

Päivi-Maria Jaatinen

Rethinking Visual Art Practice in Relation to Well-Being



A Conceptual Analysis

JYVÄSKYLÄ STUDIES IN HUMANITIES

Päivi-Maria Jaatinen

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Abstract

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This study examines how the concepts related to visual art practice and well-being have been used in the arts and academic sectors. Furthermore, it studies whether it is possible to create a new theoretical and conceptual framework for research. The research material of the arts and academic sectors was examined by the methods of critical review and conceptual analysis. The conceptual analysis led to the following main results: The employment of the concepts concerning the practice of visual arts was diverse, often overlapping, and in some respects incoherent. Both the concepts of 'art' and 'well-being' were mostly used as reasoning with generalizations. This strategy of discourse was conceptualized as 'the stated ideal' of research. A lack of theoretical frameworks and conceptions in regard to both art research and contemporary psychology was discovered.

Further study led to the examination of the concepts of subjective well-being (SWB), psychological well-being (PWB), hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (EWB), and flow as a subjective, cognitive-affective experience. A set of relevant conceptions in order to connect the visual art practice with contemporary psychology was discovered. New interdisciplinary theoretical and conceptual frameworks were developed. The principal conceptions of well-being are recommended to be applied in research concerning visual art practice are hedonic and eudaimonic well-being as psychological constructs.

The new conceptual framework for situationalized and contextualized research takes into consideration the reflective knowledge of art research, and the theories by Waterman and colleagues, Huta, Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi in psychology, and Langer and Dewey in aesthetics. The framework consists of the following conceptions: 1) environment, 2) arts facilitation, 3) arts participation, 4) art activity, 5) artistic process, and 6) artwork. Several research aspects of the conceptions are discussed. In addition, an in situ art workshop research method is introduced. The results provide relevant theoretical support for a new connection between visual art practice and eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. Eudaimonic well-being can be enhanced through the practice of visual arts if the practice is considered as having value, quality and meaning, opportunities for personal growth and self-expression, and the activities and engagement are intrinsically motivated. These notions are conceptualized as the meaningfulness of the visual art practice.

The new frameworks can be used when formulating a research question or hypothesis, or when selecting methodology. The study can thus benefit the diverse fields of arts and humanities, practice-based art and design research, as well as health, social and leisure sciences.

Keywords: art, visual arts, visual art practice, art activity, arts facilitation, art history, aesthetics, well-being, psychological well-being, eudaimonic well-being, flow, meaningfulness, positive psychology, conceptual analysis, concepts, human-centered service design, interdisciplinary research.

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Preface

When I began my professional career in the 1990s I was interested in the connection between visual arts, design and well-being. Apart from the few projects which I then designed, the issue of well-being maintained mostly as an interesting sideline in my working life for many years. However, as a lecturer and art and design practitioner, I found myself increasingly raising the question of how art and design could enhance the well-being of human beings.

In conversations with different people, the most often misunderstood concept was well-being itself. Many students and professionals had surprisingly ambiguous opinions about well-being, and no current and factual understanding of the concept. I found out that the explanations of possible well-being outcomes were, to a large extent, all-encompassing and extensive. Even though different art and design programmes for promoting well-being have been developed in the European Union during the past decades, a common language and concepts between art and design, health and social sciences and recreation and leisure studies are still largely missing.

Meanwhile, the new domains of service and experience design have emerged. There has been a change in perspective as art and design are seen as a means for creating, not only products, but better services and experiences for people, especially in the context of well-being.

However, for the development of good art and design practice, relevant and valid research is firstly needed. Good practice should never be considered as a simple set of tools. Vice versa, relevant research requires an epistemological foundation, a theoretical framework, methodology, methods and conceptualizations. Thus, in order to understand how visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits should be researched, concepts of study have to be problematized.

For the benefit of the research, the subject matter has been confined. Artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits can be considered as a small sized professional service practice. However, the examination of the use of concepts and the development of a new theoretical and conceptual framework can provide much-needed knowledge to the research of art and design, health and social studies and recreation and leisure studies in general.

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For most people the writing of an academic dissertation is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I consider it as a long rite of passage to academic scholarship and professional qualification as a researcher. This process has taught me to appreciate even more the work that has been done previously by various scholars, designers and artists. Work by precedents is highly valuable for the continuity of research.

I want to express my gratitude to the following organizations for supporting my research financially: the Department of Humanities, University of Jyväskylä; the Department of Arts and Culture Studies, University of Jyväskylä; Finnish Cultural Foundation; Finnish Cultural Foundation, the South Savo Regional Fund; Finnish Educational Fund; the Arts Council of Finland and the trade union Akava Special Branches.

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I want to acknowledge my indebtedness and gratitude to my mother Tuula Näätänen. She has taught me to love life in all its colours and dimensions. Eine Häyrinen from the island of Ärjä have always been my inspiration. My late great-aunt and great-uncle Typi and Nipa from the same island: I know that you still guard me from heaven above. My friend, Kati Olkkonen-Repo has always supported me. Thank you for the long and deep discussions.

Most of all I want to thank my children, Rebekka and Jeremi. You are my constant inspiration and motive for being. To put it simply: I love you. This work is dedicated to you. Thank you for your love.

Mikkeli 29.6.2015

Päivi-Maria Jaatinen

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CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

As Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889–1951) phrased it: “Every word has a meaning.”¹ However, this claim cannot be made unless an explanation is provided about the context. In his later period, as presented in his *Philosophical Investigations*, Wittgenstein had in his mind a picture of the essence of human language as a ‘language-game’. Following Wittgenstein, the main principle of the present study is to let the use of concepts to teach us about their meaning in contexts.

There is a popular statement in the contemporary research field of arts, health and well-being which is usually constructed as follows: Art has a positive impact on well-being.² From the perspective of art research this generalization raises a number of questions. Has the causal connection between art and well-being really been proved or should we discuss more about a *possibility*? Is it likely that there are other factors in the situation of visual art practice that may influence the subjective experience of the sense of well-being of an individual rather than the arts themselves? How have the conceptions, knowledge base and contexts of justification been constructed in the research?

If we adapt a conceptual approach, i.e. a consideration of the language as a vehicle of thinking as Wittgenstein suggested, we may find out that many research issues regarding visual art practice in relation to well-being interests actually require rethinking.

1 Wittgenstein 1978, 2.

2 Margrove, Pope, Mark 2013, 1; Liddle, Parkinson, Sibbritt 2013, 330; Jensen 2013, 204; Stickley, Eades 2013, 727; Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2012, 262; Patterson; Perlstein 2011, 32; Beesley et al. 2011, 2353; Stacey, Stickley 2010, 76; Bungay, Clift 2010, 280; Reynolds 2010, 135; Howells, Zelnik 2009, 219; Reynolds, Lim 2007, 1; Cohen et al. 2006, 726; Hacking et al. 2006, 125.

Much of the previous research has been done under the movement of Arts and Health, which can be considered to be a relatively new and developing field of practice and research. Considering science as a constructed discourse, a shared language and conceptions between art and design research, humanities, health and social sciences, recreation and leisure studies are still largely unaccounted for. In regard to visual art practice, research should focus in more detail on the possible connection between art practice and psychological well-being. At the moment, there are no agreed epistemological foundation, theoretical framework, methodology, methods or conceptualizations which could be utilized in research design concerning visual art practice in relation to psychological well-being pursuits, when excluding art therapy.

As a result, the present study is theoretical and concentrates on the use of concepts. In this, I follow the suggestion by the American psychologists Jacob Getzels (1912–2001) and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi who stated that the stimulating factor for research in a new field can be the formulation of a conceptual framework from which significant hypotheses for empirical study can be derived.³

I have found no satisfactory theoretical framework or conceptual model in previous research concerning visual art practice in relation to well-being in order to design, conduct and evaluate a rigorous practice-based or empirical study.

The research and evaluation methods of the possible well-being outcomes of visual art practice are still largely underdeveloped and based on mental health models. There is a lot of confusion in the application of concepts in research. For example, the practice of the arts is called ‘creative approach’, ‘arts-based approach’, ‘arts intervention’, ‘creative activity’, ‘participatory arts practice’, ‘community-based arts activity’, and ‘socially engaged art’, among others.

Furthermore, there is not enough theoretical knowledge on the very subject of well-being in regard to visual art practice. In the previous research, well-being has been described as ‘mental well-being’, ‘psychological well-being’, ‘subjective well-being’ or ‘quality of life’, often without sufficient explanation of the theoretical paradigms underlying these concepts.

The usage of terms and concepts changes and develops over time. In the field of arts, health and well-being, concepts are often undescribed, overlapping and vague due to the novelty of the field itself. A conceptual analysis is vital in order to develop the validity and relevance of research considering the possible connection between visual art practice and well-being. However, the research at hand

3 Getzels, Csikszentmihalyi 1964, 1.

does not focus on proving or disapproving the connection. Instead it asks how can the research of the possible connection between visual art practice and well-being be designed in a more relevant theoretical manner. My hypothesis is that conceptual analysis may shed light on the above-mentioned question.

For the benefit of the research, the subject matter has been confined. The focus of the study is presented in the following table.

Table 1. The focus of the study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research of visual art practice in relation to well-being, as being facilitated by a professional artist(s) for non-clinical participants. • The research of visual art practice in relation to well-being, excluding art therapy, art education, medical humanities, and the improvement of the healthcare environment by artworks, design and/or architecture. • The research of visual art practice and not arts engagement by viewing visual artworks. • The research of visual art practice in relation to well-being that is not conducted as improving occupational work and health abilities.

As can be seen from this table above, in the interest of narrowing the scope of this research, art therapy, art education, medical humanities, art, design and architecture for the improvement of healthcare or other settings, arts engagement by viewing artworks or other art forms than visual arts are not the focus of the research. The present study concentrates on the particular subject of the research concerning artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being aims for non-clinical participants. The narrowing of scope permits for the examination of the use of concepts and the development of a new theoretical and conceptual framework in a more founded way.

1.1. Aims

Good practice is informed by relevant and valid contemporary research. My overall aim is to increase the use of quality art and design as well as service and experience design practices in the industries of health and social services as well as leisure and recreation services. The research at hand can be considered as one of the crucial steps in order to achieve this overall goal.

However, I have specific aims in regard to the development of more well-founded practice-based art research as well as empirical research. While past researchers have focused little on how research discourses in the speciality field of visual art practice have been constructed, the

aim here is to examine especially what happens to the concepts related to visual art practice when they are applied in the published research of arts and academic sector. I aim to explain why some claims, such as 'The arts have a positive impact on well-being' are naturalized into a fact, while more challenging and critical views can be considered as alienated in the research. Even though a proposition is made that there may exist a justified connection between visual art practice and well-being, doubt about the framing strategies of the previous research designs in regard to visual arts cannot be logically excluded.

Table 2. Aims of the research

What we already know	What new aspects this research adds
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a growing number of outcome studies that provide 'evidence' of the positive impact of the arts for well-being in general. • There are some critics within the arts and health movement and in the research field of cultural policy who question the value of the impact studies of arts. • There is a lack of critical debate on the theoretical frameworks on the specific subfield of visual art practice for promoting well-being. • There is uncertainty in the use of concepts and definition of terms. • There is a need to develop a shared language and a conceptual framework within the arts and health movement and academic research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distinction between artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being and art therapy. • Conceptual analysis of research publications in the arts sector. • Conceptual analysis of related academic studies. • Identification of the main research fields of the academic studies. • Critical discussion of the missing theoretical frameworks and missing conceptions. • Identification of the key theoretical frameworks of the contemporary psychology of well-being. • A theoretical framework for the design of research of visual art practice in relation to hedonic and eudaimonic well-being psychology. • Discussion for key conceptions related to visual art practice in relation to well-being. • A conceptual framework for situationalized and contextualized research. • Considered suggestions for further research in regard to the epistemological foundation, theoretical framework, methodology and research conceptions.

The objectives of this research are: 1) to conduct a critical review and conceptual analysis of the research done in the arts and academic sectors regarding the subject matter of visual art practice in relation to well-being; 2) to conduct an analysis of the usage of the concepts and methodology in research regarding the subject matter of visual art practice in relation to well-being; 3) to formulate new theoretical and conceptual frameworks potentially capable of guiding further systematic practice-based or empirical research regarding the subject matter of visual art practice in relation to psychological well-being.

In view of the novelty of the subject matter, it is important to note from the outset what this research does not aim at. It is not a history of visual art practice, nor of well-being. The interest is not to study empirically the possible impact of visual art practice on well-being, or the evaluation of this impact. Instead, interest is focused on the usage of concepts and systems of belief that underpin the discourses in the research conducted in the arts and academic sectors. This analysis, the separation of the wholes into their component parts, the investigation of conceptual elements and their relations aims to offer a more theoretical foundation for the future research design. Without a clear understanding of the theoretical frameworks and concepts of this field, it will become a misconceptualized quest to design research and evaluate the possible positive outcomes of visual art practice in relation to well-being aims.

The present study seeks to conceptualize visual art practice as a potential source that may enhance the sense of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being of an individual. However, the future research of this possible causal connection requires many interdisciplinary theoretical preconditions. Thus, different conceptions that may influence the research concerning visual art practice in relation to well-being aims are discussed.

The research aims to be one of the first theoretical studies that connects visual art practice to the contemporary conceptions of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being as psychological constructs. Due to its interdisciplinary nature, the study seeks to benefit a diverse field of research, including art history, art theory, aesthetics, practice-based art and design research, design theory, psychology, social and health studies, and leisure and recreation studies. The group of professionals that may benefit the most from the study includes art and design practitioners, art and design lecturers, art and design researchers, art historians, psychologists, health and social care researchers, health and social care practitioners as well as policy makers in the art and design sector as well as the health and social care sector.

1.2. On terms and concepts

Even though the research concerns concepts and their applications, it is useful to deconstruct the title of the research as general working descriptions at the onset. Thinking, visual art practice, well-being, and conceptual analysis are all very complex concepts which have a variety of interpretations depending on the perspective and research discipline.

Thinking is understood here as a continuous movement of subject-matters in experience. I agree with John Dewey (1859–1952) who argued that the theoretical formulation of the process of reaching a conclusion is made in terms which conceal the similarity of the concept of ‘conclusion’ to the finishing phase of every developing integral experience. When considering the experience of thinking, Dewey stated that premises emerge only as a conclusion becomes manifest. According to Dewey: “If a conclusion is reached, it is that of a movement of anticipation and cumulation, one that finally comes to completion.”⁴ Thus, the conclusion may be conditional, but it is a result of experiences of the movements in thinking. Research should emerge also from the questions that are developed during the research process instead of proving the hypothesis formulated beforehand.

Next we will consider the concept of ‘visual art practice’. Here it must be noted, following the lead by Wittgenstein, that terms can be defined, whereas concepts cannot, unless we are talking about logic and mathematics. Thus, I will offer only definitions of visual arts and practice as terms, not concepts. The definitions of terms may change in relation to precision and utility. The working definitions of the terms comprising the terms of ‘visual arts’ and ‘practice’ are selections from the entries in the Encyclopædia Britannica and the Merriam-Webster Dictionary and must be regarded in their appropriate contexts. Encyclopedias and dictionaries contain descriptive definitions and as such can be considered only as clarifying the initial situation of this research in a general sense.

However, they may be useful in order to confine some common ground of what is typically thought about these terms. According to Gupta, nominal definitions explain the meaning of a term, but are not all of one kind. Dictionaries aim to provide sufficient information to impart an understanding of the term.⁵ There are several different ways to define a term, as well as levels of the descriptive adequacy of the definition. Gupta distinguished three degrees: 1) extensionally adequate: no actual counterexamples to it; 2) intensionally adequate:

4 Dewey 1934, 38.

5 Gupta 2014, 4.

no possible counterexamples to it; 3) sense adequate: endowing the defined term with right sense.⁶ What is important to understand is that several definitions can be analysed in three or two elements:

- (1) X:.....X.....=df- - - -
 (2)X.....=df- - - -

(X) represents the term that is defined, (.....X.....) represents an expression containing the defined term and (- - - -) represents another expression that is equated by the definition with this expression. The term to be defined is the *definiendum*, which may have multiple meanings. For each meaning, a *definiens* is an assemblage of words that defines that term, assuming that the *definiendum* and the *definiens* are affiliated with the same logical category.⁷

The next working definitions of *terms* serve as common general platforms for the development of concept comprehension and thus, should be regarded only as initial perspectives. The entries have been summarized to include the most relevant working definitions of this research.

Visual arts: a visual object or experience consciously created through an expression of skill or imagination. The term art encompasses diverse media such as painting, sculpture, printmaking, drawing, decorative arts, photography, and installation.⁸

Practice: an actual performance or application; a repeated or customary action; systematic exercise for proficiency or the continuous exercise of a profession.⁹

The above-mentioned definitions concern visual arts and practice as terms. For the purpose of understanding how *concepts* have been used, broad descriptions of terms are more useful at the outset than restrictive ones.

Brown and Yule argued that whenever a particular situation is described in a discourse, a writer may assume that the reader already has some representations of background knowledge in her or his mind.¹⁰ Thus, ‘visual arts’ may bring to mind first, as a concept, the default elements of fine arts, such as the genres of painting and drawing, and the elements of canvases, easels, paints and brushes. However, visual arts as a practice is a much larger and complex conception in meaning.

Thus, my working consideration of ‘visual art practice’ to begin with is as follows: Visual art practice is an exercise of a versatile

6 Gupta 2014, 7.

7 Gupta 2014, 9–10.

8 Encyclopaedia Britannica Online Academic Edition 2014, online.

9 Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2014, online.

10 Brown, Yule 1984, 236.

profession, which requires skill and imagination and encompasses the creation of different visual objects, services and/or experiences. Visual art practice is considered as a mode of activity that includes a connotation of professionalism. In a broader sense and following the description by *The Journal of Visual Art Practice*, visual art practice is considered as “(...) including the social, economic, political and cultural frames within which the formal concerns of art and visual art practice are located.”¹¹

Well-being itself is a very complicated concept. Well-being has been described in multiple ways, for example from the perspective of philosophical ethics, theology, political science, health and social sciences and economics. It is essential to understand that the meaning of 'well-being' changes in different contexts, and depends on whether we are talking about Ancient Greek philosophy, 19th-century Utilitarianism or the economics of the welfare state. Thus, in the study at hand, the aim is to provide more clarity to the application of well-being in relation to visual art practice, concentrating especially on how it is understood in contemporary psychology.

Two major conceptions of well-being guide the understanding of well-being in principle. In philosophy well-being has been traditionally discussed in relation to two concepts: eudaimonia (ευδαιμονία) and hedonia or hedonism (ήδονισμός). Eudaimonia is understood in relation to Aristotle's (384–322 BCE) *Nicomachean ethics* as happiness or well-being, and hedonia in its original etymological meaning as delight or pleasure. However, the purpose here is to engage in a more ongoing debate and consider the concept of well-being in the context of contemporary psychology. Four key concepts related to well-being, which are applied and discussed in this research are: subjective well-being (SWB), psychological well-being (PWB) and hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (EWB) as psychological conceptions. In modern psychology the most sophisticated interpretations based on Aristotelian ideas are the work of Ryff, Csikszentmihalyi, Deci and Ryan, Waterman, and Huta whose work is my foundation for the conception of psychological well-being.

Finally, conceptual analysis is considered as follows: 1) Analysis concerning ideas and thought related to concepts, 2) Concepts are regarded as historically evolving, multidimensional and changing according to context; 3) Conceptual analysis concerns the use of the concepts in the contexts; 4) Conceptual analysis concerns the explicit and implicit meaning-making processes concerning ideas and thought about issues relevant to the development of research. 5) Conceptual analysis may lead to new theoretical and conceptual frameworks.

11 The Journal of Visual Art Practice 2014, online.

1.3. The research approach

The overall research approach should be distinguished from specific research methods. The problem of the conceptualization of visual art practice in relation to well-being belongs to several disciplines. Thus, the research approach is necessarily interdisciplinary and combines the perspectives originating from visual art practice, art history, philosophy and psychology. My intersecting location in both art and design practice as well as art and design research has shaped the research approach, questions and process. Interdisciplinarity is considered as an enriching perspective for research offering true space for innovative standpoints, which can be considered as the creativity in thinking.

First of all, the American philosopher Susanne K. Langer (1895–1985) insisted that an enlightening theory of art should stem from artistic insights.¹² The first research approach thus originates from the insight of art and design practice. I first got to know about the subject field of visual arts and well-being in the early 1990s in the United Kingdom. As a producer and guiding regional artist, I conducted a seminar on arts, health and well-being and started an Arts in Hospital project. I created a community art project as a BA submission in visual communication as well as further community-orientated arts educational projects. I developed and taught courses in design research, scientific writing, MA thesis work in design business and research, art theory, design history, colour theory, and visual expression among others in higher design education. At the same time, I also exhibited, albeit to a lesser degree, my own artworks in several exhibitions in Finland and abroad. This prior professional insight and knowledge are integrated to the theoretical research and percolated through the text

The research approach of artistic insight could be contextualized also with the concept of the reflective practitioner proposed by Donald Schön (1930–1997). Schön argued that the workaday life of the professional depends in many respects on tacit knowledge. This silent knowledge can be made more known by reflection, thinking about what is already known and understood. Furthermore, Schön argued that it is the process of reflection-in-action as ‘art’ that professionals can use in situations of uncertainty or value conflict.¹³ Reflection in general allows one to build upon the strengths as a practitioner and, thus, guides this research.

12 Langer 1953, 4.

13 Schön 1983, 50.

The second research approach stems from art history. Even though art history as a discipline has a similar cultural background in Western countries, its principles and boundaries may vary in different countries and universities. Therefore, it is important to understand my research approach *within* art history. I consider contemporary art history as a versatile and extensive field of study. To me, the aim of art history is to research, explain and analyse the artworks as well as the concepts and meaning of visual arts, design, history and culture. I have been influenced by the British critical art-theoretical approach to art history. British art critic John Roberts described that there can be found three critical positions in the British art history. According to Roberts, these are the critique against concepts of *art* history, *Art History* and *art history*. According to him, the first position is associated with the sociology of art, the second with the rise of the so called New Art History in the 1960s and its rejection of the unitary field of art historical research, and the third with accounts of the overabundance of historical analysis in relation to the individual aesthetic experience.¹⁴

Therefore, contemporary art history is considered as offering a good platform for diverse voices and topics. Zwijnenberg and Farago have also stressed the importance of understanding the meaning of interpretation and the interpreter. According to Zwijnenberg and Farago, artworks and interpreters exist in a historical continuum. The interpretation of artworks should be particular, and the theoretical instruments and the vocabulary motivated by the work of art itself. They also stated that in art history there exists the personal and initial response of the scholar to the artwork as well as historical knowledge. The personal involvement of the scholar should be acknowledged in the act of interpretation.¹⁵ Thus, theoretical statements in art history usually contain knowledge that is related to the experience of the researcher. 'Interpretation' as a concept is the core element of contemporary art history. Furthermore, Williams has stated that art history should perhaps embrace more art's identity as an activity, as a cultural work. According to Williams we should study the relation of artistic activity and the cultural environment in which art occurs.¹⁶

The third research approach is philosophical. Firstly, the overall philosophical approach here applies the conception of interpretation as an open system, a shared perspective of hermeneutics. However, the purpose of philosophical inquiry is understood here especially in the context of the theoretical preconditions proposed by Langer. Firstly, the predominant aim of philosophy is to unravel and organize concepts.¹⁷

14 Roberts 1994,1.

15 Zwijnenberg, Farago 2003, xii.

16 Williams 2009, 4.

17 Langer 1953, vii.

Secondly, Langer stated strongly that the philosophy of art requires the standpoint of the artist to test the power of its concepts. Langer argued that the artist may prevent empty generalizations being made. Thus, Langer's requirement was that the philosopher must know the arts from the inside.¹⁸

Finally, this study discusses psychological theories in the context of visual art practice and well-being. Langer stated that there is no need to evade issues that concern art on the grounds that they perhaps belong more to the discipline of psychology. According to Langer, on the contrary, this kind of approach of artificial barriers would block the progress of thought as "A problem belongs to the discipline in which it logically arises and for which its solution is of consequence."¹⁹

As stated above, the problem of the application of concepts related to visual art practice and well-being belongs to several disciplines and the solution is of consequence for multiple lines of inquiry. Thus, the present inquiry is in its essence interdisciplinary, combining the perspectives of visual art practice, theoretical art research, psychology and aesthetics.

1.4. Research questions

For the benefit of this research, the principal research questions are focused as follows: 1) the examination of the use of the concepts in research publications of the arts and academic sector, and 2) the possibility of the development of new theoretical and conceptual frameworks for research concerning visual art practice in relation to well-being.

Table 3. Key questions of the research

<p>(i) How are the concepts related to artist-facilitated visual art practice for well-being aims used in the research publications of the arts and academic sector?</p> <p>(ii) Is it possible to create a new theoretical and conceptual framework for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being?</p>

The hypothesis is that the use of the concepts may have at least three dimensions: 1) It may unveil the overall approach to the subject matter of visual art practice in relation to well-being aims, 2) It may unveil the predominant conceptions, and, 3) It may unveil the missing theoretical frameworks and conceptions. Thus, the primary research question

¹⁸ Langer 1953, ix.

¹⁹ Langer 1953, 370.

focuses on how different concepts related to artist-facilitated visual art practice for well-being aims have been utilized in the arts sector and academic studies. However, the purpose of the conceptual analysis does not end here. Suggestions for increased well-being cannot be made if future research is not focused on the complex mechanisms of the practice of visual arts, and the subjective experience of the sense of well-being. It is only after a consideration of what the concept of 'visual art practice' could mean in the context of well-being, and, vice-versa what the concept of 'well-being' could mean in the context of 'visual art practice', that the possible connection between these two conceptions can be researched in depth. Thus, the second question concerns the possibility of the development of new theoretical and conceptual frameworks for research.

The key questions can thus be divided into more subquestions concerning the theoretical frameworks and methodology of research.

Table 4. Subquestions of the research
(i) What research methods have been used to study visual art practice and well-being ?
(ii) How has the possible link between visual art practice and well-being been identified and conceptualized?
(iii) Which research frameworks have been used to study the possible link between visual art practice and well-being?

As can be seen from table above, these questions centre around the use of the research methodology and the possible conceptualization of the linkage between visual art practice and well-being in the research material of arts and academic sectors.

1.5. Research methods

The research applies the following methods: firstly, critical review as presented by Booth, Papaionnaou and Sutton, and Hart, and secondly conceptual analysis as understood especially in the context of the theories by Wittgenstein and Bal.²⁰ Three critical reviews of selected research material were conducted: firstly, of publications by Arts Council England on the timescale of 2000–2013, secondly of the academic studies concerning visual art practice and well-being on the timescale of 2000–2013, and thirdly of the academic studies published in *Arts & Health—International Journal for Research, Policy &*

20 Booth, Papaionnaou, Sutton 2012; Hart 1998; Wittgenstein 1978; Bal 2002.

Practice on the timesale 2009–2013.

Altogether a critical review of 23 publications by Arts Council England and 87 academic studies concerning art practice in relation to well-being in full text was made. Nine publications by Arts Council England and twelve academic studies were selected through a detailed critical review process for closer conceptual analysis. Conceptual analysis resulted into findings from which it was possible to identify what theoretical perspectives and conceptions could be found in the research material and what were missing. The research fields and publications of the academic studies were identified.

