders opgemerk as gevolg van hul toenemende steun op onderwysers vir kreatiewe en prosedurele aanwysings. Hierdie studie het die interne en eksterne faktore van opvoeders wat die ontwikkeling van die leerders se selfdoeltreffendheid beïnvloed, ondersoek. Die studie het die ontwikkeling van selfdoeltreffendheid gedurende 'n periode van drie weke, vandat deernis met die self, selfrefleksie, introspeksie en bevestiging in die graadlesse geïntegreer is, ondersoek. Data is versamel deur die gebruik van oop vraelyste; kleur- en collageaktiwiteite, 'n diepgaande onderhoud met die kunsonderwyser en gevoelskaarte en klaswaarnemings. Die gegewens wat versamel is uit die reflektiewe vraelys voor die studie en die onderwyser-onderhoud het bevestig dat leerders negatiewe emosies gehad het oor hul artistieke praktyk en hul eie vermoëns. Die ander gegewens wat versamel is deur die reflektiewe vraelys na die studie, die bevestigingsaktiwiteite, die klaswaarnemings en die gevoelskaarte, het egter bewys dat deur 'n klaskameromgewing te skep wat bewuste kleur en skryfwerk waarmee leerders hulle gevoelens kon uitdruk insluit, die bevestiging van leerders se selfdoeltreffendheid kon geaffekteer word en leerders se agentskap oor hul artistieke praktyk kon beïnvloed.

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CHAPTER 1: Orientation to the study

1.1 Introduction to the research

Regardless of where they live, adolescents spend a significant amount of time in classrooms. The relationship between mental health and learning is intimate in the classroom, where good mental health and healthy practices may facilitate academic success for learners. The opposite is also true: poor mental health and unhealthy practices build large barriers to learners' academic and overall life success. According to Coursera (2021), mental health care management and healthy school practices have a significant impact on adolescents' mental health. If adolescents are equipped to manage mental health and schooling practices, they could apply these skills to their social, emotional, behavioural, and working environments (Coursera 2021).

With the above in mind and with relevance to art teaching, this study investigated how adolescents' self-efficacy might be affected in a classroom scenario where self-compassion, self-regulation, and self-reflection skills are stimulated.

The study investigated how adolescents' self-efficacy is formulated, as well as some of the internal and external influences on adolescents' self-efficacy. Through the application of literature, specific techniques regarding self-efficacy within the classroom as suggested by Bandura (1983, 1999), Zimmerman (1990) and Schunk (1990) was examined. The literature discusses examples of different types of influence on the self-efficacy of learners. Next, the relationship between self-efficacy, agency, affirmation, and art was studied to strengthen self-efficacy. The research incorporated skills such as self-reflection, self-compassion, and artistic inclinations that could facilitate the influence of self-efficacy in art learners.

The study applied an interpretative approach to explore how affirmation art activities might affect Grade 10 to 12 art learners and influence their agency over their art-making practice through their self-efficacy. The effect of integrating self-compassion and self-reflection activities into a classroom setting was observed to establish how learners' self-efficacy through these approaches, was influenced.

This study aimed to explore, analyse, and discuss the possible results of doing affirmation art activities and viewing reflective reports that the learners wrote about their experiences of the art-making process. In addition, an interview with the art educator of the Grade 10 to 12 art learners regarding the educators' involvement with the art-making practice of the learners and aspects of disciplines-based art education could inform the environmental and social contributions regarding the loss or gain of agency.

Researching art educators (Code, 2020; Claxton, 2002b, 2012) who integrated similar self-efficacy building strategies into their classroom environment showed that few studies specifically focus on self-efficacy as the foundation of personal agency, but in contrast, the studies focus on building self-reflection and automated skills in learners. Education research points out that feedback from an educator has a significant influence on a learner's regulation and assessment of his or her learning. This presents ways in which educators can build self-efficacy in their learners. Learners may gain self-confidence when art educators use authentic assessments, such as self-reflection, affirmation activities and critiques within their lessons. These specific assessments can be applied to the curriculum to affect learners' perceptions of ability. Learning practices designed to modify learners' perceptions of abilities can directly affect their motivation to explore art and take risks. Bandura (1993), a pioneer in self-efficacy research, notes that students who have beliefs that they can achieve, were more likely to take

on challenging, meaningful, and learner-driven experiences and formulate confidence exhibited in problem-solving, risk-taking and goal-setting behaviour (Bandura, 1993). By attempting to implement self-efficacy improving techniques in the art classroom, learners may be given a range of strategies and mindful thinking activities to evaluate their progress and make artistic decisions confidently. This conscious thinking could strengthen their self-efficacy.

The subject of this research explores the interactions between self-reflection, self-compassion, and self-efficacy in an art class for Grade 10 to 12 art learners to gain agency over their art-making practice. The rest of this chapter is dedicated to discussing the background of the research, the problem statement and the research questions. Additionally, the aims and objectives of the study are presented, together with an overview of the methodology, the boundaries and limitations of the study and the anticipated field problems. Finally, the structure of the thesis is put forward.

1.2 Background to the problem

The context of the research study and its relevance to the local and global framework is discussed in this section. The effect of solid self-efficacy in the art classroom is becoming vastly prevalent and constructive in present curriculums worldwide. A solid belief in one's abilities plays a significant role in transformation, creativity and finding one's voice in a rather monocultural world. A personal view, the school's context and local and global context is explored below.

1.2.1 Personal view

Since the 1980s, most secondary school art curriculums have been organised around art disciplines (Dorn 2003:351). The "disciplines-based art education model" contains subject matter about art projects, vocabulary and artists, demonstrating aesthetics, art history and techniques (Richardson 2017:1). The art educator uses most of her preparation and lesson time to ensure that all learners can complete the project. Learners are assessed based on their ability to follow the directions of the project, apply time management, and execute technique (Richardson 2017:1). This "teaching model" has not taught learners how to make artistic, reflective and decisive decisions, but instead provides learners with contextual learning of how art has developed (Code 2020:1). As a result, learners lack the confidence to express opinions, take risks, or envision alternate solutions to visual problems. As a substitute, learners generally rely on their educators to answer their questions and guide them through the process of making art.

This model influenced my early art education. I relied on my educators to guide me with steps to completing my projects. The feedback of my educators would then drive my artistic choices. In high school, I realised that the independence to reflect on and set goals for future projects was enjoyable. Even though this independence is what I wanted most, I found myself experiencing self-doubt, feelings of incapability and anxiety about making mistakes in my art and not knowing what to do. Now that I am an artist and an academic, I feel that I still fear making something terrible without the approval of somebody else, which has affected my aspiration to make art. Because of my experience, my longing for precision and perfection has crippled my risk-taking and confidence. Through this research, I wanted to discover how to help Grade 10 to 12 art learners view themselves as confident art makers with agency over their art-making practice through possibly developing their self-efficacy. By exploring

affirmation art activities and self-reflective reporting, within a “discipline-based art education model”, I aimed to redefine learners’ understanding of their agency (Richardson 2017:1).

1.2.2 School context

The study was relevant as the secondary school in which it was conducted is an exclusive private school that could be viewed as an environment for an upper-class community. Learners in the school are under fierce pressure from parents to achieve excellent grades, go to university, and follow in their footsteps as doctors, engineers, or entrepreneurs. These academic and parental pressures on the learners lead to mental disorders such as anxiety (Lowe, Grumbein, & Raad 2011). Individuals reporting anxiety may also experience “other types of anxiety disorders, low self-esteem, lower academic performance, grades, standardized achievement scores”, challenges with learning new material, “lack of motivation, negative self-evaluation, struggles with concentration, grade retention, and dropout” (King, Mietz, Tinney, & Ollendick 1995). By introducing healthy practices such as mindful colouring, reflective writing and affirming collaging, learners are observed to see what they experience, how they respond and how they are affected. Adopting affirmation and reflective activities in the art classroom could influence how learners function in the art classroom.

1.2.3 Local and global context

South African education has a window of opportunity to establish a kind of democratic citizenship away from its segregated history. In recent times, development has brought changes in the South African educational system, incorporating citizenship and arts education in the changing South African policies.

Citizenship is an affiliation between the individual and the government. Therefore, the union of South African democratic citizenship depends on the success with which it manages this relationship. Citizenship values individuals who exhibit “equity, tolerance, multilingualism, openness, accountability, and social honour” (Waghid 2004:531). Education is expected to serve the public by producing these “critical citizens for a vibrant democratic society” (Reddy 2004:5). Social justice, therefore, plays a role in creating a democratic society through education. The transformation of the educational system became responsible for this social justice. The aim of social justice is complete and “equal participation of all groups” in the South African society that is “mutually shaped to meet their needs” (Bell 2007:1). Social justice embraces a vision of society in which the allocation of resources is unbiased, and all participants are “physically and psychologically safe and secure” (Bell 2007:1). This is where Art education plays a role.

Education included art as a transformational form. Art education actively promotes access to equitable, appropriate life-long education “to develop individual talents and skills through the transformation of arts” (White Paper 1996:16). Education in arts, culture, and heritage embraces the many expressions of the South African cultural heritage. It entails an “integrated developmental approach leading to innovative, creative, and critical thinking” of social relationships, community, and identity (White Paper 1996:169). An essential part of our identity is to be confident in who we are, what we are capable of and why we make specific choices. Helping adolescents discover the answers to these questions at an early age could enable them to be agents of social change, and use their art for social justice.

Drawing on the creative, accumulated knowledge or practices and innovative skills promoted by Art education, “it is now globally understood that innovation, creativity, and problem-solving are the critical strategic capacities for social and economic development” in South Africa (Revised White Paper 2017:13). The Revised White Paper (2017:14–15) further concludes the role of art in the South African transformation vision:

The arts, cultural and heritage dimension of social cohesion and nation-building is integral to develop South African culture, to reduce inequalities, exclusions, and disparities based on ethnicity, gender, class, nationality, age, disability, or any other distinctions which engender divisions, distrust, and conflict.

1.3 Problem statement

Based on my experience in the school art classroom, I identified the need for this research. Frequently, students focus on precision so much that risk-taking does not appeal to them. They tend to follow directions rather than embrace divergent thinking. I need to ask whether they have experienced an art education that highlights creative thinking and problem-solving values over following directions. Reflecting on the above, I formulated the following research problem. Given that learners with a “strong self-efficacy are more engaged in the process of learning” (Bandura 1993) and are more likely to exhibit self-reflecting properties (Zimmerman 2003):

Affirmation and reflective activities may help Grade 10 to 12 art learners gain agency over their art-making practice by possibly improving their self-efficacy.

1.4 Research questions

The research questions guided the focus of the study to derive complex answers from the qualitative investigation of this case study. The following questions informed the data collection.

Main question

How can affirmation and reflective activities affect Grade 10 to 12 art learners regarding their self-efficacy and agency over their artistic practice?

Sub-questions

The following sub-questions were posed for this study.

- How do the art learners feel before, during and after their art-making process?
- How do the art learners feel about their artistic capabilities?
- What do learners think about self-compassion and self-reflection?
- How does the teacher, classroom, school environment, globalisation and art education affect the art learners’ self-efficacy?

1.5 Study aims and objectives

The aims of this research involved the following:

- investigate how art learners' art-making process is influenced by their trust in their abilities to produce artworks (related to self-efficacy);

- investigate how art learners feel before starting a new artwork, during the making process and when looking at the result (related to self-reflection);
- investigate how affirmation influences art learners' perceptions of their capabilities;
- investigate how art learners react to a public display of their artworks (related to self-efficacy);
- investigate how art learners' feel about self-affirmation after exercising it for a while;
- investigate how self-reflection influences art learners' perceptions of their capabilities;
- investigate how art learners feel after self-affirmation and self-reflection; and
- investigate how art learners' perception of their capabilities influence the control they enact over their artistic practice.

The objectives of this research involved the following:

- to interview the art educator regarding her observations of learners' self-efficacy related to their art-making processes;
- to allow participants to reflect on how they feel before starting a new artwork, during the making process and when looking at the result, through writing self-reflective reports;
- to present the affirmation colouring activity to establish possible positive affirmations in the Grade 10 to 12 art students;
- to observe art learners' body language and facial expressions when seeing their affirmation activities being displayed in class;
- to establish progress through feeling card indications of how the affirmation activity of the week made them feel;
- to present the affirmation collaging activity to strengthen self-reflection in the Grade 10 to 12 art learners;
- to allow learners to reflect on the project through writing self-reflective reports about their experiences during the previous two weeks;
- to explore participants' experiences via questions in the self-reflective reports; and
- to analyse outcomes produced throughout the study.

1.6 Overview of the research methodology

The study employed an empirical research approach as it was based on that which was experienced and observed. Therefore, this study was qualitative research based on lived experiences (Skerrett 2008:143). The qualitative research methodology was characterised by an arts-based inquiry within an interpretative paradigm and case study research design. This design was an intensive investigation of a single unit of twelve individuals (Grade 10 to 12 art learners) for a particular reason (the effect on agency and self-efficacy). This unit was small; thus, in-depth exploration could be done. However, it does not allow for vast generalisation of the findings. Instead, it allows for uniqueness and complexity in a real-life context (Marshall & Rossman 2016:343).

An in-depth individual interview with the art educator was conducted to investigate her views on the learners' experiences to collect empirical data. The learners were issued with open-ended questionnaires that were simple to answer and understand. 'Yes or no' questions in the questionnaire also required that learners give reasons for their choices. Simplifying the format of the questionnaire ensured that the possibility of participants leaving questions unanswered were minimised. As the learners were still on a school level, the aim was neither to intimidate

them, nor to make the experience of filling out a questionnaire daunting and too formal. The research was conducted during class time, and lasted for ten to twenty minutes for five days in the week, over three weeks. During this time, close observations of the learners, the activities and reports the learners' completed were recorded and observed.

Ethical considerations were considered. Critical ethical concerns applicable to qualitative research were informed consent, voluntary participation, to do no harm, confidentiality, anonymity, and only to assess relevant components (Bryman & Bell 2015:142). Kaiser (2009:4) describes the convention of respect of confidentiality and anonymity as a means to protect research participants from harm, and protect the "privacy of all persons; to build trust and rapport with study participants, and maintain ethical standards the integrity of the research process". Since the learners in this study were minors and part of a vulnerable population or community, the researcher's responsibility was to ensure that the learners were not exploited or disempowered by the research process (Jelsma & Clow 2005:5). Therefore, consent forms were issued to their parents to obtain permission for the learners to participate in the research. Consent forms were also given to the learners. The consent forms assured the parents and learners that participation would be anonymous and that the participants' identities would be protected at all times and the form thoroughly explained the research process. Institutional permission was received from the selected school for the research to be conducted there. The participants were informed that taking part in the study would be voluntary. They could decide to withdraw their participation at any time without any adverse outcomes. The learners were aware of who was participating in the research case study. This meant the process was not entirely anonymous among the participants themselves. Furthermore, the research was conducted in their art classroom as a familiar space to made the learners feel safe.

This study used inductive content analysis. According to Elo and Kyngäs (2008:1), "inductive content analysis is a qualitative method of content analysis that researchers use to develop theory and identify themes by studying documents, recordings and other printed and verbal material". The material analysed in this study was the affirmation activities, the reflective questionnaires, the educator interview, the classroom observations and the feeling cards. The themes that presented themselves in the analyses of the mentioned materials were the negative emotions of the learners, for example, anxiety and stress, frustration and confusion, criticism and disappointment. The learners' positive emotions regarding self-compassion and self-reflection were also recorded. When using content analysis, the aim was to "build a model to describe the phenomenon in a conceptual form" (Elo & Kyngäs 2008:1). This form entailed a process represented in three main phases: preparation visible in the Chapters 2 and 3, organising through data collection, and reporting seen in Chapter 4.

1.7 Boundaries and limitations of the study

This study had a few boundaries and limitations, including time, cultural barriers, the school environment, the local context, and the COVID-19 restrictions. Firstly, time was a multifold limitation and boundary. Time was a limitation as this was research for a mini-thesis completed in one year. This did not allow much time to gather information and data, so the scope of the study was limited. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, school closures made time even less predictable, as specific grades were sent home for isolation during the study. During school hours, time in the classroom was a limitation as the educator had to continue with a densely packed curriculum, while the activities had to take place and reports also had to be written. Secondly, cultural barriers was a limitation as mindfulness, introspection, reflection and identity in the activities and reports were comprehended and experienced differently by learners from different cultural backgrounds.

Thirdly, the school environment presented some limitations. The limitations of the research were the busy academic and extra-mural calendar at the school, and the absenteeism of participants. The active school calendar affected the amount of time during which the learners could attend their art lessons, therefore causing some disruption to the data collection schedule. In several instances, the activities themselves were interrupted by learners and educators coming into the classroom for resources. This could have disturbed the learners' flow and ease of operation while doing the activities and reports. Even though they sat further away from their peers, doing the activities and reports with their classmates may have affected their answers. As mentioned before, the school environment was stressful for the learners for their academic achievement, which influenced them. Fourthly, there were only two schools in the area where art was taught as a high school subject for Grade 10 to 12 learners, and this, combined with time limitations, limited the sample opportunities. Lastly, another limitation was the COVID-19 pandemic, since communication and the constant cleaning of materials and surfaces could construe a clinical, cold, uncomfortable environment for the learners in which to work and function. This influenced their eagerness to take control or creative risks directly. The COVID-19 restrictions also led to anxiety, fear and distraction as the learners had to go to school and participate in these activities during a tragic period in a society enveloped in illness, death and loss.

1.8 Anticipated field problems

The primary limit to the anticipated study was the parents' concern about their children participating in the study during school hours and therefore having inadequate lesson time. These anticipated concerns regarding the research required an explanation in detail in the consent forms to the parents, the intentions of the study and how the study would not infringe on the learners' human rights (for example, the right to education) in any way and would also benefit the learners. By explaining that the benefits of the study and its aims mainly focused on influencing the learners' self-efficacy, which might positively affect their academic performance, the parents gave consent. In addition, a compromise regarding the quality of the activities and reports due to limited time has disadvantaged the study. Concerning the insufficient lesson time and the absence of learners, some break times or after school hours were used to complete the research.

1.9 Structure of the thesis

Orientation to the study is the first chapter, which presents background information on the study and also identifies a research question (s) and a problem statement to guide the study. The limitations of the study are also discussed in this chapter. Theoretical perspectives is the second chapter, which presents detailed examinations of the main theoretical themes interlaced into the research case study. The third chapter (Methodology) describes the research approach and paradigm, selecting the research samples, and the critical ethical considerations that were observed during and after the research. The methods used to analyse the data collected during the data collection period is also discussed. An analysis and a discussion of the data collected during the case study are presented in Chapter 4. Finally, Chapter 5 (Conclusion) brings the investigation to a close, by concluding the findings and provide a discussion.

CHAPTER 2: Theoretical perspectives

2.1 Introduction

The theoretical perspectives for the study began by exploring the context of self-efficacy. First, this chapter introduces the developmental changes in adolescents' social and academic self-efficacy perspective and explain the relationship between self-efficacy and agency in learners. Secondly, the chapter examines how educators influence learner self-efficacy, and what research has found regarding self-efficacy in the art classroom, how learning to become authoritative and adaptable is important for learner self-efficacy and how assessment and educator feedback can influence self-efficacy. Thirdly, I investigate art education, which integrates techniques to boost self-efficacy and introduce affirmation as a self-reflective strategy that can affect agency through self-efficacy and art. Finally, I look at aspects of globalisation, global citizenship, their relation to art and how praxis and a 'perfectionist' hidden curriculum plays a role in the learners' journey to the personal agency through self-efficacy. This section has been divided into internal aspects, affecting learners' agency from within the self, and external aspects that affect the learner's agency from without – their environmental influences. Hargrove's (2012:9) advice on research is applicable.

... educators should ask themselves how effective current design education is at developing learners with strong creative thinking abilities, and how this potential connection between creativity and metacognition can translate into an educational model that will encourage a disposition for creative thinking.

2.2 Internal aspects

This section is dedicated to discussing the theoretical perspectives of the internal influences and aspects of the study. Under internal aspects, the study referred to personal, psychological and developmental aspects worth discussing. The segment is dedicated to discuss understanding the background of self-efficacy, understanding agency through self-efficacy, and agency and affirmation. Additionally, agency and art is presented together with agency and art in adolescents.