The first study that could be called a systematic review was published in 1753 by the Scottish physician James Lind (1716–1794). The mathematician Karl Pearson (1857–1936) identified the need to bring together many smaller studies in order to arrive to a more evidence-based result.²¹ Despite the relatively long history Hart argued that review has been an underestimated research method. He stated that many reviews in academic research are actually thinly disguised annotated bibliographies. Hart posed serious and relevant questions about the quality of these reviews. According to him, the quality of the reviews vary significantly as they sometimes lack breadth and depth, rigour and consistency, clarity and brevity, as well as effective analysis and synthesis.²²

Moreover, Booth, Papaioannou and Sutton claimed that the role and importance of reviews must be understood. They argued that especially the rising popularity of evidence-based health policy and evidence-based practice from the 1990s onwards provided a major catalyst for reviews as research methods.²³ Booth, Papaioannou and Sutton identified 12 different types of reviews: critical review, integrative review, literature review, mapping review, meta-analysis, mixed methods review, overview, qualitative systematic review, rapid review, scoping review, state-of-the art review, systematic search, and review. According to Booth, Papaioannou and Sutton, critical review aims to demonstrate extensive research and critical evaluation of quality. There is no appraisal, instead the goal is to seek a conceptual contribution for theory through the demonstration, analysis and interpretation of the research material. Another quality of critical review is that it develops beyond mere description and often results in hypothesis or model.²⁴ Booth, Papaioannou and Sutton stated that the critical review as a research method provides an opportunity to explore

21 Booth, Papaioannou and Sutton 2012, 9.

22 Hart 1998,1.

23 Booth, Papaioannou, Sutton 2012, 10.

24 Booth, Papaioannou, Sutton 2012, 26.

both what has been found and what is missing in research.²⁵

The approach to conceptual analysis as a research method follows the notions of Ludwig Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein argued that in language we have different kinds of words and we group them in various ways depending on the aim of the classification and our own inclination.²⁶ Wittgenstein proposed that one should not try to examine the general explanation of a word, but instead its usage. It is not useful to try to evaluate a concept, but rather to evaluate its application.²⁷ Moreover, Wittgenstein argued that a methodological investigation can also be a conceptual one.²⁸

Wilson explained how the process of concept analysis in philosophy proceeds in general. It begins with somebody else's text, moves into the context of a particular question and proceeds into thinking about concepts in abstract.²⁹

Thus, the purpose is to examine the use of concepts in their original contexts. This consideration takes its lead generally also from the interpretivist line of inquiry, instead of a positivist perspective on concepts. Hammond and Wellington explained that from a positivist starting point, concepts are regarded as real and capable of objective definition, whereas in an interpretivist perspective concepts are considered as nominal and emerging from communication and interaction.³⁰

Moreover, the language used in the research material is considered as discourses, which construct reality along with representing it. The discourse analytical view considers texts as performing action, for example exercising power, and raises questions on how language is used to achieve the action. In line with Brown and Yule, the interest is also in "(...) the products of the *actual* use of linguistic expressions in a definable context for a particular purpose (...)"³¹

Selections are made from the reviewed research material in order to conduct the conceptual analysis, 'conceptual' meaning as something *relating* to ideas or concepts. As explained here, the purpose is not to determine the essence of a word, term or a concept appearing in the research material, as this approach itself is problematic. Instead, interest is focused on what can be deduced from the applications, the use of the concepts.

25 Booth, Papaioannou, Sutton 2012, 170.

26 Wittgenstein 1978, 8.

27 Wittgenstein 1978, 31.

28 Wittgenstein 1978, 225.

29 Wilson 2005, ix.

30 Hammond, Wellington 2013, 30.

31 Brown, Yule 1984, 280.

The conceptual analysis follows also the theoretical framework suggested by the Dutch cultural theorist and artist Mieke Bal. According to Bal, interdisciplinary in the humanities should seek its heuristics and methodological basis in concepts rather than methods, as ‘cultural analysis’.³²

Bal stated that the counterparts of the concepts are not the systematic theories from which the concepts are taken, nor the history of the concept in its philosophical or theoretical development, nor the context. She argued that “ (...) the counterpart of any given concept is the cultural text or work or ‘thing’ that constitutes the object of analysis.”³³ Moreover, Bal considered concepts as keys to intersubjective understanding, meaning that concepts can help in the analysis of objects, situations, states or other theories. To Bal, concepts are neither ordinary words nor labels.³⁴

Bal explained the difference between a word and a concept with the consideration of intersubjectivity. According to Bal, concepts are sites of debate, meaning that people can meaningfully agree or disagree on the content of a concept.³⁵ Bal suggested that the use of the concept may have both stability and a near-unlimited extendibility. According to her it is this status of concepts as flexible, as a means of travel for intellectual journey that helps with the dilemma between practice and theory.³⁶ Bal noted that the study of concepts is especially useful if the critic has “(...) no disciplinary tradition to fall back on and the object no canonical or historical status.”³⁷

Due to the novelty of the field, there is no extensive tradition of the study of visual art practice in relation to well-being aims in the discipline of art history. Also the subject matter itself, i.e. artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being does not yet possess historical status, unlike art therapy.

Bal employed the metaphor of travel to explain and convey her research method concerning concepts. This method can be called interdisciplinary travel with concepts.³⁸ The one single, most important point that Bal tried to make was as follows: the method of travelling, with indeterminate concepts as one’s baggage, through a field both larger and a field smaller than a discipline would order, is in her view indispensable for the revitalization and survival of the humanities.³⁹

32 Bal 2002, 5.

33 Bal 2002, 8.

34 Bal 2002, 22.

35 Bal 2002, 13.

36 Bal 2002, 14.

37 Bal 2002, 23.

38 Bal 2002, 326–327.

39 Bal 2002, 328.

1.6. The research material

On some occasions a new design solution to a problem is tested by examining the views of experts, i.e. the stakeholders in the field and their related networks. Francis stressed that no careful data analysis can compensate for poor quality data. In her opinion it is important that the researcher clearly lets the reader know what weight can be put on the quality of the data to be analysed. She also stressed that the access to the sources of information should be discussed.⁴⁰

The range of the research material was framed so that the quality of the data can be guaranteed. In the selection of research material, concentration was focused on specificity and topicality. In order to restrict the scope of the inquiry, the focus was directed on two currently operating systems: the arts sector and the academic sector. By concentrating on three specific groups of research publications, a relatively detailed critical review and conceptual analysis could be made.

The primary research material consist of: 1) research publications of Arts Council England on the time-scale 2000–2013, and 2) international academic studies from four selected databases: ScienceDirect, SAGE Journals, EBSCO Academic Search Elite and ProQuest Psychology Journals on the time-scale 2000–2013, and 3) international academic studies from *Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy & Practice* on the time-scale 2009–2013.

There are constraints of access to texts as data sources in general. According to the resources, universities have acquired access to different databases. Therefore, I decided that the first research material should be the data that is available to the general public on the Internet. However, in order to be able to focus on the research questions, while trying to guarantee the quality of the research material as valid and relevant to the question of visual art practice in relation to well-being, the focus was centred on the research publications of Arts Council England.

The first key research source was the web-based digital publication archive of Arts Council England.⁴¹ The selection of publications as research material was made by the following criteria: 1) The publications are open to the general public on the Internet, thus, can be accessed by anyone; 2) The publications are highly relevant to the research question, presenting the approaches to visual art practice for well-being from the perspective of the arts sector; 3) Arts Council England is one of the forerunners and important stakeholders in the arts

40 Francis 1997, 30.

41 Arts Council England 2014, online.

sector in the European Union, 4) All the publications are in English, and thus, available for international scrutiny.

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland consists of four countries: England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Each country has its own Arts Council responsible for funding the arts. Arts Council England has its roots in the Arts Council of Great Britain which was created in 1944. The Arts Council of Great Britain was divided into three sections in 1994: the Arts Council of England, the Scottish Arts Council and the Arts Council of Wales. Arts Council England is a public body that promotes the arts by government funding and the National Lottery. Between 2011 and 2015, Arts Council England, by its own declaration, invests £1.4 billion of public money from the government and an estimated £1 billion from the National Lottery to the arts throughout England.⁴² Arts Council England has played a significant role in the development of Arts and Health movement in the United Kingdom.

Rowley and Slack stated that web resources in general can be difficult to evaluate as the information in Internet has been provided by a wide range of different individuals and organizations.⁴³ In this case, there is only one publisher and provider of information, Arts Council England. There is good reason to assume that the publications are representative of the views and research commissioned by Arts Council England as presenting the arts sector. The publications selected for this research will be referred to as 'the research publications of Arts Council England.'

The second body of research material consisted of international, peer-reviewed studies of visual art practice and well-being. Only studies that had been subjected to peer review were included in this second primary research material in order to ensure the quality of the research. A pilot study was conducted in seven databases (JSTOR, Project MUSE, OvidSP, EBSCO Academic Search Elite, ScienceDirect, SAGE Journals, and ProQuest Psychology Journals) in order to test the validity and specificity of the search protocol prior to the main search. Databases were explored and four databases were selected because they provided most of the indexed established search results relevant to the research question. The studies were selected for inclusion on the basis of relevance and rigour. The third body of research material consisted of the studies published in *Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy & Practice*. There is good reason to assume that the broad scale of international academic studies represents in necessary depth and breadth the contemporary situation in the academic sector.

42 Arts Council England 2014, online.

43 Rowley, Slack 2004, 33.

The search and review process is explained in detail in the chapter concerning academic studies.

There are several conventions on how to present references and bibliographies. It is essential for academic readers that the original references can be studied. As the research is intended for the international arena, reports and studies written in Finnish on the subject matter have mostly been excluded from the material due to the language barrier they present to international researchers.

The quotations from non-English authors are presented as follows. If no translator of the work with a foreign title is mentioned in the references, English translation is by me. In addition to the previously mentioned primary research material, several peer-reviewed international studies in art therapy, psychological well-being, subjective well-being, hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, and creativity were examined. For additional information on the situation in Finland, professionals were contacted through personal communication. The data thus acquired from experts is presented under the heading Archive of Päivi-Maria Jaatinen, Personal Communications after the references.

The references in this research include only the books, articles and other sources that are referred to in the text. The source attribution follows the guidelines given by the Department of Arts and Culture Studies of University of Jyväskylä. The bibliography of references in this research concerning journals and documents published electronically is conducted using the following guidelines:

1. A digital object identifier (DOI) is used to cite and link to electronic documents. A DOI is guaranteed never to change, and can thus be used it to link permanently to electronic documents.
2. A stable URL is used to cite and identify electronic documents.
3. If the document does not have a digital object identifier (DOI) or a stable URL, the whole link to the document is given with the retrieval date.

1.7. Previous approaches

In general, there has been interest in the connection between arts and well-being, but virtually no attention has been focused on the complexity of the concepts used in the research. Only few researchers have explored the question of relevant theoretical frameworks, and, to my knowledge, no research has concentrated specifically on the conceptual analysis of the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being.

I have identified four major areas of research that seem to have special interest in the visual arts and well-being, apart from art therapy. Firstly, there is research conducted mainly in the fields of health and social sciences. Most of this research can be considered as empirical case studies with the aim of linking art with possible positive outcomes. Secondly, there are critical studies of cultural policy which argue especially against the relevance of social impact studies of the arts. Thirdly, there is research, mainly in the fields of psychiatry and psychology, linking creativity with mental disorders. Fourthly, there are a few critics who raise questions about the aforementioned connection and the methodology related to these studies.

However, no research that concerns visual art practice in relation to well-being should ignore on the one hand, the long history of aesthetics, and on the other hand, the contemporary rise of the psychology of well-being. From the vast amount of literature, I limit myself to listing only those previous works that have influenced my research.

There are many philosophers who have been interested in the visual arts and noted on the connection between visual art practice and well-being without making a specific study of this topic. These include, for example, Yrjö Hirn (1870–1952), Susanne K. Langer and John Dewey, just to name a few major thinkers whose input has been meaningful to my approach.

However, there are only a few researchers who have a deep insight of both professional visual art practice and psychological well-being. In modern psychology the publications by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Jacob W. Getzels were among the first in the world to study the artistic process thoroughly in the context of psychology. Both researchers are considered to be highly influential to this research.

Most of the previous, more contemporary research has focused on the impacts of art practice in general on the well-being and health. From the extensive amount of literature, I will mention recent studies that shed light to the situation. The list is not exhaustive, and I recommend that the reader should explore Chapter Three concerning the publications of the arts sector, and Chapter Four concerning the publications of peer-reviewed academic research, as well as the full bibliography of all the references used in this research.

Hacking et al. (2006) studied the situation of arts participation and mental health work in England. They tried to develop a typology of participatory arts and mental health projects, excluding art therapy. They found out that it was not possible to constitute a typology for participatory arts work as there was no single way of categorizing the

projects.⁴⁴ The study by Cohen et al. (2006) measured the impact of professionally conducted community-based art programmes on the physical health, mental health, and social activities of individuals aged 65 and older. They concluded that participatory art programmes had positive impact on overall health, medication use, doctor visits, falls, loneliness, morale and activities.⁴⁵ Reynolds and Lim (2007) explored the participants' views about the contribution of art-making to their subjective well-being in the context of living with cancer. They found out that art-making enhanced self-worth and identity and creative activities helped to focus outwards on positive life experiences.⁴⁶

Howells and Zelnik (2009) published an ethnographic study on the experiences of participants making art in an integrated arts studio. They concluded that there is considerable power inherent in doing activities with others who share the same interest. Art-making helped to reconstruct personal life and create a sense of belonging to a community.⁴⁷ Reynolds (2010) examined older women's motives for visual art-making. She concluded that study participants described art-making as enriching their mental life. It also enhanced women's identities.⁴⁸

Stacey and Stickley (2010) examined the meaning of art for people who use mental health services. They concluded that many benefits were described by participants, which supports the need for the provision of creative resources within mental health services.⁴⁹ Bungay and Clift (2010) studied the practice of Arts on Prescription projects in Great Britain. They explored the possibility of creative activities facilitated by artists to be part of the solution to the challenge of mental ill-health in Great Britain. They concluded that participating in the arts operates at two levels: at an individual level and at the community level. At an individual level, people may experience improved health and well-being and at the community level participating in a group promotes social engagement and inclusion.⁵⁰

Beesley et al. (2011) studied stroke survivors' participation in an arts and health group programme and the possible health benefits for quality of life and well-being. They concluded that an arts health programme after stroke made a positive impact on well-being and to the quality of life of the participants.⁵¹

44 Hacking et al. 2006, 123.

45 Cohen et al. 2006, 726.

46 Reynolds, Lim 2007, 1.

47 Howells, Zelnik 2009, 219.

48 Reynolds 2010, 135.

49 Stacey, Stickley 2010, 76.

50 Bungay, Clift 2010, 280.

51 Beesley et al. 2011, 2353.

Patterson and Perlstein (2011) reviewed some of the evidence that participation in arts programmes improves cognitive performance, especially in later life. They concluded that one of the creative arts' core values in general is that they exercise the human brain's flexible abilities.⁵² Secker et al. (2011) evaluated 29 introductory arts courses provided by one arts and mental health project in Great Britain. They concluded that the results were promising. Participants identified gains in well-being and social inclusion, but the researchers stated that methodological issues limited the conclusions for positive impacts. They argued that there is a need for more controlled study designs and research for longer-term impacts of the arts.⁵³

Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu (2012) examined the impact of a professionally taught painting class on the health and well-being of senior participants. They concluded that participants perceived significant improvements in mental and psychosocial health through social engagement, self-awareness, empowerment and a sense of calm and relaxation.⁵⁴ Jensen (2013) compared British and Danish promotion of well-being through participation in art activity to empower the individual. She concluded that benefits from the participation in art activities were positive, i.e. finding identity, feeling a sense of well-being and increased self-confidence.⁵⁵

Margrove, Pope and Mark (2013) examined artists' perspectives of participatory arts and health projects for people with mental health needs. The participants described positive benefits of participatory arts and health courses, including developing friendships, self-expression and creativity and a non-judgemental environment.⁵⁶ Liddle, Parkinson and Sibbritt (2013) examined art and craft activities and their meaning for older women. They concluded that participation in valued activities contribute to subjective well-being and enable older women to find purpose in their lives.⁵⁷ Stickley and Eades (2013) examined the outcomes of an Arts on Prescription programme. They concluded that the unifying factors across the sample were found predominantly in the realms of soft outcomes, such as the raised confidence and self-esteem of the participants.⁵⁸

However, discussion concerning the theoretical frameworks, research methodology and conceptions is scarce. Many of the previous studies on the link between art practice and well-being concentrate on describing how the arts may have a positive impact on well-being.

52 Patterson, Perlstein 2011, 32.

53 Secker et al. 2011, 51.

54 Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2012, 262.

55 Jensen 2013, 204.

56 Margrove, Pope, Mark 2013, 1.

57 Liddle, Parkinson and Sibbritt 2013, 330.

58 Stickley, Eades 2013, 727.

They focus on exploring the possible different outcomes of empirical research projects instead of raising questions about the theory as well as relevance or purpose of this research practice. Only few researchers have made an effort to concentrate on the theoretical problems of art practice in the context of well-being.

Some critical notions have emerged recently within the Arts and Health field. Dileo and Bradt explored the 'arts in healthcare' field in the United States and especially the question of how arts in healthcare could develop into a discipline. They firmly stated that "if the intent is for the arts in healthcare to become a discipline, definitions are needed in the field in general, along with a standard language, and a delineation and categorization of its various practices and methods."⁵⁹ In addition to that, Dileo and Bradt argued that there is a need for a theoretical basis for the arts in healthcare, which is connected to both practice and research. They stated that ideally, in the development of a discipline, there should be a cycle of practice, theory and research. This means that questions arise from the practice, a theory is formulated to address the questions, the questions are tested through research, and research findings inform practice.

Raw et al. (2011) explored community arts and health practice. I side with the researchers who argued that the academics' overriding preoccupation with building an evidence base has resulted in the methodology itself remaining a neglected research area. Little attention has been paid to analysing the actual mechanisms by which artists facilitate the projects of arts and health and how this process can be theorized. Raw et al. concluded that a theoretical framework should be developed in the future in order to place community arts and health practice in a grounded paradigm.⁶⁰

It must be noted that the research by Raw et al. was conducted in the framework of health and social sciences, rather than the framework of art history, art or design research or aesthetics.

Moreover, Broderick (2011) aimed to make a distinction between arts therapy and arts practice and tried to claim a space for arts practices within the discourse on arts and health. She was able to sketch some of the themes of the current discourse. Broderick argued that further research is necessary to provide a conceptual frame as an alternative to the hegemony of the clinic. Broderick suggested that these conceptualizations of arts practices should be made from an interdisciplinary perspective.⁶¹

59 Dileo, Bradt 2009, 169.

60 Raw et al. 2011, 105.

61 Broderick 2011, 106.

In the field of cultural policy, the contemporary cultural researcher Eleonora Belfiore has written several, opinionated articles of the so-called instrumentalism of cultural policy in the United Kingdom. Belfiore is one of the loudest critics of the arts and culture policy discourse on the social impact claims of the arts. Belfiore has argued that many of the key issues in the British cultural policy debate lack concern for the truth. According to Belfiore, there is a specific rhetoric in the arts and culture sector when it comes to the arts and their alleged power to provide positive social impacts.⁶²

Belfiore's research interests have focused on public funding of the arts and the arguments used to justify it in a public policy context. She has especially criticized the use of the arts as a means of social inclusion. Additionally, she has raised serious questions of the reliability and usefulness of impact studies of the arts.⁶³ However, she has not provided a systematic review as the critique is more based on the analysis of statements and a selected number of researchers. Nonetheless, her approach can be commended.

In 2002 Belfiore wrote a critique of instrumental cultural policies and social impact studies in the United Kingdom. In this work she noted that one of the most interesting developments of British cultural policy was increasing emphasis on the contribution that the arts can make towards alleviating social exclusion. She argued that the phenomenon was hardly limited to United Kingdom. On the contrary, she considered it to be a European trend.⁶⁴ Furthermore, Belfiore concluded that the cultural policy of seeing arts as a tool towards social inclusion is rooted in the instrumental notion of the arts of the 1980s. She argued that attempts to demonstrate the impact miss the point if they regard culture as a means to social inclusion as culture, for Belfiore, is not a means to an end but rather an end in itself.⁶⁵

In 2004 Belfiore described the change in cultural policy in the United Kingdom as an 'instrumental turn'. She argued that the cultural policy was increasingly justifying public expenditure on the arts on the basis of instrumental notions of the arts and culture. She explained that the term 'instrumental cultural policy' was introduced in the 1990s in the academic world and used by Oliver Bennett and Geir Vestheim. She continued to place emphasis on the importance of the economic arguments for public arts funding formulated already in the Thatcherite era of the 1980s. She argued that the new course of development, introduced by Labour, was that the arts had also a positive role in social inclusion and cohesion and that arts organizations had been reinvented

62 Belfiore 2009, 343.

63 Belfiore 2002, 2007, 2009, 2012.

64 Belfiore 2002, 92.

65 Belfiore 2002, 104.

as 'centres of social change'.⁶⁶

In 2006 Belfiore wrote another critique of instrumental cultural policy, defining it as "(...) a label that refers to the growing popularity of policies for the cultural sector that conceive the arts not as the end of policy, but rather as a means towards the fulfilment of other, not artistic, policy objectives."⁶⁷ Furthermore, she criticised heavily the philosophical legacy of Plato, and especially the well-known Platonic idea of the arts not being intrinsically valuable.⁶⁸

With Bennett, Belfiore argued in 2007 that the existence of a government-funded cultural policy and the status thus bestowed in the arts is to a large extent responsible for the public debate of the value of the arts. However, they stated that a simplistic debate has taken place, focused on the measurable impacts of the arts that can be attributed to the evidence-based policy making.⁶⁹

In 2009 Belfiore analysed public statements on the social impacts of the arts as a basis for policy-making in the cultural sector in United Kingdom. She argued that the importance of the measurement of the social impacts of the arts has been one of the defining themes of cultural policy in Britain over the previous 10–15 years.⁷⁰ In 2010 with Bennett, Belfiore presented a reflection on the possibility of the development of a humanities-based approach to assessing the impact of the arts. They argued that the public and academic discourses around the power of the art to transform individuals and society seemed to be dominated by a number of unquestioned assumptions. The presumptions about this power of the arts were the following: 'arts' and 'culture' constitute clearly identifiable entities; these entities have specific, recognizable impacts; the impacts can be expected to be positive; and they can be evaluated and described. They argued that this approach has resulted into a 'toolkit approach' that has tended to emphasize the quantitative research borrowed from economics and auditing. Furthermore, the discourse of the impacts of the arts has become entangled in discussion about funding leading to advocacy considerations in research and uncritical research agenda.⁷¹ More recently, in 2012, Belfiore characterized the meaning of the New Labour cultural policies and their legacies. The focus in Belfiore's work had remained the same: the perceived instrumentalization of the rationales for public support of the arts and culture.⁷²

66 Belfiore 2004, 184.

67 Belfiore 2006, 230.

68 Belfiore 2006, 238.

69 Belfiore, Bennett 2007, 135.

70 Belfiore 2009, 348.

71 Belfiore, Bennett 2010, 124.

72 Belfiore 2012, 103.

1.8. The structure of the study

Chapter 1, Introduction, describes the background, aims and objectives, research questions, the previous studies and the research material of this study.

Chapter 2, The Field of Visual Art Practice in Relation to Well-Being, offers perspectives to the development of the field concerning visual arts and well-being internationally, concentrating especially on the diverse movement of Arts and Health. It is shown that visual art practice has many dimensions. The issue of the conception of art therapy is discussed, and a differentiation between artist-facilitated visual art practice and art therapy is made. Artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being is considered as a service practice of arts industry, or a co-operative mode of practice between the industries of arts, health and social care, recreation and leisure, whereas art therapy is regarded as a mental health profession.

Chapter 3, The Arts Sector – A Conceptual Analysis of the Research Publications of the Arts Council England, examines the research publications by the Arts Council England, which is identified as a significant contributor of information as well as a stakeholder institution in the European arts sector. The research publications by the Arts Council England are subjected to critical review and conceptual analysis. Key concepts and their applications are analysed. Conceptual analysis results into several important findings with regard to the use of concepts. The concepts related to art practice in relation to well-being aims have been used in an overlapping, and often inconsistent, way. The concept of well-being is not sufficiently described. No relevant theoretical frameworks are provided for the connection between art practice and psychological well-being.

Chapter 4, The Research Sector – A Conceptual Analysis of Academic Studies, concerns academic research. Peer-reviewed academic studies are placed under critical review. Research fields and publications are identified, and selected studies are analysed conceptually. Conceptual analysis results into the discovery of the missing theoretical frameworks and conceptions. It is found that the conceptions of both art research and contemporary psychology are mostly missing in the research material. Moreover, the specific mechanisms of visual art practice are not examined, nor described. The discourse of art research is found to be muted for the benefit of the discourses originating from different fields of health and social sciences.

Chapter 5, Connection of Visual Art Practice with the Conceptions of Well-Being in Psychology, offers an overview of relevant conceptions of contemporary psychology concerning well-being. Conceptions of subjective well-being (SWB), psychological well-being (PWB), hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (EWB) are examined and discussed in the context of visual art practice. Moreover, the evolution of the concept of flow as an optimal subjective experience is studied and discussed. A new theoretical framework for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being is presented comprising of the epistemological foundation of well-being, theoretical framework of well-being, methodology and methods.

Chapter 6, A Conceptual Framework for the Research of Visual Art Practice in Relation to Well-Being, provides a discussion of a new conceptual framework which can guide the formulation of the specific research questions and hypotheses about the connection between visual art practice and well-being. The new framework can also be utilized when selecting methodology or particular methods, or when making a choice between different psychological well-being measures in regard to the research of visual art practice. The new framework takes into consideration eudaimonic and hedonic well-being as psychological conceptions. It comprises several more arts-driven conceptions: environment, arts facilitation, arts participation, art activity, artistic process, and artwork. Visual art practice is connected to eudaimonic well-being as the perceived meaningfulness of the practice.

Chapter 7, Conclusions, discusses the main results of the study, offers conclusive statements, and suggestions for further research.

The Appendixes contain background information on higher visual art education, psychological well-being, eudaimonic and hedonic well-being.

The Bibliography lists annotated references.

CHAPTER TWO

2. The Field of Visual Art Practice and Well-Being

In the 21st century various arts and well-being schemes and projects have been developed in the European Union, with the United Kingdom being one of the forerunners in this field. The strong position of the United Kingdom is due to national policy in arts and health and more especially the impact of the Arts in Health movement. However, the international research field is relatively new. Two academic journals have emerged in the recent history. The first issue of *Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice* was published in 2009 and the first issue of *The Journal of Applied Arts and Health* was published in 2010. The fact that these specific journals have been published for only few years represents the novelty of this specific field.

Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice describes the interdisciplinary field of arts and health as “(...) fast-emerging field (...) developed in response to international interest regarding the multifarious ways in which the arts contribute to health, wellbeing, social inclusion and healthcare practice across a range of settings.”⁷³ *The Journal of Applied Arts and Health* is published in partnership with the International Expressive Arts Therapy Association and aims to evidence “(...) the effectiveness of the interdisciplinary use of arts in health and arts for health.”⁷⁴

As can be concluded for the above-mentioned statements, the journals have an interest in considering art especially in the context of healthcare.

73 *Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice* 2014,online.

74 *The Journal of Applied Arts and Health* 2014, online.

2.1. Arts, health and well-being internationally

The field of arts and well-being is relatively new in Finland, especially in comparison with the United Kingdom. In recent years rapid development and activities have started to emerge. It is also important to note that in Finland the concept of well-being has been constantly used by the principal funding institutions. In 2007 the Finnish Government issued a resolution on Government Strategy Document and in this connection adopted a Policy Programme for Health Promotion. As a result of this resolution, a programme to enhance the contribution of art and culture to health and well-being was launched. This programme was introduced as *Art and Culture for Well-being -proposal for an action programme 2010–2014*.⁷⁵ The programme was initiated by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture and lasted five years, from 2010 until 2014. It was coordinated by the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL). The aim of the programme was to promote health and well-being through culture and to strengthen social inclusion at the individual, communal and societal levels.⁷⁶

Art practice in relation to well-being has not been a prevailing agenda of arts funding in Finland. However, there is an increasing amount of different organizations, artists and firms developing art and well-being projects in Finland. The momentum for arts in relation to well-being in a larger scale in Finland as officially recognized art practice with stable provision in funding came when the Arts Council of Finland took responsibility for distributing the Regional cultural wellbeing grants (sic) annually in 2012.⁷⁷ This funding had previously been governed by the Ministry of Education and Culture on a national level. The Arts Council of Finland has gone through many organizational changes in the recent years which have influenced the arts sector. It is now called the Arts Promotion Centre Finland (TAIKE). Regional cultural wellbeing subsidies (sic) awarded by the Arts Promotion Centre Finland (TAIKE) and Regional Arts Councils are intended for projects that promote community spirit and everyday creative activities and environments, as well as to support occupational well-being by means of culture and art.⁷⁸

However, at the moment only communities and institutions, not individual artists can apply for these grants. This may mean a shift in the public art funding from artist-led projects towards art and

75 Liikanen 2010, 6.

76 National Institute for Health and Well-being 2014, online and Lajunen 2014, personal communication.

77 Arts Council of Finland 2012, online.

78 Laitinen 2014, personal communication; Arts Promotion Centre Finland 2015, online.

well-being projects initiated and governed by social and healthcare institutions. Therefore, it is strongly suggested that a longitudinal study of the employment of artists and the quality of the art practice itself in these projects should be conducted in the future in Finland. The essential questions are:

- (i) How is the employment of professional artists guaranteed in the projects?
- (ii) How is the quality of the art practice in the projects evaluated?
- (iii) How is the overall good practice of the projects evaluated?
- (iv) What are the professional requirements for artists to facilitate arts activity in the projects?
- (v) How are the well-being or health outcomes evaluated?

Overall the development regarding the art practice in relation to well-being aims has been quite recent in Finland and the field is yet to mature. There is slight variation on to how the arts in health is described or called in the international research field. I will next investigate the attempts which have been made in order to define the field of Arts in Health. The National Network for the Arts in Health (NNAH) in United Kingdom was founded in 2000. According to its first director, Lara Dose, the definition of Arts in Health can be done in practical terms as four sectors for the field: 1) Arts in Healthcare Settings: promoting patient care and enhancing the physical environment of healthcare settings for patients, staff and visitors; 2) Community Arts in Health: affecting the lives of local citizens and the communities that they form; 3) Medical Humanities: incorporating the arts into medical curriculum and practice; 4) Arts Therapies: use of the arts in treatment of an identified medical condition.⁷⁹

The above-mentioned descriptions by Dose indicate that ‘arts and health’, or ‘arts in health’ has a strong connection to healthcare, including medical humanities and different arts therapies. Thus art is understood primarily in the context of health and different medical conditions of people.

Macnaughton, White and Stacy (2005) argued that arts in health practice were largely confined to the Arts in Hospitals movement before the 2000s. Macnaughton, White and Stacy defined the field of arts in health as

comprising all activities that aim to use arts-based approaches to improve individual and community health, health promotion and healthcare, or that seek to improve individual and community health, health promotion and healthcare, or that seek to enhance the healthcare environment through provision of artworks or performances.⁸⁰

79 Dose 2006, 110.

80 Macnaughton, White, Stacy 2005, 333.

Macnaughton, White and Stacy presented the key dimensions of arts and health as the arts and health diamond, a graphic figure of the arts and health projects in two dimensions. The projects were considered as either more focused to art or health services, or more focused on individual or social.⁸¹ According to Macnaughton, White and Stacy, arts in health differs from arts therapies because artists involved are not trained therapists. Macnaughton, White and Stacy called artists as arts in health practitioners who want to engage 'unhealthy' individuals or communities in their work.⁸² However, this kind of description of practice could be called also as treatment or therapy.

Later White referred to the field as 'arts in health', even though he recognized that phrases such as 'arts for health', 'arts into health', 'healing arts' and 'arts in health' may all have different underlying approaches and assumptions. In spite of this, White defined the field of arts in health as

creative activities that aim to improve individual/community health and healthcare delivery by using arts based approaches, and that seek to enhance the healthcare environment through provision of artworks or performances.⁸³

Another group of researchers studied the state of the arts and health field in England. Clift et al. (2009) focused on arts and health initiatives in healthcare and community settings, excluding creative arts therapies and medical humanities outside the scope of their study.⁸⁴ They identified five features of arts and health practice: the scale of the sector, regional variations, mapping of arts and health initiatives, recent conferences and symposia, and key agencies supporting arts and health initiatives. In the research field they identified eight areas of arts and health research activity. These included retrospective qualitative evaluations, prospective evaluations with some quantitative assessments, experimental research on arts and health initiatives, economic evaluations of arts interventions, systematic reviews of arts and health research, theory development to underpin research efforts, and the establishment of arts and health research centres and research programmes.⁸⁵

Clift et al. stated that the range and variety of arts and health work in England is enormous. In the research field they especially acknowledged the contribution of the Centre for Arts and Humanities in Health and Medicine (CAHHM) which was established at the

81 Macnaughton, White, Stacy 2005, 337.

82 Macnaughton, White, Stacy 2005, 333.

83 White 2009,2; White 2002, 11.

84 Clift et al. 2009, 7.

85 Clift et al. 2009, 6.

University of Durham in 2000. However, despite the continuing activity, Clift et al. argued that arts and health is still an under-developed field of research.⁸⁶

There are several subfields within arts and health in United Kingdom. One of the most important is Arts on Prescription, (AoP), a type of social prescribing. Bungay and Clift (2010) reviewed the practice of Arts on Prescription projects in United Kingdom. They noted that the first programme, Arts on Prescription Stockport, started already in 1994. Bungay and Clift stated that a special feature of Arts on Prescription is that the programmes are facilitated by artists or musicians and involve groups of people living in the community, rather than a professional art therapist working with individuals in a clinical setting.⁸⁷

An example of Arts on Prescription is a study by Eades and Ager, who examined a specific programme of arts as healthcare, Time Being, which was established and delivered as an Arts on Prescription (AoP) project by Healing Arts over the period of 2002–2005. Healing Arts was founded in 1985 with the intention to provide a range of programmes linking the arts with healthcare. The aim of Time Being, designed for people living with mild to moderate mental health conditions, was to help the participants regain control over their lives and for them to develop a plan for their mental and social well-being.⁸⁸

Across the Atlantic, in an American study Sonke et al. (2009) aimed to summarize the current state of the field of 'arts in healthcare' in the United States. They acknowledged the importance of the Society for the Arts in Healthcare SAH, founded in 1991 and based in Washington, DC. SAH is a multidisciplinary and a non-profit membership organization dedicated to advancing the arts in healthcare in the United States. They offered the definition by SAH for arts in healthcare as follows:

Arts in Healthcare is a diverse, multidisciplinary field dedicated to humanizing the healthcare experience by connecting people with the power of the arts at key moments in their lives. This rapidly growing field integrates the arts, including literary, performing, and visual arts and design, into a wide variety of healthcare settings for therapeutic, educational, and recreational purposes.⁸⁹

According to Sonke et al., the programming in arts and healthcare is generally grouped under the following categories: 1) arts and aesthetics in the built environment; 2) bedside arts; 3) performing arts

86 Clift et al. 2009, 13.

87 Bungay, Clift 2010, 277.

88 Eades, Ager 2008, 62–63.

89 Sonke et al. 2009, 110.

in healthcare; 4) caring for caregivers; 5) community arts for wellness; 6) arts therapies; and 7) the arts and humanities in medical and other health provider education.⁹⁰

In another American study, Dileo and Bradt (2009) sought also to define the term, 'arts in healthcare' in the United States. They concluded that a clear initiative must be taken to define arts in healthcare, to establish the field as a distinct discipline and to begin the process of professionalization. Dileo and Bradt especially emphasized the fact that the research in arts in healthcare should be related to the demands of evidence-based practice. They presented 11 goals for future research of arts in healthcare from a meta-analysis of music and music therapy with medical patients.⁹¹

Wreford studied the state of the field as an overview of Australian arts and health. Wreford stated that in Australia, arts and health had developed through a close association with the community arts movement. Wreford stated that attempts have been made to classify the diversity of Australian arts and health practice. These have often used several overlapping categories. In Wreford's opinion, the clearest definition of current arts and health practice is provided by Doyle, who used three categories: Arts in Healthcare settings; Community Arts and Health; and Arts Therapy.⁹²

The Canadian overview by Cox et al. (2010) on the arts and health considered the work as spanning health policy, healthcare practice, individual and community health promotion, health professional education and arts-based health research. The researchers stated that in Canada, the official recognition of the connection between arts and health is still evolving. Cox et al. noted that the Canadian situation differed from the United Kingdom, the USA and Australia, where governments, universities and private organizations have supported arts and health initiatives for several decades.⁹³ More recently in an Australian study Beesley et al. (2011) stated that 'arts health' is a growing area of health that addresses Quality of Life (QOL) issues. They stated that the arts health paradigm is centred on the belief of the intrinsic value of art-making and that the participation in the arts benefits health and well-being.⁹⁴

90 Sonke et al. 2009,112.

91 Dileo, Bradt 2009, 176–180.

92 Wreford 2010, 9.

93 Cox et al. 2010, 109.

94 Beesley et al. 2011, 2347.

2.2. Visual arts in art therapy

As evidenced before, in the United States, art therapy is usually considered as a category of arts in healthcare, whereas in the United Kingdom, art therapy is often excluded from the research in arts and health and considered as its own field of study. For the purpose of both practice and research, artist-facilitated visual art practice with the aim of enhancing well-being and art therapy should be clearly distinguished from each other. I consider art therapy as a distinct professional therapy treatment applied by a licensed art therapist or a psychotherapist, psychiatric or psychologist. Thus, it differs from the artist-facilitated visual art practice for well-being pursuits and these two different kinds of professional practices related to visual arts should not be confused with each other on theoretical or practical level.

The underpinning epistemological foundation of art therapy is that the process of creating art itself is healing. Art therapy is in many countries a regulated healthcare profession, which emerged as a specific profession in the 1930s. The American psychologist Margaret Naumburg (1890–1983) was one of the first to be credited with the use of art expression as therapy.⁹⁵ According to Cohen-Liebman, art therapy can be defined as:

A human service profession that utilizes art media, images, the creative process, and patient/client responses to art productions as reflections of an individual's development, abilities, personality, interests, concerns, and conflicts.⁹⁶

There has always been a striving to maintain a high level of art therapy by professional associations. The United States and the United Kingdom have been in many areas forerunners in the practice of art therapy. The British Association of Art Therapists (BAAT), founded in 1964 defines art therapy as: "Art Therapy is a form of psychotherapy that uses art media as its primary mode of communication."⁹⁷ The American Art Therapy Association (AATA) was founded in 1969. The Association defines art therapy as:

Art therapy is a mental health profession in which clients, facilitated by the art therapist, use art media, the creative process, and the resulting artwork to explore their feelings, reconcile emotional conflicts, foster self-awareness, manage behavior and addictions, develop social skills, improve reality orientation, reduce anxiety, and increase self-esteem.⁹⁸

95 Cohen-Liebman 2002, 114.

96 Cohen-Liebman 2002, 113.

97 The British Association of Art Therapists (BAAT) 2014, online.

98 The American Art Therapy Association 2014, online.

The three leading journals in the field are *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, which is the official journal of AATA promoting “(...) a scholarly forum to advance the understanding of how art therapy and visual art contribute to the treatment, education, development, and enrichment of people.”⁹⁹ *International Art Therapy*, which is the official journal of BAAT, presents “(...) articles from art therapists on practice, research, theory and the development of the profession.”¹⁰⁰ *The Arts in Psychotherapy* publishes the “(...) peer-reviewed articles (also illustrations) by art, dance/movement, drama, music, and poetry psychotherapists, as well as psychiatrists, psychologists and creative arts therapists, that reflect the theory and practice of these disciplines.”¹⁰¹

Thus, art therapy should be considered as a mental health profession and a means of clinical therapist-patient work. Contemporary art therapy is interested in the arts-based interventions and art therapists mainly work as interns within a healthcare institution. Recent applications of art therapy include, for example, art therapy interventions for cancer patients, patients with posttraumatic disorders, and art therapy in stroke rehabilitation.¹⁰²

However, in their review *The Effectiveness of Art Therapy: Does it Work* (2000) Reynolds, Nabors and Quinlan raised several critical questions about the study designs of art therapy. They attempted to identify all published empirical evidence regarding art therapy effectiveness. They concluded that art therapy appears to be effective, but usually no more effective than standard therapy. They stated that the single group research designs can only conclude that art therapy is effective in that population. As an example they posed the question of whether art therapy found to be effective for sixth graders could also be effective for elementary school children. Reynolds, Nabors and Quinlan suggested that more focused research needs to be performed on possible outcomes. They argued that studies should also provide a more detailed description of the therapy on a session-by-session basis.¹⁰³

As stated before, art therapy as a discipline promotes the view that the creative process itself has the power to heal. According to Spaniol, art therapy is based on a belief that visual imagery has healing potential. Furthermore, Spaniol stated that art therapy uses artworks as vehicles for psychological insight and emotional growth.¹⁰⁴

99 Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association 2014, online.

100 International Art Therapy 2014, online.

101 The Arts in Psychotherapy 2014, online.

102 Nainis et al. 2006; Geue et al. 2010; Gantt and Tinnin 2009; Lande et al. 2010.

103 Reynolds, Nabors, Quinlan 2000, 212.

104 Spaniol 2001, 222.

It is of interest for my research to provide an example of how theories related to art therapy have been constructed in the design of studies. One of the key assumptions of art therapy is that art-making can improve mood, which has been examined, for example, by De Petrillo and Winner. They studied whether art-making can improve mood, and whether this effect can be best explained by 'catharsis' or 'redirection'. De Petrillo and Winner followed previous work by Feldman, Barrett and Russell in affect (1998) and defined mood repair as two independent elements of affect: valence, i.e. mood becomes more positive and arousal, i.e. mood becomes calmer. They applied the Affect Grid (high arousal, sleepiness, relaxation, depression, unpleasant feelings, pleasant feelings, excitement, stress) by Russell, Weiss and Mendelsohn (1989) to assess valence and arousal. The participants of the experiments were non-clinical college students, art majors and non-art majors. In the first experiment they attempted to induce a negative mood for the participants by showing still images of illness, death and poverty. Furthermore they showed the participants a 5-minute video of the Holocaust, 9/11, a funeral scene and people suffering from different life-threatening diseases. The participants were then asked to make a drawing based on their feelings, the so-called art condition or to copy a series of shapes, as the so-called visual-motor control condition. De Petrillo and Winner claimed that they could distinguish the model at work: valence, arousal or both, by the content of the art produced, i.e. positive, neutral or negative art. Their hypothesis was that mood would be improved more in the art than the copy condition and that the effect would be stronger in participants who were art majors.¹⁰⁵

De Petrillo and Winner explained in detail that the participants in 'art condition' were given a 8" x 11" construction paper in a variety of colours with coloured pencils, pastels, crayons, markers and chalk. The 'copy condition' received 8" x 11" white paper and the same marking materials. The drawings were classified by the content as negative/tragic, i.e. portraying sad images, positive, i.e. portraying happy images, or neutral, i.e. portraying no clear emotion. Participants were also asked questions about the drawings. De Petrillo and Winner concluded that art-making made mood valence more positive but had no effect on lowering mood arousal. Copying shapes had no effect on valence and on arousal. From this Petrillo and Winner argued that the visual-motor act of mark-making has no effect. They admitted that the copying task may not be challenging enough. Thus, they made a second experiment of completing word-find and crossword puzzles. They argued that mood valence increases significantly after art-making but not after solving a puzzle. Their final conclusion was

105 De Petrillo, Winner 2005, 206.

that art-making improves mood and there was little difference between art majors and non-art majors. Moreover, they argued that because the completion of the puzzle did not effect the mood, even though the task was interesting and engaging, this cannot be the power of art-making. Petrillo and Winner argued that the positive impact of art-making has a dual mechanism: firstly, for some art-making releases negative feelings as a catharsis, and secondly, for others it offers distraction from negative rumination and reorientation to a more positive mood as redirection. They argued that overall the beneficial effect of art-making is to be linked with the fact "(...) that creating personal images is an open-ended task in which the individual's feelings can be expressed through the images created."¹⁰⁶

Needless to say, the research design differs significantly from the methodology of art research, which considers also the institutional, social, cultural, philosophical and art historical contexts of art production.

2.3. The distinction between artist-facilitated visual art practice and art therapy

As stated above, artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits and art therapy should be considered as different kinds of professional practices. The first should be conducted by licensed art therapists or mental healthcare professionals, and the second by artists. Vice-versa, artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being interests should be researched more in the context of arts and the humanities and practice-based art and design research whereas art therapy is a subject matter of social sciences, and to be more precise, psychology and psychotherapy.

There seems to be more understanding of the fundamental difference between these two practices in the research that derives from the field of art therapy than from the Arts and Health movement. For example, Lipe et al. examined the role of arts interventions in treatment settings and especially in the context of the mental health services in the United States. They stated that currently the credentialed art therapists serve a variety of client populations. Lipe et al. argued that the definition of the profession of an art therapist emphasizes that it is a mental health profession. They noted that the services of art therapists are being complemented by the work of art professionals who facilitate art programmes in a variety of healthcare settings.¹⁰⁷

106 De Petrillo, Winner 2005, 211.

107 Lipe et al. 2012, 25.

However, there is a lot of confusion, stretched and reworked conceptions in the research that originate more from the field of arts, well-being and health. Several researchers have tried to draw the distinction between art practice and art therapy, but the conclusions leave room for development.

Wexler approached visual art practice in her study *Painting Their Way out: Profiles of Adolescent Art Practice at the Harlem Hospital Horizon Art Studio* (2002). She argued that the artist-facilitated studio art practice in the Harlem Hospital Center, the Harlem Horizon Art Studio (HHAS), provided an approach to painting for young people with disabilities that fell between art education and art therapy. She noted that the approach of HHAS engaged children as art makers, and art helped to “(...) build on what is intact rather to remediate what is lost.”¹⁰⁸ However, the actual difference between the mechanisms of art practice, art education and art therapy was left unclear.

Singh tried to differentiate between art therapy and art making (sic). He argued that ‘art therapy’ is using art mediums with an art therapist and ‘art making’ without an art therapist. Singh presented the concept of ‘art making’ by referring to a previous study by Reynolds and Lim (2007). Singh then connected visual *artistic* expression to both art therapy and art making. According to Singh, artistic expression through arts and crafts is about personalized meaning-making and a natural arena for group activities and social encounters.¹⁰⁹

However, if we consider the concept of *artistic* expression, as we usually do in art history, as a practice by professional artists, we may note that apart from film, video, design or projects that are specifically designed to be conducted as an artistic collaboration of several professionals, visual artistic expression as an activity is usually the opposite of group activity. Let us consider, for example, the forms of visual artistic expression such as aquarelle, oil, acrylic, gouache or tempera painting as well as pencil, ink, charcoal or oil-pastel drawing. All these forms of visual artistic expression differ from each other and require mostly working alone and the dialogue with oneself, in order to maximize the concentration and attention to the work at hand. Thus, Singh did not explain *how* artistic expression could be an arena for social encounters and furthermore, how it is *naturally* so.

Broderick claimed in her study that she was able to draw a distinction between arts therapy and arts practices based on policy, academic comment and practice-based observation. However, her distinction was drawn mainly by referring to the definition by The Arts Council of Ireland, the work by Dileo and Bradt (2009), White (2009)

108 Wexler 2002, 340.

109 Singh 2011, 160.

and Brett and McHarg (2010). She referred to the definitions by The Arts Council of Ireland of art therapy as a therapeutic intervention and suggested that a research agenda of arts therapy and clinical evidence-based practice does not reflect all the work of arts practices.¹¹⁰ Her own suggestion was that arts practices “(...) could address disciplinary perspectives on health by opening discursive space that can comment and critique the evolving relationship between medicine and society.”¹¹¹ She concluded that further research and a conceptual frame of practice on arts and health as a field of practice are needed.¹¹²

One of the most common fallacies is to consider that all art activities will have a therapeutic or healing impact. Argyle and Bolton presented a qualitative evaluation of ‘a process-based arts in health-care provision’ in their research paper *Art in the community for potentially vulnerable mental health groups* (2005). They tried to differentiate between art therapy, which they considered as the preserve of individuals with specialist training and the so-called ‘process-orientated art for health projects’. As so many researchers previously, they referred once again to White (2002) in describing their starting point as Arts in health, ‘a broad umbrella’, covering both active participation in creative activities and more passive audience or viewer activities of artworks. Their aim was to distinguish between ‘process-based’ and ‘product-based’ forms of arts provision.¹¹³

This strategy begs the following questions:

- (i) How did Argyle and Bolton define the process-based and product-based forms of arts provision?
- (ii) Did Argyle and Bolton consider that there is an ‘arts provision’, i.e. an act of supplying or providing art?
- (iii) If there is an ‘arts provision’ which has two forms as process- and product-based, who is supplying this activity and for whom it is provided for?
- (iv) Is it really necessary to relabel ‘art’ as ‘arts provision’?

Argyle and Bolton suggested that process-based means ‘doing it’, and product-based ‘experiencing it’. However, it is completely unclear what this ‘doing it’ actually is as they considered the practice of arts at a general level. Painting, writing, music, dance, drama and performing arts were all in their view therapeutically powerful. By referring to White (2004) they formulated that arts activities are non-medicalized, non-judgemental, and person-centred and that in arts in health projects people become artists. The same conceptual vagueness continued as product-based arts provision, ‘experiencing it’ was described as

110 Broderick 2011, 96.

111 Broderick 2011, 97.

112 Broderick 2011, 106.

113 Argyle, Bolton 2005, 341.

“(...) concerts, literature, artworks can be experienced for healthful benefit.”¹¹⁴

This general approach can be explained by the conclusions made by Argyle and Bolton. They claimed that even though the artists taking part in the art project saw themselves primarily as artists and not therapists, group members experienced the art sessions as being therapeutic.¹¹⁵ This led Argyle and Bolton to finally conclude that arts as facilitated by artists, with no apparent therapeutic input, can nonetheless be powerfully healing and therapeutic.¹¹⁶

What is more confusing is that Argyle and Bolton referred to the writings of the art therapist Tessa Dalley. According to Argyle and Bolton: “For as Dalley (1984) maintains, all stages of art activity can be seen to contribute to an overall therapeutic effect, for art activity is spontaneous, self-motivating and self-sustaining as the person becomes absorbed in what they are doing.”¹¹⁷

When such a paraphrase is used, the question raises whether *all* stages of art activity are really meant to have therapeutic effect? It seemed odd to me that Dalley who edited *Art as Therapy. An Introduction to the use of art as a therapeutic technique* (1984), still one of the most sophisticated introductions to the discipline of art therapy, would have stated that *all* art activity may have therapeutic effect as claimed by Argyle and Bolton above. What Dalley actually did, was an attempt to differentiate in a subtle way art therapy from other art activities. According to Dalley:

While it is generally understood that most art activity has some therapeutic qualities, what must be made clear is the distinct purpose of art therapy. (...) It would be naive to suggest, however that art is synonymous with therapy in the sense that all art activity is necessarily healing.¹¹⁸

As a matter of fact, Dalley differentiated between art therapy and the art activity, whose “(...) main purpose is to produce and achieve a ‘good painting’ – that is, the aesthetic considerations are of prime importance.”¹¹⁹ On the contrary, according to Dalley, there are clear corrective or treatment aims in art activity undertaken in a therapy setting as art is considered as a means of non-verbal communication between the patient and the therapist.¹²⁰

114 Argyle, Bolton 2005, 342.

115 Argyle, Bolton 2005, 349.

116 Argyle, Bolton 2005, 351.

117 Argyle, Bolton 2005, 349.

118 Dalley 1984, xii–xiii.

119 Dalley 1984, xii.

120 Dalley 1984, xii.

Another example of the diffusing conceptions between the practice of visual arts, art therapy, professional artistic practice and volunteer work is the Canadian research by Wilkinson et al. *Visible Voices: Expressive arts with isolated seniors using trained volunteers* (2013). The study described a programme that explored the potential of volunteer-facilitated expressive arts to contribute to the well-being of socially isolated rural seniors. The study employed the concept of ‘expressive arts’. Wilkinson et al. used several explanations for what constitutes as ‘expressive arts’. Firstly, they stated, that ‘expressive arts’ is a field of practice that was founded in the early 1970s by McNiff, Knill and others at the Lesley College Graduate School in the United States. Secondly, they stated that until recently, expressive arts have been the domain of therapists. Wilkinson et al. quoted the International Expressive Arts Therapy Association (IEATA) which has offered definitions of expressive arts and argued that IEATA “(...) contributes to the legitimacy of expressive arts at the facilitator level by registering Expressive Arts Consultants/Educators, who are not necessarily artists and who are bound by a code of ethics (...).”¹²¹

Wilkinson et al. argued that expressive arts are related to participatory arts and the creative arts, all under the umbrella of Arts and Health and their study is an example of the “(...) growing range of expressive arts programs delivered at the facilitator level.”¹²² Furthermore, in the special programme of *Visible Voices* “(...) the one-on-one, intermodal process at the heart of the program placed as much emphasis on the creative process as the final product, and no formal art training was needed for either the facilitator or the participant.”¹²³

The arts facilitators in the project were volunteers who were trained for the job through initial training including “(...) a program orientation and expressive arts facilitation (the use of the materials, intermodal transitions using different mediums, emphasis similarly on the creative process as the final product, not being attached to an outcome and the use of metaphors.”¹²⁴ According to Wilkinson et al. *this* distinguished expressive arts from art lessons and crafts (emphasis mine).

This arouses several, serious questions:

- (i) What is the relationship between contemporary art therapy and expressive arts?
- (ii) Why no formal art training is required from the arts facilitator?

121 Wilkinson et al. 2013, 230.

122 Wilkinson et al. 2013, 231.

123 Wilkinson et al. 2013, 231.

124 Wilkinson et al. 2013, 232.

- (ii) If an arts facilitator in expressive arts does not necessarily need to have any formal art training or be an artist himself or herself, what is the role and quality of the actual art practice?
- (iv) Why is there a need for two ‘levels’ of professionalism within the expressive arts: the expressive arts therapists, and the expressive arts facilitators?

Wilkinson et al. did not offer sufficient answers to these questions. They utilized several overlapping concepts in their study, such as ‘art’, ‘art-based participatory activities’, ‘art-making’, ‘art-making activities’, ‘creative activity’, ‘creative arts’, ‘creative process’, ‘expressive arts’, ‘expressive arts activities’, ‘expressive arts practice’, ‘expressive arts process’, ‘expressive arts programs’ and ‘participatory arts’, but only two words referred to any visual artwork actually made: co-created sculptures and collages. Thus, it is unclear what actually were the multi-modal expressive arts practised in the project and how, and by which mechanisms the arts in particular could enhance well-being.