2.2.1 Understanding the background of self-efficacy

Theorists have spent a great deal of time working with learners from all age groups within various disciplines, to examine how learners are motivated and respond to academic challenges. Bandura (1986, 1993) was one of the first educational researchers to explore the topic of self-efficacy. Bandura (1993:120) defines self-efficacy as "a person's beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over their level of functioning and over events that affect their lives". Bandura (1993:120) describes self-efficacy as an "internal system that individuals engage when facing academic, social, or emotional challenges". When individuals believe they can engage a problem personally and find success, a strong sense of self-efficacy is established. This strong sense self-efficacy then provides confidence when new challenges are presented. Bandura (1993:123) says that an extensive range of aspects affects a "child's perception of self-efficacy" and includes external factors such as "family, peer, educator feedback, and internal developmental factors". Though an educator cannot control all the influences an adolescent encounters, the environment that the educator creates "directly impacts the growth of agency and self-confidence" (Dorn 2003:357). When educators

empower their learners with specific self-efficacy and reflective strategies, a learner's agency or "ability to control their actions within environments" (Bandura 1993; Zimmerman 1990) helps them filter through external feedback. After developing solid self-efficacy, learners can redefine their abilities effectively by approaching new challenges with various tactics.

Bandura (1993:3) also notes "the understanding of self-efficacy changes as a child develops, therefore, when learners are young, their academic self-efficacy directly connects to social forms of self-efficacy, but these two categories can diverge and become less dependent as a child age". Paris and Newman's (1990) study specifically explored how a child's self-efficacy changes with age. The study found that a learner's "approach and response to achievement" depends on his or her age. Like Bandura (1990), they note that as learners develop into adolescents, their views of self-efficacy change. For instance, "young learners often believe that trying hard, completing tasks, and receiving educator praise are signs of high academic competence" (Paris & Newman 1990:89). In contrast, John Nicholls notes "as learners get older, they see high effort as compensation for low ability and thus success with hard work is valued less than success with minimal effort" (as cited in Paris & Newman 1990:90).

In summary, younger learners believe that when they "put forth a high level of effort and receive their educator's affirmation, they must have achieved academic success" (Bandura 1990:136). However, as learners grow older, they begin to believe more effort is a sign of a lack of ability. This notion can lead learners to lack motivation and avoid tasks that require a great deal of effort. In addition, their beliefs in their faculties or self-efficacy are weakened due to their misunderstanding of artistic aptitude. Dweck and Elliott (1986:136) further explored this point by stating "young learners are characterized as incremental theorists because they believe that increments in effort yield increments in ability". However, this theory of effort changes by twelve years of age when they become "entity theorists" (Dweck & Elliott 1986:136). By this age learners believe that people have a fixed amount of intelligence or ability that is relatively unaltered by their degree of effort. Due to this view, adolescents need to be encouraged to think like 'incremental theorists' by incorporating self-efficacy development tasks into their daily routine. This research focused on the importance of embedding affirmation and reflective strategies into activities to influence adolescent learners' self-efficacy.

2.2.2 Understanding agency through self-efficacy

Agency is "the power to originate action" and is present in "the ability of people to regulate and control their cognition, motivation, and behaviour through the influence of existing self-beliefs", for example, self-efficacy (Bandura 2001:3). The regulation of personal processes is inherently an individual-specific endeavour. However, the individual (self) does not operate in isolation and requires the meditative efforts of others and aspects of the sociocultural environment to develop and operate in a goal-directed manner. In this study, the sociocultural environment was the art classroom. Code (2020:2) considers the "self-as-agent" to include four core features of "human agency", of which self-reflectiveness (self-efficacy) is one. Self-efficacy is a functional self-awareness in which learners reflect on their actions, efficacy, thoughts, the meaning of their pursuits and make corrective adjustments (Bandura 2006). Self-efficacy fundamentally involves learners judging the correctness of their goals against the outcomes of their actions. This "metacognitive capability to reflect upon oneself and the adequacy of one's thoughts and actions is the most distinctly human core property of agency" (Bandura 2006:165). Self-efficacy beliefs contribute to a learner's sustained interest, motivation, and performance in school (Code 2020:2–3).

The greatest challenge to this open-ended process of affecting self-efficacy is that learners are still learning about art and making art. Rodny (2018), an art educator and researcher, explains:

They do not often have the basic skills and tools of art-making and must learn through the process. They do not always recognize key moments of the process of making: when to stop, when to take a risk, when to try something different, when to fall back on a reliable, tested routine. They also often feel pressured to connect their art to an important issue because that is what they have been trained to do in other art classes. I steer them away from big issues and more toward personal investigations while they build the practical and mental skills necessary to bring their project to a logical conclusion.

The most significant evidence that self-efficacy is being influenced in the learners is when they realise their artistic controls and start using the art class as their growing space where they find a personal voice and vision and create work entirely separate from grades, assignments, and requirements (Rodny 2018). Most importantly, the learners were given the freedom to pursue their visions in their own way and at their own pace. If learners realise that by their choices in their art ('a mechanism of personal agency'), they can produce the desired effects by their actions, they have an incentive to make art from their own free will. "Efficacy belief is, therefore, the foundation of agency" (McCarthy & Newcomb 1992:39).

2.2.3 Agency and affirmation

Self-affirmation theory is rooted in the premise that people are motivated to maintain a view of the self that is "adaptively and morally adequate ... competent, good, coherent, unitary, stable, capable of free choice, [and] capable of controlling important outcomes" (Steele 1988:262). One way to maintain such a favourable self-image is to affirm one's essential values, attributes, and actions. "Affirming core values promotes a positive self-image because it provides a means by which individuals can secure a sense of being competent, reasonable, and self-determining in the face of life's challenges" (Nelson, Fuller, Choi & Lyubomirsky 2014:998).

Because self-affirmation prompts people to reflect on the values and experiences most important to them, it may also "encourage them to engage in activities congruent with those values – absorbing and enjoyable, also known as flow activities" (Nelson et al. 2014:999). For example, the art-making process can become a flow activity for art learners, once they realise that through their agency, influenced by affirmation art activities, they are capable and chose to do art because it is something they enjoy and at which they are good.

This research considered the potential impact of self-affirmation, "the process of reflecting upon important personal values or strengths" (Harris 2011:304). Self-affirmation appears to encourage several vital processes relevant to self-efficacy influence, including more "open-minded assessment" of otherwise threatening information, "higher levels of mental understanding", and "reductions in the likelihood of self-control failure" (Harris 2011:304). Furthermore, these effects of self-affirmation may provide learners with the capacity to view the "big picture" and consider how their current actions relate to their longer-term interests (Harris 2011:304). Therefore, self-affirmation can be associated with cognitive reappraisal, coping, and self-control, which are all elements of agentic behaviour.

2.2.4 Agency and art

Creativity has long been the battle cry of the arts in education. This started changing since the 1980s, and now almost everyone thinks creativity is a good idea. “School mission statements embrace creative thinking” (Kraehe 2018:4). However, the arts in schools are not necessarily seeing additional support, but are rather undermined through cuts due to shifting curricular priorities at schools. Nonetheless, art educators persist and do not lose sight of their creative agency in this situation. These art educators generate concrete strategies to improvise and share these strategies with their network of art educators. This is just one example of how creative agency is fostered in art education. Agency commonly is defined as “the capacity to reflect upon and direct one’s thoughts and actions” (Kraehe 2018:4). When we talk about creative activities, people typically are given the starring role to play. According to Kraehe (2018:4), art education researcher and writer, explains examples to help illustrate this.

Carlos chose the red marker, not the blue one. Eve wishes to draw a boat using charcoal. The Art II students completed their clay pieces today. The tour group interpreted the photographs. The red marker, charcoal, clay, and photographs—are cast as passive objects, mere things controlled and acted upon by people. Carlos, Eve, the Art II students, and the tour group are the only creative thought and action agents. Over the last few decades, developments in creativity studies suggest a need to reconsider such person-centred beliefs about what creativity is and how to generate more of it.

Social psychologist Gläveneau (2014) and others (Clapp 2017), say “creativity does not come from ideas inside a person’s head, as many tests for creativity assume, nor is creative agency exclusive to humans”. Instead, creativity, or the making of something new, is a distributed phenomenon, which is to say “it emerges from the interplay between a person and all the affordances found in one’s context” (Kraehe 2018:5). This distributed perspective means that context is integral to the creativity of artists, authors, learners, and inventors because “the efficacy of a person’s creative agency is entangled with and dependent on the assistance (and sometimes resistance) of other elements external to the person like the classroom and the educators” (Kraehe 2018:5). Thus, creativity emerges from the collaborative relationship between person and context, and not from the creative person alone. In this way, influencing agency over an art-making practice needs to include external elements to push it forward.

At least four elements of context intervene to enable and constrain human creative agency (Gläveneau 2014). They are:

- 1) “Social recognition and validation through feedback from an audience” or any other public, for example, art educators. We might call this the “co-creative power of people”;
- 2) “Material affordances of nonhuman things” (for example, the colour saturation and linear quality of markers) enable the human imagination to extend beyond the person and take form in the world, which is the affirmation art activities. We might call this the “co-creative power of things”;
- 3) “Cultural practices, symbols, and meanings” that already exist collectively within a community and empower the creative person to reconfigure new practices, symbols, and new meanings, such as the self-reflective activities. We might call this the “co-creative power of culture”; and
- 4) “Historical development of creative practices” over centuries and smaller increments of time (years, weeks, or minutes) enable the person to imitate and learn skills, improvise with materials and methods, and develop new conventions. We might call this the “co-creative power of time” (Kraehe 2018:5).

These contextual elements point to the importance of other people, things, culture, and time in any creative process. Context enables and constrains the personal choices and possible

outcomes of creative activity (Kraehe 2018:6). As many art educators know already, the structure and guidelines in an art project or design challenge limit creativity and simultaneously provide a context that catalyses learners' agency (Fendler & Hamrock 2018). Without any context or structure for art-making, many learners find themselves without ideas for how to begin. Context, therefore, plays a significant "co-creative role in artistic and other creative processes", both limiting and extending what individuals can achieve on their own (Kraehe 2018:6). In situations in which there are excessive constraints, such as too little time and material support or outright suppression of creative agency, people nonetheless find ways to create with and within (and sometimes against) the contextual limits imposed on them and their lives.

1.2.4 Agency and art in adolescents

Adolescence (specifically the age of Grade 10 to 12 learners, which is 15 to 18 years old), is a vulnerable developmental stage as it is a crucial stage to consolidate self-concept. Art educators, as agents of transformation, might equip these learners with a "new agency" that enables them to acquire the necessary tools to question the prevailing relationships and organise new ways to "be heard" (Abdi 2002:34). Art as a form of self-expression, emotional outlet and decision making can be an empowering or discouraging subject at this age (Margolis & McCabe 2006:218). Art is a way of facing and changing your personal and social reality. Rajagopal's (2006:149) claim, that we as individuals "become more capable of reflexive and self-aware behaviour, assisted by modernization and the expansion of mass media, [and we] begin to construct [ourselves] as cultural and political subjects, seeking charge of [our]own destiny". This statement explains my understanding of the relationship between art and society. As we become part of society, it becomes clear "how we are socialized to perceive the world and our place in it" (Rajagopal 2006:138), as we slowly acquire the "powers of self-expression" and assert our "rights of equality". We use art to give form to the "individual voice" that we found, and as a forum where our "ideas can be generalized as a public voice" (Martin 2006:17).

Martin (2006:1) continues to explain that "art-making is an intricate journey where public and private are at once the vehicle, the route, and the destination... The keys to artistic citizenship lie in understanding how art and artists are brought into the world". We as artists use our personal views, reflections, self-awareness and self-expression to influence our voice and raise awareness for the social and political causes in which we believe. When we think of art, we imagine something that "enhances understanding through universal forms of expression" (Rajagopal 2006:137). Art is a form used for self-expression, therapeutic purposes, aesthetic purposes, social purposes, or political purposes. Art, artistic knowledge and artistic practices are embedded in society by inserting ethical responsibility through artistic excellence. In other words, art brings communal, societal and even political problems to the public eye to help create awareness and find solutions. Martin (2006:17) explains that art earns its freedom to practice by being "worthy of worldly attention". I believe that in the case of the role of the arts in society, even when no changes were instigated, the arts have played a critical role in terms of "conscience, moral critique, and collective action" (Schmidt Campbell 2006:27).

2.3 External aspects

"The accelerated pace of informational, social and technological evolution has placed a premium on people's capabilities to exert a strong hand in their development and functioning throughout the life course" (McCarthy & Newcomb 1992:39). Therefore, globalisation and

global citizenship play a significant role in learners' choices, and control and manage their artistic practice. This section is dedicated to discussing globalisation, globalisation and art, and global citizenship. Additionally, a learning to learn learning perspective is presented together with the teacher impact on learner self-efficacy, assessment in art education, praxis and the hidden curriculum are discussed.

2.3.1 Globalisation

Globalisation is a term associated with the technological advancements of the 21st century that have led to the centralisation of knowledge. Globalisation is said to influence all domains of life, specifically in this case education, culture and society (Abdelhadi & Ahmed 2015:8). Held, Mc Grew, Goldblatt and Perraton (1999:68) describe globalisation as “a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity”. Furthermore, globalisation is described as “the inscription of the particular and the contextual associated with ‘identity’ in the global operation of capital” (Dimitrakaki 2012:308).

Held et al. (1999:269) further state that globalisation has destroyed diverse cultures and has displaced people by bringing about a market-driven “branded homogenisation of cultural experience”. This has led to the destruction of the differences between locality-defined cultures that had formed part of the identities of their people. Therefore, the world will adopt a ‘global culture’, which implies that systems of communications will be commercialised, and human values will be standardised and generalised (Held et al. 1999:279). Thus, the concept of globalisation describes the intermixing and interpenetration of global and local phenomena, which involve the imposition of the global onto the local, and local adaptations of global trends and entities (Delacruz, Arnold, Kuo & Day 2009: 89).

Globalisation has led to a transformation in the education system. Learners at some schools can now communicate digitally, share knowledge, and create new knowledge using technological tools such as the internet. The potential to make knowledge accessible to all, is a central focal point in the South African governments’ embrace of the concept of globalisation in school environments (White Paper on South African Education 2017). Learners no longer need to experience the world through physical interaction. Some learners are granted the privilege of connecting virtually to many parts of the world and exploring countless available knowledge sources in the global sphere.

Through this centralisation of knowledge, the global identity imposed on the local identity and the easy access to the knowledge, learners start feeling intimidated to produce artworks that are so freely sourced on the internet. These learners feel that these globalised, commercialised images of art are what they should be capable of producing and if they are not able to do so, they are unsuccessful and cannot control their artistic practice correctly. This might result in these learners experiencing a change of self-efficacy (Bandura 1996) and forfeiting their local voices, cultural identities and social responsibilities that their artistic practice brings them.

2.3.2 Globalisation and art

Art education (painting, sculpture, literature, drama, music and dance) can serve different social purposes. The primary function of art is “to provide enjoyment”. Art can function as a source of pleasure (Torres & Kamhi 2000:8) and play a social role in community enrichment

(Campbell & Martin 2006:137). Art allows individuals to develop a strong sense of identity. Art practices may enable individuals to question their social status, language, race, ethnicity, values, beliefs, behaviour, and spiritual orientation (Taylor 1999:232). Individuals can also learn more about themselves and the contexts in which they find themselves. Art-making and art education can contribute to a homogenised and consumer-driven visual culture by embracing contemporary art. Contemporary art allows for the accelerated hybridisation that is the creative force behind monumental cultural innovations of this age (Delacruz 2000:89).

Moreover, art responds to globalisation in three ways: the content of the work, the artist's use of imagery, and the visual and conceptual strategies. Through art education, the learners can understand a blending of art forms and ideas in art. The outcomes depend on their individual artistic choices influenced by their globalised, but yet personal, identity.

2.3.3 Global citizenship

McDougall (2005:3) defines global citizenship as "a moral disposition that guides individuals' understanding of themselves as members of communities, on both local and global levels, and their responsibility to these communities". Furthermore, she emphasises how global citizenship allows for full human potential to be realised and materialised "through one's participation, either on a local or an international level" (McDougall 2005:3). Global citizenship increases reflexivity (self-awareness), in that it transforms our understanding of ourselves concerning a global 'significant' other (Adams, Bell & Griffin 2007:128). McDougall (2005:274) further gives a few positive aspects of global moral citizenship, including recognising that "one's actions can impact others on both local and global levels", which implies that one must make a positive contribution to one's society. An individual who embraces sensitivity to global citizenship reflects evident traits in a broader identity of self, an open-minded and tolerant attitude, and an ability to address the pressing issues of a globalising world (McDougall 2005:274).

According to Johnson and Morris (2010:78), forms of critical citizenship are promoted through the schooling system to ensure that there is an obedient population and "ensure that citizens are creative and critical". This strengthens the idea that the workforce produced by the schooling system is more "innovative, independent, creative, and reflective" (Johnson & Morris 2010:78). Moreover, 'critical thinking' encompasses critical citizenship as it often suggests that the type of individuals that school leavers will be, will be explorative, developmental, evaluative, and able to make independent choices. Therefore, in the art classroom, learners should be encouraged to explore critical, introspective and reflective thinking as it could lead to independent choices that best fit their ideas of personal identity in their artistic practice.

Janks (2013:8) comments on how education in a globalised world needs to develop people "capable of high-level symbolic engagement and who are also creative and critical". He (Janks 2013:10) further states that education is meant to prepare learners for a "world of ongoing, unpredictable, and rapid change that requires deep specialised knowledge, broad general knowledge, and the ability to think independently and imaginatively". It further becomes evident that creativity and adaptability have to be underpinned by enhanced skills and values that embrace difference and responsibility for others and the planet. Therefore, the art educator needs to utilise self-efficacy development in the art classroom. Higher self-efficacy allows the learners to understand themselves and their surroundings better. In addition, adolescent art and conversations about art "can be a window into the meanings and multiple associations experienced by young people" (Diket 2003:175). Through frequent classroom reflection, both educators and adolescents gain a sense of the "collective psychology of youth

and see its relationship to that of the adult world” (Diket 2003:175). From an artistic perspective, adolescents can grapple with “personal and cultural conflict”, interpret “emotive and expressive intent”, identify common elements in “disparate cultural presentations”, and locate the self in a complex array of worldviews (Diket 2003:175) in favour of critical, critical and independent global citizenship. Claxton’s (2012) learning perspective also focuses on producing learners that are equipped for a society which needs critical, innovative citizens.

2.3.4 Learning to learn learning perspective

This learning to learn (LTL) perspective is included as part of the theoretical perspectives to discover how Grade 10 to 12 art learners can gain agency over their art-making process. Claxton's LTL perspective focuses on building learners' confidence and character as it is crucial to develop learners' ability to learn (Claxton 2012). Learning for oneself and from oneself is one of the most potent and essential abilities that young individuals need. The ability to cope calmly, creatively, confidently, and capably with challenges, uncertainties, disappointments, and frustrations is crucial. It forms part of the development of the self-concept and all its self-factors in adolescents. Williams (2004:32) further explains that learners need to be curious, independent, reflective, and creative, "but to foster them [educators] need to change pupils' attitudes and values". Therefore, education in the twenty-first century "needs to not only steer learners in not only one valuable outcome, the acquisition of knowledge and gathering certificates and grades that will give them access to good quality further education, but will give them two valuable outcomes, the second of which is the slow, deliberate, conscious cultivation and affirmation of these habits of mind" and attitudes (Claxton 2017: 8.45).

Much of Claxton's (2012:7) practical advice stresses that the habits and attitudes required for building learning power need to be nurtured through an encouraging and supportive culture. Therefore, it is appropriate briefly to explore how learning power can be developed. Claxton (2002b:32) argues:

Attention to the implicit values and assumptions of the culture and to making sure that its objects, tasks, non-verbal signals, and so on are consonant with the dispositions that the culture wishes to develop.

Many of the practical ideas for classroom practice come from 'Building Learning Power' (BLP) (Claxton 2002a) and associated resources. Claxton focuses on how educators can develop 'the four Rs' of BLP (resilience, resourcefulness, reflectiveness, and reciprocity) in their learners. Educators encourage learning power through what they value, how they talk with their learners about learning and attainment, and how they model learning (Aubrey & Riley 2016:191). This, Claxton (2002b:34) argues, is achieved by educators explaining, commenting, orchestrating, and modelling from the perspective of the subject. These four aspects are significant factors in developing learning power. Some of Claxton's practical aspects will be implemented in this study, for example, creating a display in the art classroom that depicts finished affirmation art activities and developing plans and activities the learners have made to show the creative process involved. Claxton (2006:353) suggests this would give authenticity and significance to the creative-affirmation process.