Raw et al. considered the difference between art therapy and participatory community arts and health practice. They referred to a previous attempt of definition by South (2004) and considered it helpful in the distinction between art therapy and community-based arts for health. South identified as some core elements of community-based arts for health the following: community settings; active participation of individuals or groups; the aim is improvement of health in the context of social model of health; it is not treatment, nor therapy.¹²⁵

Raw et al. suggested that participatory community arts and health practice could be understood as belonging among the social sciences and humanities, rather than medical health sciences and thus participatory community arts and health practice is distinct from professionalized, arts therapies approaches. Moreover, Raw et al. claimed that arts therapy approaches are “ (...) closer cousins of the biomedical treatment model.”¹²⁶ However, if we take a closer look to contemporary art therapy as a discipline, it also actually already belongs to the discipline of social sciences and moreover, to psychology, as a form of psychotherapy.

Raw et al. argued that their approach might contribute “(...) towards finding these forms of non-professionalised, participatory practice a meaningful conceptual home.”¹²⁷ However, to me, South did not describe a non-professionalized practice. On the contrary, in her conclusions South stated that the facilitating factors of

125 South 2004, 2.

126 Raw et al. 2012, 101.

127 Raw et al. 2012, 101.

community-based arts for health included partnerships, experienced co-ordinators and quality venue or space for activity. Furthermore, South stated that there can be tension between the arts and health sector, and clearly defined objectives, roles and responsibilities are needed. Moreover, she suggested that the evaluation should apply a systematic approach, better measurement of outcomes and the use of appropriate research methods.¹²⁸

It is clear that the concept of professionalism of artists is understood in a narrow way by Raw et al. who saw a difference between community based artists who are not governed by formalized codes, criteria or agreed frameworks, unlike art therapists, and tend to be guided by “(...) their own responsive intuition.”¹²⁹ On what studies of artists’ views this claim of intuition is based on, is unclear. This begs the following question:

(i) If it is claimed that community-based artists are guided in their work by their own ‘responsive intuition’, why is this claim not evidenced by examining what artists themselves use as their guidance strategies in their professional work?

However, in the recent study *Evidence of a transnational arts and health practice methodology? A contextual framing for comparative community-based participatory arts practice in the UK and Mexico* (2013) Raw and Mantécon examined the artists’ practice as an ethnographic study. The aim of the study was to discuss contextual influences on artists’ practice and whether a common transnational practice model can be identified. The study participants, the artists themselves were characterised as “Highly skilled, trained specialists from more than 20 arts disciplines, what all had in common was their well-regarded current participatory arts practice with groups in non-clinical community settings, in projects seeking change and well-being.”¹³⁰

Raw and Mantécon offered a short assemblage of six key elements and argued that the practice assemblage they have outlined can provide an international characterization of community-based participatory arts practice. The six key elements were Personal Commitment; Intuition; the Relational Framework; the Spatial Framework; the Ethical Framework, and the Creativity Key.¹³¹

However, already at this stage I argue that the professionalized visual art practice for enhancing well-being and facilitated by artists, can find a meaningful theoretical home in practice-based art and design research, art theory, aesthetics, design theory, service design

128 South 2004, 17.

129 Raw et al. 2012, 101.

130 Raw, Mantécon 2013, 220.

131 Raw, Mantécon 2013, 222.

and experience design. All these fields apply traditionally also interdisciplinary approaches. But more importantly, what they have in common is an arts-driven or design-driven perspective as well as the art and design concepts. Moreover, artist-facilitated visual art practice can find a meaningful theoretical foundation in positive psychology and the study of psychology of well-being as well as the study of psychology of arts and creativity. These issues are considered and developed in the further chapters.

However, it is possible to make a distinction between artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being and art therapy based on occupational standards. Art therapy belongs to mental health professions and artist-facilitated visual art practice is a service of the arts industry. I strongly suggest that clarity in professionalism, as well as a clear ethical code of practice are essential to any art practice in the context of possible well-being outcomes. Artist-facilitated visual art practice requires the theoretical framework of facilitation, whereas art therapy requires the theoretical framework of psychology and psychotherapy. The main difference is the aim of the practice and whether the aim is to bring about a change in mental disorder or rather to focus on prevention and well-being.

It is questionable whether any claims concerning mental disorders or therapeutic outcomes should be made in regard to artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits. An artist without art therapy training can not make a decision of the theoretical standpoints, therapeutic objectives, therapeutic approach or the level and depth of therapeutic discussion with vulnerable clients. Thus, the qualifications of both the artists as facilitators and the art therapists require clarification. The first occupation: an artist, should belong to a different category than the latter, an art therapist. The first should be considered as a profession of the arts, and the second a profession within healthcare, and more precisely mental health. These two occupations may emerge in praxis, if the individual professional is qualified to do so. My recommendation is that this would mean formal education in the arts, as well as in psychotherapy.

Let us consider the occupation of the art therapist further. The International Standard Classification of Occupations by ILO (ISCO-08) classifies occupations and jobs for research purposes. According to ISCO-08, Art therapists belong to the unit group 2269: Health professionals not elsewhere classified. In addition to arts therapists, this group includes occupations such as podiatrist, occupational therapist and other professionals that are not classified in the major group 22: Health professionals.¹³²

132 ILO 2008, online.

However, occupation classifications are a different thing than the rights to practice the occupation with the occupational title. An example can be given from Finland. In Finland, the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health (Valvira) supervises the professional practice rights of healthcare occupations. The practice of supervision is based on law: the Act on Health Care Professionals (559/1994) and the Decree on Health Care Professionals (564/1994).¹³³

There are two levels of occupations in health care in Finland. Firstly, the licensed professions consist of a group of professions, such as a physician or a psychologist. The practice of these professions is restricted to only licensed professionals by Valvira. Of course, a licensed psychologist may apply the methods of art therapy in his or her work. Secondly, the protected occupational titles consist of a group of professions, such as a psychotherapist. However, these professions may also be practised by those who possess the required training, experience, professional skills and knowledge, even though these people are not entitled to use the protected occupational title.¹³⁴ A psychotherapist with a protected occupational title may, of course, utilize the methods of art therapy. However, 'art therapist' is not a protected occupational title, nor is it a licensed profession of health care as defined by the law and governed by Valvira in Finland.

Let us next examine the situation of visual art practice as a profession. Art practice is understood here as a mode of professional activity which is formed in the society and carried out by artists. Starting from education, contemporary visual arts are increasingly interdisciplinary but the professional higher art education has been and still is strongly differentiated. Although there are some fine art foundation programmes that offer a large curriculum of artistic techniques, students are usually asked to specialize in a specific art form within the field of visual arts. In order to produce evidence of this fact, I will offer five tables of the study programmes at the undergraduate and graduate level of five higher education art and design institutions in Europe. This is done in order to offer some clarity in the question of what we might consider as the practice of visual arts in the 21st century. The criteria for selection of the higher education institutions was as follows:

- 1) the institution offers a large range of professional studies in visual arts,
- 2) the institution offers the highest Ph.D. research possibility in visual arts in addition to BA and MA degree programmes
- 3) the institution is located in the European Union.

133 Act on Health Care Professionals 1994; Decree on Health Care Professionals 1994.

134 Valvira 2014, online

From Finland I selected Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture in Helsinki, and the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki. From the United Kingdom I selected the Royal College of Art in London and the University of the Arts in London. From Sweden I selected Konstfack, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm. The courses provided here are only BA and MA degree courses in 2013. Short courses, diploma courses and foundation courses are excluded from the tables as they do not provide an academic degree or long term professional education in a specific visual arts subject. The Royal College of Art differs from other institutions as it offered only post-graduate study programmes. The specific study programmes are introduced in Appendix I.

It can be concluded from the study that the concept of visual arts could broadly include at least the following art forms: drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, film, video, digital media art, animation, environmental art, installation, architecture, interior architecture, landscape architecture, industrial design, graphic design, fashion design, textile design, ceramics, scenography, theatre design and costume design. There are also divisions and sub-divisions among these art forms.

As can be seen from the aforementioned list, several art forms that could be considered as design might also be included under the extensive conception of 'visual arts'. There is an ongoing debate on whether design should be considered as 'art', or rather as its own, separate domain. This is due to the artificial separation of 'industrial design' from 'artistic design', a perspective which can sometimes still be found in higher education. From the perspective of art history, a large amount of design could be considered also as 'art'. Concrete Finnish examples could be glass design by Tapio Wirkkala (1915–1985) and Gunnel Nyman (1909–1948), textile design by Maija Isola (1927–2001) and more contemporary graphic design by Klaus Haapaniemi or glass design by Harri Koskinen.

Some designers may have a strong focus on the engineering and serial manufacture of physical objects, whereas other designers produce more unique visual solutions. What is more, the more recent conceptions of design research have concentrated on the participative role of people in the design process. The application of concepts such as 'human-centered design', 'participatory design', 'participative design' or 'cooperative design' is common language within the field of contemporary design and service design.¹³⁵

135 Sanders, Dandavete 1999; Sanders, William 2001; Hanington 2003; Laurel 2003, Battarbee 2004; Kotro 2005; Mattelmäki 2006; Pruitt, Adlin 2006; Miettinen 2007; Miettinen, Koivisto 2009; Miettinen, Valtonen 2012.

My proposition is that in relation to well-being aims art and design could be considered related and overlapping fields of professionalisms. Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574) noted that design is the ‘father’ of the visual arts. According to Vasari

I say, then, that sculpture and painting are in truth sisters, born from one father, that is, design, at one and the same birth, and have no precedence one over the other (...)¹³⁶

Furthermore, both art and design can be considered as human activities. As Herbert A. Simon (1916–2001) phrased it: “Everyone designs who devises courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones.”¹³⁷ Deconstructing the sentence by Simon, the concept of design includes the conceptions of creation, action, aim, situation, context, change, preference and future. These are the conceptions that are included also in professional artistic practice.

However, artists and designers themselves often act as gatekeepers of the professional fields in the creative industry. Let us examine, as an example, how the artists and designers have organized themselves in the artist-led and designer-led professional unions in Finland.

In Finland the professional artists’ associations are strongly differentiated. The Artists’ Association of Finland consists of six different member Unions: the Artists’ Association MUU, The Association of Finnish Sculptors, The Association of Finnish Printmakers, The Finnish Painters’ Union, The Union of Artist Photographers and The Union of Finnish Art Associations.¹³⁸ Grafia, the Association of Visual Communication Designers in Finland represents members who are employed in various sectors in the field of visual communication.¹³⁹ SAFA, the Finnish Association of Architects is a professional organization of architects with a university degree from a Finnish university or equivalent qualification from another country.¹⁴⁰ There is another specialized association for landscape architects, MARK.¹⁴¹ ORNAMO, the Finnish Association of Design is for design and crafts professionals. There are also specialized professional sub-associations within ORNAMO, namely SIO, the Finnish Association of Interior Architects, TEXO, Textile Artists, TKO, Industrial Designers, MTO, Fashion Artists, Artists O, and Ceramic Artists.¹⁴² TEME, Theatre and Media Employees in Finland is

136 Vasari 1912, xxiv.

137 Simon 1988, 67.

138 The Artists’ Association of Finland 2013, online.

139 Grafia 2013, online.

140 SAFA 2013, online.

141 MARK 2013, online.

142 ORNAMO 2013, online.

an association for professionals working in theatre and media.¹⁴³ SELO is the Association of Finnish Film Directors.¹⁴⁴

These associations promote the interests of their professional members but work also as gatekeepers within the field of visual arts, design and architecture. Membership is usually applied for and there is no guarantee that the application will be accepted. In order to be accepted in a specific association, applicants are normally required to provide proof of their artistic education and/or the quality of their professional work.

I therefore suggest that the visual art practice should be considered as socially and institutionally structured professionalism. There are both internal and external gates in the way to a career in arts as an occupation. Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels noted that there are hardships that have nothing to do with the artistic talent. According to Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels, there are two societal issues that may hinder a career as an artist: 1) demand for art is limited in society, 2) art is held in low esteem in society. Thus, working in art is considered as a meaningless pursuit in terms of a career. Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels also found out that there is a contradiction if the artist works as a public relations agent for his or her own work. Artists felt uneasy about the contradiction between the intrinsic need for solitude to practice art and the extrinsic need for sociability to gain artistic status. According to Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels “Our artists are encouraged to be subjective and independent, yet at each step of their career subtle forces pull them back toward conformity”.¹⁴⁵

Furthermore, Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels noted that the institutional channels for artistic legitimation influence the artists’ careers so that artists tend to follow similar career lines. The timing and sequencing of steps in career development, however, may be flexible.¹⁴⁶ Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi stated that the external measures may actually be considered as functions of artists’ resourcefulness, understanding of politics and endurance.¹⁴⁷

Therefore, a table for external indications of artist’s professionalism is presented here. This table is based on the studies by Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels but their research has been taken one step further by utilizing also the reflective knowledge as a practitioner.

143 TEME 2013, online.

144 SELO 2013, online.

145 Csikszentmihalyi, Getzels 1976, 29.

146 Csikszentmihalyi, Getzels 1976, 201.

147 Csikszentmihalyi, Getzels 1964, 5.

Table 5. External indications of the recognition of artists' professionalism
• Professional art education
• Membership in a professional artists' association or union with membership criteria for applicants
• Grant provided for artistic work
• Prize in an official and public art competition
• Commissioned public art
• Group exhibition in a recognized gallery or art museum
• Private exhibition in a recognized gallery or art museum
• Artwork purchased for a recognized collection or collection of an art museum
• Art criticism of the artist's work in a renowned publication
• Article about the artist's work in a renowned publication
• Published study about the artist's work
• Published book, tv-programme or film about the artist's work

All the indications above are external and depend on the value other people give to the artist's work. In order to be able to fulfil all these expectations concerning the artistic legitimation, artistic practice needs to be professional, resolute, dedicated, innovative and consistent. The artist needs to have good communication skills and to be willing to engage in social interaction. Most of professional visual artists must, in fact, be rational and trustworthy with timetables to follow and assignments to fulfil. The industry that utilizes art and design is dependent on the innovation of creative individuals and teams.

The inquiry is next taken to the level of classifications of occupations and economic activities again. The premise is that visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits is facilitated by the artist. Therefore the real question at hand is as follows:

(i) What is the economic activity of a visual artist as a facilitator?

As introduced before, the International Standard Classification of Occupations by ILO (ISCO-08) classifies jobs and occupations. A job is defined as a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person for an employer or in self-employment. An occupation is a set of jobs categorized by the 'skill level' and 'skill specialization' required to completely perform the tasks and duties of occupations.¹⁴⁸

The first of the following tables is based on the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08). I have selected the occupations in the presented table. The Class 73: Handicraft and printing makers may have occupations that in some occasions could

overlap into the field of visual arts. However, only 7313 ‘Jewellery and precious-metal workers’, and, 7314 ‘Potters and related workers’ can be considered as such occupations.

The European Commission publishes statistical classifications of the economic activities of the European Community. Economic activity as a term consists of the actions that involve the production, distribution and consumption of products and services. Two statistical classifications are of interest for the research at hand: 1) Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community, Rev. 2 (NACE Rev. 2)¹⁴⁹ and 2) Statistical Classification of Products by Activity in the European Economic Community, 2008 version (CPA 2008)¹⁵⁰. The first classifies economic activities and the second products and services.

**Table 6. Occupations in the field of visual arts, design and architecture
Adaptation of the International Standard Classification of Occupations
ISCO-08**

2 Professionals

2161	Building architects
2162	Landscape architects
2163	Product and garment designers
2166	Graphic and multimedia designers
2651	Visual artists
2654	Film, stage and related directors and producers
2659	Creative and performing artists not elsewhere classified

3 Technicians and associate professionals

3431	Photographers
3432	Interior designers and decorators
3435	Other artistic and cultural associate professionals

**Table 7. Economic activities in the field of visual arts
Adaptation of the Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the
European Community, Rev. 2 (2008)**

R Arts, entertainment and recreation

90	Creative, arts and entertainment activities
90.0	Creative, arts and entertainment activities
90.03	Artistic creation
This item includes: activities of individual artists such as sculptors, painters, cartoonists, engravers, etchers etc.	
90.04	Operation of arts facilities

149 European Commission 2008, online.

150 European Commission 2008 B, online.

**Table 8. Products and services by visual arts
Adaptation of the Statistical Classification of Products by Activity in the
European Economic Community, 2008 version**

R Arts, entertainment and recreation services	
90	Creative, arts and entertainment services
90.0	Creative, arts and entertainment services
90.03	Artistic creation
90.03.1	Artistic creation
90.03.11	Services provided by authors, composers, sculptors and other artists, except performing artists
90.03.12	Original works of authors, composers and other artists, except performing artists, painters, graphical artists and sculptors
90.03.13	Original works of painters, graphical artists and sculptors

Regarding the artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being aims the occupational group of this practice can be considered mainly to be 2651: Visual artists. The economic activity could be considered mostly as 90.03: Artistic creation comprising of the activities of individual artists. The service provided could be regarded as in the category 90.03.11: Services provided by authors, composers, sculptors and other artists, except performing artists.

Thus we can continue to differentiate between artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being and art therapy on a sound institutional background. We have already learnt that in Finland the occupation of the art therapist is not considered as a regulated health care profession, unless the art therapist is licensed first as a health or mental health professional, such as a psychologist or psychotherapist. Let us then consider the following. An artist decides to facilitate a series of visual art workshops for a group of people in his or her studio or a community venue in order to promote well-being. This is done as self-employment. If the practice of visual arts in order to promote well-being is considered as a service, then the service provider in Finland should follow the Consumer Protection Act. According to the Act, consumer goods and services are defined as goods, services and other merchandise and benefits that are offered to natural persons.¹⁵¹ A business is defined as a natural person or a private or public legal person who, in order to obtain income or other economic benefit, deals in, sells or otherwise offers consumer goods or services on a professional basis.¹⁵²

This practice should thus be straightforward to everyone. An artist is a natural person, or if she or he has her or his own company, the company is the legal person. If the artist receives income for offering the service, it is business. The individual who participates in the service

151 Consumer Protection Act 1994, Chapter 1, section 3.

152 Consumer Protection Act 1994, Chapter 1, section 5.

is the customer. Therefore caution should be exercised as to what is the actual promise to the consumer in relation to well-being aims. This raises the following question:

(i) Is the artist liable to declare that her or his art practice will enhance the well-being of the customer, and if so, how?

Chapter 2 of Finland's Consumer Protection Act declares that "Marketing that does not convey information necessary in respect of the health or economic security of consumers shall always be deemed unfair."¹⁵³ This means that the customer should be informed if the service might include any risks to health. Well-being is included in the concept of health in the WHO manifest.¹⁵⁴ According to Section 2 of Chapter 2 "False or misleading information shall not be conveyed in marketing."¹⁵⁵

The fundamental question is thus as follows:

(i) If the artist as a facilitator does not know what kind of well-being his or her service will enhance, or if the service will enhance well-being at all, should we not assume that the marketing of the service might be considered to be misleading information, or as lack of information with regard to health?

This leads us to another pivotal question:

(i) What exactly is the product and/or service of artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being interests?

We might ask whether the product or service is a healing process as in health and social work, an experience or a series of original artworks made by the customers?

In conclusion, a clear distinction between artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits and art therapy should be made in research and practice. This distinction can be made if we accept that artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being is a service and does not aim to fulfil the objectives of art therapy. Furthermore, there should be no claim of a therapist-client relationship or a therapeutic impact of the arts activities in the artist-facilitated practice, unless the artist is also a mental health professional.

Therefore, the artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being should be considered as a service practice with careful considerations about the promises made in regard to the possible well-being benefits of customers. A description can thus be made: Artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being is considered as a service practice of the arts industry, or a cooperative mode of practice between the industries of arts, health and social care,

153 Consumer Protection Act 1994, Chapter 2, section 1.

154 WHO 2013, 4.

155 Consumer Protection Act 1994, Chapter 2, section 2.

recreation and/or leisure. However, more examination as to how visual art practice is understood in research is needed in order to find out how the practice could actually be conceptualized further. I will start with the arts sector, and more precisely with the research publications of Arts Council England.

CHAPTER 3

3. The Arts Sector – A Conceptual Analysis of the Research Publications of Arts Council England

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has been one of the most important pioneering countries in art and well-being projects during the 21st century in Europe. This has been the result of change in cultural policy from the mid-1990s onwards. It could be argued that this change was particularly evident during the power period of the Labour Party, and Tony Blair's premiership from 1997 to 2007. One of the most important issues for art history was the consideration of social inclusion as an objective of arts. The rise of the interest in social inclusion can be seen as driven by the political will in the United Kingdom.

PAT 10, A Policy Action Team, chaired by the U.K.'s Department for Culture, Media and Sport, is often considered in the publications of Arts Council England as an important contributor to the arts policy concerning the so-called socially engaged arts. PAT 10 published a report for The Social Exclusion Unit of the government in 1999. In this report PAT 10 argued that arts, sports, cultural and recreational activity can contribute to neighbourhood renewal in deprived British communities. However, the same report also noted that although there was much anecdotal evidence that arts and sports are successful in promoting community development, there was relatively little hard evidence about what kinds of projects provide value for money.¹⁵⁶

Reeves noted that at the same time the new Labour government introduced different systems of performance measurement in public sectors with the aim of making public services more accountable. In addition to this, arts and cultural organizations were provided with

156 Reeves 2002, 17; Winsor 2005, 5; Jermyn 2004, 1.

new economic opportunities and resources by changes in lottery funding. Following this Arts Council England produced a framework for addressing social exclusion through the arts as one of its strategic priorities. Reeves stated that two action reports were published in 2000: *Addressing Social Exclusion: A Framework for Action*, and, *Social Exclusion – A response to Policy Action Team 10 from the Arts Council of England*.¹⁵⁷

However, Belfiore has argued that the link between the arts and neighbourhood renewal had already been suggested by the Arts Council in 1986 and was therefore not a Labour invention. Instead, according to her, the original suggestion echoed the spirit and values of the economic arguments for the public funding of the arts in order to develop the inner cities and the skills and talents of communities.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, Belfiore has argued that the reasoning for social benefits of arts lies in the arguments for public arts funding of the 1980s.¹⁵⁹

Nonetheless, several reports referring to the issue of the arts and well-being in a broad sense have been published by Arts Council England. Jermyn's literature review *The Arts and Social Exclusion: a review prepared for the Arts Council of England* on social exclusion was published in 2001, Moriarty's review on evaluation, *Sharing Practice*, in 2002, Reeves's *Measuring the economic and social impact of the arts: a review* in 2002, Jermyn's report *The Art of Inclusion* on arts and social inclusion in 2004, Staricoff's review *Arts in health: a review of medical literature* in 2004, Winsor's report *Your health and the arts: a study of the association between arts engagement and health* in 2005, Hecht's audit and analysis on Arts and Health in South West, *Shared Territories*, in 2006, Bunting's report *Public value and the arts in England: Discussion and the conclusions of the arts debate* in 2007, the review by 509 Arts Adult participatory arts –thinking it through in 2010 and the publication by Ings, Crane and Cameron *Be Creative Be Well* in 2012.

Although the publications of Arts Council England concern many issues of the arts, relatively few academic studies have researched Arts Council England's views apart from the discipline of cultural policy. However, British cultural policy has provided some convincing critiques that may concern the situation of arts policy, artists and policy agendas also internationally. Belfiore, one of the most prolific researchers and critics of the social impact studies of arts in cultural policy, has referred to several publications by Arts Council England in her studies.¹⁶⁰ However, she has not offered a systematic and detailed

157 Reeves 2002, 18–19.

158 Belfiore 2002, 96.

159 Belfiore 2004, 184.

160 Belfiore 2002, 92; Belfiore 2002, 96; Belfiore, Bennett 2007, 137; Belfiore 2007, 197.

analysis or review of the publications themselves.

Another example of a critique originating from the field of cultural policy is Selwood's examination of a specific publication and strategy, Arts Council England's vision for contemporary visual arts, *Turning Point* in 2007. She concluded that it was clearly intended that *Turning Point* would serve to enhance the perception of the visual arts sector. Selwood stated, however, that it appeared unlikely that it would be able to enhance Arts Council England's visual arts profile as much as was hoped for. Selwood argued that the Arts Council's priority had shifted to its public value inquiry instead of visual arts.¹⁶¹

The writer of one of the research publications of Arts Council England, Bunting, stated in 2007 that the polarization between art for art's sake and the funding of the arts in order to deliver some social and economic outcomes had become a fixation in policy and media circles. She argued that there had been a lot of discussion on the instrumentalism of the arts and demands for the recognition of the intrinsic value of the arts. However, Bunting argued that these simple divides were not relevant to the majority of people according to her survey on the debate on the public value of the arts.¹⁶²

In 2008, however, Gray presented a critique of Arts Council England's public value inquiry by Bunting. The aim of his critique was to examine whether the inquiry could provide a meaningful basis upon which arts-supporting organizations can function and whether the research had been carried so that it could provide an effective basis for the development of new management and policy ideas for the arts-funding sector. Gray argued that despite the amount of effort and money that had gone into the research, it raised several serious methodological and analytical questions.¹⁶³

Furthermore, Gray argued that too much of the research of Arts Council England is based on assumptions. According to Gray, in the case of public value inquiry a more relevant starting point would have been 'that the arts are valueless', instead of the idea that the arts provide 'public value.' He especially criticized the emphasis that was placed on artists and representatives of arts organizations in the data collection stage, arguing that the research was "(...) made up of an enclosed artistic world talking to itself."¹⁶⁴

It could be argued that there is clear tension between the critiques originating from the field of cultural policy and the publications focusing on the possible social impacts of art. As an example of this, Matarasso's politically influential report on arts and their positive

161 Selwood 2007, 1214.

162 Bunting 2007, 7.

163 Gray 2008, 210.

164 Gray 2008b, 213.

social impacts *Use or ornament* (1997) has been sharply criticized by Belfiore in 2002 and 2009¹⁶⁵, and, by Merli in 2002 and 2004¹⁶⁶. Matarasso's main conclusion was that participation in arts activities brings social benefits.¹⁶⁷ The underlying theoretical approach that bothered Belfiore the most in Matarasso's work was that arts "(...) appear to be valued precisely for their capacity to 'deliver' on this non-aesthetic, non-artistic level."¹⁶⁸ Merli considered her focus to be more on the methodological flaws such as the lack of internal validity and the measures used in Matarasso's work.¹⁶⁹

What raises questions for me in Matarasso's work is the fact that the concept of personal growth is seen mostly in the context of social development, even though the concept itself actually refers to a subjective psychological experience. Moreover, personal growth through participation in the arts is seen by Matarasso as "(...) leading to enhanced confidence, skill-building and educational developments which can improve people's social contacts and employability."¹⁷⁰ In the above the concept of personal growth is explained through possible outcomes and every single outcome could actually be connected also to the aims of any education provided.

However, Matarasso's work and especially the aforementioned publication *Use or Ornament* has been cited or referenced to in the following research publications by Arts Council England: *Adult participatory arts – Thinking it through* by Dix and Gregory, Jermyn's *The Art of Inclusion* and Jermyn's *The Arts and Social Exclusion: a review prepared for the Arts Council of England* in a rather positive light.

Thus it must be stated that the publications by Arts Council England are likely to present a funding bias, which means that the publications may emphasize on favourable outcomes of the visual arts practice. In addition to that, it may be that the publications reflect the instrumental cultural policy. However, the possible positive bias in the research material of the publications by Arts Council England is taken into account. On the contrary, in overall, the publications by Arts Council England should be considered in their own context as possibly demonstrating the agenda. However, the agenda may sometimes be unclear and even contradictory. This may be due to the complex relationship between the demand of the artistic quality versus the demand of the socially justified outcomes of the art practice.