2.3.5 Educator impact on learner self-efficacy

In his studies, Bandura (1993) comments on the educator's role in developing a child's self-efficacy. Educators who create environments where learners are taught to believe that

learning can be acquired, have developed a system where self-efficacy can be developed. This confidence in abilities can equip learners with the motivation and determination to face and persevere through challenges (Bandura 1993). In addition, educators can help their learners acquire cognitive skills to tackle diverse problems by teaching thinking, the same way that academic material should be instructed. Bandura (1986:139–140) says:

Guided mastery series as the principal vehicle for the cultivation of competences. In this approach, cognitive modelling and instructive aids are used to convey relevant knowledge and strategies in graduated steps. Diverse opportunities are provided for guided practice in when and how to use cognitive strategies in the solution of diverse problems. Activities, incentives, and personal challenges are instructed in ways that ensure self-involving motivation and continual improvement. Instructive aids are progressively reducing as learners' competencies are expanded. Self-directed mastery experiences are then arranged to strengthen and generalize the sense of personal efficacy.

According to Bandura (1993:125), "learning environments that construe ability as an acquirable skill, deemphasize competitive social comparison, and highlight self-comparison of progress and personal accomplishments are well suited for building a sense of efficacy that promotes academic achievement". The emphasis on personal reflection and progress is a situation where a strong self-efficacy is nurtured. Comparing learners' abilities and successes to those of their peers, can have a detrimental effect on their perspective of learning. Educators need to provide learners with opportunities to reflect upon their accomplishments and set goals for the future. Schunk (1990) has spent time looking at "the direct correlation between goalsetting and levels of self-efficacy". The integration of feedback and goal setting promoted "the best sense of control over their comprehension, which can raise self-efficacy" (Schunk 1990:72). The combination of feedback and goal setting in artistic practice can therefore affect self-efficacy. Schunk's (1990) primary findings were that when educators assist learners in setting specific learning goals, learners are more likely to build self-efficacy to regulate and motivate learning. The goals set should be precise performance goals due to the fact, "specific goals boost performance by a great specification of the amount of effort required for success and the self-satisfaction anticipated" (Schunk 1990:74). Schunk (1990) also says that educator feedback on assessment could affect motivation for future challenges. If learners feel that their educator will only praise them for high test scores, they will feel less likely to study if they doubt performing well. In contrast, Schunk (1990) found that when educators enter into dialogue with learners about their goals, the educators can help learners recognise their capabilities and set challenging, yet achievable, objectives. After successfully reaching a problematic goal, learners will realise the most growth and this may lead to solid self-efficacy (Richardson 2017:1).

Zimmerman (1990) approached the question of self-efficacy by interviewing high-school learners on the ways that they face academic problems. He found that the learners who incorporated "self-regulating skills" into their work, were the most successful in "facing academic problems". Zimmerman (1990:7) defines self-regulating skills as "the ability of a person 'to seek out information when needed and take the necessary steps to master it'". Zimmerman (1990) argues that when an educator instructs a content framework alongside a self-regulating strategy, learners can achieve higher academic success and transfer those skills to other lessons. This helps learners reflect on, not only what they are learning, but how they are learning it. The realisation of how, builds self-efficacy that can then be applied to other learning opportunities. Learners "become more likely to seek out other opportunities to apply their newly found learning strategy" (Zimmerman 1990). Self-regulating strategies in this sense can be seen as self-reflective skills, as self-reflection enables learners to reflect on their artistic choices and adjust the seen shortcomings with external resources. If self-efficacy develops in art classrooms, that same development may affect other subject areas. By

providing art learners with self-reflective skills during art-making, learners gain self-efficacy that will transfer into other artistic achievements. The learners are equipped with specific tools to help them embrace challenging problems throughout their lives. Bandura (1990) emphasises that the “feedback that learners receive directly impacts the learners' views of self”. Educators should create feedback that emphasises the learner's growth and progress, instead of weaknesses. If the assessment only examines the learner's academic inadequacies, learners will be directed to focus on their present deficiencies instead of the progress possible in the future (Bandura 1986). Educator feedback should model how learners approach their learning. Feedback should be given on the product that the learner produces and the thought process behind the work. Hargrove (2012) describes the importance of assessing cognitive development. In his mind, “[a]ssessment is utilized as a tool to create the optimal educational experience for learners. It serves first to make learners aware of the level of ... thinking that they are practising and then of what is needed to reach a higher level” (Hargrove 2012:22). Art educators should ensure that they are helping their learners see their artistic growth and their cognitive growth (Hargrove 2012). “This recognition of growth will empower learners to set growth goals in the future and grow their self-efficacy” (Hargrove 2012:22). After looking at what educators can do to build self-efficacy, one can take a more in-depth look at the assessment in art education and how that affects self-efficacy.

2.3.6 Assessment in art education

Art assessments embody self-reflective principles. Freeman (2002) looked at general beliefs, assumptions, and implementations of art assessments by secondary art educators and learners. His primary goal was to determine whether the educators were genuinely performing authentic assessments and whether the learners understood it the same way as the educator intended. Freeman (2002:3) defines authentic assessment as assessments that “include[s] recording evidence of the learning process, applications in products, perception of visual relationships, integration of new knowledge, reflecting on one's progress, and interpreting meaning in consideration of contextual facts”. Freeman (2002) found that most educators did not understand the term “authentic assessment”. He also found that most educators in his study measured the success of art projects based upon standards. When Freeman (2002) compared learners' responses to the same question, Freeman notes that the learners' understanding of authentic assessment varied from each other and this could be from diversified approaches of educators. After analysing his data, a significant finding was a discrepancy between the educators' and learners' understanding of “authentic assessments”. Freeman (2002) recommends that educators receive more training on implementing practical, authentic assessments. Freeman (2002:57) suggests, “as educators, we need to consider how to make the evaluation process more integral to instruction and learning, less likely to derail the process and more learner-centred”. This recommendation can be fulfilled by further exploring “authentic assessments” and integrating them into the learning process.

Learners should consider their artwork in the same way craftsmen and professional artists approach their work. The educator must be sure that they are not viewing the artwork produced as the sole production of their classroom. Instead, the educator should view the learner's work as evidence of how the learner develops as an artist. Dorn's (2003) findings and reflections pose that most professional artists evaluate their artwork in a “reflective, progressive nature instead of using fixed criteria like elements and principles of art”. In this way, most professional artists have developed a solid self-efficacy to evaluate their progress (Richardson 2017:31). Suppose educators do not use criteria that encourage reflection and goal setting for future progress. In that case, an opportunity will be missed to encourage artistic

development and growth of self-efficacy in learners. Using authentic assessment within the design of art education, learners will be encouraged to produce art that “communicate ideas, captivate the imagination, contextualize information, provide open frames for viewing the world, and widen perspectives” (Diket 2003:173).

2.3.7 Praxis

According to Freire, praxis is a human activity that consists of action and reflection upon the world (Allsup 2003:158). Freire believed praxis to be transformational (Allsup 2003:162). Torres and Mercado (2004:60) define praxis as “an ongoing process in which reflection, including theoretical analysis, enlightens action, and in turn, the transformed action changes our understanding of the object of our reflection”. Therefore, praxis can be interpreted as the process of putting theory or something one has learned, into action, practise or experimentation. The influence on agency is in line with this idea. Learners reflect via the affirmation activities; they take this reflection and combine the knowledge of their capabilities and apply them to their artistic practice, influencing their self-efficacy and ‘transforming’ their agency. New knowledge can be formed and developed when practice is applied in light of theory within an educational context. Old knowledge can be challenged, while probing further research to be conducted (Motake 2020:20).

One encourages the learners to engage with prior knowledge through the process of praxis. The theories provided from textbooks, notes and books in the class and the skills they have learned up to that point form a basis on which learners could construct knowledge. They could make better sense of their prior (textbook) knowledge and skills once they put their personal, positive, artistic attributes on paper, practically through the activities. In addition, the collaging activity could help them reflect on their world, cultural background, and previous knowledge. The concept of praxis was relevant to this study because the learners could play, create new possibilities for themselves, form new knowledge, and engage in the research. The learners were thus able to contribute to creating new artistic knowledge due to their critical reasoning around prior knowledge, self-knowledge, and reflection.

2.3.8 The hidden curriculum

Gordon (1988:425) defines the hidden curriculum as “the unintended messages transmitted by the physical and social structure of the school and by the teaching process itself”. It refers to the unspoken or implicit values, behaviours, and norms in the educational setting (Alsubaie 2015:125). In simpler terms, the hidden curriculum is what learners learn without educators intending or realising it (Zorec & Došler 2015: 105). Alsubaie (2015:125) notes that the hidden curriculum is an “implicit curriculum that expresses and represents attitudes, knowledge, and behaviours, which are conveyed or communicated without conscious intent; it is conveyed indirectly by words and actions that are part of the life of everyone in a society”. Thus, members of a society can rediscover what is considered sacred and valuable in that society by engaging in the hidden curriculum (Gordon 1988:426). The hidden curriculum is a concept that was a large part of this study, because learners encountered different challenges and discovered new knowledge as they explored. Whether the experiences were positive or negative, each learner’s individual experience was unique to them. As a result, they could form different understandings of the uses of control in their artistic practice.

Edwards and Carmichael (2012: 577) refer to three different aspects of the notion of the hidden curriculum, namely: (1) a kind of “indoctrination that attempts to maintain social privilege”; (2)

the “subtle effects of the setting in which formal education occurs”; (3) the “unstated rules for necessary completion of formal education studies”. These concepts exist within the hidden curriculum and art education. First, certain expectations and rules ground the creation of art at the high school level. Secondly, society indoctrinates the idea of ‘perfection’ and what perfect art looks like. Learners were negatively affected by this expectation which is set to maintain societal standards. Thirdly, this indoctrination was subtly covered under the camouflage of marks and the ambition to achieve academically in high school (formal education) to get into tertiary education. This brings us to the last point: learners are often told that tertiary education is needed to be successful in life. Being able to manipulate learners into this fear of not being ‘perfect’ or ‘successful’, is an important feature of the hidden curriculum in art education.

2.4 Synthesis

In the theoretical perspectives chapter, I explored the internal aspects of influencing self-efficacy to build agency, including theory on understanding the background of self-efficacy, understanding agency through self-efficacy, agency and affirmation, agency and art, and agency and art in adolescents, after I explored the external aspects of developing self-efficacy to shape agency through theory. This discussion included globalisation, globalisation and art, global citizenship, learning to learn learning perspective, educator impact on learner self-efficacy, assessment in art education, praxis and the hidden curriculum. I examined both internal and external influences on the development of solid academic self-efficacy. In the next chapter, the methodology for this research is presented.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3. Introduction

According to Marshall and Rossman (2016:20), arts-based or arts-informed research indicates that artistic processes or artistic pieces are integrated in the development, data collection, and/or analysis of the project, or that they are being used to exemplify results. As with the nature of arts-based and art-informed research, this study considered how colouring, collaging and writing of art learners could reasonably lead to evidence of the research's aims. The rest of this chapter is dedicated to discussing the research approach and paradigm, the research design and the sample selection. Additionally, the data collection is presented, together with ethical considerations and finally, the data analysis.

3.1 Research approach and paradigm

The research was conducted within an interpretive ontology, referring to a "worldview that claims that understanding (to know) is a process of psychological reconstruction" (Maree 2010:63). As human beings gain sensory information through their senses, this information needs to be interpreted for reality to exist for the individual. This implies a subjective epistemological assumption which maintains that knowledge is created through social interaction. This, in turn, implies that multiple realities exist, and consequently, studies within this paradigm "generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them" (Maree 2010:63). Because this study was concerned with a "postmodern educational paradigm", it was expected that this research should correlate with "postmodern thinking", which supports the idea that reality is "socially constructed" (Maree 2010). This assumption supported using a mode of inquiry (a case study) located in "interpretivism", which enabled one to access the "participants' experiences" (Joubert 2015:59–60).

3.2 Research design

This study was an empirical study based on that which was experienced and observed. Therefore, this study was based on qualitative research as the information was "about persons' lives, lived experiences, behaviours, emotions, and feelings, as well as about organizational functioning, social movements and interactions between body and mind" (Skerrett 2008:143). This study also followed inductive reasoning, where general principles were developed from specific and concrete observations supported by theoretical explanations (Skerrett 2008:146).

Furthermore, this research design needed to lead to the question: How did affirmation art affect Grade 10 to 12 art learners' agency and self-efficacy over their art-making process? The conducted case study was an intensive investigation of a single unit of individuals (Grade 10 to 12 art learners) for a particular reason or case (gaining agency over the art-making process through affecting self-efficacy). This unit was small in size, thus in-depth exploration could be done, but findings could not be generalised (Skerrett 2008:145). In this specific case, twelve participants from three grades, Grades 10 to 12 from a particular school, were part of the case study.

Apart of the research design, sample selection and data collection is discussed further.

3.2.1 Sample selection

The sample was selected at a high school with art as a subject choice for Grade 10 to 12 learners. The school was selected based on three factors. Firstly, the chosen school was the only school in my vicinity that provides art as a subject to Grade 10 to 12 learners. Therefore, the ages of the sample group (Grades 10 to 12: fifteen to eighteen years old) formed part of the primary focus of this study and acted as qualifying criterium. Secondly, the particular school had a small enough group of learners to fit the in-depth criteria of this proposed study. A low learner-educator ratio allowed me to interact intensively with the learners during data collection. Due to Covid-19 regulations, the small classes were efficient for communication with masks and social-distancing protocols. Lastly, the particular school where data collection took place, was easily accessible to me, as it was my former high school, and I knew the principal and most of the educators.

This is a private school in the Free State, with an estimated learner-educator ratio of 7:1 in Grades 10 to 12. A sample selected of approximately twelve learners was included across the three targeted grades. The school has a majority of black South African learners from privileged homes and whose primary language of communication is English. It needed to be pointed out that this school fits into a South African demographic for three reasons. Firstly, the school rewards bursaries to less fortunate learners, which provides the participation of lower-income socio-economic groups. Secondly, the school takes pride in the fact that it is the only school in the district that encourages foreign learners to study here and sustains a ratio of 1:22 non-South African learners to South African learners (SASW 2020). Lastly, the school represents multiculturalism and racial diversity statistically similar to that of South Africa. As mentioned above, most of the learners at the school are black, and a small number are international learners. This demographic was similar to the larger South African population as the population groups included black South Africans at 79.2 per cent, white South Africans at 8.9 per cent, coloured South Africans at 8.9 per cent, Indian/Asian South Africans at 2.5 per cent, and other South Africans at 0.5 per cent, to form a total of 100 per cent (Stats SA 2016:5).

The sample was six males and six females, and one male was openly homosexual. Three of the males were black individuals, one was Xhosa (10M1), one was Zulu (12M2) and the other was a foreign learner from Lesotho (12M3). Two of the other three males were white individuals, one English-speaking (10M2) and one Afrikaans-speaking (12M1). The last male in the sample was from Lebanon (11M1). Three of the females were black individuals, one Xhosa (12F3), one Zulu (11F2) and the other was a foreign student from Zimbabwe (11F1). One of the other three females was a white individual, Afrikaans-speaking (12F2). Another female was Portuguese (12F1) and the last female was a foreign Chinese learner (11F3). All learners were able to speak and write fluent English throughout the lessons and activities.

This sample was the result of non-probability sampling, as individuals from all schools in the vicinity did not have an equal chance of being selected. It was also a purposive selection as participants were Grade 10 to 12 learners who chose art as a career-guiding subject (Denzin & Lincoln 2000). Using learners from Grades 10 to 12 and not just learners from one grade decreased sampling bias as there was variance in the data obtained from the sample. Including learners from three grades allowed for the sample size to be increased.

3.2.2 Data collection

It is important to note that all these affirmation activities and reflective activities took place under my supervision. The educator was absent from the class, but on standby in the staffroom if needed in an emergency. The educator's absence was required as her presence

may have negatively affected the outcome of the data that the learners produced. This negative effect was due to the concern that the educator's presence may have influenced the learners' responses, considering that the educator was seen to be in a position of authority over the learners. The educator's expression of authority over adolescent learners could have affected their expression of agency in the process. Even though I also had a position of authority as a researcher and an adult, my role was less recognised as an authority and disciplinarian by the learners. I was an unknown entity, asking them to do an activity unrelated to schoolwork, and the activity was not being marked.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, a contingency plan was put in place to collect the required data. In the case of school closure due to Covid-19 restrictions, my study would have been conducted via the online platform on which the school operated. Explanations and introductions to activities would have been done via video. The consent forms, affirmation art activities, cards and reflective report pages would have been distributed together with schoolwork in the form of digital copies. As normal school days returned, hopefully, so would have the reports, cards, consent forms and activities. Learners could also email photographs of their work to me. Any interviews would have been conducted via the given virtual class methods at the school, Google Meet. This contingency plan would have excluded class observations that could have affected the study negatively. Fortunately, these contingency plans did not need to be implemented as the school continued as normal with all the necessary COVID-19 regulations in place.

This segment further looks at the data collection process, self-reflective open-ended questionnaires, affirmative art colouring activity, mid-week emoji feeling cards, affirmation art collaging activity, the educator interview and classroom observations.

3.2.2.1 Data collection process

Data collection began on 26 July 2021 and continued until 13 August 2021, a three-week period. The first week was used for consent forms to be handed out and taken back. During the two weeks, the various activities for data collection took place. Each grade had five lessons of one hour each per week. In each lesson, the data collection took ten minutes. In three of the ten lessons the data collection took twenty minutes, which is explained below. In the Grade 10 lessons, two learners were present. In the Grade 11 lessons, four learners were present and in the Grade 12 lessons, six learners were present. The data collection process that followed, was divided into ten steps that took place over three weeks. The steps and explanation of each step, follow.

In the first week I introduced myself and the activities to the three different grades.

1) Parental or guardian consent forms were handed out to the learners to give to their parents or guardians to seek approval to do the activities with the learners. The consent forms outlined the purpose of the research, informed them about the affirmation art activities in the classroom space, that participation was voluntary and what the beneficial qualities of the activities could entail for their children. The learners received a consent form containing the above information, clearly stating that the activities were not for marks or assessment, what they wrote or created would be confidential and anonymous when used in the research and stating that, only if their parents allowed participation, the learners could participate. All learners participated in the activities, as it formed part of their art education experience. The parents and learners had the option to decline the inclusion of their data in the thesis. In this step, the

Grade 10 to 12 art educator was approached and asked to participate in an interview consisting of questions about her role as an art educator and her involvement in the art-making practices of her art learners during the handing out of the parental or guardian consent forms. The educator was chosen for her knowledge of art and her knowledge of the learners. The art educator was also asked to sign a consent form. The consent form outlined the purpose of the research, informed her about the affirmation activities that took place in her classroom space in her absence, that her participation in an interview was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any point of the study without reason, and thirdly, asked permission for the study to take place in her classroom space. After the forms were handed back, all participants received a copy of their own and their parent or guardian's signed consent forms. After handing out the consent forms, I reminded the learners to return the consent forms before the end of the week, and on the last day, I reminded the learners to bring colour pencils for the next week.

2) Once sample size was established, and participation of the educator was established, I interviewed the art educator to investigate how the Grade 10 to 12 art learners' art-making process was influenced by their trust in their capabilities to produce artworks (self-efficacy), whether some learners seemed more uncomfortable in the classroom environment while making artworks, and lastly, how she would or did approach this situation. The interview was semi-structured as specific questions were designed, but could lead to a more in-depth field of enquiry.

This interview included, but was not limited to, these questions:

Do the learners need much guidance when starting new artworks? If so, why do you think this is?

Do the learners ask for much guidance during the art-making process? If so, why do you think this is?

Do you think most learners feel assured in their skills? If not, why do you think this is?

Do most of the learners feel comfortable working on their artworks in the classroom with fellow learners? If so, why do you think this is?

How do you approach a situation where a learner doubts his or her capabilities?

How do you comfort a learner that is questioning his or her choices while making the artwork?