165 Belfiore 2002, 98; Belfiore 2009, 348.

166 Merli 2002, 108–109; Merli 2004, 17–18.

167 Matarasso 2003, 10.

168 Belfiore 2009, 350.

169 Merli 2002, 109.

170 Matarasso 2003, 6.

Dame Liz Forgan, the chair of Arts Council England considered excellence as its guiding start. According to Forgan excellence for Arts Council England is “ (...) the bravest, most original, most innovative, most perfectly realised work of which people are capable – whether in the creation of art, its performance, its communication or its impact on audiences.”¹⁷¹ How well this quest for excellence corresponds to the goals of socially motivated outcomes is an open question.

3.1. The design of the search and review process

The first step was to define how to search the digital archive of Arts Council England for relevant publications as a focused search. Arts Council England is a public organization and the publications are available directly from the organization’s online database. Arts Council England’s digital database was selected as a target source, because the organization was considered as a significant contributor of information as well as a stakeholder institution in the European arts sector. Arts Council England provides for a very extensive, up-to-date and relevant database of publications of the arts sector.

The digital archive of the publications by Arts Council England was searched manually in September 2012, and, a revised search was made in February 2014. It must be noted that the online digital archive of the publications by Arts Council England is continually extending. At the time of the last search in February 2014 it contained 433 results under the category Browse: Advice & Guidance on the timeframe of 1999–2014.¹⁷²

After I had familiarized myself with the archive, I defined the inclusion criteria for the publications firstly as follows:

Table 9. First search requirements used for the database search of Arts Council England

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus on visual art practice in the context of well-being. 2. Full text accessible for public. 3. Publishing date: 2000–2013. |
|--|

Only one publication, *The Power of Art, visual arts: evidence of impact, regeneration, health, education and learning* (2006), met all the requirements of the first inclusion criteria as its focus is specifically on visual arts and their various beneficial impacts. However, this report was published without a named author. As the specific author

¹⁷¹ Forgan 2010, 2.

¹⁷² Arts Council England 2014, online.

or authors are unknown, and authority cannot be stated, this report was not included in the conceptual analysis. Thus, the first search led to the result that few publications by Arts Council England addressed specifically visual arts or visual art practice in the context of well-being. Therefore, the search requirements had to be reconsidered as follows:

Table 10. Second search requirements used for the database search of Arts Council England

1. Focus on art practice and visual art practice in the context of well-being.
2. Full text accessible.
3. Publishing date: 2000–2013.
4. A responsible author or authors named for the publication.

The final inclusion and exclusion criteria of the publications for conceptual analysis were defined as follows.

Table 11. Inclusion criteria for the publications by Arts Council England

- Report, review or research with a named author.
- Publishing date: 2000–2013.
- Focus of the publication is art practice in relation to well-being, excluding art therapy, art education, artworks and design for improvement of healthcare facilities or art in medical humanities.

The aim of the inclusion criteria was to find as many publications as possible that could have significance, authority, currency and relevance to the research question.

Table 12. Exclusion criteria for the publications by the Arts Council England

- Publication is not a report, review or research with a named author.
- It is published outside the publication dates of 2000–2013.
- Focus of the publication is art therapy, art education, art or design for the improvement of healthcare facilities, or art in medical humanities.
- Focus of the publication is not art practice in relation to well-being.

The aim of the exclusion criteria was to exclude the publications that could not be considered as relevant to the research question. I searched the full archive of 433 results manually for the timeframe of 2000–2013. After examining the data of the title and subject information, I excluded 407 publications, because they did not concern art and visual art practice in relation to well-being specifically. I reviewed 23 publications in full text, and excluded a further 14 publications. The excluded publications can be found in the Bibliography in the end of this study.¹⁷³ Review

173 The Arts Council of England, The Heritage Lottery Fund 2002, Arts Council England 2004, 2005, 2005b, 2006, 2006b, 2006c, 2007, 2007b, 2007c, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012.

refers here to the process of critical reading, analysing, categorizing and evaluating the content of the publications. The quality and scope of the publications by Arts Council England vary significantly. Thus, brief leaflets or summaries of projects, anonymous reports, annual, national or regional reviews were not included in the conceptual analysis. For example, the following publications had no person or persons named as an author or authors in the publications:

- 1) Arts Council England with the Department of Health (2007). *A prospectus for arts and health*.
- 2) Arts Council England (2007). *The Arts, health and well-being*.
- 3) Arts Council England (2006). *The power of art, visual arts: evidence of impact, regeneration, health, education*.
- 4) Arts Council England (2004). *The impact of arts: some research evidence*.

Information of the possible authors from Arts Council England was asked through personal communication twice in order to confirm the lack of the responsible authors. It was affirmed by Arts Council England that the publications have been published without a named author on them. All information available about them is enclosed within the publications themselves.¹⁷⁴ As there is no author mentioned, the above-mentioned publications were therefore excluded from the analysis.

However, a brief description of the main content of these publications follows. Arts Council England's and the Department of Health's *A prospectus for arts and health* promotes the benefits of the arts in improving people's well-being, health and healthcare. The emphasis is clearly on healthcare as the benefits of arts are primarily considered as the improvement of clinical and therapeutic outcomes, a possibility for users to express and transform distress and disturbance, creation of a less stressful environment for patients, service users and staff, increase of the understanding between clinicians and people, development of more patient-focused services, enhancement of public health, and improvement of the experience for all.¹⁷⁵

Arts Council England's *The Arts, health and well-being* presents a national framework for arts, health and well-being. The publication states that Arts Council England and the Department of Health consider arts and creativity broadly as arts-based activities for promoting individual and community health and health care delivery, as well as the enhancement of the health care environment by providing artwork or performances.¹⁷⁶

174 Bancroft 2013, personal communication.

175 Arts Council England 2007, 8.

176 Arts Council England 2007, 8.

Arts Council England's *The power of art, visual arts: evidence of impact, regeneration, health, education and learning* is a report and a set of examples in order to illustrate the impact of contemporary visual arts. The perspective is clear as it is claimed unproblematically that visual arts have a positive impact on the people who engage with them. Contemporary visual arts is "(...) defined as an expanded field of practice by living artists. As well as painting and sculpture, the field includes: artists' film and video, crafts, design, architecture, live art, photography and new media arts, education and critical debate."¹⁷⁷

Arts Council England's *The impact of arts: some research evidence* consists of information about research which has been conducted as to provide evidence on the impact of the arts on various areas, including employment, education, health, criminal justice and regeneration. The report suggests that impact evaluation of socio-economic outcomes should be embedded within the core work of Arts Council England.¹⁷⁸

3.2. The conceptual analysis of the research publications of Arts Council England

Nine (9) publications were identified as the most relevant and valid for the exploration in regard to the research question. The final list of included publications is presented in the following table. As high a proportion as possible for relevance and validity from all the publications of Arts Council England was included in the conceptual analysis with respect to the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The group of selected publications is referred to hereinafter as 'the research publications of Arts Council England'.

Table 13. The research publications of Arts Council England that address art practice in relation to well-being 2000–2013

Author(s) Year	Title and Aim	Re- search design	Principle considerations of art
Ings, Crane, Cameron (2012) <i>Region: London</i>	Be Creative Be Well <i>A report on Be Creative Be well, a Well London programme in enhancing health and well-being.</i>	Report	Art is considered as a participatory arts practice. Art and creativity are considered symmetrically as means to enhance well-being and health in general.

177 Arts Council England 2006, 8.

178 Arts Council England 2004, 3.

509 Arts; Dix and Gregory (2010) <i>Region: London</i>	Adult participatory arts –thinking it through <i>A report on London-based arts organizations in participatory arts.</i>	Report	Art is considered as a participatory process. Art is considered as a way of collaboration.
Bunting, (2007) <i>Region: National</i>	Public value and the arts in England: Discussion and the conclusions of the arts debate <i>Report as a contribution to the debate about the value of the arts and the purpose and role of public funding.</i>	Report	Art is considered as having two main priorities: artistic excellence, and public engagement in order to enable quality of artistic experience.
Hecht (2006) <i>Region: South West</i>	Shared Territories <i>A research report for Arts Council England and Arts & Health South West of the Arts and Health activity in the South West.</i>	Report	Art is considered in the context of Arts and Health, which refers to collaborations between artists and people working in health and social care; and any creative initiative that directly enhances people's health and well-being.
Winsor (2005) <i>Region: National</i>	Your health and the arts: a study of the association between arts engagement and health <i>The report presents findings on the associations between engagement in the arts, health and illness.</i>	Report	Art is considered as a means of attendance and participation. Art is considered as a means to improve health.
Staricoff (2004) <i>Region: National</i>	Arts in health: a review of medical literature <i>The review of medical literature explores the relationship of arts and humanities with healthcare.</i>	Review	Art is considered as a means to enhance health. Art is considered to include all the arts such as visual arts and music.
Jermyn (2004) <i>Region: National</i>	Art of Inclusion <i>The findings of a three-year research project to explore social inclusion in the arts.</i>	Report	Art is considered as participatory arts practice in the context of social inclusion and societal purpose.
Reeves (2002) <i>Region: National</i>	Measuring the economic and social impact of the arts: a review <i>To provide an overview of arts impact research.</i>	Review	Art is considered as an economically and socially important sector. Art is seen as a value-adding activity in society.
Jermyn (2001) <i>Region: National</i>	The Arts and Social Exclusion: a review prepared for the Arts Council of England <i>Literature review commissioned to support social inclusion research programme.</i>	Review	Art is considered as a socially motivated activity. Art is considered as a means to enhance social relations and society.

As seen from the table above, the principal considerations in regard to art and its purpose are defined according to the content of the publications. These considerations are as follows: 1) Art is considered as a participatory arts practice. Art and creativity are considered symmetrically as a means to enhance well-being and health in general (Ings, Crane and Cameron); 2) Art is considered as a participatory process. Art is considered as a way of collaboration (509 Arts, Dix and Gregory); 3) Art is considered as having two main priorities: artistic excellence and public engagement in order to enable the quality of artistic experience (Bunting); 4) Art is considered in the context of Arts and Health, which refers to any collaboration between artists and people working in health and social care; and any creative initiative that directly enhances people's health and well-being (Hecht); 5) Art is considered as a means of attendance and participation. Art is considered as a means to improve health (Winsor); 6) Art is considered as a means to enhance health. Art is considered to include all the arts such as visual arts and music (Staricoff); 7) Art is considered as participatory arts practice in the context of social inclusion. Art has a societal purpose as a means to enhance social inclusion (Jermyn); 8) Art is considered as an economically and socially important sector. Art is seen as value-adding activity in the society (Reeves); and, 9) Art is considered as a socially motivated activity. Art is considered as a means to enhance social relations and society (Jermyn).

Thus the main purpose of art in the research publications of Arts Council England, apart from Bunting, could be formulated as: 'Art as a means of participation and enhancement of well-being, health and social inclusion'. Furthermore, I found out that the aforementioned publications did not concentrate solely on visual arts or visual art practice. Instead, all of the publications dealt with 'the arts' in a generalized manner. Therefore, the analysis can only focus on the application of concepts of art practice.

Thus, my selected target concept is 'art practice'. The task is to find and analyse how concepts related to the target concept of 'art practice' have been applied. At the first level of analysis, I identified and selected concepts if they clearly referred to 'art practice' as a form or mode of practice or activity in the text. Practice is understood here as: 1) a repeated or customary action; 2) the usual way of doing something; 3) the continuous exercise of a profession. Activity is understood here as: 1) the quality or state of being active; 2) a pursuit in which a person is active; 3) a form of organized activity. These definitions of terms are adaptations from Merriam-Webster dictionary.¹⁷⁹

179 Merriam-Webster Dictionary 2014, online.

Thus 'art practice' as a *term* could be defined as the customary action of practicing art, and the exercise of an art profession. However, as a *concept* 'art practice' is necessarily open, as there are no sufficient and necessary properties, nor conditions to close the concept. However, this notion does not mean that statements, clarifications or explanations of a concept cannot be formulated. My suggestion is that only the *closing* statement of a concept such as 'art practice' would be impossible and unnecessary to construct in the field of arts and humanities. For example, it would be interesting to see how the meaning of 'art practice' is understood in the future.

As stated above, my main interest is in exploring how the concepts related to the target concept of 'art practice' are used. Therefore concepts that may refer to the experience of art as viewing artworks or the actual physical product of art, such as 'artwork', 'artworks', 'work of art' or 'art objects' were excluded in the conceptual analysis.

Also longer linguistic forms including verbs in syntax conveying action, such as making art, or creating art were excluded. The concept of 'art form' do not equal as such to practice, as art forms are *practised*. Nonetheless, specific visual art forms were identified and coded if they appeared in the publications. However, it must be stated that the discussion about the art forms and their particular mechanisms in regard to the well-being aims is almost non-existent in the research material which is a surprising finding. Instead, different art forms are mentioned in an anecdotal way. Even though art forms, such as painting, sculpture or photography occur in the research material, none of the publications discuss what attributes the particular art forms have in enhancing well-being, what the specific mechanisms of the art forms are in enhancing well-being or what their specific meaning is in the context of well-being.

The concepts were identified and selected as the certain ones that were determined as the most relevant to the question of art practice in relation to well-being. Thus, determining a specific target concept made it possible to examine a text for specific things. The aim was to provide a comprehensive coverage of the concepts that relate specifically to arts as a form or mode of practice or activity in the research material concerning well-being aims. The concepts were coded for existence and not frequency in the individual publications. This determination arose from the research material and the research question itself. The aim is not to provide statistical evidence of the frequency of the concepts in the individual publications. This might not permit any interpretation of the overall concepts, as for example the concept of 'arts intervention' might appear in one publication only few times and in another several times. Instead, the first aim was to identify the concepts that are used in

all research material, and secondly to examine the employment of the concepts.

The level of the generalization was specific for the tables that are presented as follows. The concepts were coded for the tables as they appeared in the texts, in singular and plural forms. The coding of the texts was done manually. No automatic coding systems were used. Instead the coding was done by hand. The texts were read through several times and concept occurrences were manually written down and presented in the tables. However, it is not enough to note the instances of particular words as it results in analysis only at a descriptive level. Beckwith, Dickinson and Kendall argued that interpretation and context appreciation is always needed in conceptual analysis.¹⁸⁰

As opposed to the descriptive level, the conceptual analysis follows the notions of Bal (concepts as miniature theories), Wittgenstein (concepts as a network of overlapping similarities), and Weitz (focus on the employment of concepts).¹⁸¹ It is not relevant to try to define a concept as a statement of necessary and sufficient properties. Instead, we should focus on the actual functioning of the concepts in different conditions. This strategy also follows the notion of Hammond and Wellington: “If we see concepts as constructed, we become aware that they are malleable or stretched to fit a range of conditions.”¹⁸² It is precisely this malleability and elasticity in the use of concepts that is of interest here. Thus, I strive for discussing the usage of certain kinds of concepts that relate to the art practice and the conditions under which they have been applied. Therefore, concepts are considered as constructs that can convey meaning.

First, however, I present tables of the concepts in all their linguistic forms. This is done because I wanted to enable the reader to actually see for himself or herself what these concepts might have in common, whether they are related or have similar characteristics. This strategy follows the advice by Wittgenstein: “(..) look and see whether there is anything common at all.”¹⁸³

After this, I discuss the main content of each research publication. The next stage of the conceptual analysis is to consider groupings of concepts as family resemblances as suggested by Wittgenstein. This is the examination of what similarities and resemblance the concepts may have in their employment. The same strategy and procedure of inquiry is repeated in the next Chapter Four, concerning the research material of academic studies.

180 Beckwith, Dickinson, Kendall 2008, 1837.

181 Bal 2002; Wittgenstein 1978; Weitz 1956.

182 Hammond, Wellington 2013, 30.

183 Wittgenstein 1978, 31.

A general note concerning the tables must be given. The tables present specific visual art forms mentioned and concepts related to art practice as used in all linguistic forms in the research publications of Arts Council England on the timeframe of 2000–2013 concerning arts and well-being. However, for the benefit of communication and readability the detailed main content of the tables is not individually repeated as table titles. Instead more concise table titles have been used in respect to the instructions by APA.¹⁸⁴

Table 14. Visual art forms and concepts related to art practice in the publication by Ings, Crane, Cameron (2012)

Author(s) Year	Visual art forms	Concepts related to art practice
Ings, Crane, Cameron (2012)	Painting Sculpture Film Photography Mosaics Ceramics Textiles Fashion design Printmaking Screen printing Graphic design Jewellery Costume-making Multimedia Design Graffiti art Mixed media Drawing Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Arts • The arts • Act of creativity • Applied arts • Art workshops • Artistic activity • Artistic interventions • Artistic practice • Artistic process • Artistic programme • Artists' work • Artistry • Arts activities • Arts activity • Arts and cultural activity • Arts and cultural activities • Arts and cultural participation • Arts and cultural work • Arts and health initiatives • Arts and health initiative • Arts and health work • Arts intervention • Arts interventions • Arts participation • Arts practice • Arts programmes • Arts projects • Arts process • Arts workshop • Arts workshops • Community arts • Community arts projects • Community arts programme • Community-based participatory arts programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity • Creativity and the arts • Creative act • Creative activities • Creative activity • Creative and skills based workshops • Creative arts • Creative arts projects • Creative intervention • Creative learning • Creative practice • Creative process • Creative programme • Creative programmes • Creative project • Creative projects • Creative ventures • Creative or arts-based intervention • Creative work • Creative workshops • Culture and creativity • Cultural activities • Cultural intervention • Cultural participation • Cultural and creative activities • Cultural and creative interventions • Participatory and community-based arts • Participatory arts • Participatory arts practice • Participatory arts process • Participatory arts projects • Participatory arts work • Participative creative process • Programme of arts events • Socially engaged arts

The publication *Be creative be well* (2012) was written by arts consultants Ings, Crane and Cameron. The report aimed to be an independent evaluation of the *Be Creative Be Well* programme. The report was commissioned by Arts Council England, and it was intended

184 APA 2006, 156.

to complement the overall evaluation of the programme of *Well London* by the University of East London. *Be Creative Be Well* was considered as a wide-ranging community art programme that was shaped by local conditions and local people in London. Ings, Crane and Cameron listed as the outcomes of the project the following: people were inspired to try new things, change jobs, refresh their outlook on life and gain useful creative skills.¹⁸⁵

However, there is something oddly familiar here. If we take a closer look on the outcomes, they can all be considered as outcomes of learning in general. This notion creates the first consideration:

(i) Is the aim of the art practice actually learning and not the practice of arts?

According to Ings, Crane and Cameron, the key results of their report for successful participatory arts practice were as follows: definition of the community, selection of the artist, preparation of the ground, demystification of the artistic process, working with the local structures, collaborative programming, building levels of commitment, use of evaluation and leaving a legacy.¹⁸⁶ However, Ings, Crane and Cameron stated that, in general, the art and well-being sector lacks a detailed ethical framework, and some artists struggle to fulfil their own needs as creative producers alongside their commitment to social progress.¹⁸⁷

The research report by Ings, Crane and Cameron offers us several overlapping concepts in regard to art practice. Eventhough several 'case studies' of the art practice are briefly presented, the discourse is mostly descriptive and fails to communicate what the actual mechanisms of art are in enhancing well-being.

Moreover, the discourse sometimes apply the rhetoric of persuasion. Arguments made are reasonable if the aim is to provide 'evidence' of the benefits of art practice in general. However, the rhetorical forms used in the publication bear resemblance to the discourse used in public relations and politics rather than critical evaluation. For example: "The story of *Be Creative Be Well* is, without doubt, one of considerable success."¹⁸⁸

The arguments of the claimed positive impacts are high on persuasion, but actually fail short on research. This may be due to the fact, that Ings, Crane and Cameron evaluated *Be Creative Be Well* by rather simplified frameworks of well-being, that could relate to almost any other activity, labelled as 'creative'. This is an issue that is discussed later.

185 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 9.

186 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 10–12.

187 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 37.

188 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 18.

Table 15. Visual art forms and concepts related to art practice in the publication by 509 Arts – Dix, Gregory (2010)

Author (s) Year	Visual art forms	Concepts related to art practice
509 Arts: Dix, Gregory (2010)	Photography Digital art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • The arts • Adult participatory arts • Artistic activities • Artistic creation • Artistic process • Arts projects and programmes • Arts activity • Creative practice • Creative process • Creative work • Creativity • Participatory arts • Participatory arts work • Programmes of creative work

Arts Council England, London commissioned *509 Arts*, a cultural consultancy, to review 13 London based arts organizations working with vulnerable and disadvantaged adults in 2009. The aim of the review *Adult participatory arts –thinking it through* (2010) was to gain a better understanding of the work of the organizations in the field of adult participatory arts.¹⁸⁹

The report authors Dix and Gregory from *509 Arts* concluded that it was difficult to decide what constituted as the area of adult participatory arts, as it is not a sector, or as a term common currency. Therefore, they drew in as many companies as they could for the review.¹⁹⁰ According to Dix and Gregory, the adult participatory work could be typified as follows: work is in part a response to the issues of the participants, is led by artists, is personalized, can develop the capabilities and skills of the participant, is undertaken in a partnership with non-arts workers or organizations and takes place over a timescale.¹⁹¹

Dix and Gregory further defined participatory arts as a collaboration, as the professional skills of the artist combine with the creative energy of the participants. They emphasized on the importance of the role of the artist stating that the presence and the quality of the artist is significant. The artist may change the dynamic and affect the outcome quality. They found out, however, that the artists working in the area of adult participatory arts often felt that they were not given appropriate status in the arts community and felt like second-class citizens.¹⁹²

Unlike many other writers commissioned by Arts Council Enland in the research material, Dix and Gregory adressed briefly the issue of artistic merit in participatory arts work. Dix and Gregory argued that some parts of the arts sector remain sceptical about the value and

189 Dix, Gregory 2010, 8.

190 Dix, Gregory 2010, 26.

191 Dix, Gregory 2010, 21.

192 Dix, Gregory 2010, 13.

quality of the participatory arts work.¹⁹³ Dix and Gregory noted that there is a contradiction in the field: a high-value aesthetic is expected by the peers and arts funders while at the same time the participatory arts should be able to deliver social outcomes. They argued that there is a tension between the notion of artistic excellence as classic and timeless and the more contemporary view that art has a social purpose and its values are relative.¹⁹⁴

However, they did not discuss this issue further. Thus, it must be stated that the perspective that art has a social purpose is not a contemporary view in art history. Instead, there has been socially motivated demands for artistic practice during different eras from Catholic Rome to the Soviet Union. The content of the socially motivated demand has, of course, changed, but the core can be considered the same as art is considered to be in service of something else, whether it is the Catholic church, Communist policy or social inclusion in the contemporary society.

Table 16. Visual art forms and concepts related to art practice in the publication by Bunting (2007)

Author(s) Year	Visual art forms	Concepts related to art practice
Bunting (2007)	Fine art Conceptual art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Arts • The arts • Artistic practice • Artistic development • Artistic expression • Artistic innovation • Arts projects • Arts activities • Community arts • Creative process • Participatory arts

Bunting's report described the arts debate, the first-ever public value inquiry by Arts Council England launched in 2006. The publication *Public value and the arts in England: Discussion and the conclusions of the arts debate* (2007) aimed to bring together the findings of this inquiry in order to provide an overall account of how people think about the arts and their aspirations for public funding.¹⁹⁵ In Bunting's report, the arts were considered as a part of a fundamental capacity for life, enriching the experience of life and having powerful applications as an outlet for expressing emotions.¹⁹⁶

According to Bunting, quality was a critical factor in the arts debate and referred to many contexts in the inquiry. Members of the public referred to the quality of experience as something that helps to understand new or enriches their experience of life. Arts professionals referred to the quality of a product as something that

193 Dix, Gregory 2010, 16.

194 Dix, Gregory 2010, 18.

195 Bunting 2007, 5.

196 Bunting 2007, 14.

exists independently, can be judged according to the level of expertise and the contribution it makes to a particular art form. Members of the wider stakeholder community referred to the quality of project as how well an arts organisation is run and meets its objectives.¹⁹⁷

The most important finding of this research, however, was Bunting’s realization of the points of tension in the debate. Bunting explained that for an artist there is a tension between the individual right to artistic expression and the need to engage and connect with others. Another tension described by Bunting was the question of how widespread the benefits of public funding of the arts should be, i.e. what are the benefits on one hand to the public, and on the other hand to artistic development.¹⁹⁸

Bunting suggested that focusing on enabling widespread quality of artistic experience by means of artistic excellence and public engagement, a balance might be found.¹⁹⁹ She concluded that for Arts Council England this means that investment in the arts should have a deep commitment to and focus on the quality of artistic experience which is created by enabling artistic excellence.²⁰⁰

Thus, Bunting’s work differs from other publications as it places more emphasis on the issue of quality and artistic excellence.

Table 17. Visual art forms and concepts related to art practice in the publication by Hecht (2006)

Author(s) Year	Visual art forms	Concepts related to art practice
Hecht (2006)	Multi-media arts Film Animation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts • The arts • Arts activity • Arts and health • Arts initiatives • Arts psychotherapy • Arts projects • Arts programme • Arts workshops • Arts therapies • Creativity • Creative collaboration

In 2005 Arts Council England South West and the South West Arts and Health forum commissioned an arts consultant to undertake an audit and analysis of the Arts and Health activity in the South West. Ruth Hecht’s *Shared Territories* (2006) argued that the type of the work, the art forms, the client groups and the scale and sustainability of the work varied to a large extent. According to Hecht, the good practice included initiatives of high artistic quality which delivered measurable health outcomes, cross-sector partnership, credible research and evaluation and sustainable integration of the arts in health settings.²⁰¹

197 Bunting 2007, 16.

198 Bunting 2007, 22.

199 Bunting 2007, 26.

200 Bunting 2007, 28.

201 Hecht 2006, iii.

Hecht identified 14 key issues in relation to the development of the Arts and Health sector in the South West. I will list those that are still most relevant to the field in general also internationally. The issues according to Hecht were as follows: there should be a more higher profile for the sector; there is a need for more rigorous evaluation; there is little strategic work; successful partnerships should be developed; arts sector should accept the health sector's desire for measurable outcomes in relation to health while the health sector should accept that working with the arts sector is about producing work of quality and integrity in relation to both process and product; more arts and health work could be targeted towards specific health outcomes and at specific groups of people; more emphasis could be on work with older people: there is lack of funding and people working in the sector feel isolated and undervalued; there is a danger that some artists and arts organizations working in the field may not necessarily have the skills, knowledge and expertise for arts and health work; arts therapists and artist are working in different ways in the sector and could perhaps engage to mutual learning. Hecht argued that Arts and Health covers an extremely broad spectrum of work, from projects with a specific client group with specific health issues to social inclusion. She asked if it is even necessary or possible to clearly explain the field of Arts and Health.²⁰²

Table 18. Visual art forms and concepts related to art practice in the publication by Winsor (2005)

Author(s) Year	Visual art forms	Concepts related to art practice
Winsor (2006)	Design Film Video Electronic art Printing Drawing Painting Sculpture Textile Crafts Photography Animation Print making Pottery Jewellery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Arts • The arts • Artistic activities • Artistic activity • Artistic and cultural activities • Artistic creation • Arts activity • Arts activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts and culture • Arts interventions • Art therapy • Community-based arts • Creative activities • Creative activity

Winsor's *Your health and the arts: a study of the association between arts engagement and health* (2005) was a report commissioned by Arts Council England that focused on the associations between engagement in the arts and health and illness among the general population in England. At the time of the writing of the report, Arts Council

England was developing a national strategy for arts and health. The report was based on statistical analysis of over 12,000 people and it involved attendance at performing and non-performing arts or culture, participation in artistic and cultural activities, and viewing and listening through audiovisual and online media.