Is there anything else you can think of that you have noticed that influences a learner's agency in the classroom environment?

Do you think agency/self-efficacy is an essential aspect for feeling competent in making artworks? If so, why do you think so?

On the Monday of the second week we started with a colouring activity, together with a written report, and the Friday ended with a colouring activity accompanied by a feeling card. During the rest of the weekdays the colouring activities were completed.

3) At the beginning of the week, I reminded the learners of non-assessment and confidentiality aspects of this project. During the first session of the second week, learners used twenty minutes of their last art period. The first ten minutes were spent writing a reflective report consisting of an open-ended questionnaire written on pages with the established questions. I collected these pages at the end of the ten minutes. The first reflective reports investigated how art learners felt about their art and capabilities. The report asked three questions, but these reflective reports included, but were not limited to, these questions:

> How do you feel before starting a new artwork (when you receive a new project assignment)?

> How do you feel during the making process of your artwork?

> When looking at the finished artwork, how do you feel about it?

4)The second ten minutes were used to do the colouring activity. At the end of this week, each learner would have made five A6-size affirmation colouring pages. The activity consisted of an affirmation colouring, A6 in size, which I supplied. Each learner brought along their colouring pencils. I also brought three extra packets of colouring pencils. Colouring pages were handed out to each learner and taken in at the end of each activity by me. Using their pencils with every activity served as a controlled variable together with the seating positions of the learners. Keeping these variables controlled will help the learners to feel secure in their environment with a familiar 'tool' and keep them focused on the activity in front of them. Learners were left to sit at their original seats as it served as environmental control and was distanced from each other due to Covid-19 regulations. Each colouring page was marked with the learner's name to ensure order when organising the activities for analysis. A different affirmation colouring activity was done each day for ten minutes, as explained above. The affirmation colouring activity was to remind learners of their excellent qualities and inspire positive thoughts.

5)After every affirmation colouring activity, I put up the colouring pages in the classroom. As learners entered the class, I observed their reactions to their affirmation art being displayed in class every day. After completing the activities, the learners were encouraged to look at each other's work that was put up in the classroom anonymously to encourage introspection further. This consisted of quick, generalised grade write-ups from my observations. At the end of the week, I had one short report of this observed behaviour over five days.

6)At the end of this week, I reminded the learners again of non-assessment and confidentiality aspects of this project. In the last session of the second week, learners used twenty minutes of their last art period. The first ten minutes were spent on their affirmation colouring pages, as explained above. The last ten minutes were used as a mid-study progress report for the project. To establish progress, I handed out A6-size feeling cards with an empty drawn circle. The card asked how the week's activities made them feel. Therefore, the learners used the circle to draw their emoji of how the affirmation activities of the week made them feel and wrote one word to say why the activity made them feel that way. The emoji feeling cards were also marked with names by the learners and taken in by me. At the end of the lesson, I asked learners to please pack a pair of scissors and a glue stick for the next week.

The Monday to Thursday of the third week started with a collaging activity, and the Friday ended with a collaging activity accompanied by a written report.

7)During the Monday session of the third week, learners used twenty minutes of their last art period. The first ten minutes were spent explaining the collaging activity that they were doing for the next week for ten minutes each day, which was affirmation collaging. The last ten minutes was used to do the first affirmation collaging activity. After stimulating them the previous week, this activity functioned as a confirmation or declaration of the learner's own positive attributes and capabilities. Each learner had ten minutes to decide on a one-word personal positive affirmation and create an A6-sized word collage of the word. Each learner received an A6-size piece of black paper on which to do the activity, a quarter of a magazine with which to do the activity and had brought a pair of scissors and a glue stick as instructed the previous week. (Glue sticks and scissors are basic school stationery that was required to be bought at the beginning of the year on stationary lists, and therefore was not an external requirement). I supplied the A6-size pieces of black paper and a quarter of a magazine for each learner. With each activity, each learner got a new quarter of a magazine. I also brought

four extra glue sticks and scissors. Learners were left to sit at their original seats as it served as an environmental controlled variable and distanced from each other due to Covid-19 protocols. Keeping this variable controlled also helped the learners to feel secure in their environment and to keep them focused on the activity in front of them. Each A6-size piece of black paper was marked by each learner with their name to make after-study analysis more efficient. Learners were required to collage a different personal positive affirmation each day. At the end of this week, each learner had produced five affirmation collages each. On each school day of the third week, affirmation collage activities took place at the end of the art period for ten minutes, as explained above.

8) After every affirmation colouring activity, I put up the collaging pages in the classroom. As learners entered the class, I observed their reactions when seeing their affirmation art displayed every day. After completing the activities, the learners were encouraged to look at each other's work that was put up in the classroom anonymously to encourage introspection further. This consisted of quick, generalised grade write-ups from my observations. At the end of the week, I had one short report of this observed behaviour over five days.

9) During the last session of the third week, learners used twenty minutes of their last art period. The first ten minutes were spent on doing their last affirmation collage, as explained previously. The second ten minutes were spent writing a reflective report, written on pages with the established open-ended questions. I collected these pages at the end of the ten minutes. The reflective reports allowed the art learners to reflect on how they felt after the activities of the previous two weeks. The report asked four questions. These reflective reports included, but were not limited to, these questions:

- > How did you feel about doing these activities during the two weeks, and why?
- > How did the affirmation art activities make you feel about yourself?
- > Would you continue doing the activities on your own (why or why not)?
- > Would you recommend these affirmation art activities to your friends (why or why not)?

10) I thanked the art learners, each with a Thank you appreciation card at the end of the three weeks.

3.2.2.2 Self-reflective open-ended questionnaires

Self-reflection and open-ended questionnaires work together. Self-reflection (also known as 'personal reflection'), is taking the time to "think about, meditate on, evaluate, and give serious thought to your behaviours, thoughts, attitudes, motivations, and desires" (Browning 2016). The open-ended questionnaires allowed the learners to formulate a response about their reflections and express it verbally or in writing (Züll 2016:1). In the open-ended questionnaires, the participants were not steered in a particular direction by predefined response categories (Züll 2016:1), but rather dove deeper into their reflections. Answering self-reflective open-ended questionnaires allowed learners to analyse their lives on both macro- and micro-levels (Finn & Molloy 2021:174). At a macro-level, learners could evaluate the overall trajectory of their artistic practice and understand why they felt the way they did about creating art. At a micro-level, they could see where they were headed, determine whether they were happy with the direction, and adjusted their direction as necessary (Browning 2016). In these self-reflective open-ended questionnaires, the micro-level was important as self-efficacy determines how much the learners believe in their capabilities and their happiness in their artistic practice. At a micro-level, learners could evaluate their responses to circumstances and events and write about them in the questionnaires. Browning (2016) talks about personal reflection:

Reflection is a deeper form of learning that allows us to retain every aspect of any experience, be it personal or professional — why something took place, what the impact was, whether it should happen again — as opposed to just remembering that it happened. It is about tapping into every aspect of the experience, clarifying our thinking, and homing in on what really matters to us.

The thoughts of Reja, Manfreda, Hlebec and Vehovar (2003:159) were deemed appropriate in the use of open-ended questionnaires for self-reflection, as the responses that learners could give would be spontaneous. The lack of bias in how the questions in the questionnaires were worded, omitted suggesting responses to the participants. The questionnaires were presented in hardcopy to be filled in by the learners before and after their affirmation activities. The questionnaires were then kept safe by the researcher for data analysis. This data collection method was chosen as it was both quantitative and qualitative in approach and enabled the counting of how many participants chose 'yes' or 'no' answers and their personal opinions and views about their artistic practice.

3.2.2.3 Affirmative art colouring activity

As briefly stated in the data collection process, the affirmation colouring activity reminded learners of their good qualities and stimulated thoughts by colouring in a circularly structured images with increasing affirmation quotes. The affirmative colouring activities introduced the learners to mindfulness through colouring. Evidence for the success of mindfulness-based interventions for adolescents' well-being and mental health is growing, specifically within educational settings (Hutchinson, Huws & Dorjee 2018:3935). "Mindfulness" is defined as taking the time to pay attention to the present moment, which can affect mental well-being and influence the capacity to deal with emotions (Kabat-Zinn 2003).

One form of mindfulness-based intervention is colouring, specifically colouring structured circles composed of small symmetrical shapes. Colouring these shapes encourages "focused attention and awareness of current experiences and emotions" (Carsley & Heath 2018:252). The learners focused on colouring little details rather than focusing on intrusive and troubling thoughts, thus it is an effective way to de-stress and be mindful. The circular shape of the colouring designs was also indicative of the self: the end of the individuation process, of striving towards a psychic wholeness and self-realisation (Julien 1996:71).

When introducing affirming quotes into this colouring, this activity affected the self-efficacy of the learners. Quote colouring pages were designed to be coloured in for at least 10–20 minutes, where learners were focused on the present moment, with stimulating and motivational words (Educators' resource force 2019: <http://www.quotecolouringpages.com/>). The affirming quotes were handed out in increasing levels of positive affirmation, which started with self-compassion and ended with self-confidence in who they were.

"I give myself the gift of time, to learn".

"There are no mistakes, only great learning opportunities".

"I will create for the sake of joy, not for other people's approval".

"I am a worthy person; my abilities do not equate my worthiness".

"I love and accept myself as I am right now".

The positive phrases on these affirmation colouring activities were affirming. As the learners were colouring them in, they could reflect on them and think about applying it to their lives (Educators' resource force 2019: <http://www.quotecolouringpages.com/>).

3.2.2.4 Mid-week emoji feeling cards

We live in a digital society that provides a range of opportunities for virtual interaction. Consequently, "emojis have become popular for clarifying communication" (Kaye, Malone & Wall 2016:66). This presented an exciting opportunity to interact with emotions through drawing emojis, as this new adolescent generation feels comfortable connecting and expressing concepts and ideas through shorthand emoticons (Novak, Smailović, Sluban, Mozetič & Perc 2015:1). Emojis are a common substitute for natural facial expressions and, in specific contexts, like the emoji feeling cards, "transport information beyond emotions, reflecting interindividual differences or social aspects" (Weiß, Gutzeit, Rodrigues, Mussel & Hewig 2019:1). The mid-week emoji feeling cards were a fun and contextualised way to investigate how the learners felt halfway through the study.

3.2.2.5 Affirmation art collaging activity

As briefly stated in the data collection process, this activity functioned as a confirmation or declaration of the learners' positive attributes and capabilities after stimulating them in the affirmation colouring activity. Collage and introspection were combined to affirm the learners' personal, positive, artistic attributes. The basic idea of collages was that various found objects from a magazine, such as ready-made texts, images, or other objects, were taken and reassembled into compositions, affirming attributes (Kangasa, Krivonosb, Perheentupac & Särmä 2019:361). Collages were also an easy art form making the medium suitable for pedagogic purposes, using low-tech utilities like glue, scissors, paper and found objects in magazines (Kangasa, Krivonosb, Perheentupac & Särmä 2019:363). Furthermore, and very important to the study, collaging did not require specific artistic training or refined artistic skills and therefore the learners did not feel intimidated or scared.

Collage was embraced by learners that felt threatened by artistic ability. The less structured materials of collage allowed the learners to cross the bridge from insecurity to creativity. Raffaelli and Hartzell (2016:25) state "collage seems to address concerns about failing, being judged, and not being in control, and to allow for the expression of strengths". Collage offered enough structure to be supportive and independent to develop autonomy (Moriarty 1973:1), promoting freedom of choice and artistic expressions (Gussak & Rosal, 2016:164). This freedom of expression and autonomy that came with collaging, links with individuality and personal agency with developing self-efficacy. According to Malone and Rosal (1993:22), collage as a beneficial tool complements the process of individuation and the drive towards wholeness.

3.2.2.6 Educator interview

In-depth interviewing is a qualitative research technique involving intensive individual interviews with a small number of participants to explore their perspectives on a particular idea, programme, or situation. Ozdemir and Koc (2012:116) highlight that the primary advantage of in-depth interviews is that they "provide much more detailed information than what is available through the other data collection methods". Conducting an in-depth interview

may also provide a more relaxed atmosphere in which to collect information. The advantages of interviews are that the data is quick to collect, and follow-up and clarification of responses are immediate (Marshall & Rossman 2016:150). In addition, the art educator felt more comfortable having a conversation about her art learners instead of filling out a lengthy questionnaire. Ultimately, doing an in-depth interview with the art educator helped collect more detailed information about her thoughts and perspectives in a relaxed atmosphere where she felt comfortable and free to express her opinions without feeling judged or exposed. During the interview, it was also easy to see how the educator truly felt about certain issues and specific learners through observing body language. The interview was conducted in the educator's art classroom at the school during school hours. This was done so that the educator did not need to be inconvenienced with arranging an after-school appointment and that the educator was in an environment conducive to the questions asked. This interview lasted for approximately thirty minutes and was voice recorded to capture the interview, and no video footage was recorded during the interview. This was to ensure that anonymity was preserved and that the educator felt comfortable answering the interview questions.

3.2.2.7 Classroom observations

Shing ([s.a.]:28) defines classroom observations as a systematic inquiry to inform practice in a particular situation. During the classroom observations, I made written notes about how the learners interacted with each other, the self-reflective reports, the affirmation activities, the emoji feeling cards, each other, the activities put up in the classroom, and their art. I observed the learners' preferred techniques and mediums for creating their collages and artworks. The learners' behaviours and attitudes were carefully observed and noted during the study.

3.3 Ethical considerations

As stated by Pillay (2014:196), ethical clearance is crucial when conducting research, especially research with learners. Furthermore, definitions of ethics for consideration either explicitly or implicitly emphasise "the importance of values, moral principles and obligations, and the protection of learners from all harm and danger throughout the research process" (Pillay 2014:197). Ethical clearance was received from the Stellenbosch University ethics committee. Institutional permission was received from the selected private school to conduct the research using the art class in the school and the overall context in data collection. Before commencing with the research, ethical clearance and ethical consideration had to be considered to ensure that all participants benefited from the study. The data collected from the completed affirmation colouring and collaging activities and the cards and reports were scanned into a personal laptop and stored on the laptop. Additional copies were stored on an external hard drive as a backup. The recorded educator interview was transcribed, and both the recorded interview and transcription were saved on the personal laptop and copies stored on an external hard drive as a backup. The information file on the laptop and external hard drive was password protected as well as the laptop itself. In the case of theft, data loss, or any unforeseen occurrence regarding the technology devices, all the data mentioned above was also stored on the University's Microsoft OneDrive facilities with the needed security features. Any hardcopy paperwork from this study (activities, cards, consent forms, reports, observation write-ups, notes from the educator interview) was stored in a password protected briefcase. The briefcase accompanied the data collection weeks for data safekeeping during school hours. Only I had access to the above storage facilities, and therefore the information was protected. Artworks and reflections were returned to the learners once they were scanned.

The participants and their parents or guardians were notified that only my supervisor and myself would view and have access to their research information. The participants and their parents or guardians were also informed that they were free to withdraw from the research at any point should they wish to and if they withdraw, they would be informed that the data collected from them would have been removed from the research immediately. The participants and their parents or guardians were also made aware that participation in this research study was voluntary, that they would not receive any compensation, and that the activities could cause no harm. To protect their identities, the participants' names were not revealed in the research, and the name of the school was not revealed in the study to protect the disclosure of the participants. The information provided by the participants was kept confidential. For data capturing and analysing purposes, the participants' work was marked with an anonymity code, for example, 10F1 (Grade 10, female learner). Participants had an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and ask questions during the activities and after regarding aspects that interest them.

Digital copies of the study data and hard copies of the study data will be deleted and shredded ten years after this degree has been obtained, in accordance with the Stellenbosch University Research Data Management regulations. It should be noted that the data is only preserved for this time due to regulations and will not be shared or used in the future. The data collection procedure (including interviews and activities) took place in the art educator's classroom. To my knowledge, no harmful or extensively personal information was asked for or revealed in this data collection process.

Also note that the learners' work was anonymous in the class environment when the affirmation art activities were displayed in the class with their name and grade on the back, as the learners were instructed to write their name and grade in pencil. Displaying the learners' names in no way would add quality to the data collected, and by hiding the names and grades of the learners, anonymity could be ensured amongst peers. By omitting the names and grades of the learners, observations were based on reactions towards the affirmation activities and not the finding of fellow peer activities. When writing about the affirmation art activities in the thesis, it was anonymous, and codes (as mentioned in 4.3), instead of learners' names, were used. The researcher and supervisors only saw the learners' reflections shared through Google Drives secured, encrypted sharing services, and was not shared among the other learners or with the educator. When writing about these reflections, codes were used. Learners could choose to withdraw their reflections at any time as well.

The risk classification of this study was medium, as participants were not asked to provide any personal information and were only asked to reflect on their feelings and thoughts. The participants, therefore, could have experienced a minor degree of discomfort due to the reflection on their feelings, thoughts, and self-efficacy. In the case of any degree of discomfort of any participants, the parent or legal guardian and educator could contact the school counselling unit at Equip for life – Jenny Kowalik – 0824099015. Therefore, the counselling unit was on standby in case of this anticipated risk.

All activities took place in the art classroom, as it is a safe space that learners were used to and a space where learners could function creatively. All interactions with learners were in English as it was their preferred language and the language of the teaching medium. Learners were able to ask questions during the introduction of the research and throughout the process.

3.4 Data analysis

Data analysis is the systematic search for meaning by identifying patterns, making interpretations, and synthesising information. “It is a way to process qualitative data to communicate what has been learned to others” (Hatch 2002:148). Researchers always engage their intellectual capacities to make sense of qualitative data. In this study, the collected data was analysed through the means of inductive content analysis. The purpose of inductive content analysis is to arrive at meaning features by studying the data qualitatively and looking at how the participants experienced the affirmation art activities. The data analysing process followed the steps indicated by Creswell's Data Analysis graph in Figure 1 (Creswell 2009:82). The different answers to the reflective reports and the emoji feeling cards were grouped and studied. The observed write-ups, close inspection, and attention to detail on the affirmation art activities were also used for content analysis. Findings from the data were grouped into several topics. These topics were then consolidated into broader themes that were discussed with reference to the theoretical perspectives.

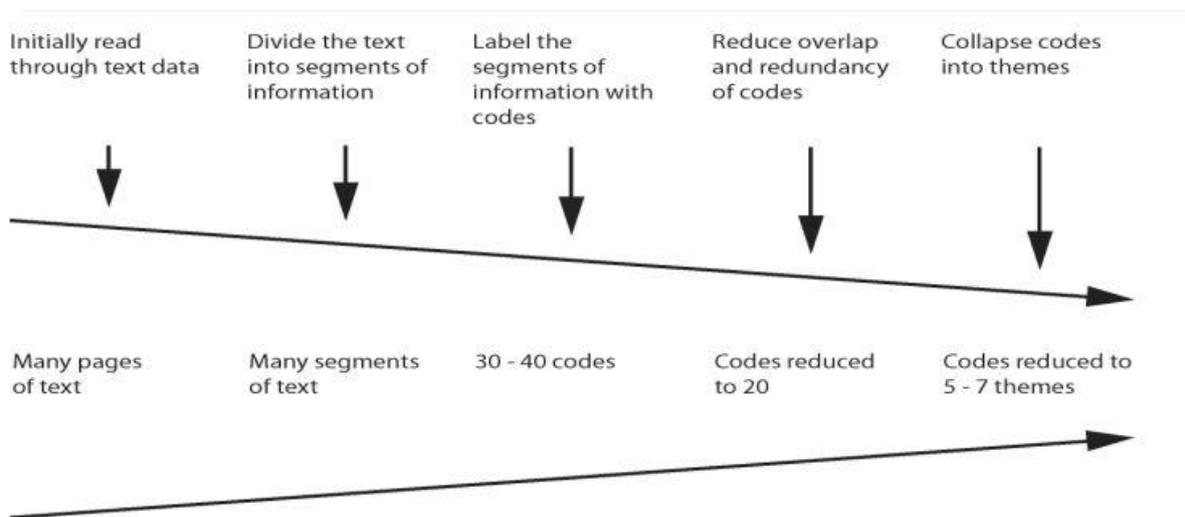


Fig 1. John W. Creswell, *Creswell's Data Analysis* (2009). Graph.

(Creswell 2009:83).

3.5 Synthesis

Through self-reflective activities, affirmation activities, observations, and an interview with the art educator, the researcher intended to understand how affirmation activities could affect Grade 10 to 12 art learners' agency and self-efficacy in their art-making.