The first key finding by Winsor was that there was a high level of engagement in a wide range of events and activities. Only 2 % of the participants had not engaged in any of the events or activities described in the report. Secondly, people with a longstanding illness were less likely to attend to both performing and non-performing arts or culture. Thirdly, study participants who engaged in the arts were more likely in general to report better health. Fourthly, patterns of engagement in the arts were not narrowly focused. People who engaged in the arts were likely to have used all the means of engagement of the report: attendance, participation and audiovisual or online media.²⁰³

As mentioned before Winsor's title of the report is *Your health and the arts: a study of the association between arts engagement and health*. I studied, however, more closely what the arts in fact consist of in this report. The 'arts' were actually transformed into the concept of 'creative activities' by Winsor in the body of the text. Under the concept of creative activities, Winsor included for example painting, drawing, print making or sculpture; textile crafts such as embroidery and sewing; photography as an artistic activity; wood crafts and other crafts such as calligraphy, pottery or jewellery making.²⁰⁴

Eventhough art can be considered as an open concept in the original spirit by Weitz, a notion that I will discuss more in the further chapters, we are be obliged to ask:

- (i) Why is it necessary to change the concept of the arts of the title of the research into creative activities in the body of text and vice-versa?
- (ii) Could the reason be that embroidery and sewing might not be considered as art by many, and probably not even by the criteria of Arts Council England itself if we are to believe the previously described recommendations by Bunting regarding the arts debate?

Thus, the utilization of the concept of 'creative activities' justify a wide range of activities that do not necessarily have to be judged by nature or value of art, two quests traditional to the history of aesthetics. In other words, there is firstly a chosen group of activities labelled as creative. These creative activities are then redefined as art.

203 Winsor 2005,100–102.

204 Winsor 2005,37.

Table 19. Visual art forms and concepts related to art practice in the publication by Staricoff (2004)

Author(s) Year	Visual art forms	Concepts related to art practice
Staricoff (2004)	Design Drawing Fine arts Painting Photographs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Arts • The arts • Artistic work • Artistic creativity • Artistic creation • Artists' creativity • Arts interventions • Arts programme • Artistic development • Artform activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-based participation projects • Intervention of the arts • Creative arts programme • Creative arts • Creativity • Creative intervention • Visual creativity

Staricoff's review *Arts in health: a review of medical literature* (2004) consisted of the review of studies published between 1990 and 2004. The aim of the study was to strengthen the information on the positive impact of the arts on health. The review included 385 references from medical literature. According to Staricoff the arts and humanities are of pivotal importance in

inducing positive physiological and psychological changes in clinical outcomes, reducing drug consumption, shortening the length of stay in hospital, increasing job satisfaction, promoting better doctor-patient relationships, improving mental healthcare and developing health practitioners' empathy.²⁰⁵

From this direct quote we may conclude that the main environment for Staricoff's consideration about the usage of the arts is healthcare settings. Actually every single goal introduced above is connected directly to medical practice, rather than arts and the humanities. We have a good reason to ask:

(i) Why should the arts have any role in promoting better doctor-patient relationships or shortening the length of stay in hospital?

Although the number of the references in Staricoff's review is impressive, I counted that most of them, i.e. 257 references, dealt with music or sound according to the titles of the bibliography. Thus, the evidence of the positive impact on health by any other art form is limited in this review.

Staricoff stated that there are many areas that should be explored in the future. She gave two examples of these: arts interventions in community settings and work of artists with patients and staff in healthcare settings. She also noted that there is a lack of research on the contribution of different types of art forms to healthcare.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ Staricoff 2004, 10.

²⁰⁶ Staricoff 2004, 11.

Table 20. Visual art forms and concepts related to art practice in the publication by Jermyn (2004)

Author(s), Year	Visual art forms	Concepts related to art practice
Jermyn (2004)	Digital arts Textiles Painting Mural-making Photography Crafts Jewellery Mixed media Cartoons Collages Mosaics Sculptural structures Drawings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts • Art • The arts • Arts activities • Arts activity • Arts and crafts • Arts and crafts activities • Arts and cultural activities • Arts-based interventions • Arts intervention • Arts-led community regeneration programmes • Artists-led workshops • Arts participation • Arts practice • Arts process • Arts programmes • Arts project • Arts projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative creative process • Community arts • Community arts activity • Community arts projects • Community-based arts projects • Community-led arts programmes • Community-led projects • Community-orientated projects • Community-led work • Creative collaborative process • Creative process • Creativity • Participant-led project • Participatory arts • Participatory arts activities • Participatory arts projects • Visual arts projects • Workshops

The report by Jermyn *Art of Inclusion* (2004) aimed to explore three different models of social inclusion work that had been identified by the Arts Council: community-led work, where the initiative for the arts project came from a local community or group; experienced arts organizations supported by the former Arts Council and Regional Arts Boards, for whom working with people from low income communities was a principle method of their work; and partnerships brokered by the Arts Council between established organizations with little experience in working with people from low income communities and organizations with a track record of work. Twenty-eight arts organizations participated in the research. Jermyn concluded that the arts projects did not ‘neatly’ fit in the typology of the three commissioned models. Apart from the partnerships, almost all the projects were led by experienced arts organizations, companies or artists supported by the Arts Council and Regional Arts Boards.²⁰⁷

Jermyn argued that the Arts Council needed to communicate more clearly what it views as social inclusion work in the future, and how this differs from access or audience development. According to Jermyn, one of the most important key issues that rose from the research concerned definitions and language. There was confusion about the terms ‘social inclusion’ and ‘social exclusion’. She argued that the report documented a wide range of arts practices, but it is questionable whether it all amounted to ‘social inclusion work.’²⁰⁸

207 Jermyn 2004, 86.

208 Jermyn 2004, v.

Table 21. Visual art forms and concepts related to art practice in the publication by Reeves (2002)

Author(s), Year	Visual art forms	Concepts related to art practice
Reeves (2002)	Film Film-making Video Fine art Design Architecture Designer fashion Craft/design Photography Multimedia Film/media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts • The arts • Artistic activity • Artistic creativity • Arts activities • Arts activities/workshops • Arts activity • Arts and cultural activity • Arts and creative industry activity • Arts interventions • Arts and cultural interventions • Arts and culture • Arts participation • Arts processes • Arts programmes • Arts projects • Arts and community projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts-based programmes • Arts and social inclusion work • Arts-cultural work • Community arts • Community arts projects • Community-based arts practice • Community-based arts projects • Creativity • Creativity activity • Creative work • Cultural activity • Cultural programmes • Participative activities • Participative arts activity • Participative arts programme • Not-for-profit art activity • Socially-relevant arts practice

The review of Reeves *Measuring the economic and social impact of the arts: a review* (2002) considered the arts from the perspective of economic and social value. In addition to including studies that concentrated on the economic contribution of the arts, it covered studies which concerned the social benefits of arts interventions.

According to Reeves, the first investigation of the new agenda for the social impact of the arts was delivered by Comedia with the support from the Arts Council in 1993. Reeves referred also to another study from Comedia, the above-mentioned work by Matarasso from 1997 *Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in Arts Programmes* which she considered as a seminal and influential study on the social benefits of the arts.²⁰⁹

Furthermore, Reeves argued that prior to the 1980s, little literature was available on the impact of the arts in the United Kingdom, because the sector had relied on aesthetic rationales, such as the intrinsic values of the arts. She stated that aesthetic arguments were still valid, but they could not be strong enough for the arts to gain more resources.²¹⁰ She identified five broad methods for the social impact assessment of arts activity: the multiple-method approach, social auditing, the longitudinal research method, the community based multi-method approach and the survey method.²¹¹ From the work by Reeves we can conclude that the social impact of the arts was actually invented in order to win more financing for the arts and that social impact was evaluated by a set of research methods that stem from social sciences rather than arts.

209 Reeves 2002, 15–16.

210 Reeves 2002, 30–31.

211 Reeves 2002, 67–83.

Table 22. Visual art forms and concepts related to art practice in the publication by Jermyn (2001)

Author(s), Year	Visual art forms	Concepts related to art practice
Jermyn (2001)	Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Arts • The arts • Arts activities • Arts activity • Arts interventions • Arts participation • Arts programmes • Arts projects • Arts sessions • Arts-based interventions • Arts-based projects • Arts/community projects • Creative activity • Creative work • Collective creative action • Community arts • Community arts activity • Community-based arts • Community-based arts projects • Community-based collaborative artistic production • Community-led projects • Group artistic production

The report by Jermyn *The Arts and Social Exclusion: a review prepared for the Arts Council of England* (2001) was commissioned by Arts Council England in order to explore different models of social inclusion work in the arts by conducting a review. Jermyn noted that a strong emphasis on the evaluation of the arts had emerged only recently. She argued that there were several challenges in evaluation of the arts, many which were present in the areas of social research. These problems included clarity of outcomes, conceptual confusion, appropriate ways of measuring outcomes, lack of established methodology, lack of measuring progress, difficulties in establishing cause and effect, difficulties in measuring the effect of multiple interventions, sensitivity of evaluation, and the determination of benefits.²¹²

She concluded that the concept of ‘social exclusion’ is complex and difficult in both defining and measuring, and that the meaning of social exclusion has caused confusion in the arts sector. The focus of the policy and research interest was on the value of the arts in reaching non-arts social inclusion goals. Jermyn suggested that further research should include the relationship between the concept of social exclusion and arts impacts; the transfer of outcomes into other situations; development of the methods for assessing the acquisition of skills, self confidence and self-esteem and the distance travelled; the long-term effects of arts participation and the factors that can improve the effectiveness of arts participation.²¹³

Jermyn is the only researcher in the research material of Arts Council England who raised questions about the quality and relevance of social impact research as early as in 2001. She argued that many studies referred to the benefits of the arts and presented case study findings in a generalized manner. In addition to the claimed positive

212 Jermyn 2001, 10–11.

213 Jermyn 2001, 28–29.

effects having been labelled in different ways, explanations of concepts were missing and the application of concepts such as social cohesion varied.²¹⁴

3.2.1. Key concepts and their use

Now we have arrived at the point where it is asked how some of the key concepts have been used in the research publications of Arts Council England. The intention is to go beyond the mere description of concepts into the analysis of how the concepts have been employed.

As can clearly be seen from the tables presented here, there are several concepts related to 'art practice' that seem to have a reference to each other in the research material. This situation can be compared to what Wittgenstein explained about the use of concepts: "We see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities in detail."²¹⁵

Thus, the next stage of the conceptual analysis is to consider groupings of concepts. This is the examination of what similarities and resemblance the concepts may have. Wittgenstein called the similarities as 'family resemblances', a concept which has since been studied extensively, for example by Weitz (1956), Aaron (1965); Manser (1967); Pompa (1967); Huby (1968); Llewelyn (1968); Simon (1969), and Palmer (1986).²¹⁶

Manser noted that many philosophers have used the concept of family resemblance in situations "(...) where there appears to be difficulty in finding a single definite common property and yet there exists a desire to call some set of things by the same name."²¹⁷

In his classical example, Wittgenstein asked what one would consider as 'games': Wittgenstein asked: How should we explain to someone what a game is? He answered that firstly we might describe the games, and secondly add that this and similar things are called 'games'. Because the concept of 'family resemblance' is a complex one, and often misunderstood, it is necessary to offer a direct description by Wittgenstein here. Wittgenstein asked us to do the following:

214 Jermyn 2001, 13.

215 Wittgenstein 1978, 32.

216 Weitz 1956; Aaron 1965; Manser 1967; Pompa 1967; Huby 1968; Llewelyn 1968; Simon 1969; Palmer 1986.

217 Manser 1967, 210.

Look for example at board-games, with their multifarious relationships. Now pass to card-games; here you find many correspondences group, but many common features drop out, and others appear. When we pass next to ball-games, much that is common is retained, but much is lost. (..) And we can go through the many, many other groups of games in the same way; can see how similarities crop up and disappear. (..)I can think of no better expression to characterise these similarities than "family resemblances"; for the various resemblances between members of a family: build, features, colour of eyes, gait, temperament, etc. etc. overlap and criss-cross in the same way,-And I shall say: games form a family.²¹⁸

The concept of a game is a concept with blurred edges. Wittgenstein argued that a boundary of a concept can nevertheless be drawn for a special purpose.²¹⁹

This is exactly what was done with the description of 'art practice or visual art practice in relation to well-being'. Furthermore, I agree with Tilghman that Wittgenstein's discussion of the games should be taken more as an analogy intended to illuminate certain aspects of language, not as a theory about the essence of language.²²⁰

The concepts found in the research material are divided into seven key assemblages of resemblance: **1) art, arts and the arts; 2) artistic process; 3) arts activity; 4) arts intervention; 5) community arts; 6) creativity; and, 7) participatory arts.** The assemblages consist of related concepts and sub-concepts. Following Wittgenstein, art practice is thus explained by presenting examples from the bodies of text, rather than trying to define some common essential features of the art practice as a whole.

For the benefit of the conceptual analysis, the key concepts were considered mostly similar even when they appeared in slightly different grammatical forms. However, critical art historical and cultural analysis of the concepts was also needed. For example, 'community arts' also appeared as 'community arts projects', 'community arts programme' and 'community arts activity'. However, other appearances such as 'community-based arts projects', 'community-led arts programmes', 'community-led projects', 'community-orientated projects' or 'community-led work' may not necessarily mean the same as 'community arts' since, for example a 'community-led art programme' as a mode of practice may not be artist-led and have no relevant relationship with the history of the artist-initiated community arts movement which started in the 1960s in the United States.

218 Wittgenstein 1978, 32.

219 Wittgenstein 1978, 33.

220 Tilghman 1973, 517.

So now we have seven groups of concepts that have family resemblances in common. In addition to the previous, another important perspective is introduced. Palmer argued that in some situations we actually need to find an agreed and definite meaning for a given set of words. Considering Wittgenstein's analogy of games, Palmer stated that "(...) let us suppose that games are to be taxed, or made illegal, or held to disqualify the gamesters from party membership. We would at once be forced to decide which games were really games and which were only games-by-courtesy."²²¹

This means that there are actually many situations in praxis as well as in research that require more accurate definition of terms. These include, for example, contracts, law, policy making and especially the research and praxis of health sciences, such as medicine. If the visual arts are practised for the benefit of any kind of psychological well-being, we have another situation in which concepts and their use should be clarified in order to promote good research and practice. Thus, I will also concentrate in my analysis on the following: Is there vagueness or ambiguity in the use of concepts that may actually threaten the communication of meaning and thus good research and practice? The principles of conceptual analysis described here will be replicated in the next chapter concerning the academic studies.

Wittgenstein's notions have been applied to the discourse of art theory previously, for example by the aforementioned Weitz (1956); Hoffman (1962); Brown (1969); Sclafani (1971) and Tilghman (1973).²²² The starting point for the next analysis is the notion by Weitz:

(..) that aesthetic theory is a logically vain attempt to define what cannot be defined, to state the necessary and sufficient properties of that which has no necessary and sufficient properties, to conceive the concept of art as closed when its very use reveals and demands its openness.²²³

What Weitz tried to say was that there needs to be no consensus of what art is. Furthermore, it would be illogical to even try to state the necessary and sufficient properties of art, as art to Weitz is an open concept. However, what we might ask now about the research material at hand, is this:

- (i) Is art understood and utilized as a concept of open texture or not?
- (ii) Have there been attempts to close the concept of art?
- (iii) If there have been attempts to close the concept of art why has this been done?

221 Palmer 1986, 82.

222 Weitz 1956; Hoffman 1962; Brown 1969; Sclafani 1971; Tilghman 1973.

223 Weitz 1956, 30.

Interestingly Warburton argued that Weitz's view actually originated from the previous narrow definitions of art in aesthetic theories. Therefore, in order to make more room for creativity and new development, Weitz considered art as an open concept. However, according to Warburton there is no need for the sub-concepts of art to remain open.²²⁴ I will add to this another perspective. The sub-concepts of art are probably always also necessarily open, but statements expressing the nature and meaning of a concept should be made in order to promote common understanding in research.

Art, arts and the arts are the most common concepts used in the research publications of Arts Council England. Art, arts and the arts have been used in various ways, usually without any discussion of their complexity as concepts. On the contrary, 'art' is often used in a very generalized manner as an all-encompassing concept with no specific boundaries, value judgements or discussion of the different notions of what constitutes as art.

This is especially evident when examining the use of the governmental PAT 10s report in the opening sequences of the publications. As mentioned before, PAT 10s report concluded that arts, sport and cultural and recreational activity can contribute to neighbourhood renewal. In the context of PAT 10, arts were seen as a very broad concept and parallel to sports. Following PAT 10, Jermyn, Reeves and Winsor opened the first paragraphs of their publications by citing the document directly. Therefore, the meaning of 'arts' as something that can change health, crime, employment and education in deprived communities can be considered as the underlying presumption of these publications. This presumption creates the context of regarding 'arts' as a means of social development.

Dix and Gregory discussed 'the arts' in the context of policy development. They argued that the access to the arts has now been democratized and the notion that arts organisations exist for the benefit of an elite no longer applies.²²⁵

This statement implies that there would have been a position where the arts could not have been accessed previously. Access would not have been democratic because the arts belonged to the 'elite'. However, there is no explanation as to what historical reality this argument might actually refer to.

The concept of 'the arts' is often used in the connection with the impact, i.e. 'the impact of the arts'²²⁶. The impact of the arts usually refers to positive outcomes of the arts, such as enhanced self-esteem or

224 Warburton 2004, 79.

225 Dix, Gregory 2010, 6.

226 Hecht 2006, iv.

confidence, without any specific measure or determination of how the arts can be linked to these psychological conceptions.

There is only one exception of Jermyn, who utilized the phrase 'claimed impacts of the arts'. She explained that many of the positive outcomes were interlinked, overlapping and inter-dependent.²²⁷ She also suggested that longitudinal research which involves long-term monitoring of participants would be necessary in evaluation.²²⁸

Only one researcher, Bunting, addressed the question of 'art' and 'the arts'. She explained that in the arts debate many people "(...) felt that art is about creative self-expression, often individual and personal, but also shared experiences."²²⁹ However, 'the arts' were seen as a smaller set of clearly defined activities. 'Art' was felt to be a part of the life, whereas 'the arts' was seen as something institutional, such as theatre, ballet or an art gallery. One of the most interesting findings by Bunting was that there was a negative reaction to the type of art as 'conceptual art'. It was seen as to create a sense of being excluded from the private conversation within the artworld. Also the value of the 'conceptual art' for wider audiences was questioned.²³⁰

It is also noteworthy to mention anecdotal evidence of the denial of the use of the concept of 'art' at the beginning of an arts project in relation to well-being. Ings, Crane and Cameron explained that the starting point for successful projects in *Be Creative Be Well* was not the declaration about 'we are going to make art'. The activities were not necessarily advertised and marketed as 'art' but as practical opportunities for learning useful personal and social skills.²³¹

This statement leads to the following questions:

- (i) If the activities are marketed as learning opportunities and art is not used as the focus of the marketing, what then is the actual role of art?
- (ii) Could the activities have been any learning opportunities, for example, education in computer skills or gardening?

On the whole art is understood and utilized as a concept of open texture and as mentioned before, even parallel to sports. Only Bunting attempted to problematize the concept of art, but this was an outcome of actual research results in the arts debate. The work by Bunting seems to suggest that the general public, artists and stakeholders are able and willing to distinguish between 'art' and 'the arts'.

Artistic process, one of the key concepts for professional artists, is used in diverse ways. 'Artistic process' relates to: 'artistic activity', 'artistic practice', 'artistic expression', 'artistic innovation',

227 Jermyn 2004, 17.

228 Jermyn 2004, 87.

229 Bunting 2007, 12.

230 Bunting 2007, 13.

231 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 89.

‘artistic creation’, ‘artistic work’, ‘artistry’, ‘artistic creativity’, ‘artists’ creativity’, ‘artistic programme’, and ‘artists work’.

Staricoff utilized the concepts of artistic work and artistic creativity in the context of the possible exploration of the association between the mental and physical state of artists in future studies. In her view, insight into the process of artistic creativity can help scientists understand the causes of diseases and find potential treatments. According to Staricoff, this is “(...) achieved through an analysis of artists’ work, how their work changes throughout time and on the use of shapes, forms or colours, which can be related to specific changes occurring in the brain.”²³² Hence, artistic process, artistic creativity and artistic work are considered as overlapping conceptions and something which could be utilized as an object of medical science.

Ings, Crane and Cameron used the concept of artistic process in the context of their aims, as they set out to analyse how the commissioned artists and artistic process itself worked to change patterns of behaviour relating to health and well-being, including what it felt like to be engaged in artistic activity.²³³ Furthermore, Ings, Crane and Cameron used the concept of artistic practice when discussing the well-balanced artist. The key sentence is as follows: “(...) where a project was led by someone whose primary skill lay in working with the community through the creative process, rather than focused on high quality artistic practice, the outcome would be a well-subscribed programme of arts activities but no ‘high point’ of artistic interest or inspiration.”²³⁴ Furthermore, they argued that “(...) a product can be an intrinsic part of the artistic process, bringing a sense of completion and resolution that often leaves a lasting impact on participants.”²³⁵

The above-mentioned sentences seem to imply that there are actually two concepts that are used in contrast to one another: creative process resulting in arts activities and artistic practice resulting in artistic interest or inspiration.

Arts activity (or activities) is a grammatically quite stable concept and it does not occur in several different linguistic forms. Arts activity relates to ‘artistic and cultural activities’, and ‘art activities/workshops’.

For example, arts activity is used by Ings, Crane and Cameron as engaging in arts activity that might help to strengthen neighbourly bonds and community cohesion.²³⁶ Furthermore they noted their initial belief that “(..) there is a potential link between evidence-based

232 Staricoff 2005, 9.

233 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 17.

234 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 88.

235 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 88.

236 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 14.

benefits for people from participating in arts activity and actions that have been shown to promote health and well-being.”²³⁷ In addition to this arts activities are linked to well-being as Ings, Crane and Cameron determined ”(...) how well people feel physically and mentally is determined by a range of factors that are outside the control of health services, including income, housing, environment, education social networks and access to social facilities and services embracing cultural, leisure and arts activities.”²³⁸

Arts activities are thus contextualized parallel to cultural and leisure activities and as services. Furthermore, it is important to note that arts activity is considered as the activity of the participants.

Jermyn applied the concept of arts practice when describing the range of different art forms in the projects for social inclusion.²³⁹ In addition to this, the concept of arts practice is used in the context of a comment by an unknown artist when referring to the training of the artists as offering a narrow definition of arts practice. This is used to explain the fact that some organizations found it difficult to find artists for social inclusion work with necessary skills to deliver high quality.²⁴⁰ Jermyn referred to the concept of arts activity when she discussed the evaluation procedure in the projects: ”(...) arts organisations and artists (...) may perceive evaluation as being secondary or additional to their main purpose – delivering arts activity.”²⁴¹

The research publications, however, did not offer an explanation of what components and elements constitute, firstly, the arts activity and secondly, the arts practice. My suggestion, however, is that arts practice could be described as the practice of different facilitated art activities by artists. Vice versa, arts activity could be considered as a service delivered by an artist facilitator.

Arts intervention is used as a concept in several research publications of Arts Council England. Arts intervention relates to ‘intervention of the arts’, ‘art-based interventions’, ‘creative interventions’, ‘artistic interventions’, ‘arts and cultural interventions’, and ‘culture and creative interventions.’

It is unclear what exactly is meant by ‘arts intervention’ in the publications. For example, in the review by Reeves arts intervention is *something* that targets groups and communities in the areas of regeneration, education, health and criminal justice.²⁴²

237 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 16.

238 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 28.

239 Jermyn 2004, 5–6; Jermyn 2004, 11.

240 Jermyn 2004, 76.

241 Jermyn 2004, 20.

242 Reeves 2002, 6.

Winsor, however, noted that there is a long history of arts interventions in health. According to Winsor, these arts interventions include art therapy, the use of art to improve the hospital environment, arts interventions as a part of treatment and recuperation, and, arts interventions as a part of a range of alternative approaches to health care.²⁴³

Staricoff argued that her review had identified a number of medical areas where clinical outcomes had been achieved through the ‘intervention of the arts.’²⁴⁴ These interventions of the arts were visual art and taped music used in cancer care, the use of appropriate music, through tapes and video, music or personal headphones in cardiovascular unit, the use of music in neonatal intensive care unit and the use of music in the post-operative recovery period.²⁴⁵ In addition to that, Staricoff applied the concept of ‘creative interventions’ in the context of alleviating the concern and anxiety of patients in cancer treatments.²⁴⁶

However, Ings, Crane and Cameron used the concept of arts intervention when they described how to carry out a successful project in participatory arts in general.²⁴⁷ Furthermore, as their recommendations for the future of Arts Council England, they suggested that ‘cultural and creative interventions’ that seek social good through artistic excellence, or achieve artistic excellence through social engagement should be supported.²⁴⁸

This suggestion begs the question:

(i) How did Ings, Crane and Cameron try to describe the content or the meaning of the abovementioned ‘cultural and creative interventions’?

The answer is, they did not seek to describe, nor did they problematize the content, context or situations of the cultural and creative interventions. They simply explained the concept by referring to the possible outcomes.

What is of interest here, is the fact that none of the research publications of Arts Council England considered how the concept of art intervention is sometimes used in a completely different way in the context of contemporary art. Some artists may understand art intervention also as a radical form of contemporary art, as an interaction with a previously existing work of art or an urban environment by altering it. Thus, art intervention can be considered as a dialogue between artists within the institutions of art, i.e. the art world.

243 Winsor 2005, 5.

244 Staricoff 2004, 6.

245 Staricoff 2004, 7.

246 Staricoff 2004, 15.

247 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 10.

248 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 98.

For example, demonstrations of the members of the Stuckism movement against the Turner Prize at Tate Britain, often dressed as clowns, could be considered by some as an art intervention and by others as a critique of the art institutions. The Stuckism movement defines itself as :“(...) opposed to the current pretensions of so-called Brit Art, Performance Art, Installation Art, Video Art, Conceptual Art, Minimal Art, Body Art, Digital Art and anything claiming to be art which incorporates dead animals or beds (...).”²⁴⁹

Although the Stuckism movement is against performance art, their public demonstrations at Tate Britain could be interpreted as performances in the realm of contemporary art world. Another perspective could be to consider them as politically motivated expressions and position the demonstrations more in the context of cultural policy and the economics of art. Hence, the use of the concept of art intervention in the debates of contemporary artworld is far from the arts intervention as part of recuperation.

Thus, what I criticize the most is the fact that the concept of arts intervention is applied in the research publications by Arts Council England in a way that does not clarify, nor describe the concept. Therefore, in the field of Arts and Health movement or in the specific area of artists-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being, I recommend that the concept of arts intervention should be used clearly in the context of arts therapies, referring to the therapeutic usage and methods of art. Moreover, serious concerns should rise when the concept of arts intervention is used as creative and cultural interventions or arts and cultural interventions which actually may mean nothing specific and have little relevance to the reality of arts practices.