CHAPTER 4: Data and discussion

4.1 Introduction

Given that learners with a strong self-efficacy are more engaged in the process of learning (Bandura 1993) and are more likely to demonstrate agency over their artistic practice (Code 2020), how can self-compassion and self-reflection in the form of affirmation and reflective activities affect Grade 10 to 12 art learners' agency and self-efficacy in their art-making practice? With the aim of answering the main question and the sub-questions, the main themes that were discussed involve the learners' attitudes towards their artistic practice as negative emotions, and the learners' attitudes towards the affirmation activities as positive emotions. The negative emotions segment was divided into anxious and stressed; frustration and confusion; and critical and disappointed. The positive emotions segment was divided into relaxed, motivated and enjoyable, personal and academic ability, and identity affirmation. During the data collection period, I introduced self-compassion and self-reflection in affirmative activities and self-reflective activities that encouraged learners to reflect upon their artistic capabilities and be more self-compassionate while doing these activities. Through this reflection and compassion, I hoped that learners would begin to recognise their artistic choices, leading to their achievement. According to Bandura (1986), "this might contribute to building a positive self-efficacy that would motivate self-confidence and risk-taking". Using the data collected from the open-ended questionnaires, in-depth educator interview, classroom observations, feeling cards and affirmation activities, the themes under which the data is discussed, led to a comprehensive, detailed analysis of the data presented during the study.

4.2 The learners' attitudes towards their artistic practice

The first theme covered attitudes towards their artistic practice noted during classroom observations, self-reflective reports, and the educator interview. The sub-themes elaborated under this theme, were feelings before beginning a new artwork (anxious and stressed), feelings during the creation of the new artwork (frustration and confusion), and feelings after the artwork was completed (critical and disappointed).

4.2.1 Negative emotions

To gain some information on the learner's self-efficacy before doing the affirmation and reflective activities, two steps were taken: first, the art educator was interviewed for her view of the art learners' confidence in creating their artworks, and second, the twelve Grade 10 to 12 art learners completed a pre-activity self-reflective report gathering insight on their perception of their artistic practice. There were significant associations between negative emotions and the learners' perception of their artistic practice.

4.2.1.1 Anxious and stressed

The majority of the participants indicated that starting a new artwork makes them feel anxious, stressed, and nervous. Of the learners, 8 responded 'anxiously' to how they feel before starting a new artwork, while 4 answered that they were mainly 'excited'. Some participants stated that the beginning of a new artwork was 'stressful', because they did not have any idea that linked with the theme of the given assignment and that the result would not be satisfactory.

Learner 12F1: ... but then at the same time there is also the new challenge and stress of wanting to complete something that I envisioned.” and “There is a lot of expectations ...

Learner 10M2: I feel anxious because normally I don't immediately know what I am going to do, and it takes me a long time to decide what I want to do.

Learner 12F2: I typically feel anxious to start a new project. I often fear that it would not be satisfied with the result.

Learner 11F3: ... a bit nervous it may not link or click to me in that instant as it may lead to a block in my head.

Learner 11F1: I feel stressed, nervous ... that I get to challenge myself in a new way.

Learner 11F2: I feel somewhat nervous...” and “It is always a daunting task and sometimes frustrating ...

Learner 12M3: ...nervous. I have never really accomplished any goals so that really deters me.

Learner 12F3: I feel conflicted because it's hard to come up with a new idea for a good art piece.

Most learners, not just art learners, suffer from a lack of agency over their schoolwork, due to their agency being marginalised by school standardisation. Robinson (2008:3) states that singular priority is placed on cognitive intelligence while neglecting sensory intelligence. Robinson (2008:3) further believes that schools need to move away from standardisation and cultivate creative thinking as standardised testing and standardised curricula marginalise learners to believe in their creative and artistic capabilities. Schools are losing sight of how valuable the arts are for whole-brain learning (Amorino 2009:217). Due to standardisation, learners set themselves unreachable goals and an example of how their work should look, for which they do not have the skills yet. If their work does not meet that standard, art learners feel as if they failed, their artwork was not successful, they cannot create art, and therefore indirectly, they are not capable or creative enough. Learners then stop engaging in their artistic practice, believing that they “lack talent when the truth is that they lack specific skills” (Beltowski 2015:3). In art learners' case, their tendency to enjoy art and focus on self-expression, rather than 'perfect artworks', is compromised.

Amorino (2009:214) explains that “preadolescents retain the perception that good art is characterized by technically [smart], mimetic representation, and view this as an unattainable goal”. In addition, the hesitation that art is for the talented or fears of failure steers adolescents from creating art and feeling capable (Lowenfeld & Brittan 1987). Even more dangerous is the false assumption that if one does not express “talent,” they conclude their future in the arts to be anything but successful. The learners do not trust their abilities to begin an artwork, as most expressed self-doubt in linking an artwork idea to the theme given. It appears that the learners think that a good idea is the only idea that can be taken further and become a 'good art piece'. When asking the art educator in her interview, whether the art learners need much guidance when starting new artworks, she said yes. She explained that she felt that the Grade 10 and 12 learners “should start taking responsibility for their processes and creative making”, but “that they limit themselves or that sense of fear exists if they do not push themselves. I assume that this fear is not making a perfect artwork that meets school standards.”

A large part of this fear of not being or making perfect artworks is having low self-efficacy, not trusting in their abilities, and not taking risks in their artistic practice (Bandura 1993). When asking whether the educator thought most learners feel assured in their skills, she answered optimistically that “They are comfortable enough in matric”, but “inherently in Grade 10 and 11

there is still that sense of doubtfulness that comes through because they are still trying to develop their medium or rather their confidence in the medium so there would be certain disciplines, especially drawing, that would then go and hamper that sort of confidence building". By introducing self-compassion and self-reflection, learners could do more introspection and see that their abilities and ideas were not as bad as they thought and that self-expression and growth were more important than perfection and 'good art pieces'. Self-reflection in this regard was essential, because learners needed to start learning what was vital for their personal growth and what broke their personal growth down.

Extending kindness to ourselves means we see ourselves as human beings who are wonderfully made and valuable, yet who are imperfect and make mistakes. This plays out in the way we view ourselves, speak to ourselves, listen to ourselves, care for ourselves, and respond to ourselves when we make mistakes... One of the keys to even considering kindness toward ourselves involves accepting that it is okay to be human in both having 'faults' and in having 'strengths' (Fredrickson 2015:73–74).

Without self-compassion and self-reflection, learners go through their artistic practice without thinking, moving from one thing to the next without making time to evaluate whether things are going well if they have mastered a specific skill or what parts of the artwork are successful as they 'envisioned'. The participants did not pause to think, analyse, or determine what was going well and what was not working. The unfortunate result was that they often got stuck and started thinking that they were not capable, as presented in 4.2.2. From my classroom observations, I have seen the learners jump from idea to idea, when they felt the idea is not 'good enough', and the moment the educator tried to explain elements of what would be challenging to achieve and skills they would need for the specific idea they have chosen, learners started getting fidgety, showing upset facial expressions and started researching new ideas when they went back to their seats. Instead of planning for the difficulties and practising the skills the educator pointed out that they needed, they felt angry with themselves for not choosing a 'better' idea and for not being skilled 'enough' to do the activity. The learners could be encouraged to learn self-compassion, because if they practised self-compassion, they might not have been angry with themselves, but rather might feel willing to try and achieve their original idea, even if they made mistakes, learn from those mistakes and grow from the self-expressive artwork they made.

To improve this harsh judgement of their capabilities, the art educator also commented that she tried to encourage self-compassion and self-reflection in process-based guidance in the learners' artistic practice. However, the learners' acceptance of her help in making the artwork, depended on how open they were to self-exploration. I asked the educator how she approaches a situation where learners doubt their capabilities, and she answered:

I suppose I will try the alternative working methodologies. The one learner in matric for example, I gave that large piece of paper to work on and just be free because she works very neatly, as you've seen, so she's got this sense of control and can't really step out of her boundaries although she wanted to. So, the idea was to take that large piece of paper and just explore and to be and to go both into her subconscious as she was exploring in any case, although she did not at the end of the day do that. You can offer ideas and creative ways of trying to go about things. It is whether they are going to take it and do it and sometimes they do take advice and then actually by happenstance they come across something else whether it was through a mistake while going through their creative processes. It does work sometimes just looking at different ways of creating and making but other times and again I don't know if it's a time management thing, they don't feel that exploration is valuable. So, like I said, you can give them so many ideas and maybe there is something that sparks, and they do end up going in a different direction then. It is also good as it is part of the whole cyclic process.

The “positive correlation between doubts and anxiety/depression was stronger the higher the level of self-doubt” but was strongest when self-doubt and low self-efficacy were both high (Kézdy, Martos, Boland & Horváth-Szabó 2010:39).

4.2.1.2 Frustration and confusion

Many learners indicated that they felt frustrated and confused during the making of their artworks. Out of the 12 participants, 9 reported that they struggled or got “annoyed” with the process of making and therefore did not enjoy making their artworks. Conversely, the three learners that perceived doing art positively, all commented that they felt “relaxed” when making their artworks.

Learner 12F1: Depending on the time left before the artwork should be complete, I will feel stressed if the due date is near, but it mostly eases as I engage in the artwork.” and “Most of the time I do criticize myself through the creation process and expect almost every step in creating my art piece to be perfect and again meet my standards if I feel I’m not getting where I want to I will get angry and upset with myself and will sometimes want to give up entirely.

Learner 10M2: When I know what I am doing ... When I am still not sure what exactly it is that I am doing, I don’t enjoy making art.

Learner 12M2: I feel like the more time spent on my artwork, the more tiring it becomes due to the fact that I’ve been working on a piece for a while; and as time passes by, more flaws and technical issues arise.

Learner 12F2: Other times it may be difficult for me because personal struggles are brought to my attention through not being distracted with other activities other than my art.

Learner 12M1: Depends on the process, if it’s coming along, well then it’s fine, if not then I do become a bit anxious/annoyed.

Learner 11F3: Clueless, because I don’t know what to base/begin with and if it’s going to lead to another roadblock in my head.

Learner 11F2: If I hit an obstacle, I get very frustrated ...

Learner 12M3: Stressed. I feel like giving up every time. Journal processes drain my energy. I never accomplish my goals. This is mostly my fault because I tend to procrastinate.

Learner 12F3: I feel anxious if the artwork is going to be successful or not or turn out how I want it too.

A lack of self-compassion and self-reflection causes us to keep running and keep up with things, even if things are not going well. We feel as if we are simply trying to keep our heads above water. As a result, we end up doing the same things repeatedly, even if those things are not producing the results we had hoped for (Browning 2016). This is what might be happening to these high school art learners. They seemed not to use self-compassion or self-reflect on their artistic journey and therefore kept doing art in circles, but did not feel that they were ‘accomplish[ing their] goals’, made ‘successful’ art and got ‘very frustrated’ and ‘annoyed’. This lack of self-compassion and self-reflection thus resulted in frustration and confusion, which broke down the positivity and personal power of making art. The majority of these feelings could come from academic stress, no support from family and the plenitude of changes that adolescences encounter.

Learners in high school settings face a wide range of “ongoing stressors related to academic demands” that can reduce academic achievement, decrease motivation, negatively impact on learners’ “learning capacity and academic performance, mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, sleep disturbances” and ultimately disadvantage their overall well-being (Pascoe, Hetrick & Parker 2019:104). At a point in my time at the school, I observed that one of the learners (12F1) looked distressed and was running around trying to finish work and print out work on the art classroom printer. The specific learner left her school bag and files in the class, and only after the school bell rang and their lesson was done, she fetched her things. On her return, she looked frazzled, but less stressed. I felt obligated to ask her if she was doing okay. She replied that she was under much academic stress, and because of that, she did not sleep enough, did not do any of her schoolwork to the best of her ability, and all this pressure made her feel “stupid, incapable, frustrated and tired”. She continued by explaining that she was having a difficult time at home and that everything just felt overwhelming. This seemed to be a usual thread, as one of the other learners (12F2) commented on something similar in her self-reflective report by writing that it may be difficult for her, because ‘personal struggles’ distracted her from fully committing to her art practice and that she could not solely focus on her artwork as other work and ‘activities’ loomed while she was doing art. Her home environment did not allow her to place her attention only on her art practice.

When speaking to the art educator about this, she informed me that this particular learner’s parents were not specifically keen on their daughter taking art as they both were doctors and her brother was also studying medicine, but that the learner got to matric with art as a subject and that she was the top student since Grade 10. Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987) note that adolescents felt social pressure to pursue traditional career choices due to the perpetuating view from parents that the arts were not a viable investment. I observed a presentation that the art educator did with the Grade 9s centred around a video promotion for visual arts as a subject in Grades 10 to 12. Afterwards, I asked the educator about the presentation. She explained that the Grade 9s were taking their aptitude tests that weekend and that it was her job to promote art as a subject, because the parents and some school staff members did not see the advantage of art. The value that the school placed on the arts contributes to adolescents’ and parents’ perception of the arts (Beltowski 2015:10). The emphasis of the school on art education, whether good or bad, creates an atmosphere where learners who take art could feel appreciated or unappreciated. As parents are part of general society, Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987:435) state that the parents might not consider art an essential part of learning and may have devalued art education as irrelevant or an activity of the past. With parents and society feeling this way, their children, the art learners, also feel devalued, useless and struggling.

In a schooling environment, these self-destructive thoughts have led to many insecurities and questions. In the art educator’s interview, this topic was also discussed. When asking the educator whether the learners ask for much guidance during the art-making process, she noted that they do come to her “when they do hit a stumbling block” and asked what her thoughts were, what her opinions were on some things and in that sense, it could be seen as a bit of guidance. She also indicated that the learners asked to get “the first bit going” as it was “always an issue and then from there it seems to flow and develop a bit better”. The educator noted that many learners used procrastination as a defence mechanism for their feelings of frustration, annoyance, and stress. The rest of the interview topic went as follows.

Researcher: Do you think that when they're asking, it is based on their insecurities, or do you think they ask because they have a fear of doing it incorrectly?

Educator: I think if they are inherently a perfectionist, they would need some acknowledgement from somebody else. It depends on the character of the learner whether they would ask for my opinion, and when they do, my opinion might come through more. They don't seem to trust themselves, but it depends on the learner, and if they are not comfortable with the medium. That sense of discomfort comes through as well.

Researcher: How do you comfort a learner that is questioning their choices while making their artwork?

Educator: The only way I can comfort them is to acknowledge that I have been in difficult positions with my art as well and that they are not alone in this feeling of isolation. I'll share that all artists have gone through those processes, I'll maybe share certain stories and anecdotes about past learners or fellow peers that I've taught that has also run into problems. We are all growing at different rates and it is difficult to constantly be better than our last mark, so there's going to be times where we going to plateau and where we going to take a dip, especially with what these kids are going through at their age. It's just sharing my own experiences, not as an educator but as an artist.

From this specific topic discussion and the educator's answers, I noticed that self-reflection work together with self-compassion. The educator demonstrated self-compassion indirectly in her answer to my second question and directly when she said that "... we all are growing at different stages ... especially with what these kids need to go through at their age ...". Self-compassion comes before self-reflection, as with some self-compassion, it gives the learners a kinder filter through which to view their self-reflection.

Self-compassion is essential for Grade 10 to 12 learners as it is almost like having a friend inside with whom to go through life (Fredrickson 2015:22). We are with ourselves 100 per cent of the time. The way you interact with yourself has a more significant impact than any interactions you have with others. "You have a critically important choice about whom you go through life with, will it be with a kind friend or a harsh inner critic", which some of the participants seem to have picked the latter of in 4.2.1.3 (Fredrickson 2015:22). If the learners do not yet know how to be their own friend, they might be able to learn through self-compassion activities. Imagine leading adolescents to comfort and soothe themselves through the difficulties of life, what a difference it would make to their future and specifically to their agency over their artistic practice. Art education can be a safe space where adolescents need to learn about themselves, be kind to themselves and from where to explore the world. Amorino (2009:215) says:

Adolescence is a time to explore oneself and discover a personal purpose, while at the same time, physical, emotional, and cognitive transitions are at a high. The arts cater to the multisensory modes of learning among the soul searching and self-expressive needs of adolescence... Artistic engagement naturally accommodates the needs of these individuals, who are seeking homeostasis and self-identity while experiencing a period of dramatic physical and emotional change accompanied by confusion, internal unrest, and unbalance...

4.2.1.3 Critical and disappointed

Seven participants indicated that when looking at their finished artworks, they felt that they "could have done something better" and were terribly 'critical' of their work. These participants provided the following responses:

Learner 12F1: ... often I will look at my finished artwork and depending on how much effort I feel that I put in and whether or not I met my own expectations which hasn't really happened recently, I will take it badly and feel angry and upset with myself knowing that I

could have done better. It almost lowers my self-esteem as I begin to question my ability as a person and whether I can achieve my goals or not.

Learner 10M2: ... sometimes I think that I could have done something better.

Learner 12F2: I am mostly critical of my art ...

Learner 11F3: ... not happy in the end as maybe I could have done better in making of the art piece. Happy I'm done with it ...

Learner 11F1: ... sometimes sad that I didn't use my time well.

Learner 12M3: Never satisfied. I have never worked to the very best of my abilities, thus my end-product reflects this. I acknowledge that I don't always put in more effort.

Learner 12M1: I sometimes feel regret about tiny details.

Most of these responses reflected a feeling of being stuck during the making process. The learners were glad that the artwork was done because they felt stuck and did not think the final work was worth being happy about. Most wished they did something else or "something better". The introduction of self-compassion and self-reflection in affirmation activities aimed to get these art learners unstuck. When asking the art educator whether she thought agency or self-efficacy was an essential aspect in feeling competent in making an artwork, she had a similar answer. She told me that from an older artist's perspective, "your ability to give self-affirmation and being positive does need to play a role. If you are in a negative space and again, you are not getting that sort of motivation from home/support, it could impact on your agency". She said that she did see the point of introducing the learners to self-reflection and self-compassion and that she "hope[s]" that it has had a positive impact on their ability to be creative". She further explained:

So maybe if this study was done at the beginning of the year, instead of a week before they start their prelims, it would be an interesting thing to go and compare and see the difference. Because we are all so happy at the beginning of the year where the workload is non-existent. So, it's that coping with the snowballing challenges that they all now need to juggle. That constant struggle and the constant battling effects like how you think of yourself. It also affects their capabilities and their abilities of doing art. It's sort of that intra-personal communication that we all have. I mean even myself at my age I find myself also questioning sometimes, why I constantly do this. We can rationalize it as we get older and I suppose that is the problem with them, is that they could get caught up in that moment and then believe it to be the absolute truth going forward.

Often, we become stuck because we are divided against ourselves on the inside (Fredrickson 2015:24). Let us say the learner made a mistake at school, with a friend, or with their parents. They are genuinely sorry, have apologised, and have done whatever they needed to correct the mistake. Nevertheless, they still blamed themselves, talked harshly to themselves, and could not let it go. We all get stuck like this and then have internal fights going on. The antidote to this is truth with compassion towards ourselves (Fredrickson 2015:25). Being able to forgive ourselves for our weaknesses and mistakes are part of having a compassionate relationship with ourselves. For many of us, we are the most difficult person to forgive. We are much more able to feel compassion and understanding towards others, than towards ourselves (Fredrickson 2015:25). This is often because we did not experience someone who forgave us or showed us how to forgive and be compassionate with ourselves. The introduction of self-reflection and self-compassion through the affirmation activities is a small glimpse into this territory to help these learners develop their self-efficacy and gain agency over their artistic practice.

Most criticism and self-loathing could come from external influences such as social media and the internet with access to many impressive artists. The way artists on social media portray only their best artworks, the pressure of a globalised world where learners might compare their work with what they see online and thinking that all this is reality or just 'talent', negatively influences learners (Beltowski 2015:10). The schooling system plays a significant role in equipping students for the workplace and coping in the technologically progressing world (Fischman, McLaren, Sunker & Lankshear 2005:220). The curriculum develops a system that dictates the type of knowledge the learners receive and the type of outcomes required to be acceptable in the modern world. Learners see artworks in their textbooks and might feel the need to live up to artworks like those. They see artists and their artworks while researching for their journals required by the curriculum and may feel their work must look like that to get a good mark. From these sources, learners only get globalised, fragmented and instrumentalised knowledge due to scientism. Scientism refers to the power and authority bestowed on intellectual work generated by specialists through using the education system to perpetuate the cultural assumptions or ideology of the dominant class (Fischman et al. 2005:218). Tomlinson (1991 as cited in Held et al. 1999:269) proposes that globalisation has been associated with the destruction of cultural identities and has played a role in accelerating a standardised, westernised consumer culture. Globalisation, as a form of devaluation and criticism of learners, link to the ideas of stress, societal norms and standardisation mentioned in 4.2.1.1 and 4.2.1.2, making art learners incapable of self-expressive art due to a lack of agency in their artistic practice.