Community arts relates to several other concepts in the research material. This set of related concepts consists of: ‘community arts projects’, ‘community arts programme’, ‘community arts activity, arts/community projects’, ‘arts and community project’, ‘community-orientated projects’, ‘community-based arts’, ‘community-based arts project’, ‘community-based arts practice’, ‘community-based participatory arts programme’, ‘community-based participation projects’, ‘community-based collaborative artistic production’, ‘community-led arts programmes’, ‘community-led projects’, ‘community-led work’, and ‘arts-led community regeneration programmes’.

The concept of community arts is not clearly described in the research material. Ings, Crane and Cameron stated that ”(...) as a community-based participatory arts programme Be Creative

249 Stuckism International 2014, online.

Be well is all about relationships: group work, cooperation and collaboration.”²⁵⁰ According to them this means that the process is about creating art in the company of others.

However, there is a difference between community arts and community-led arts programmes. Jermyn applied the concept of community arts when she discussed the importance of partnership and different organizational objectives of organisations, i.e. an organization might have a venue perspective or a community arts perspective to the social inclusion work.²⁵¹ One of the most important notions about community arts in Jermyn’s publication can be found in a cited comment by an unknown artist. The artist explained that it is important to distribute the finished work properly. She considered that community arts was at the start very process-based and the idea of making products to distribute or to sell was wrong as ”(...) all had to be based around what people did in the session.”²⁵²

Jermyn described the concept of ‘community-led work’ as work, ”(...) where the initiative for the arts project came from a local community or group.”²⁵³ Thus, community-led work differs from the work that is initiated by artists or art organizations. This is consistent to the previous study by Jermyn where she stated that in community-led projects the initiative for arts activity comes from local people or communities, instead of artists themselves.²⁵⁴ However, as explained before, Jermyn found out in her 2004 research that almost all of the arts projects for social inclusion were either partnerships or led by experienced artists or art organisations.²⁵⁵

Belfiore criticized that the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and the Arts Council seemed to have applied the once oppositional values of the community arts movement. These values such as participation, empowerment and community development were brought into mainstream cultural policy. However, she argued that the spirit of the community arts and cultural policy discourse are quite different.²⁵⁶

Thus my suggestion is that the concept of ‘community arts’ should be used in the context of artist-initiated practice, whereas the concept of ‘community-led arts’ or ‘community-based arts’ should be reserved for the activities initiated by the people who formulate a community.

250 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 55.

251 Jermyn 2004, viii.

252 Jermyn 2004, 41.

253 Jermyn 2004, 86.

254 Jermyn 2001, 1.

255 Jermyn 2004, 86.

256 Belfiore 2002, 96.

Creativity was one of the most utilized concepts in the research material. Creativity appeared in various forms: 'creativity and the arts', 'creative activities', 'creative activity', 'creative arts', 'creative arts projects', 'creative practice', 'creative programme', 'creative project', 'creative workshops', 'creative work', 'creative collaboration', 'creative process', 'creative arts programme', 'creative intervention', 'creative or arts-based intervention', 'creative collaborative process', 'creativity activity', 'collective creative action', and 'creative and skills based workshops'.

However, the concept of creativity or creative practice is not problematized, nor connected to the contemporary creativity research in psychology. This is especially evident, when examining the evaluation report by Ings, Crane and Cameron and the use of the concept of creativity in different contexts. Firstly, Ings, Crane and Cameron stated that there is growing evidence that creativity and the arts can make a significant difference to people's health and well-being.²⁵⁷ According to them, creative activity can develop personal skills as well as technical or aesthetic knowledge. Furthermore, they stated that there is a body of research of the positive impact of creative interventions in medical settings.²⁵⁸ According to Ings, Crane and Cameron creative or arts-based intervention in a community can enable higher levels of well-being, better mental health and wider participation in the arts.²⁵⁹ In addition to that, they argued that "(...) the general acceptance of the value of creative activity reflects an increasing official recognition of the role that culture and creativity can play in addressing inequalities and other determinants of health and in improving health and wellbeing."²⁶⁰ They also argued that the artists in *Be Creative Be Well* acted as enablers and that the creative process they facilitated provided a structure that supported positive behavioural change.²⁶¹

But now we may ask what constitutes as creativity? When an art project was evaluated, what components did Ings, Crane and Cameron include in the concept of creativity? For example, one of the brief case studies described a 'sculpture' which was, in a closer scrutiny, a working outdoors oven, providing "(..) a link between the creative act and encouraging healthy eating (...)."²⁶² Thus, one of the recommendations by Ings, Crane and Cameron to Arts Council England was to continue to challenge the traditional definitions of what culture is and what the arts consist of. They claimed that

257 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 8.

258 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 14.

259 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 16.

260 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 30.

261 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 47.

262 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 22.

many artists in *Be Creative Be Well* were confirmed of the value and benefit of contributing to creative practice in popular activities such as gardening and cooking. Therefore the suggestion was that the arts can be integrated more in familiar, everyday activities.²⁶³ We are then obliged to ask what is actually the role of art and why is the concept of art needed in cooking and gardening.

Dix and Gregory stated that behind all participatory arts work is an understanding that personal creativity is an asset. Furthermore, they argued that creativity has value for the economy, well-being and civil society.²⁶⁴ Hecht defined that for the purpose of her research 'Arts and Health' referred to "(...) any creative collaboration between artists and people working in health and social care; and any creative initiative that directly enhances people's health and well-being."²⁶⁵ Thus, Arts and Health can be anything creative.

Jermyn applied the concept of creative evaluation and admitted that there is confusion as to what creative evaluation actually was. According to Jermyn creative processes might be used in arts projects for social inclusion and creative evaluation is aligned to these.²⁶⁶

It is clear that the concept of 'creativity' and its related forms are used as reasoning with generalization. Furthermore, the concept of creativity is stretched to relate to almost any condition that can be labelled as 'creative'. Instead of characterizing the components of creativity in different contexts, creativity is explained through outcomes. Thus the suggestion 'Creativity enhances well-being' can be considered as a cherished belief of the research publications.

Participatory arts relate to: 'participatory arts practice', 'participatory arts process', 'participatory arts project', 'participatory arts work', 'participatory arts activities', 'participative activities', 'participative arts programme', 'participant-led project', 'adult participatory arts', 'participatory and community-based arts', 'participative creative process', 'participative arts activity', and 'arts participation'.

The concept of participatory arts was discussed especially in the research publications of Ings, Crane and Cameron as well as by Dix and Gregory. Dix and Gregory stated that a complex view of participatory arts prevails nowadays. They argued that participation is a 'malleable dialogue' informing artistic work, building and developing audiences, engaging with communities, promoting learning and forging routes into active experience and artistic creation of many kinds.²⁶⁷ Furthermore,

263 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 98–99.

264 Dix, Gregory 2010, 6.

265 Hecht 2006, 2.

266 Jermyn 2004, 83.

267 Dix, Gregory 2010, 6.

Dix and Gregory applied the concept of ‘adult participatory arts’, which is, according to them, not a science, a sector, bounded or common currency. They used the concept of adult participatory arts for the purpose of their review, because Arts Council England, London wanted an exploration of participatory arts that was not focused on young people. However, Dix and Gregory argued that many of the companies of the review worked in fact in cross-generational contexts.²⁶⁸

In their view participation is flexible, adaptable and a dialogue, which means conversation or exchange. Dix and Gregory stated that participatory arts are collaborative as the professional skills of the artists combine with the energy of the participants. Dix and Gregory noted, however, that participation was described in various ways by the organizations such as ‘unleashing the creative impulse’; ‘bringing memories to life’; ‘making possibilities real’; ‘taking people on a journey’ or ‘an individual therapeutic process’. Furthermore, Dix and Gregory considered the above-mentioned phrases as the foundations of creative process.²⁶⁹

Dix and Gregory mapped the relationship between the process and product as participation, enabling, presentation and owning. It is unfortunate that the map is not explained and justified further. In addition to that they typified adult participatory work as follows: the creative practice is in part a response to the issues of the participant group; led by artists with a detailed understanding of issues faced by participants; the work is personalized to maximise the benefit to the individual participant; the participatory processes are able to develop the capabilities and skills of the participant; projects and programmes are undertaken in partnership with non-arts workers and/or organizations; the work takes place over an appropriate timescale.²⁷⁰ The participant groups were categorized as older people, people in the Justice System, people with mental health issues, homeless people and people with physical health issues.²⁷¹

Jermyn stated in her study that the practice in the area of social inclusion work was mostly participatory arts projects. These participatory arts projects consisted of a wide range of arts and crafts, participants being young children to older people, settings ranging from prisons or hostels for homeless to theatres.²⁷² In the report by Ings, Crane and Cameron the concept of participatory arts is discussed in the context of the report of new economics foundation (nef) *Five Ways to Wellbeing: The evidence*. The report by the new economics

268 Dix, Gregory 2010, 26.

269 Dix, Gregory 2010, 13.

270 Dix, Gregory 2010, 21.

271 Dix, Gregory 2010, 10.

272 Jermyn 2004, iv.

foundation in 2008 produced a concept of ‘everyday wellbeing’ (sic). Ings, Crane and Cameron argued that the five actions identified by new economics foundation: connect, be active, take notice, keep learning and give, connect closely to behaviours that can emerge from participatory arts projects. According to Ings, Crane and Cameron, in participatory arts projects people can form relationships by engaging in common creative task; physical activity is intrinsic to artforms such as dance but applies equally to the making of material things; creating art encourages people to reflect on their experiences; people develop skills and find out new things; art is a means of communication as well as self-expression; and participation in the arts can build self-esteem and empathy. Furthermore, they argued that “(...) unlike formal arts education or training, participatory arts process engages with the person in their own context and by extension, as with community arts, with the everyday social formation around them.”²⁷³

The effort by Dix and Gregory to characterize participatory arts is commended. Even though Dix and Gregory claimed that the process and the product are entangled, and the product must be ‘artistically credible’ they also noted that there have been questions of the artistic merit of participatory arts.

From the point of view of art history, my interpretation is that the process is perhaps more important for participatory arts than the artistic merit of the final product. Furthermore, it can be concluded that to a large extent the outcomes of participatory arts, such as learning new skills within a group, can be considered as socially motivated. However, we may be forced to ask:

(i) Is the direction of the participation directive or non-directive, i.e. who chooses the aims and the modes of participation: the artist-facilitator, the sponsoring organization, community or the group of participants or the participant herself or himself?

3.3. The main findings of the conceptual analysis

My first reason for selecting the publications of Arts Council England as research material was based on the assumption that these publications might offer useful information on the usage of the concepts of visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits in the arts sector. The conceptual analysis, however, has led in the first surprising result: the art practice itself was dealt in a generalized manner and separate forms of visual arts or their specific mechanisms in regard to well-being were

273 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 47.

not discussed in sufficient breadth or depth.

This research finding supports the previous opinion by Selwood, who claimed that Arts Council England has historically collected data for advocacy purposes which apply to audiences' general experiences.²⁷⁴

Furthermore, my research findings are in good agreement with the previous critiques of the so-called instrumentalistic cultural policy in the United Kingdom, made by Belfiore, Merli, Bennett, Selwood and Gray. However, my study differs from their previous approaches. The presence of high numbers of overlapping and undescribed concepts, i.e. miniature theories in a Balian sense, is a novel finding.

Only few research publications of Arts Council England mention the fact that the concepts or terms in regard to the art practice itself are not clearly discussed or suggest that more clarity is needed. Ings, Crane and Cameron noted that "(...) the sector is full of changing definitions and descriptions—community arts, participatory arts, socially engaged arts, creative learning, outreach and so on."²⁷⁵

They stated that everyone will have their own ideas of where the artistic outcome fits into it. But instead of trying to clarify the usage of the concepts in the arts sector or offering some useful statements, Ings, Crane and Cameron utilized concepts such as 'artistic intervention', 'arts and cultural activity', 'arts and health work', 'community arts,' 'community-based participatory arts programme', and, 'creative or arts-based intervention' among others without any substantial effort for differentiation or characterization.

Thus, I have considered every research publication critically and assumed that the writers have considered and taken their time in choosing to use particular concepts. In addition to that, I presume that the research publications have been published as the writers and Arts Council England have intended.

As stated before, my aim is not to examine concepts, but instead the use of concepts. Thus, discussion about the discourses and their meaning-making strategies also follows.

274 Selwood 2007, 2014.

275 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 37.

Table 22. The main findings of the conceptual analysis of the research publications of Arts Council England

1. The number of concepts related to art practice in the context of well-being is extensive.
2. The usage of the concepts related to the art practice in the context of well-being is diverse, wide-ranging, often over-lapping, and sometimes contrasting.
3. The concepts related to art practice in the context of well-being have not been described nor problematized in the research material.
4. The concepts related to art practice in the context of well-being are surrounded by several insertions of unnecessary words.
5. Eventhough specific visual art forms occur in the research material, none of the publications discuss what attributes and mechanisms these visual art forms specifically have in enhancing well-being.
6. There is little consistency in the meaning of the concepts.
7. Distinction of the concepts from related concepts is unclear.
8. The language used differs significantly from art history, aesthetics and practice-based art and design research.
9. The language used applies terms borrowed from the fields of health and social sciences.
10. The practice of the arts is often generalized.
11. The practice of the arts is justified in terms of utility.
12. The art practice may mean the facilitation or deliberation of arts activity.
13. Well-being is superficially discussed, described and explained.
14. The discourse is centred on the claimed positive impacts of the arts in general.
15. The research publications are mostly research reports, evaluations or reviews.

1) The number of concepts related to art practice in the context of well-being aims is extensive. The large number of different concepts used, such as 'arts activity', 'arts and cultural work', 'arts and health work', 'arts intervention', 'arts projects', 'arts workshop', 'arts and social inclusion work', 'community-based arts practice', 'creativity activity', 'creative work', 'participative arts activity' or 'socially-relevant arts practice' is a surprising research finding. The overuse of concepts indicates that there are no general concepts that have been agreed on in the arts sector to describe the specific phenomena of art practice in relation to well-being aims.

2) The usage of the concepts in the context of art practice in relation to well-being is diverse, wide-ranging, often overlapping, and sometimes contrasting. To a large extent, the meaning of the concepts is not discussed, they are sometimes used inconsistently and integrated with other concepts. If we acknowledge the general assumption that language is used in order to better communication, it can be argued that some of the research publications in fact hinder clear communication. It is often left undescribed what are considered to be the actual elements

of the art practice itself in relation to well-being. Furthermore, the conditions under one concept of art practice can be used and another cannot be utilized have not been problematized.

3) In most of the cases, the concepts related to art practice have not been described, nor characterized in the research material. Few efforts have been made in order to clarify the meaning of the concepts used in the research publications. In addition to that, no attempt has been made to examine, nor explain the origins of the concept, for example 'arts intervention' or 'community arts'.

4) The concepts used in the context of art practice are often surrounded by several insertions of unnecessary words. In this strategy, for example, 'participatory arts' is transformed into 'participatory and community-based art' or 'participative creative process'. The strategy obscures the message of the research publications to the reader, as well as the possible analysis of the meaning. However, linguistic clarity and logical consistency in the usage of concepts concerning art should be demanded from the research publications of the arts sector.

5) The distinction between different forms of visual art and their individual mechanisms in relation to well-being is lacking. Although specific visual art forms occur anecdotally in the research material, none of the publications discuss what mechanisms these visual art forms have specifically in enhancing well-being and how they can be compared to one another or how they differ from one another. The treatment of visual art forms is often superficial and descriptive and indicates that there is actually little factual information of the mechanisms of different visual art forms in relation to well-being.

6) There is little consistency in the meaning of some of the concepts. The concepts have been used in a way that may create several confusing and contradicting meanings, a good example being the application of the concepts of 'arts intervention', 'community arts' or 'community-led arts programme'. Discourses without a shared starting point and common concepts may often be cross-purposed.

7) Differentiation of the concepts from related concepts is unclear. In many cases, the writers of the research publications have not been able to constitute a difference that distinguishes one concept from another, but concepts which may have different meaning have been used in order to mean something similar. This is especially evident by the application of 'creativity' and its related sub-concepts.

8) The discourse differs significantly from art history and aesthetics which aim at interpretation. The use of the passive allows non-attribution of agency, as if the discourse would be more scientifically valid. The most important issue that is insufficiently problematized is the aesthetic value of the art practice or the artwork

itself in relation to, for example, ‘adult participatory arts’, ‘creative intervention’, ‘community-based participatory arts project’, ‘socially engaged art’ or ‘community-based collaborative artistic production’, just to name a few of the concepts used to signify the art practice in relation to well-being.

9) The discourses apply concepts, such as ‘social inclusion’ or ‘neighbourhood renewal’ borrowed from the field of social sciences. The terms of ‘social exclusion’, ‘social inclusion’ and ‘social impact’ are problematized in the publications by Jermyn. However, none of the other publications address critically the question how the use of these socially motivated concepts in the context of art practice may be critically justified.

10) The discourse on the art practice in relation to well-being is often based on reasoning by generalization. The arguments can be considered as acts of forming opinions that are based on a small amount of factual information. Apart from Jermyn, criticism of the claimed positive impacts is rare. Negative outcomes in relation to well-being are rarely discussed.

11) The practice of the arts is justified in terms of utility. The arts practice is mostly justified in the context of social, health, well-being and participation aims. In a way, the research publications strive for creating a new kind of feeling of gratitude of the existence of the arts in society by highlighting their general usefulness for well-being, health and social development.

12) The facilitation of arts activity is integrated to the concept of artistic practice. The practical elements of artistic practice such as the meaning of the art studio, materials, techniques, and the process dimensions such as innovation, originality, novelty, imagination, symbolic expression or problem finding are mostly ignored. There is little discussion of what the conception of ‘facilitation’ actually means or consists of in the context of artistic practice. There are few statements about the difference between facilitation by an artist compared to education or arts education.

13) Well-being is superficially explained. It is most often considered as a single, uncomplicated, all-encompassing concept. None of the publications has utilized the data of contemporary psychology, nor philosophy. The conceptions of well-being are not based on theoretical research frameworks of psychology.

14) The discourse is centred on the claimed positive impacts of the arts in general. Some of the arguments of the overall positive impact of the practice of arts may have a basis in health and social sciences, but the strategy of constructing a one-dimensional vision, of the activities of art being overwhelmingly positive, may actually backfire amongst

artists and researchers who expect more rigour argumentation in questions concerning the value, quality and outcomes of art. The usage of concepts in a perplexed way, may lead to the concept of arts practice to become drained of its full meaning.

15) Most of the research publications can be considered as research reports, evaluations or reviews.

3.4. Discussion

On the whole the research publications of Arts Council England in the selected sample present a generalized view of the positive impacts of the art practice. The main consideration and purpose of art in the research publications, apart from Bunting's contribution, can be characterized as: 'Art as a means of participation and enhancement of well-being, health and social inclusion'. Therefore, it is clear that the research publications present an agenda to regard art as an utility for purposes which have not been traditionally considered as the ends of art in art history, nor in aesthetics. This complex issue is explained away by the need for social inclusion, more access, or that the values of art are relative and art has a societal or social purpose.

I suggest that these considerations could be regarded as 'the stated ideal'. I will here adapt Weitz's conception: "Each age, each art-movement, each philosophy of art, tries over and over again to establish the stated ideal only to be succeeded by a new or revised theory, rooted, at least in part, in the repudiation of preceding ones."²⁷⁶

However, I do not consider 'the stated ideal' as a repudiation of previous theories of art as such but more as a politically motivated shift in perspective. The stated ideal may arise from the notion that the arts sector wants to believe that art can have positive well-being and health impacts, but is unable to evidence these outcomes in a convincing and detailed manner. Thus, the discourse of 'the stated ideal' takes the central place in the research publications.

Another finding that rose from the research material is the lack of discussion about the quality of the art practice or the completed artwork itself which has also been anecdotally admitted by Arts Council England, as "(...) there is no shared understanding of what 'quality' means in the context of visual arts and regeneration, health and education projects."²⁷⁷

Quality and aesthetic value, however, are an especially interesting issue for artists. Arts Council England aims to provide great art for

276 Weitz 1956, 27.

277 Arts Council England 2006, 97.

everyone and has referred to this as ‘excellence’. According to Forgan ‘excellence’ is *central* to Arts Council’s purpose.²⁷⁸ Ings, Crane and Cameron commented on the request of excellence and noted that the greatest communal impact seems to reflect the most impressive artistic results and vice versa.²⁷⁹ In addition, also Jermyn suggested that pursuing quality – both in the process and outcome would be important as “There was a belief among artists that the better the final result, the greater participants’ sense of achievement.”²⁸⁰

The aesthetic value and quality of both the artistic process and the finished artwork, the aesthetic experience, have a prominent role in shaping the ideas and the execution of the artwork for the professional artist. One would, thus, presume that it would also be a very important issue for the researchers commissioned by Arts Council England. But Ings, Crane and Cameron argued that there is “(...) another tiring binary argument here, between the value of process and of product.”²⁸¹

On the contrary, I do not find the debate on the value of process and product tiring, but instead essential to the development of the arts sector. I refer shortly to Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) here in order to prove how far the art discourse has come over time from ‘intrinsic value’ to what could be considered as discourse motivated by policy aims. According to Kant, the object of fine art “(...) must always have an evident intrinsic worth about it.”²⁸² There is, of course, other kinds of art. But for Kant it was only with regard to judgement that the name of fine art was deserved. Thus the requisities for fine art for Kant were imagination, understanding, soul and taste.²⁸³

This aesthetic judgement derives from Kant’s notion of fine art, ‘schöne Kunst’. As to the artist himself or herself, it is important to understand that ‘genius’ for Kant is a *talent* and an innate mental aptitude ‘ingenium’. Ingenium is a Latin word which means innate character and talent. According to Kant:

Genie ist das Talent (Naturgabe), welches der Kunst die Regel gibt. Da das Talent, als angebornes produktives Vermögen des Künstlers, selbst zur Natur gehört, so könnte man sich auch so ausdrücken: Genie ist die angeborne Gemütsanlage (ingenium), durch welche die Natur der Kunst die Regel gibt.²⁸⁴

278 Forgan 2012, 3.

279 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 98.

280 Jermyn 2004, 47.

281 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 38.

282 Kant 1973, 203.

283 Kant 1973, 182–183.

284 Kant 1994, 242.

This reference to Kant is here simply to illustrate the fundamental difference in the perspectives between the poles of personal aesthetic motivation and the socially and politically motivated art. Even though I do not consider talent as ‘*Naturgabe*’ and avoid the use of ‘*genius*’ altogether in the context of art, there is no reason to reject the whole history of aesthetics and its discussion of the value, integrity and quality of art. It is strongly argued that if we dismiss the debate on the intrinsic value of art and conceptions such as imagination and talent, we strip art practice of its full meaning, whether it is related to well-being or not.

Thus, it is interesting, that the publications do not specifically discuss the mechanisms of different art forms or different visual art forms. It is questionable whether there is a mutual understanding regarding the use of the concepts referring to the art practice itself. Even though some of the voices of the artists themselves are present in the publications by Jermyn, Bunting, Dix and Gregory and Ings, Crane and Cameron, the opinions, views and critical practice of the artists themselves cannot be considered as being in a central role. The exemplary cases are presented quite briefly. Therefore, the interest of the authority of the arts sector in regard to the aims of participation and enhancement of well-being, health and social inclusion may not present the interest of artists as a multifaceted and a heterogenous occupational group. Therefore relevant research questions for further studies should be as follows:

- (i) How many artists actually consider their art practice primarily or partly as enabling participation or enhancement of well-being, health or social inclusion?
- (ii) Do the artists consider the initiative of the arts to be used for enabling participation or enhancement of well-being, health or social inclusion to be their own or a top-down request from the funding authorities?

To answer these kinds of questions, an extensive quantitative as well as qualitative research design and resources would be needed. However, the lack of the voices of the artists and the need of a more arts-driven perspective is in good agreement with the results of Glinkowski. Glinkowski studied the relationship of artists to British art-policy making and concluded that “As the era of New Labour government was ending, then, for all the talk of a ‘Golden Age’ for the arts, it appeared that, visual artists continued to feel (...) that they lacked real visibility, support, understanding and influence at a policy level.”²⁸⁵

Because the research publications do not consider the arts-driven perspective as the core element of the studies, I was able to find several networks of overlapping concepts. The concepts of art, arts and the

285 Glinkowski 2012, 181.

arts, artistic practice, arts activity, arts intervention, community arts, creativity, and, participatory arts are used as open concepts and there have been no attempts to close them. As explained before, my purpose was not to provide necessary and sufficient conditions for any concept. As Weitz remarked: “If necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of a concept can be stated, the concept is a closed one. But this can happen only in logic or mathematics where concepts are constructed and completely defined.”²⁸⁶

From the perspective of art history, however, there seems to be a situation that could be described as ‘the invention of new concepts’ such as ‘arts-led community regeneration programme’, ‘collaborative creative process’, ‘community-based participatory arts programme’ or socially-relevant arts practice’. Whether these new concepts actually refer to new situations and new conditions, is questionable. However, what these conceptions have in common is the underlying instrumentalization of the arts.

There is a persistent suggestion in the research publications that ‘art’ could be used to ‘fix’ society’s ills. Although it is a perspective that has long roots in history, it is a demand that may be considered to be poorly suited to the contemporary, diverse art world, with different subcultures and critical aesthetic values. It should be asked whether it is a task for an artist to offer solutions to the society’s problems, such as social inclusion, housing, poor estates or insufficient education. The large societal aims can make the practice of visual arts for enhancing well-being an easy target for sceptical minds. Only Jermyn referred to this problematic. She explained that “A number of practitioners felt uncomfortable with the generalised claims that had been made about arts and their ability to ‘solve’ social exclusion.”²⁸⁷

Gray’s notion of ‘policy attachment’ is one of the most important explanations for the instrumentalization of the arts.²⁸⁸ Gray argued that cultural policy has been changing in similar ways across many European countries in the recent years. More emphasis has been placed upon the use of ‘culture’ and the ‘arts’ as instrumental tools for the attainment of non-cultural, non-arts, goals and objectives. According to Gray, ‘policy attachment’ means that the arts which constitute a policy area with small budgets and little political influence, especially at the local level, have gradually attached themselves to larger social and economic agendas, thus benefiting from larger budgets and more political relevance. Therefore, funding for the arts sector can be gained by demonstrating the role the arts can play in the fulfilment

286 Weitz 1956, 31.

287 Jermyn 2004, 29.

288 Gray 2007, 206.

of the goals of other policy sectors. However, Gray noted that this attachment strategy only makes sense, if the justifications for policy themselves have in deed shifted. Gray argued that the dominant forms of justification that are increasingly demanded by governments are economic and social in orientation.²⁸⁹

Gray argued that the instrumentalization can be seen as a combination of two strategies. The political weakness of the cultural sector makes it vulnerable to exogenous political pressure from top-down. However, the exogenous pressure it not the only one that exists. According to Gray, the reasons for policy attachment in the cultural sector are as follows: other sectors have more financial resources or have greater political significance, such as education and health. This results to the fact that the cultural sector then needs to demonstrate the benefits that it can provide to the sector it has attached itself to, and not necessarily to the benefits of its own core activities. However, Gray considered the incorporation of cultural elements into the activities of other policy sectors as 'instrumental reasoning', not policy attachment. Nonetheless the common factor is that arts are used for non-artistic ends.²⁹⁰

There is a definite agenda in promoting the positive impact of art practice in the context of well-being in the research publications of Arts Council England. The research publications are driven by this specific agenda and more complex issues to do with the autonomy and quality of the art practice itself and the reliability of the actual outcomes of the art projects are overstepped in favour of the positive reports for the funding institution. For example, only Hecht addressed the question of the insufficient skills and the lack of knowledge and expertise of some artists in arts and health projects. Hecht argued that there are artists and art organizations that do not necessarily possess the professional competence to work on the sector of arts and health, but nonetheless are working in this field. Hecht asked a very appropriate ethical question in regard to good practice and the possible vulnerability of the clients: how could this be regulated?²⁹¹

The instrumentalistic view on arts have effects on arts funding and cultural policy, but I am even more concerned on what effect it can have to the actual practice of the arts and the professionalism of the artists. Jermyn pointed out that "There is a danger that all arts programmes will come to be viewed as inevitably producing desired outcomes."²⁹²

289 Gray 2007, 206.

290 Gray 2008, 217.

291 Hecht 2006, 10.

292 Jermyn 2001, 26.

I would express this in other words: There is a possibility that more arts programmes will be designed to provide outcomes for other policy fields than arts. It is unfortunate that despite of the large financial resources, that could be put into more arts-driven research and development, the research publications by Arts Council England as a whole seem to act as an advocacy for policy attachment. Hence, my research findings are in good agreement with the previous, more opinionated critiques made by Belfiore, Bennett, Merli, Gray and Selwood.