Janks (2013:8) comments on how education in a globalised world needs to develop "people capable of high-level symbolic engagement and who are also creative and critical". He further states that education is meant to prepare learners "for a world of ongoing, unpredictable, and rapid change that requires deep specialised knowledge, broad general knowledge, and the ability to think independently and imaginatively" (Janks 2013:10). It further becomes evident that creativity and adaptability must be underpinned by enhanced skills and values that embrace difference and responsibility for others and the planet. Therefore, the art educator needs to utilise self-compassion and self-reflection in the art classroom in enhancing artworks that have been thought through, executed with expression and carried with personal agency. This allows learners to become individuals with purpose, self-love and agency, to make life choices that are good and do not contain doubt. Furthermore, exercising self-compassion and self-reflection daily might advance their art-making process. Consequently, the artworks produced could form a narrative of the affected self-efficacy that the learners are experiencing in their daily lives and how it helps enhance their daily agency.

4.3 The learners' response towards the affirmation activities

The second theme covers the learners' attitudes towards the affirmation and reflective activities during classroom observations, self-reflective reports, feeling cards, affirmation and reflective activities and the educator interview. The sub-themes elaborated under this theme are positive emotions. Discussed under this theme are relaxed, motivated and enjoyable, personal and academic ability, and identity affirmation. The data analysis suggested a positive association between the learner's positive emotions and the affirmation and reflective activities.

4.3.1 Positive emotions

The learners did five ten-minute sessions, and reflectively produced five affirmation colouring activities introducing self-compassion. As a mid-study reflective marker, the learners each completed a mid-study emoji feeling card. In the last week of the study, the learners completed five affirmation collaging activities introducing self-reflection in five ten-minute sessions. The learners completed a second self-reflective report that asked whether the affirmation activities influenced their artistic practice. The following data presentation addresses how introducing self-compassion and self-reflection through affirmation art activities, and self-reflective activities could have affected adolescents' self-efficacy and agency in their artistic practice.

4.3.1.1 Relaxed, motivated and enjoyable

In the last self-reflective report that the learners did after the affirmation activities, numerous participants mentioned the role of the activities as making them feel “relaxed”, “creative” and that it was “enjoyable”. On that particular note, most learners commented on how the activities helped them to take their mind off of “stress” and focus on being present in the moment. Six learners explained:

Learner 12F2: I have found it's relaxing and enjoyable. It has allowed for my mind to wander and let go of ongoing stress.

Learner 12M3: Creative because I do not usually colour or 'collage' so it has been a good challenge.

Learner 11M1: I enjoyed these activities, and it was relaxing because it was fun to look for new words.

Learner 11F1: I felt relaxed, my mind was focused on one thing that was not stressful.

Learner 11F3: Somewhat relaxing in a way and just taking time to do something that is not stressful and demanding to say the least.

Learner 12F3: I felt quite calm because it eased my mind.

However, for the affirmation activities to affect the learners more personally than just a time-passing activity that eases stress, it would be beneficial to note that some participants voiced more profound self-reflective opinions on the role of the affirmation activities in the art classroom environment. Three participants indicated that the affirmation activities had an effect on how they “perceive” art through the lens of the self-affirming activities.

Learner 12M1: I felt like a child again, because I rarely colour in shapes or make cut-outs of a magazine.

Learner 12M2: I felt quite self-aware at times about the type of person I am.

Learner 11F2: I felt that the activities made me feel more positive about making art, because I could be creative in small ways.

According to Neff (2003), self-compassion expert and co-founder of the Center for Mindful Self-Compassion, “[t]he first step in giving yourself compassion is to be aware that you are suffering, that is mindfulness”. This links with the learners experiencing less stress and less space to think anxiously during the affirmation activities. Neff (2003) continues to explain that as individuals, we do not like “to be aware when we are suffering”; we either try “problem-solving”, try to “suppress it”, or we get “lost” in the suffering and “over-identify” with it. Here the affirmation activities can play a role to stop learners from avoiding their difficult times. The

affirmation activities help the learners step outside of themselves and recognise that they are having a hard time. The affirming quotes and attributes help them realise that having a hard time is entirely normal. It takes some courage to be with ourselves and our pain and be kind towards ourselves in this time and think about the better times positively. This leads to the discussion of self-compassion and self-reflection.

By recognising their shortcomings, possibly explore more in areas of art that make them think, for example “feeling like a child” again, being “creative in small ways” and being more “self-aware”, may push them to face their artistic challenges first and then enjoy the artistic skills that came from that. These affirmation activities might have influenced self-efficacy in learners. By affecting self-efficacy, learners could likely challenge themselves with difficult tasks, be intrinsically driven, and gain a stronger sense of agency in their decisions. Learners with solid self-efficacy put forth a “high degree of effort to meet their commitments”, and they attribute failure to things that were “in their control rather than blaming external factors” (Margolis & McCabe 2006:220). Self-efficacious learners (learners with solid self-efficacy) also recovered quickly from setbacks and ultimately were likely to achieve their personal goals (Margolis & McCabe 2006:224).

Most learners, especially adolescents, are very critical and hard on themselves. This is true, especially when they think they lack something or have some defect. When talking about art learners, they usually doubt their artistic skills such as drawing, painting, and journaling, which directly translates into their perspectives of themselves. When asking the art educator whether she noticed any personal destructive behaviour in the art class that exhibited negative feelings towards their artistic practice, she replied by explaining that all the learners, especially the Grade 12 learners, “ ... pass the time on certain things like creating the content page or heading [of their visual journals] so they'll try and stay away from making the art or going through the art processes”. She further explains that this fear might exist due to thinking they are being judged, not doing art correctly or being intimidated by art they see on social media. Thus, the learners usually criticise and judge themselves as seen in 4.2.1.3 when they feel they have made a mistake, thinking it will improve things (Neff 2003). In the end, though, it does not make their artistic practice better.

Self-compassion is an alternative to self-criticism that helps one grow (Neff 2003). It consists of treating yourself kindly and recognising that you have things in common with the rest of your classmates and, for that matter, artists all over the world. By doing activities that promote self-compassion with fellow classmates, it encourages the feeling of not being alone in feeling down in hard times and that everybody goes through hard times. But it is also about accepting your own limitations and focusing on improving them, and not break them down further (Neff 2003). For example, during the second affirmation colouring activity, learner 11M1 commented that he strongly related to the quote on the colouring. The quote stated that “There are no mistakes, only great learning opportunities”. The learner further explained that he usually does not think his drawings are good enough, but this quote reminded him that they do not have to be perfect because he is still learning and exercising his drawing skills. According to the art educator, these learners tend to self-criticise rather than exercise self-compassion for their artistic practice, like learner 11M1 mentioned. The educator explained that she tries to give the learners positive feedback before negative feedback, because the learners “ ... will immediately just sit on the one negative point, never mind seeing the two to three other positive things”, and then they will “fixate on the one negative thing ... because that is the moment where they would probably judge themselves forever and a day”. In the educator’s opinion, introducing “that sense of positivity and motivation in their life”, like doing the affirmation

colouring activities, can encourage them to believe that self-compassion is ‘deserved and earned’ and learner 11M1 is an example of that. According to Neff (2003), self-compassion has, therefore, three fundamental aspects, namely, kindness toward yourself, recognition of your own humanity and focused attention, all present in these learners’ reactions towards aspects of self-compassion in the colouring activities.

In response to the participants’ opinions on the role of the affirmation activities promoting self-compassion, it can be noted that there are advantages of promoting self-compassion through quotes (Brach 2012). Brach (2012) explains that quotes can help individuals “see another perspective and find the words to express their thoughts and feelings”. Quotes can be therapeutic. They have the power to possibly motivate, influence reflection, and be a source of influence. After doing the colouring activities and in coherence with Brach (2012), Learner 12F1 commented that “... [it] is very therapeutic for me... it makes me feel capable and that I can achieve the things I want”. The colouring quote activities may have made learners show more kindness toward themselves in the midweek emoji card activity. Nine out of the 12 participants commented on how the colouring activities made them feel positive emotions (see Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5 for four examples).

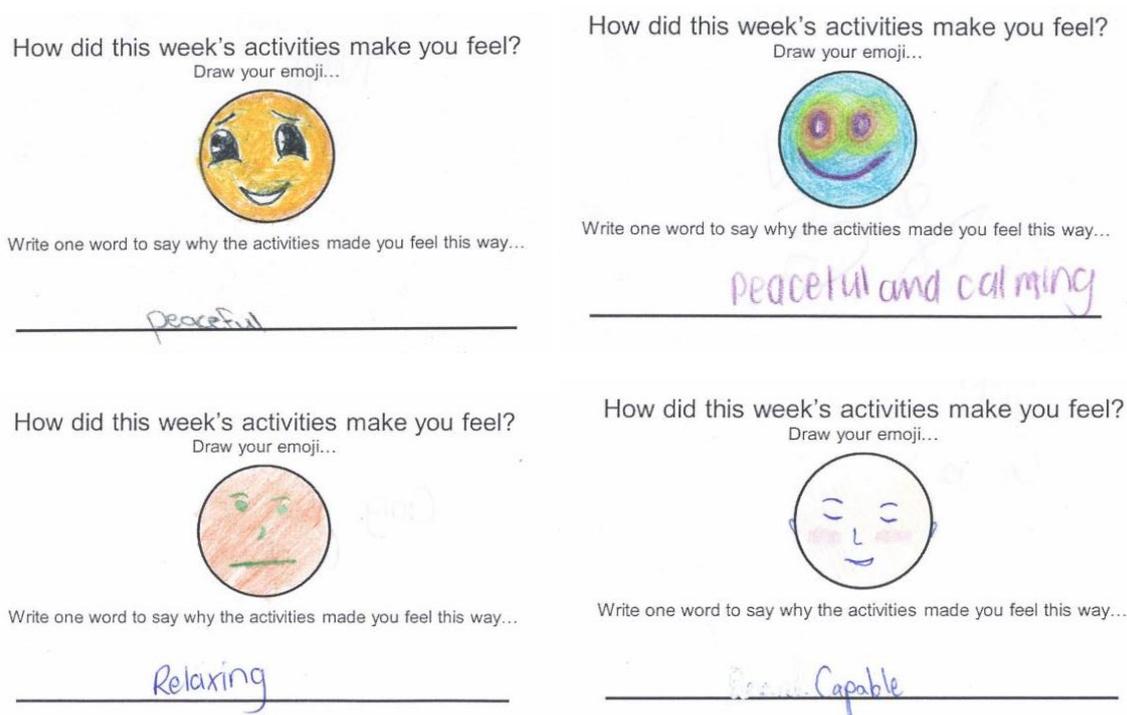


Fig 2, 3, 4 & 5. Multiple learners, *Mid-week reflections* (2021). Colouring and writing. (Data collection 2021).

The second aspect of self-compassion that was visible during this analysis was recognising their own humanity. During the time I helped the art educator out in the classroom, the educator commented that she does not speak positively to the learners and does not motivate them nearly enough. She explained:

I suppose at times I forget to tell them that I'm proud of them ... I maybe need to take that initiative and even if it means just once a week giving them that affirmation... I know that they don't all need to hear it, there could be one that is slipping underneath the radar and

at that specific stage just need to hear and know that what you've done is ok this week and know that maybe next week will be better, to try and offer that motivation.

The feeling of compassion surges from the recognition that the human experience is imperfect. Compassion toward yourself consists of recognising that all humans can fail (Neff 2003). When the educator and the learners do activities together, learn together and generally encounter their common humanity, they all remember that suffering is shared, everyone suffers and feels pain at some point in their lives, and everyone makes mistakes in their artistic practice. Therefore, being self-compassionate is not the same as feeling sorry for yourself (Neff 2003). Instead, self-compassion leads the learners to understand their situation better and in a kinder way. This leads to them finding better solutions for their artistic practice. When asked if they would do the activities on their own, many learners commented that the activities made them feel confident and realise their potential.

Learner 12M1: Yes, I would, because the activities ... are ... fun to do.

Learner 12M2: Yes, these activities aided my self-confidence and help me realised all the attributes I love about myself.

Learner 11F1: No I would not actually, but I will continue to say great affirmations to myself daily.

Learner 11F2: Yes, it made me think clearer about what happens next and better about myself.

Learner 11F3: I would like to do it again, especially the colouring one even though it was a little bit stressful I would still do it.

Brach (2012), one of the top researchers in her field of community and compassion, explains that when you feel you do not have merit, it “goes hand-in-hand with feeling removed from everyone else, removed from life ... [i]t seems to be a vicious cycle; the more useless we feel, the more removed and vulnerable we feel”. To expand on Brach’s (2012) notion, when the learners feel more confident and assured in their attributes and continue affirming their positive characteristics, they are part of a community and will share this self-compassion discovery. These art learners are a part of a school community and have friends in other subjects and other grades. In the second self-reflective report, I asked the participants if they were willing to share their affirmation activities with their friends and community. Ten out of the twelve learners responded with “Yes” and continued explaining why:

Learner 12F3: Yes, because it is a good distraction from thinking a lot and rather just focusing.

Learner 12M1: I would as it reawakens what it was like being a child, discovering the wonders of art.

Learner 12F2: Yes, like me, they are also under a lot of stress and pressure. These activities may allow them to clear their minds from worries.

Learner 12M3: Yes, I would recommend them because they could learn new skills.

Learner 12F1: Yes, I think it’s beneficial and relaxing. It sets your mind at ease.

Learner 12M2: Yes I would, reason being that these days the world can be crowded with so much negativity, it would do good to acknowledge the positives more.

Learner 11M1: Yes ...

Learner 11F1: Yes, it makes you realise and remember you are amazing, important, worthy and so on and so forth. It’s relaxing and gets your mind off things.

Learner 11F2: Yes, because I think everybody should feel better about themselves.

Learner 11F3: Yes, I would as it is a fun experience to try with my friends.

Feelings of connection with others, such as kindness, activate your attachment system in the brain. People who feel connected to others fear adverse circumstances less and respond more flexibly to life's challenges (Brach 2012).

The third key aspect for practising self-compassion, which was visible during the data analysis, is focused attention or mindfulness. The learners' observed that focused attention could be divided into better control of thoughts, being mindful and creating an inner headspace that is less stressed and more peaceful, and the other a more focused, positive classroom space.

The first focused attention, the inner space, was seen by the comments above, as the learners mentioned how the activities; were " ... a good distraction from thinking a lot", 'clear their minds from worries', "... set your mind at ease", "acknowledge the positives more" and "gets your mind off things". Living in the present with acceptance and without judgment leads to a clearer perspective of the learners' academic stress (Neff 2003). By colouring and focusing on the moment, practising mindfulness, helped the learners recognise how they felt and identify the emotions and thoughts as they were, without letting these define their artistic practice. Figures 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 are examples of the colourings enjoyed by the learners. Mindfulness and self-compassion are about observing what is happening in your conscious and the here and now. This lets you identify thoughts about the past and the future precisely for what they are: thoughts. An observation I made during this study, particularly the colouring activities, is of a learner (12F2) who got a conceptual idea for her examination artwork during the third colouring activity of the week. When announcing her realisation, she looked surprised and joyful. When I asked her how this happened, she explained that she did not know as her thoughts were silent and peaceful and focused on colouring a purple-pink colour marker between the lines, and the "idea just jumped at" her. I was extremely happy for her and I was assured by her actions that self-compassion in quotes such as 'I give myself the gift of time, to learn', 'There are no mistakes, only great learning opportunities', 'I will create for the sake of joy, not for other people's approval', 'I am a worthy person, my abilities do not equate my worthiness' and 'I love and accept myself as I am right now', and mindfulness through colouring might positively affect learners' agency over their artistic practice.

The other focused attention, a positive classroom space, was mainly observed in the classroom before, during, and after the activities. In addition to the inner thought space, Neff (2003) comments that mindfulness gives you tools for responding to different situations from a state of peace and relaxation, even outside your personal space. Being self-compassionate is a constant exercise in self-kindness that should never end. It would help if you cultivated it during your entire life, especially when your environment leaves unwanted lesions and mean comments, for example, at school.

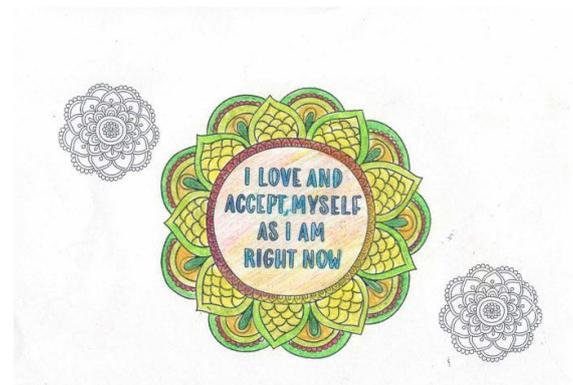
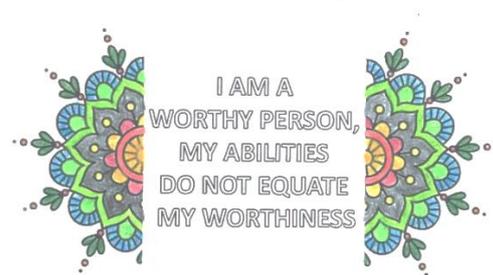


Fig 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10. Multiple learners, *Colouring activities* (2021). Colouring.
(Data collection 2021).

4.3.1.2 Personal and academic ability

As mentioned above, many of the learners noted that the affirmation activities were enjoyable and they would recommend the activities to their friends. However, seven participants specifically noted that they would not do these affirmation activities in their free time, because of personal limitations or because they did not see the purpose of the activities. When looking at the affirmation art collages of the learners, I saw that they incrementally increased in their

perspective of their positive artistic attributes and thus saw a significant association between the affirmation collaging activities and their personal and academic ability. The learners might not realise the bigger picture of the effects of self-reflection and I would like to use learner 12F2 as an example. Learner 12F2 responded to the question of doing the activity in her free time that although she would like to, she is unlikely to do so. She typically felt as if she was wasting time. She further stated that she would predict that she would feel similarly towards this activity. Her collage activities did depict something different. First up for discussion is learner 12F2's personal ability.



Fig 11. Learner 12F2, *Collaging activities* (2021). Paper on paper.

(Data collection 2021).

From left to right, top to bottom, the affirmation collage activities of learner 12F2 depicts an increase in confidence in her perceived artistic capabilities. During the collage activity, this specific learner stated that the activity made her believe she “was not a terrible artist” and that she “doubts [her]self-more than [she] is supposed to”. Learner 12F2's first two affirmation collages were more generalised and not necessarily related to her artistic attributes, while the following two affirmation collage activities were more directed towards her artistic practice and her re-affirmed artistic attributes. I observed the participants closely in the class, and learner 12F2 specifically had interesting reactions towards the affirmation activities. Learner 12F2 was one of the few learners that did not talk to fellow students during the activities, nor did she try to finish the activities as quickly as possible. She used her time sufficiently and focused intentionally on the affirmation activities. At first, she was significantly retracted from the class, and her facial expressions expressed confusion and dislike through the first collaging activity. Her body language opened a little more with the second collage activity, and she looked content in her collaging work. During the third collaging session, the learner smiled while

cutting out letters and looked as if the activity was enjoyable as she pasted her cut-outs. By the fourth and fifth collaging sessions, the learner was smiling, looking assertive and seemingly proud when she handed me her collaging activities.

Second is academic ability. Self-reflection, in this case, might build confidence in the learner's perception of herself academically. According to Nicol and Macfarlane (2016:199), research shows that a learner's self-reflection can result in deeper learning. In addition, helping learners to understand their level of achievement and abilities better, can decrease the negative and time-consuming feelings of anxiety and frustration. Furthermore, learners that recognise their relevant limitations and skills through self-reflection can plan and set better goals towards a desired academic outcome (Zelazo & Doebel 2015:30). Self-reflection can also influence adolescents to consider various potential obstacles and recurring obstacles to accomplishing this goal as they reflect on what went wrong and what they need to change to accomplish their academic goals (Zelazo & Doebel 2015:31). Likewise, in an adolescent social context in which adaptive goals are likely to run up against competing desires, like maintaining peer acceptance, adolescents would likely benefit from being encouraged to consider in detail the various potential short and long-term consequences of various courses of action by reflecting on their perceived characteristics, attributes and identity (Zelazo & Doebel 2015:52).

Context is integral to the creativity of artists, authors, learners, and inventors because the efficacy of a person's creative agency is entangled with and dependent on the assistance (and sometimes resistance) of other elements external to the person like peers, the classroom and the educators (Kraehe 2018:5).

4.3.1.3 Identity affirmation

Looking at the four of the five affirmation collage activities in Figure 11, the learner's identity or personality seems to start coming through via the colourful, abstract, and textured shapes behind her personal, artistic attributes. In this sense, learner 12F2 might have expressed her identity better in the last few affirmation collage activities by taking objects from their "conventional contexts and assembled", the magazine, and placed them into a new relational collection, depicting her agency over her artistic attributes (Kangas, Krivonos, Perheentupa & Särämä 2019:355). Art allows individuals to develop a strong sense of identity. The Cambridge dictionary describes identity as "who a person is, or the qualities of a person or group that make them different from others". For example, an individual who possesses particular talents such as singing, songwriting, and producing artworks has an artist's identity. Atkinson (2001:308) manages to recognise that identities of "self" allow people to place themselves socially, sexually, and academically in the world. A person can see himself or herself in others while renegotiating notions of "self" and "self-improvement" as they learn from those around them.

The self-reflection activities that took the form of a collage, dealt indirectly with the subject matter of identity for learner 12F2. On that note, in many of the participants' affirmation collages, their distinctive identity or personality was visible. The learners used their knowledge of aesthetic theory, writing in the form of magazine letter cut-outs, and collaging to think mindfully about their personal, artistic attributes to produce tiny artworks that show their increase in personal agency (Holbrook & Pourchier 2014:754). This small act of introspection became "a rigorous articulation process through which sense (rather than meaning) is tentatively fabricated" (Holbrook & Pourchier 2014:754). This sense refers to personal perspective of self rather than what meanings are ascribed to these learners externally. On this basis, four more learners showed the same expression of identity and character as learner 12F2 in Figures 12, 13, 14 and 15.



Fig 12. Learner 11F2, *Collaging activities* (2021). Paper on paper.
(Data collection 2021).

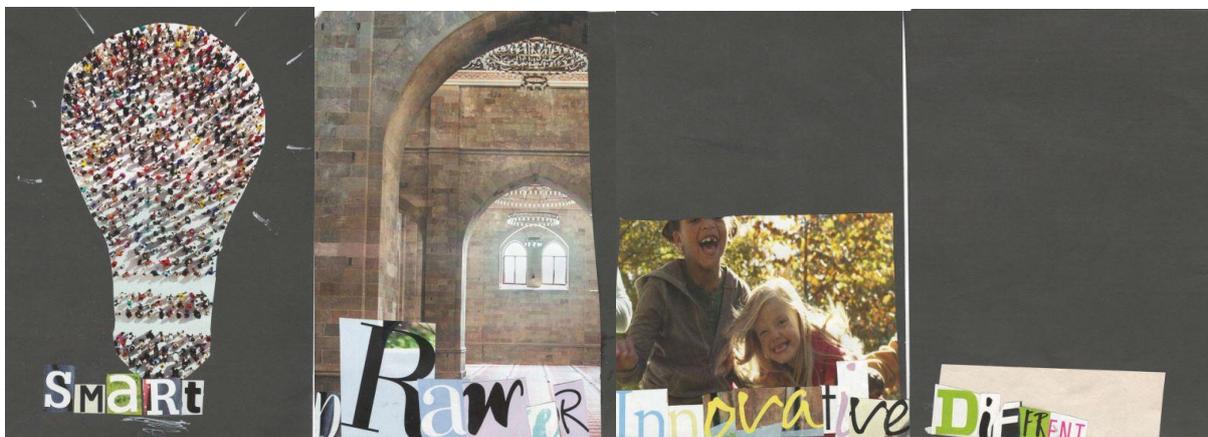


Fig 13. Learner 12M3, *Collaging activities* (2021). Paper on paper.
(Data collection 2021).



Fig 14. Learner 12M1, *Collaging activities* (2021). Paper on paper.
(Data collection 2021).

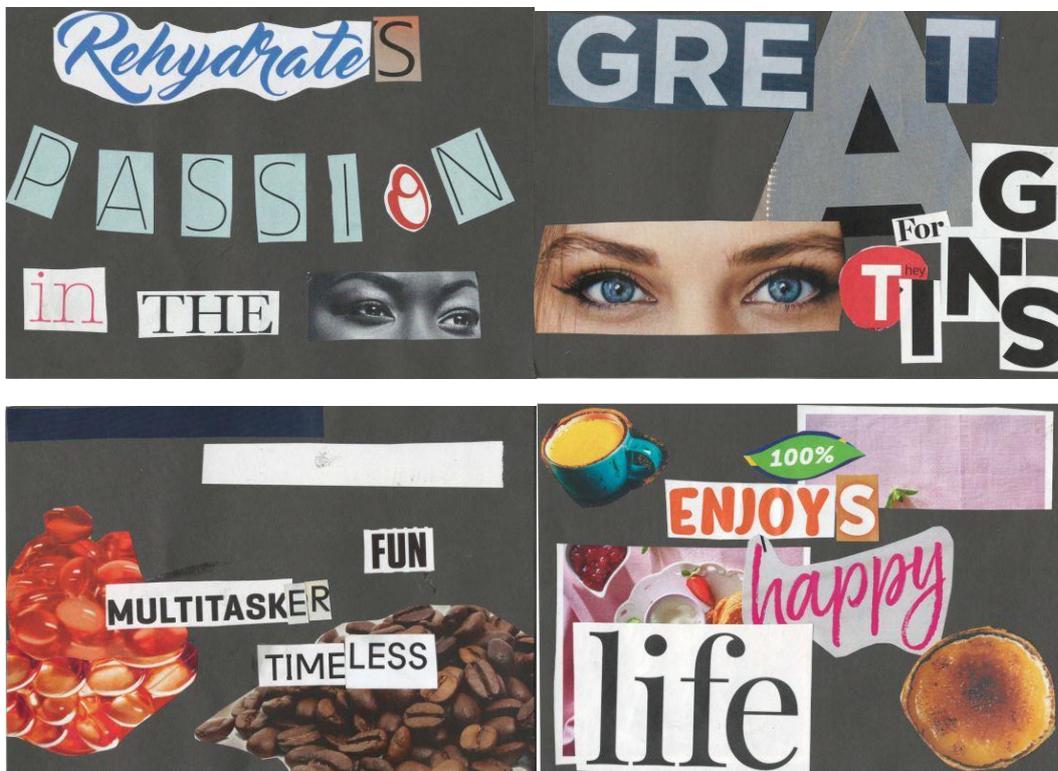


Fig 15. Learner 11M1, *Collaging activities* (2021). Paper on paper.
(Data collection 2021).

According to Berry and Candis (2013:45), identity comprises “both visible and invisible domains of the self that influence self-construction. They include but are not limited to ethnicity, skin colour, gender, sexual orientation, nationality and physical, intellectual ability.” This definition implies that one is subjected to internal and external identities. Therefore, part of internal identities is aspects of one’s capabilities, vulnerabilities and is also where we discover our purpose and whom we need to become to fulfil that purpose. Identity also includes social status, language, race, ethnicity, values, beliefs, behaviour, and spiritual orientation. Identity is heterogeneous, implying that every learner or educator possesses a unique identity that can affect the classroom environment or the research context. Cultural identity is the most pervasive when it comes to influencing the education and research contexts. Furthermore, cultural identity is defined as “one’s understanding of social status, language, race, ethnicity, values and behaviours that permeate and influence nearly all aspects of our lives” (Berry & Candis 2013:45). All these factors influence the way individuals see the world, perceives themselves and inform their experiences. In the activity, the learners had to make their personal, artistic attributes visible through methods of visual art, the making of something unseen, seen through art. Thus, collaging offers an effective “modality of thought, analysis, and expression for agency-seeking world-making learners” (Kangas *et al.* 2019:355).

Exploring collage served as the basis of the affirmation activity of self-reflection given to the learners. Chilton and Scotti (2014:163) describe collages as visual art “created by selecting magazine images, textured papers, or ephemera, cutting or altering these elements, and arranging and attaching them to a support such as paper or cardboard”. Collages combine different visual elements on one surface, and this aesthetic device in postmodern art brings about transformation in the visual art-making space. By bits and pieces of a variety of materials, the learner can form new images and shapes. This juxtaposition of different visual and textual elements is a freeing process wherein new ideas are discovered (Chilton & Scotti 2014:163). Using the collaging method to create an artwork enables the learner to select various images that create new meaning depending on their placement on the paper. The collage project was unconventional and flexible and allowed the learners much room to explore with the medium. Collage deconstructs the conservative expectations of an artwork, which in many forms should be presented as perfect and highly organised. The learners could apply self-reflection in grappling with notions of identity formation and context within their artwork. Letters from magazines pasted in the foreground of the collages, for example, ‘unique’, ‘creative’, ‘emotional visualist’, are seen in Figures 17, 18 and 20 and represent the type of characters portrayed. The activity involved introspection of external skills that formed their identities.

“[C]ollage reflects the very way we see the world with objects being given meaning not from something within themselves but rather through the way we perceive how they stand in relationship to one another” (Norris 2007:483). The process of collaging personal, artistic attributes was diving deep into their thoughts, emotions and motivations and determining how they perceived the world through their experiences. Self-reflection is a large part of making artworks, as it is the same perceptions that help one understand the functioning behind one’s artworks (Browning 2016). Practising self-reflection takes discipline and intentionality. “It requires pressing pause on the chaos of life and simply taking the time to ponder one’s life” and how we experience the world (Browning 2016). The practice of self-reflection is integrated into the moral reconstructive process in adolescent learners (Kamarzaman 2018:265). This collage activity aimed to remind the learners that they should always renew their perspectives of their artistic attributes, which indirectly boost their agency in their life and, therefore, their artistic practice in the world.



Fig 16, 17, 18, 19 & 20. Multiple learners', *Collaging activities* (2021). Paper on paper.
(Data collection 2021).

4.4 Synthesis

This chapter presented some effects of affirmation activities in the artistic practice of Grade 10 to 12 art learners in igniting the elements of self-compassion and self-reflection in the influence of the agency process. It has shown how learners are pessimistic about themselves, and therefore, negative about their artistic practice. This chapter continued further in presenting that self-compassion through colouring activities can develop learners' perception of themselves through kindness toward themselves, recognition of their humanity and focused attention via mindfulness and classroom space. Self-reflection after self-compassion benefits the learners' artistic practice when integrated with collage activities encouraging them to be optimistic about their artistic attributes and reflect on their art-making. The collaging activity also discussed academic performance, identity affirmation and how collage constructs our personal and world views. In the following chapter, the implications of the findings are explored, and the conclusions drawn from the case study are discussed.

CHAPTER 5: Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

The research topic was chosen because, as an artist and academic, I wanted to explore where self-doubt, feelings of incapability, and anxiety about making mistakes in artistic practice and not knowing what to do, come from. The research study sought to discover how affirmation and reflective activities may help Grade 10 to 12 art learners gain agency over their art-making practice by possibly improving their self-efficacy.

The study investigated how adolescents' self-efficacy was formulated and what internal and external aspects influence such development. Through the application of literature, internal influences namely understanding the background of self-efficacy, understanding agency through self-efficacy, agency and affirmation, agency and art and agency and art in adolescents, were discussed. Afterwards, external aspects of developing self-efficacy to shape agency through theory was discussed. This discussion included globalisation, globalisation and art, global citizenship, learning to learn learning perspective, educator impact on learner self-efficacy, assessment in art education, praxis and the hidden curriculum.

The study applied an interpretative approach to explore how affirmation and reflective activities affected the learners. The study took the form of an in-depth case study with a small sample size of twelve participants from a private school with art as choice subject. This study aimed to explore, analyse, and discuss the possible results of doing affirmation activities and viewing reflective reports that the learners write about their experiences of the art-making process. In addition, an interview with the art educator of the Grade 10 to 12 art learners regarding their involvement with the art-making practice of the learners and aspects of disciplines-based art education, informed the environmental and social contributions regarding their agency. Classroom observations and mid-study feeling cards were also included in the data collection process. Finally, inductive content analysis was used to analyse the data collected.

The main themes that were discussed in the data presentation and discussion chapter involved the learners' attitudes towards their artistic practice: negative emotions, and the learners' attitudes towards the affirmation activities: positive emotions. The negative emotions segment was divided into anxious and stressed; frustration and confusion; and critical and disappointed. The positive emotions segment was divided into relaxed, motivated and enjoyable; personal and academic ability; and identity affirmation.

5.2 Implications and further research

These findings may not be generalisable due to the nature of the context of the school, which is said to be highly advantaged in a privileged, anti-stereotyping environment. These Grade 10 to 12 art learners receive their education from a private, independent school that prides itself as an individualistic, growth-encouraging school. Not many high school adolescents have the privilege of taking art at school, having limitless access to self-help resources and are privileged to be in well cared-for home environments. Nonetheless, instead of only introducing these agentic skills in the art classroom, self-compassion and self-reflection activities can be implemented throughout register periods. The research can also be furthered by expanding the study to non-independent, public schools. This study included a significantly small sample, and all the suggestions above could explore findings from larger samples. Lastly, the study can also be taken further by doing the study with lower grades, for example Grades 8 and 9.

Art education can benefit mainly from integrating affirmation activities with agentic outlooks from the earliest high school grades. However, art educators may need extensive training to formulate projects that embrace the usage of self-compassion and self-reflection through affirmation activities. Learners should be guided to achieve a clear understanding of the educational benefits of integrating agentic processes like self-compassion and self-reflection with affirmation activities in the art classroom and be allowed to explore the vast opportunities presented by using these processes.

This study could also be improved by giving the learners more time to complete the activities instead of setting a time limit. Furthermore, the study could have taken place over a more extended period of time, for example, three months of self-reflective and self-compassion activities, instead of three weeks. The affirmation activities could also be included as a part of the learners' daily routine. In this way, the learners begin to make more personal choices and control the outcome of their artworks. This will build upon the self-confidence learners expressed in their reflective reports. The moment affirmation becomes part of the learners' daily art routine, allowing them to reflect on their learned process, solid self-reflection can help them take on new challenges.

5.3 Contribution to the field of research

This research introduces new ideas and questions that could be further explored by new research. Due to the amount of added time affirmation activities add to the academic curriculum, there might be some concerns. It is important to remember that this study found that their self-efficacy was affected when the students were engaged in the affirmation process. If the affirmation activities are not included to accommodate for more time to create, students are missing out on opportunities to grow. Researchers must continue to research how to promote influencing self-efficacy in their school communities so that a limited created work is accepted with understanding that agency developed behind the scenes.

This study also revealed a link between the types of communication learners had and their self-confidence levels. Another area of investigation that came out of the revealed link is the relationship between social and academic self-efficacy. Learners' self-efficacy and relationships with other learners during art-making need to be examined further. Research can consider whether peer influence is beneficial or detrimental to their academic performance.

5.4 Concluding remarks

By attempting to implement self-efficacy improving techniques in the art classroom, learners were given a range of strategies and mindful thinking activities that evaluated their progress control in making artistic decisions. This conscious thinking strengthened their self-efficacy. The study was structured into colouring and collaging firstly to give the learners general positive affirmation in the form of self-compassion about being worthy and allowing mistake to be made. The second aim of the two activities focused on giving the learners space to self-affirm or self-reflect their own positive personal attributes regarding their artistic practice. These specific activities aimed to enhance the learners' agency over their artistic practice by influencing their self-efficacy. Finally, learners were led through these guided affirmation and reflective activities to apply perceptual self-efficacy to the study. This study allowed learners to access self-affirming knowledge and learn that their artistic practice can flourish if they perceive their agency in constructive ways (Dorn 2003).

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Addendum A – CONSENT FORMS



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STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are invited to take part in a study conducted by Mieke Lagendyk, from the Visual Arts Department at Stellenbosch University. You were approached as a possible participant because you have chosen art as a subject in grade ten to twelve.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study intends to use affirmation colouring and affirmation collaging to improve how you perceive your capabilities and strengths so that you can have confidence in your choices and actions regarding your academic art practice. Therefore, the study aims to use the above-mentioned affirmation art activities to help you gain agency over your art-making practice through improving your self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is commonly defined as the belief in one's capabilities to achieve a goal or an outcome.

2. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME?

If you consent to taking part in this study, you will be asked to partake in five different activities each lasting 10 minutes for 10 days during your art periods in the art class.

The first activity will be writing a reflective report. You will need to answer three questions regarding how you feel about your art-making process. These three questions are:

- > How do you feel before starting a new artwork (when you receive a new project assignment)?
- > How do you feel during the making process of your artwork?
- > When looking at the finished artwork, how do you feel about it?

The second activity is the mentioned affirmation colouring page. At the end of this week, you will have made 5 A6 size affirmation colouring pages.

The third activity will be an A6 size feeling card with 5 coloured emojis. The card will ask how the weeks' activities made you feel according to an emoji and to write one word to say why the activity made you feel that way.

The fourth activity is the mentioned affirmation collaging page. At the end of this week, you will have made 5 A6 size affirmation collaging pages.

The fifth and last activity will be writing another reflective report. You will need to answer four questions regarding how you feel after the activities of the last two weeks. These four questions are:

- > Did you like doing these activities during the two weeks (why or why not)?
- > Did you feel the affirmation art activities helped you in some way?
- > Would you continue doing the activities on your own (why or why not)?
- > Would you recommend these affirmation art activities to your friends (why or why not)?

3. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Risk classification of this study is medium as you will not be asked to provide any personal information and will only be asked to reflect on your feelings and thoughts. You, therefore, might experience a minor degree of discomfort due to the reflection on your feelings, thoughts, and self-efficacy.

If any overwhelming emotions, discomfort, or inconveniences should be experienced during any of the affirmation activities, the activity will be stopped immediately, and your parents/guardians will be notified directly. Referral for counselling or therapy can be made. All learners will participate in the activities, as they will form part of your art education experience. You and your parent/guardian have the option to decline the inclusion of your data in the study.

To follow is the contact details of the counselling unit at the school:

Equip for Life – Jenny Kowalik

Contact nr. 0824099015

4. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO THE SOCIETY

These affirmation art activities can improve self-efficacy in individuals and is therefore beneficial for you. By improving self-efficacy, according to studies, you are more likely to challenge yourself with difficult tasks and be intrinsically motivated, gaining a stronger sense of agency in your decisions. These individuals will put forth a high degree of effort to meet their commitments, and they attribute failure to things which are in their control, rather than blaming external factors. Self-efficacious learners (learners with high self-efficacy) also recover quickly from setbacks, and ultimately are likely to achieve their personal goals.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Participation will not be compensated as your participation is voluntary and does not require any costs from your parents/guardians as the activities will take place at school, in school time with stationery required on your stationery list of the school. Your participation will be much appreciated and thanked with an appreciation card.

6. PROTECTION OF YOUR INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND IDENTITY

Any information you or your parents/guardians share with me during this study and that could possibly identify you or your parents/guardians will be protected. The data collected from the completed affirmation colouring and collaging activities and the cards and reports will be scanned into a personal laptop and stored on the laptop and additional copies will be stored on an external hard drive as a backup. The information file on the laptop and external hard drive will be password protected as well as the laptop. Any hardcopy paperwork from this study (activities, cards, consent forms, reports) will be stored in a password protected briefcase. The briefcase will accompany the data collection weeks for data save keeping during school hours. Only I have access to the above storage facilities and therefore the information is protected.

Please be aware that only myself and my supervisor will view and have access to the research information. Please be informed that you are free to withdraw your data from the research after the affirmation activities has been done as these activities are part of your art education experience. You should also be made aware that participation in this research study is voluntary and that you will not receive any compensation for it and that no harm can be caused by the activities. To protect your and your parents/guardians' identities your names will not be revealed. The information provided by you will be kept confidential. For data capturing and analysing purposes, your work will be marked with an anonymity code for example grade ten female learner – 10F1 You will have an opportunity to reflect on your experiences and ask questions regarding aspects that interest you.

Digital copies of the study data and hard copies of the study data will be deleted and shredded one year after this degree has been obtained. The data collection procedure (including activities) will take place in the classroom of the art teacher, as it is a comfortable space for you.

To my knowledge, no harmful or extensively personal information is asked for or might be revealed in this process of data collection. The information given will also not be published.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

All learners will participate in the activities, as they will form part of your art education experience. You, the learner, and your parent/guardian have the option to decline the inclusion of their data in the study without any consequence. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw you from this study if you wilfully disobey instruction and partake in activities with the intention to mock the process or hurt your fellow classmates. Please note that although your parents/legal guardian and teacher agree to your participation in this study, you are at liberty to accept or reject the invitation to participate as your parent/legal guardian or teacher's consent is not binding to you.

RESEARCHERS' CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Mieke Lagendyk at 0828235389 / 25754114@sun.ac.za and/or the supervisor Ms Neeske Alexander at neeskealexander@gmail.com and/or Prof Elmarie Costandius at elmarie@sun.ac.za.

8. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you

have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

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DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT

As the participant I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide, have been explained.

By signing below, I _____ (*name of participant*) agree to take part in this research study, as conducted by Mieke Lagendyk.

Signature of Participant

Date

DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the **principal investigator**, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant has been encouraged (and has been given ample time) to ask any questions. In addition, I would like to select the following option:

	The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent.
	The conversation with the participant was conducted with the assistance of a translator (who has signed a non-disclosure agreement), and this “Consent Form” is available to the participant in a language in which the participant is fluent.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date



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**STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN CONSENT FOR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

I would like to invite your child to take part in a study conducted by Mieke Lagendyk, from the Visual Arts department at Stellenbosch University. Your child will be invited as a possible participant because your child has chosen art as a subject and is in grade ten to twelve.

9. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study intends to use affirmation colouring and affirmation collaging to improve how your child sees their capabilities and strengths so that they can have confidence in their choices and actions regarding their academic art practice. Therefore, the study aims to use the above-mentioned affirmation art activities to help your child gain agency over their art-making practice through improving their self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is commonly defined as the belief in one's capabilities to achieve a goal or an outcome.

10. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF MY CHILD?

If you consent to your child taking part in this study, the researcher will then approach the child for their assent to take part in the study. If the child agrees to take part in the study, he/she will be asked to partake in five different activities each lasting 10 minutes for 10 days during art periods in the art class.

The first activity will be writing a reflective report. Your child will need to answer three questions regarding how they feel about their art-making process. These three questions are:

- > How do you feel before starting a new artwork (when you receive a new project assignment)?
- > How do you feel during the making process of your artwork?
- > When looking at the finished artwork, how do you feel about it?

The second activity is the mentioned affirmation colouring page. At the end of this week, each learner would have made 5 A6 size affirmation colouring pages.

The third activity will be an A6 size feeling card with 5 coloured emojis. The card will ask how the weeks' activities made your child feel according to an emoji and to write one word to say why the activity made him/her feel that way.

The fourth activity is the mentioned affirmation collaging page. At the end of this week, each learner would have made 5 A6 size affirmation collaging pages.

The fifth and last activity will be writing another reflective report. Your child will need to answer four questions regarding how they feel after the activities of the last two weeks. These four questions are:

- > Did you like doing these activities during the two weeks (why or why not)?
- > Did you feel the affirmation art activities helped you in some way?
- > Would you continue doing the activities on your own (why or why not)?
- > Would you recommend these affirmation art activities to your friends (why or why not)?

11. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Risk classification of this study is medium as your child will not be asked to provide any personal information and will only be asked to reflect on their feelings and thoughts. Your child, therefore, might experience a minor degree of discomfort due to the reflection on their feelings, thoughts, and self-efficacy.

If any overwhelming emotions, discomfort, or inconveniences should be experienced during any of the affirmation activities, the activity will be stopped immediately, and parents/guardians will be notified directly. Referral for counselling or therapy can be made. All learners will participate in the activities, as they will form part of their art education experience. You and your child have the option to decline the inclusion of your child's data in the study.

To follow is the contact details of the counselling unit at the school:

Equip for Life – Jenny Kowalik

Contact nr. 0824099015

12. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO THE CHILD OR TO THE SOCIETY

These affirmation art activities can improve self-efficacy in learners and is therefore beneficial for the learners. By improving self-efficacy, according to studies, learners are more likely to challenge themselves with difficult tasks and be intrinsically motivated, gaining a stronger sense of agency in their decision. These learners will put forth a high degree of effort to meet their commitments, and they attribute failure to things which are in their control, rather than blaming external factors. Self-efficacious learners (learners with high self-efficacy) also recover quickly from setbacks, and ultimately are likely to achieve their personal goals.

13. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Participation will not be compensated as participation is voluntary and does not require any costs from parents/guardians as the activities will take place at school, in school time with stationery required on the stationery list of the school. Participation of learners will be much appreciated and thanked with an appreciation card.

14. PROTECTION OF YOUR AND YOUR CHILD'S INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND IDENTITY

Any information you or your child will share with me during this study and that could possibly identify you or your child will be protected. The data collected from the completed affirmation colouring and collaging activities and the cards and reports will be scanned into a personal laptop and stored on the laptop and additional copies will be stored on an external hard drive as a backup. The information file on the laptop and external hard drive will be password protected as well as the laptop. Any hardcopy paperwork from this study (activities, cards, consent forms, reports, observation write-ups) will be stored in a password protected briefcase. The briefcase will accompany the data collection weeks for data save keeping during school hours. Only I have access to the above storage facilities and therefore the information is protected.

You and your child should note that only myself and my supervisor will view and have access to your child's research information. You and your child should also be informed that you are free to withdraw your data from the research after the affirmation activities has been done as these activities are part of your child's art education experience. You and your child should also be made aware that participation in this research study is voluntary and that your child will not receive any compensation for it and that no harm can be caused by the activities. To protect your and your child's identity, the participants' names will not be revealed in the research. The information provided by the participants will be kept confidential. For data capturing and analysing purposes, the participants' work will be marked with an anonymity code for example grade ten, female learner, 10F1, 10F2. Participants will have an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and ask questions regarding aspects that interest them.

Digital copies of the study data and hard copies of the study data will be deleted and shredded

1 year after this degree has been obtained. The data collection procedure (including interviews

and activities) will take place in the classroom of the art teacher, as it is a comfortable and safe space for your child. To my knowledge, no harmful or extensively personal information is asked for or might be revealed in this process of data collection. The information given will also not be published.

15. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

All learners will participate in the activities, as they will form part of their art education experience. You, the parent/guardian, and your child have the option to decline the inclusion of their data in the study without any consequence. Your child may also refuse to answer any questions they do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw your child from this study if your child wilfully disobeys instructions and partake in activities with the intention to mock the process or hurt fellow classmates.

16. RESEARCHERS' CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Mieke Lagendyk at 0828235389 / 25754114@sun.ac.za and/or the supervisor Ms Neeske Alexander at neeskealexander@gmail.com and/or Prof Elmarie Costandius at elmarie@sun.ac.za.

17. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Your child may withdraw their consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. Neither you nor your child are waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your participation in this

research study. If you have questions regarding your or your child's rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

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DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARENT/ LEGAL GUARDIAN OF THE CHILD-PARTICIPANT

As the parent/legal guardian of the child I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information have been explained.

By signing below, I _____ (*name of parent/guardian*) agree that the researcher may approach my child, _____ (*name of child*) to take part in this research study, as conducted by Mieke Lagendyk.

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

Date

DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the **principal investigator**, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the parent/legal guardian. I also declare that the parent/legal guardian was encouraged and given ample time to ask any questions.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date



UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

You are invited to take part in a study conducted by Mieke Lagendyk, from the Visual Arts Department at Stellenbosch University. You were approached as a possible participant because you are the art teacher for the grade ten to twelve art learners.

18. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study intends to use affirmation colouring and affirmation collaging to improve how grade ten to twelve art learners see their capabilities and strengths so that they can have confidence in their choices and actions regarding their academic art practice. Therefore, the study aims to use the above-mentioned affirmation art activities to help your child gain agency over their art-making practice through improving their self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is commonly defined as the belief in one's capabilities to achieve a goal or an outcome.

19. WHAT WILL BE ASKED OF ME?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to participate in an interview to investigate whether grade ten to twelve art learners' art-making process is influenced by their trust in their capabilities to produce artworks (self-efficacy) if some learners seem more uncomfortable in the classroom environment while making artworks and lastly how you would/do approach this situation. The interview will be semi-structured as specific questions are designed but can lead to a more in-depth field of enquiry.

This interview will include but not be limited to these questions:

Do you think your learners need a lot of guidance when starting new artworks?

Do your learners ask for a lot of guidance during the art-making process?

Do you think most learners feel assured in their skills?

Do most of the learners feel comfortable working on their artworks in the classroom with fellow learners?

How do you approach a situation where a learner is doubting their capabilities?

How do you comfort a learner that is questioning their choices while making their artwork?

Is there anything else that you can think of that you have noticed, that influences a learner's agency in the classroom environment?

Do you think agency/self-efficacy is an important aspect for feeling successful in making artworks?

20. POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Some inconvenience might be experienced because questions may seem obtrusive to your teaching style, classroom flow and activities. Referral can be made to the principal to mediate any difficulties or you can discuss the enquiries with the researcher herself.

To follow is the contact details of the counselling unit at the school:

Equip for Life – Jenny Kowalik

Contact nr. 0824099015

21. POSSIBLE BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO THE SOCIETY

You may experience different activities and take your own knowledge and expand in more advance ways or even try new lessons or practical work based of the enquiry of the interview.

22. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Participation will not be compensated as participation is voluntary and does not require any extra trouble as the interview will take place at school, after school hours at a time that suits you. Your participation will be much appreciated and thanked with an appreciation card.

23. PROTECTION OF YOUR INFORMATION, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND IDENTITY

Any information you share with me during this study and that could possibly identify you as a participant will be protected. Your recorded interview will be transcribed, and both the recorded interview and transcription will be saved on a personal laptop and copies stored on an external hard drive as back up. The information file on the laptop and external hard drive will be password protected as well as the laptop. Any hardcopy paperwork from this study (notes from your interview) will be stored in a password protected briefcase. The briefcase will accompany the data collection weeks for data save keeping during school hours. Only I have access to the above storage facilities and therefore the information is protected.

Please be aware that only myself and my supervisor will view and have access to the research information. Please be informed that you are free to withdraw from the research at any point should you wish to. Also be aware that participation in this research study is voluntary and that you will not receive any compensation for it and that no harm can be caused by the interview. To protect your identity, your name will not be revealed. The information provided by you will be kept confidential. You will have an opportunity to reflect on your experience and if time allows, ask questions regarding aspects that interest you.

Digital copies of the study data and hard copies of the study data will be deleted and shredded

1 year after this degree has been obtained. The data collection procedure (including interview) will take place in your classroom. To my knowledge, no harmful or extensively personal, information is asked for or might be revealed in this process of data collection. The information given will also not be published.

24. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you agree to take part in this study, you may withdraw at any time without any consequence. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw you from this study if at any point bias is displayed or lack of confidence in the learners' abilities.

25. RESEARCHERS' CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact Mieke Lagendyk at 0828235389 / 25754114@sun.ac.za and/or the supervisor Ms Neeske Alexander at neeskealexander@gmail.com and/or Prof Elmarie Costandius at elmarie@sun.ac.za.

26. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights, or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

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DECLARATION OF CONSENT BY THE PARTICIPANT

As the participant I confirm that:

- I have read the above information and it is written in a language that I am comfortable with.
- I have had a chance to ask questions and all my questions have been answered.
- All issues related to privacy, and the confidentiality and use of the information I provide, have been explained.

By signing below, I _____ (*name of participant*) agree to take part in this research study, as conducted by Mieke Lagendyk.

Signature of Participant

Date

DECLARATION BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

As the **principal investigator**, I hereby declare that the information contained in this document has been thoroughly explained to the participant. I also declare that the participant has been encouraged

(and has been given ample time) to ask any questions. In addition, I would like to select the following option:

	The conversation with the participant was conducted in a language in which the participant is fluent.
	The conversation with the participant was conducted with the assistance of a translator (who has signed a non-disclosure agreement), and this "Consent Form" is available to the participant in a language in which the participant is fluent.

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

Addendum B – SELF-REFLECTIVE REPORTS

Self-Reflective Report

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

> How do you feel before starting a new artwork (when you receive a new project assignment)?

>How do you feel during the making process of your artwork?

> When looking at the finished artwork, how do you feel about it?

Self-Reflective Report

Name: _____ Grade: _____ Date: _____

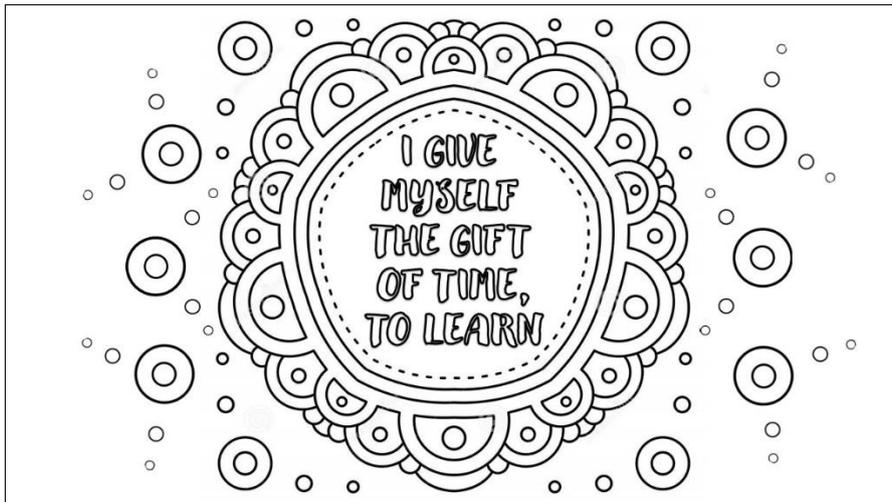
> How did you feel about doing these activities during the two weeks and why?

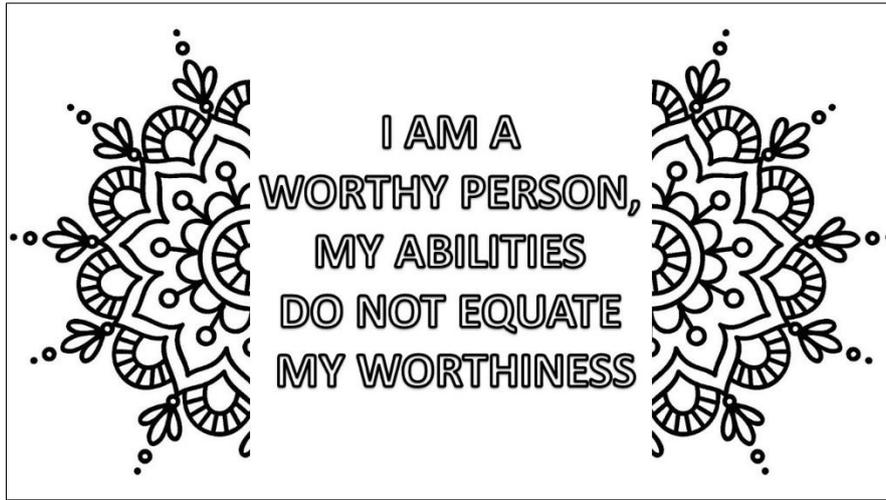
> How did the affirmation art activities make you feel about yourself?

> Would you continue doing the activities on your own (why or why not)?

> Would you recommend these affirmation art activities to your friends (why or why not)?

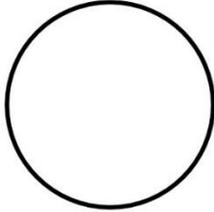
Addendum C – AFFIRMATION COLOURING ACTIVITIES





Addendum D – MID-WEEK EMOJI ACTIVITY

How did this week's activities make you feel?
Draw your emoji...



Write one word to say why the activities made you feel this way...

Addendum E – PARTICIPATION THANK YOU CARD



Addendum F – EDUCATOR INTERVIEW GUIDE

Mieke Lagendyk

Student nr. 25754114

Teacher Interview guide

INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH

NAME AND CONTACT NUMBER OF RESEARCHER:

Mieke Lagendyk

University of Stellenbosch, Cell.: 0828235389 Email: 25754114@sun.ac.za

TITLE OF RESEARCH:

Agency through Affirmation Art: Exploring the improvement of self-efficacy in grade ten to twelve art learners.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The study intends to use affirmation colouring and affirmation collaging to improve how grade ten to twelve art learners see their capabilities and strengths (agency) so that they can have confidence in their choices and actions regarding their academic art practice. Therefore, the study aims to use the above-mentioned affirmation art activities to help your child gain agency over their art-making practice through improving their self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is commonly defined as the belief in one's capabilities to achieve a goal or an outcome.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

This portion of the study seeks to understand whether art teacher notices lack in confidence and self-efficacy in grade ten to twelve art learners and if the teacher thinks it is an important part of the learner's art making process.

The study also seeks to explore how affirmation art can help grade ten to twelve art learners gain agency over their art-making process through improving their self-efficacy?

The resultant study objectives were:

- To investigate whether grade ten to twelve art learners' art-making process is influenced by their trust in their capabilities to produce artworks (self-efficacy) by interviewing the teacher.
- To allow participants to reflect on how they feel before starting a new artwork, during the making process and when looking at the result, through writing a self-reflective report.
- To present the affirmation colouring activity, to establish possible positive affirmation in the grade ten to twelve art learners.
- To observe whether art learners exhibit more positive body language and facial expressions when seeing affirmation art being displayed in class.
- To establish progress through feeling card indications of how affirmation activity of the week made them feel.
- To present the affirmation collaging activity, to strengthen positive affirmation in the grade ten to twelve art learners.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To allow learners to reflect on the project through writing a self-reflective report about their experiences in the past two weeks. To analyse outcomes produced throughout the project. 	
ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY	
Participation in the research is voluntary. You are free to decline to participate in this study, or to withdraw from it at any point.	
INTERVIEW FORMAT: INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW	
Person/s interviewed	
Date	
Place	
Duration	
INTERVIEW CONTENT	
<p>1. <u>Introduction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain objectives of the interview and explain what topic areas will be addressed Explanation of the potential value of the research as to how the information will be used for the benefit of Art teachers and grade ten to twelve art learners Give an indication of the expected length of the interview 	
<p>2. <u>List of topics regarding being an Art teacher acknowledging Self-efficacy in art learners</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do the learners need a lot of guidance when starting new artworks? If so, why do you think this is? Do the learners ask for a lot of guidance during the art-making process? If so, why do you think this is? Do you think most learners feel assured in their skills? If not, why do you think this is? Do most of the learners feel comfortable working on their artworks in the classroom with fellow learners? If so, Why do you think this is? How do you approach a situation where a learner is doubting their capabilities? How do you comfort a learner that is questioning their chooses while making their artwork? Is there anything else that you can think of that you have noticed, that influences a learner's agency in the classroom environment? Do you think agency/self-efficacy is an important aspect for feeling successful in making artworks? If so, why do you think so? 	
<p>3. <u>Closing</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarise the main issues discussed Discuss the next course of action to be taken Invite participants to reflect on what they have said and encourage them to contact the researcher if they want to add or adjust any of their comments made during the interview Thank the participant for his or her time 	

Addendum G – LETTER FROM LANGUAGE EDITOR

Certificate for editing work done

28 October 2021

To whom it may concern

This serves to declare that the thesis by **Mieke Lagendyk** was duly edited for language usage, spelling and referencing. Track changes were used, and it was the responsibility of the author to effect changes and finalise the reference list.

Title of the work: **AGENCY THROUGH ART: EXPLORING SELF-EFFICACY IN GRADE TEN TO TWELVE ART LEARNERS AT A PRIVATE SCHOOL IN THE FREE STATE**

Yours truly

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. du Toit', written in a cursive style.

Juanita du Toit

076 821 2588

juanitadutoit5@gmail.com