Even though the claimed positive impacts on well-being, health or social inclusion may be true to some art practices, they can be considered also as outcomes to much that is not art, for example learning new skills in general or participating in other recreational activities. Therefore failing to differentiate art practice from other practices and arts activity from other activities does not provide any useful understanding of how arts or visual arts as a practice and an activity might actually enhance well-being.

There is another fundamental fallacy in regard to the concept of well-being itself in the research publications. The question is:

(i) If art practice is used to enhance well-being, how is the concept of well-being been described in the publications?

None of the authors of the publications by Arts Council England used the concepts of subjective and psychological well-being, nor did they specify well-being in the context of contemporary psychology or philosophy.

Dix and Gregory considered well-being very briefly in the context of creativity as "(...) creativity has value – for the economy, for our wellbeing and for civil society."²⁹³ Jermyn concluded that there was evidence that the arts had the effects of raising levels of self-esteem and confidence, enhancement of a feeling of determination and sense of control, pleasure and enjoyment and development of arts and creative skills.²⁹⁴ However, Jermyn did not explain how these states relate to the concept of well-being and different contexts of well-being.

Reeves settled on using the previous identification by European Task Force on Culture and Development (1997) for the contribution of arts and culture to society. According to Reeves, the direct social impacts would be that "(...) the arts and culture provide socially valuable leisure activities, elevate people's thinking and contribute positively to their psychological and social well-being and enhance their sensitivity."²⁹⁵ Once again, there are no statements, nor

293 Dix, Gregory 2010, 6.

294 Jermyn 2004, 63.

295 Reeves 2002, 30.

explanations of the meaning of psychological and social well-being, which are mentioned on an anecdotal level.

Bunting found out that three main domains for the value of the arts to the people in England may be related to well-being. According to Bunting, firstly, the arts could be seen as a part of the capacity for life. The arts are an important means of communication, they help people understand and interpret the world and express themselves. Secondly, Bunting argued that the arts enrich the experience of life. They are a source of pleasure, entertainment and relaxation. Thirdly, Bunting stated that the arts have powerful applications in different contexts. The arts offer an opportunity to express emotions, participation in the arts can build skills, confidence and self-esteem.²⁹⁶

Hecht stated that the main aims in the Arts and Health initiatives in the South West region were to "(...) enhance people's psychological and spiritual well-being, improve people's self-esteem and self-confidence, and enhance social relationships."²⁹⁷ Yet, we are left to ask what psychological well-being and spiritual well-being are for Hecht and how do they differ from one another.

Only Ings, Crane and Cameron tried to offer a conceptualization of well-being. But according to Ings, Crane and Cameron well-being is more than happiness or the absence of illness. Well-being means how people experience their own lives, whether they feel able to achieve things and have a sense of purpose. Furthermore, Ings, Crane and Cameron argued that well-being also consists of a sense of belonging and being part of the social fabric, connection with other people and the support of local networks.²⁹⁸

Ings, Crane and Cameron applied the report *Five ways to wellbeing* (2008) by the new economics foundation (nef), and stated that the report by nef provided a conception of well-being, comprising of two elements: feeling good and functioning well.²⁹⁹ Ings, Crane and Cameron claimed that nef's 'ways to wellbeing' (sic) gave them a robust framework.³⁰⁰

Actually, nef is an independent think tank and the report was written by Aked, Marks, Cordon and Thompson. The new economics foundation was commissioned to develop a set of evidence-based actions to improve personal well-being for the UK Government's Foresight Project on Mental Capital and Wellbeing. The report by nef introduced a model, which is presented also in the publication by Ings, Crane and Cameron. This model consists of well-being as good

296 Bunting 2007, 14.

297 Hecht 2006, iii.

298 Ings, Crane, Cameron, 2012, 27.

299 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 44.

300 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 10.

feelings day-to-day, overall happiness and mental capital as resilience, self-esteem, cognitive capacity and emotional intelligence. There are five ways of action in the model: connect, be active, take notice, keep learning and give.³⁰¹

Ings, Crane and Cameron suggested that in the future, when artists are recruited in programmes such as *Be Creative Be Well* they should intend to explore and deliver health outcomes as well as artistic results. Furthermore, they suggested that the new economics foundations's five actions to well-being could be used as a basis for this work.³⁰²

I agree with Ings, Crane and Cameron on the notion that artists should perhaps explore and report health and well-being outcomes as well as artistic results. Evaluation should be constructed in the projects concerning health and well-being from the start. However, the evaluation about the health and well-being outcomes should always be based on valid research and the knowledge of rigour methodology. The 'conceptual framework' by new economics foundation is simplified and differs significantly from the methodology used in contemporary psychology. Thus, it cannot be recommended as a basis for evaluation or research.

To conclude, the concept of well-being, or the epistemological foundation, theoretical frameworks or relevant contemporary research methodology concerning well-being have not been described, explained, nor problematized in the research publications of Arts Council England. The concept of well-being has been used without the appropriate contextualisation, although 'well-being' is a context-dependent concept. The use of the concept of well-being lacks theoretical specificity and content, and therefore significance and meaning.

This strategy is useful as it enables the avoidance of any detailed claims concerning well-being that could be considered as untrue by the general public, artists, stakeholders or researchers. Instead, the authors of the research publications propose value judgements of well-being, as well as generalizations of a very complex concept. Moreover, the research publications apply the concept of well-being as something that can be taken for granted, not as a concept of *potential* significance in relation to the practice of arts. It is unfortunate that the opportunity to offer statements of the concept of well-being in the context of the arts sector has not been used. In this sense the research publications by Arts Council England present an opportunity that has been lost.

301 Aked et al. 2008, 13.

302 Ings, Crane, Cameron 2012, 95.

Therefore, the research publications of Arts Council England as a whole can provide little clarity to the question of how the research could be developed. The problem lies in the ambiguity of the concepts used in the context of art practice as well as the broad and generalized perspective on well-being.

There is evident over-claiming of the outcomes of art practice in regard to social benefits. I agree with Merli who suggested that “Social deprivation and exclusion arguably can be removed only by fighting the structural conditions which cause them.”³⁰³

However, a relevant theoretical and conceptual framework for research can be developed. This can be done, if we concentrate on the subjective experience of the sense of well-being by the participant instead of ‘welfare’ and societal aims. There is a need for a common understanding of what the artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits can be as a research subject and what conceptions can be used. This need can be categorized as two questions concerning research:

- (i) In research, how are the conceptions of visual art practice and well-being constructed for valid and relevant research?
- (ii) What components do the researchers include in the concepts of visual arts, practice and well-being?

As stated before I follow the guideline by Dileo and Bradt by considering research as “(...) the critical factor informing practice as well as informing those outside the field (...)”³⁰⁴ Thus, in the next chapter I will examine the contemporary academic research on visual art practice in relation to well-being and the usage of concepts in this field. Therefore, my focus from now is on the academic research material and the journey continues in the field of academia.

303 Merli 2002, 113.

304 Dileo, Bradt 2009, 170.

CHAPTER 4

4. The Research Sector – A Conceptual Analysis of Academic Studies

The metaphor of travel or a journey is often used when referring to research designs in arts and humanities. Another, less familiar metaphor of language as an ancient town by Wittgenstein is perhaps here even more interesting. Wittgenstein compared language to an ancient city, which has a maze of little streets and squares, of old and new houses, and of houses with additions from various periods. These are then surrounded by “(...) a multitude of new boroughs with straight streets and uniform houses.”³⁰⁵

In many respects the language of art history and aesthetics can be considered to represent the elements of the ancient city, with contemporary additions. The real question at hand is: Do contemporary academic studies represent the new boroughs, or additions to above-mentioned art research?

Cross described how the values of the respective cultures in the sciences, humanities and design are different from each other. According to him, the sciences are concerned with objectivity, rationality, neutrality, and the 'truth'; the values in the humanities are subjectivity, imagination, commitment, and a concern for 'justice', while in design the values are practicality, ingenuity, empathy, and a concern for 'appropriateness'.³⁰⁶

However, and consistent with the interdisciplinary approach of this study, the values of 'justice' and 'appropriateness' are now connected. This section of research considers in specific the theoretical justifications and validity of the design of academic research. Academic research is regarded here as contemporary, peer-reviewed international research in the subject area of visual arts and well-being.

305 Wittgenstein 1978, 8.

306 Cross, 1982, 222.

4.1. The design of the search and review process

The search processes were conducted by using NELLI, an information retrieval portal shared by Finnish university libraries. The relevant databases for this research were first selected. The MetaSearch protocol in the Category of Studies in Humanities and Arts: Art Research in order to select the relevant databases was used. The MetaSearch protocol in the Category of Studies in Social Sciences, Psychology, in order to select the relevant databases in psychology and social sciences was utilized.

In the preliminary search Academic Search Elite EBSCO, SAGE Journals, ScienceDirect, ProQuest Psychology Journals, JSTOR, Project Muse and OvidSP were examined as potential research material sources. JSTOR is a scholarly journal archive offering full text articles from the journal's first issue on, dating from the late 1800s. JSTOR's subject areas include humanities, social sciences, economics, biology and ecology. Project Muse consists of about 300 full text journals in the humanities and social sciences, and OvidSP is a database of journals in behavioural science and related fields, ranging from education, to nursing, to neuroscience. These three above-mentioned databases (JSTOR, Project Muse and OvidSP) were found not be as prolific in the specific subject matter of visual art practice in relation to well-being as the four databases included in this research. Thus, from the different databases most relevant databases for this study were selected and researched individually.

Table 24. Databases selected and used for the search of academic studies

Database	Contents
1. SAGE Journals	Multidisciplinary
2. Academic Search Elite EBSCO	Multidisciplinary
3. ScienceDirect	Multidisciplinary
4. ProQuest Psychology Journals	Psychology

Academic Search Elite EBSCO contains the full text of more than 2,100 journals, including over 1,700 peer-reviewed titles. EBSCO database covers several areas of academic study. SAGE Journals is an independent academic and professional publisher of more than 560 journals. ProQuest Psychology Journals provides full texts in the area of psychology. ScienceDirect is a large multidisciplinary database. I searched all selected databases by using the following search requirements for inclusion and exclusion of individual studies:

Table 25. Search requirements used for databases

1. The terms [visual art] [well-being] in full text.
2. Full text accessible.
3. Publishing date: 2000–2013.
4. Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals.
5. Articles.
5. Language: English.

The search terms used were ‘visual art’ and ‘well-being’. Singular forms of the words were used as search engines will find the plural forms, such as ‘arts’. No other search terms were utilized because the purpose of the search was to discover, in particular, what this specific combination of terms would provide. The aim was to be able to find studies containing both terms in full text, not only ‘visual art’, or ‘art’ or ‘well-being’. The databases were searched for full texts and articles, not for abstracts. The timeframe of the publication of the study was defined as 2000–2013. Furthermore, in order to guarantee the scientific quality and usability of the research material, only scholarly, peer-reviewed journals in which studies were published in English were included in the search.

The number of possible search scores from different databases varied according to the search engine and protocol of each database. In two cases the result duplicated, meaning that the same study (Titus, Sinacore, 2013, and, Dalebroux, Goldstein Winner, 2008) could be found in two separate databases: in the first case EBSCO and ScienceDirect, and in the latter case EBSCO and ProQuest Psychology Journals. A duplicated article is considered as a search result of the database from which it was first found (EBSCO), and has not been counted twice as a search result in the final number of reviewed studies.

The database of SAGE Journals was searched by Boolean system for the keywords of ‘visual art’ and ‘well-being’. The search resulted in 202 search scores. The study title, subject area and journal information were examined, and 179 articles were excluded as non-relevant. A further 23 abstracts were reviewed, and 10 studies were excluded after the examination of the abstracts. The total number of studies retrieved from the database of SAGE Journals and reviewed in full text was **13**.

The Academic Search Elite EBSCO database was searched by Boolean system for the keywords of ‘visual art’ and ‘well-being’. The first search resulted in 585 search scores, from which most of the results were not relevant to this research. An advanced search for more refined and detailed search scores was then conducted. The second search resulted in 57 search scores with better relevance to the search requirements. The study title, subject area and journal information were examined, and 25 studies were excluded as non-relevant.

Further 32 abstracts were reviewed, and 12 studies were excluded after examination of the abstracts. The total number of studies retrieved from Academic Search Elite EBSCO and reviewed in full text was **20**.

The database of ScienceDirect was searched by a Boolean system for 'visual art' and 'well-being' in the selected disciplines of Arts and Humanities, Nursing and Health Professions, Psychology and Social Studies. The first search resulted in 1017 search scores, from which most of the results were not relevant to this research. An advanced search for more refined and detailed search scores was conducted. The second search resulted in 146 articles with better relevance to the search requirements. The study title, subject area and journal information were examined, and 126 studies were excluded as non-relevant. A further 20 abstracts were reviewed, and 12 studies were excluded after the examination of the abstracts. The total amount of studies retrieved from ScienceDirect and reviewed in full text was **8**.

The database of ProQuest Psychology Journals was searched by utilizing the terms of 'visual art' and 'well-being'. This resulted in 1252 search scores, from which most of the results were not relevant to this study. Most of the search results concerned a very broad scale of different psychological treatments, but not in the context of arts or visual arts. After examining the data of the title, subject area and journal information, 1219 studies were excluded as non-relevant. Further 33 abstracts were reviewed, and 22 studies were excluded after the examination of the abstracts. The total number of studies retrieved from ProQuest Psychology Journals and reviewed in full text was **11**.

In order to make the search process more extensive, I made a further search of the journal *Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice* by hand. The journal has been published since 2009, which represents the novelty of the field of research. However, *Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice* can be considered as a key journal in the research field. From the database of *Arts & Health. An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice* additional **19** studies were retrieved and reviewed in full text.

A further search in the full text of selected articles was made by hand in order to find out if there were other relevant articles by the same author or authors published in peer-reviewed academic journals. This procedure resulted in **16** further studies which were not found through the aforementioned search of databases SAGE Journals, Academic Search Elite EBSCO, ScienceDirect, Proquest Psychology Journals, or *Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice*.

Altogether I identified and reviewed critically **a total number of 87** potentially relevant studies in three aspects: 1) with regard to the research field; 2) with regard to the publication journal; and 3) with regard to the inclusion and exclusion criteria and possible further insertion in the conceptual analysis. For good research practice, all search results have been saved electronically, as well as printed for archive.

4.2. The research fields of academic studies

It is necessary to study what are the research fields of the academic studies. The academic studies are international and their origin is diverse. Thus a classification of the research fields is a complex task. For example the journal *Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice* lists as its' subjects Allied Health; Arts; Behavioral Medicine; Behavioral Sciences; Creative Arts & Expressive Therapies; Health & Illness; Health & Society; Health Policy; Health and Social Care; Medical Sociology; Mental Health; Public Health - Medical Sociology; Public Health Policy and Practice; Social Policy; Social Sciences; Sociology & Social Policy.³⁰⁷

There are several ways to classify science fields and subfields. For example, the Academy of Finland, which funds high-quality scientific research and acts as a science and science policy expert in Finland has its own research field classification.³⁰⁸ Glänzel and Schubert, who have studied the categorization of research fields, stated that "(...) many systems have been conceived and installed by general and special libraries, publishers, encyclopedias and, in ever growing number, by electronic databases, internet based information services, web crawlers, etc."³⁰⁹ Moreover, Glänzel and Schubert noted that an author's activity is often not limited to a single field. Instead, the activity usually covers a range of subfields of varying importance.³¹⁰

Academic studies may be considered as an interdisciplinary and a shifting terrain with no strict boundaries as the theoretical positions can be relocated in different research fields. The content of the study may not be limited to a single subfield. However, my suggestion is that principal fields of study can be identified by the examination of, firstly, the discourse applied, and, secondly, by the use of the concepts and methodology, and, thirdly by the aims and scope of the journal where

307 Arts&Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice 2014, online.

308 Academy of Finland 2014, online.

309 Glänzel, Schubert 2003, 357.

310 Glänzel, Schubert 2003, 367.

the research has been published in. However, the interpretation must also have a founding in commonly agreed categorization.

Thus, two tools of categorization were utilized: Firstly, the OECD *Frascati Manual: Proposed Standard Practice for Surveys on Research and Experimental Development*, 6th edition from 2002, and, secondly the *Revised Field of Science and Technology (FOS) Classification in the Frascati Manual* from 2007. The Frascati Manual was written for experts in OECD member countries who collect and issue national data on research and development. According to the OECD, the Frascati Manual has become the standard of conduct for research and development (R&D) surveys and data collection in the OECD and the European Union. The Frascati Manual includes definitions of concepts, data collection guidelines, and classifications for statistics.³¹¹

In the revised field of science and technology classification, the fields of science are categorized in six fields: 1. Natural Sciences; 2. Engineering and Technology; 3. Medical and Health Sciences; 4. Agricultural Sciences; 5. Social Sciences; 6. Humanities.³¹² These six fields include several subfields. For example, the subfield of Health sciences consists of further detailed subfields such as Health care sciences and services; Health policy and services; Nursing; Public and environmental health; and Occupational health.³¹³ Statistics Finland utilizes the similar fields of science classification as OECD.³¹⁴

The hypothesis for this section of my research was that the subject matter of visual art practice in relation to well-being is principally studied in the following research fields: 6. Humanities, and more specifically, 6.4. Arts. However, as can be seen from the following table, the practice of arts or visual arts in relation to well-being interests is studied in this sample predominantly in other research fields than Humanities and Arts. When applying the science classification of the Frascati Manual, most of the studies can be located in fields of 3. Medical and Health Sciences, and, 3.3. Health sciences.

Table 26. Main research fields in academic studies concerning arts, art or visual art practice in relation to well-being (2000–2013)

Author(s), year	Main research field
Margrove, Pope, Mark (2013)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Jensen (2013)	Humanities; Arts
Margrove et al. (2013)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Titus, Sinacore (2013)	Social Sciences; Psychology

311 OECD 2002, 14.

312 OECD 2007, 12.

313 OECD 2007, 9.

314 Statistics Finland 2014, online.

Cameron et al. (2013)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Liddle, Parkinson, Sibbritt (2013)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Wright et al. (2013)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Tesch, Hansen (2013)	Medical and Health sciences; Health sciences
Atkinson, Rubidge (2013)	Humanities; Arts
Raw, Mantecón (2013)	Social sciences; Anthropology
Bungay, Vella-Burrows (2013)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Wilkinson et al. (2013)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Parkinson, White (2013)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Stickley, Eades (2013)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Sitvast (2013)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Brillantes-Evangelista (2013)	Social Sciences; Psychology
Newman, Goulding, Whitehead (2013)	Humanities; Arts
Goulding (2013)	Humanities; Arts
Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu (2012)	Social Sciences; Anthropology
Goulding (2012)	Humanities; Arts
Goulding (2012b)	Humanities; Arts
Lipe et al. (2012)	Social Sciences; Psychology
Drake, Winner (2012)	Social Sciences; Psychology
Rollins et al. (2012)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Davies et al. (2012)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Law Suk Mun (2012)	Humanities; Arts
Raw et al. (2012)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Stickley, Hui (2012a)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Stickley, Hui (2012b)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
O'Shea, Ní Léime (2012)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Li (2012)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Barrett, Everett, Smigiel (2012)	Social Sciences; Educational sciences
Beesley et al. (2011)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Secker et al. (2011)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Fraser, al Sayah (2011)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Cowell et al. (2011)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Aaron et al. (2011)	Social Sciences; Psychology
Singh (2011)	Social Sciences; Psychology
Reynolds, Vivat, Prior (2011)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Broderick (2011)	Humanities; Arts
Patterson, Perlstein (2011)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Grossi et al. (2011)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Lee, Long Lingo (2011)	Social Sciences; Sociology
Drake, Coleman, Winner (2011)	Social Sciences; Psychology

Reynolds, Vivat (2010)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Reynolds (2010)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Wreford (2010)	Humanities; Arts
Stickley (2010)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Cox et al. (2010)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Stacey, Stickley (2010)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Bungay, Clift (2010)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Clift, Camic, Daykin (2010)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Stuckey, Tisdell (2010)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Stuckey, Nobel (2010)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Syson-Nibbs et al. (2009)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Aguilar, Bedau, Anthony (2009)	Social Sciences; Educational sciences
Stuckey (2009)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Reynolds (2009)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Sznewajs (2009)	Humanities; Arts
Sonke et al. (2009)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Dileo, Bradt (2009)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Clift et al. (2009)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Cohen (2009)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Secker et al. (2009)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Camic (2008)	Social Sciences; Psychology
Eades, Ager (2008)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Dalebroux, Goldstein, Winner (2008)	Social Sciences; Psychology
Michalos, Kahlke (2008)	Social Sciences; Sociology
Daykin et al. (2008)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Carson, Chappell, Knight (2007)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Reynolds, Lim (2007)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Stickley, Duncan (2007)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Acharya-Baskerville (2006)	Medical and Health Sciences; Medicine
Hacking et al. (2006)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Dose (2006)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Staricoff (2006)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Cohen et al. (2006)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Wright, John, Sheel (2006)	Social Sciences; Sociology
Kinney, Rentz (2005)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Michalos (2005)	Social Sciences; Sociology
Macnaughton, White, Stacy (2005)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Argyle, Bolton (2005)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Webster, Clare, Collier (2005)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
De Petrillo, Winner (2005)	Social Sciences; Psychology

Walsh, Martin Culpepper, Schmidt (2004)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Noice, Noice, Staines (2004)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences
Rentz (2002)	Medical and Health Sciences; Health sciences

As can be seen from the table above, most of the research is conducted and published in the field of Medical and Health Sciences. This conclusion can be evidenced also by an examination of the academic journals serving as the publishers of the studies of the sample. With only few exceptions, the majority of the academic journals also present the fields of Medical and Health Sciences.

Table 27. The academic journals of the sample
Public Health
Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice
Perspectives for Public Health
The Arts in Psychotherapy
Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association
Disability & Rehabilitation
The Journal of the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health
Mental Health Practice
Journal of Nursing Scholarship
American Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Dementias
Journal of Aging Studies
Psychiatric Rehabilitation Journal
Public Health
Health Education
Perspectives in Public Health
Journal of Aging and Health
Journal of Health Psychology
Qualitative Health Research
Health Promotion Practice
American Journal of Public Health
Social Indicators Research
The Gerontologist
Educational Gerontology
Ageing and Society
Journal of Psychosocial Nursing & Mental Health Services
Qualitative Inquiry
Generations – Journal of the American Society on Aging
Reclaiming Children and Youth
Journal of Child and Family Studies
Advances in Nursing Sciences
Adult Education Quarterly
Poetics

The systematic search and critical review process aimed to discover studies which had concentrated specifically on the issue of artist facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being. Thus the studies from the sample were reviewed by utilizing a further detailed inclusion and exclusion criteria. This was done in order to examine the relevance of the study for further conceptual analysis. The inclusion and exclusion criteria are presented in the following tables.

Table 28. Inclusion criteria for academic studies

- Original peer-reviewed article.
- Published in scholarly journal.
- Language English.
- Publishing dates: 2000–2013.
- Research design identifiable.
- The focus of the study is facilitated visual art practice in the context of well-being.
- The focus of the study is visual art practice that is not art therapy, nor art education.
- The focus of the study is visual art practice in the context of well-being that is not improvement of health-care environment by arts, design and/or architecture.
- The focus of the study is visual art practice and not arts engagement by viewing art works.
- The focus of the study is visual art practice and not arts policy.
- The focus of the study is visual art practice in the context of well-being that is not conducted as improving occupational work and health ability.

Table 29. Exclusion criteria for academic studies

- Article is not an original peer-reviewed work.
- Article is not published in scholarly journal.
- Language is not English.
- Article is published outside the publication dates of 2000–2013.
- No identified research design.
- The aim of the study is to conduct a review.
- The focus of the study is art therapy, art education, arts policy or medical humanities.
- The focus of the study is arts and/or culture in general in the context of well-being.
- The focus of the study is the improvement of health-care environment by arts, design and/or architecture.
- The focus of the study is arts engagement by viewing art works.
- The focus of the study is other art forms than visual arts.
- The focus of the study is several art forms in the context of well-being.
- The focus of the study is not visual art practice.
- The focus of the study is not well-being.
- The focus of the study is not artist-facilitated visual art practice.

The total number of 87 potential studies were reviewed by utilizing the aforementioned exclusion and inclusion criteria for relevance and validity in regard to the issue of visual art practice in relation to well-being.

Most of the studies were not selected for more detailed conceptual analysis as the research or project they described was not facilitated by a professional artist or the research did not concern visual art practice

as a professional service of the arts sector or the arts industry. These included, for example: Stuckey's inquiry about creative expression as a way of knowing in diabetes in adult health education, the study by Sitvast about nurse-facilitated making of photo stories in healthcare as self-management and representation of reality, the study by Secker et al. about the development of a measure of social inclusion for arts and mental health project participants, the study by Reynolds and Lim of the visual art-making and its contribution to the subjective well-being of women living with cancer, the qualitative study by Reynolds of the factors that encourage participation of women in creative activities in later life, the research by Reynolds on older women's motives for visual art-making, the study by Reynolds and Vivat about art-making and identity work of women living with CFS/ME, the study by Reynolds, Vivat and Prior about visual art-making as a leisure activity of older women affected by arthritis, the inquiry by Liddle, Parkinson and Sibbritt of the participation in art and craft activities of older women, and the research by Singh about the effects of art-making in patients with cancer.³¹⁵

In closer review it was also discovered that some studies concerned more art therapy than artist-facilitated visual art practice. These included, for example, the study by Brillantes-Evangelista about an evaluation of visual arts and poetry as therapeutic interventions³¹⁶. Another set of studies in the context of art therapy was also discovered: the research concerning art-making and improvement of mood. These studies included research by De Petrillo and Winner; Dalebroux, Goldstein and Winner; Drake, Coleman and Winner; and Drake and Winner.³¹⁷

Studies that did not focus specifically on visual arts, but instead dealt with several art forms or other art forms than visual arts in the context of well-being and health were discovered. These included, for example the research by Cohen et al. and Cohen of the positive influence of music and art on health with ageing, the study by Lipe et al. about arts interventions concerning music and visual arts in a community mental health setting, the study by Wright et al. on arts practice of Big *h*ART, and the study by Davies et al. about the definition of arts engagement for population-based health research.³¹⁸

315 Stuckey 2009, 46; Sitvast 2013, 336; Secker et al. 2009, 65; Reynolds 2009, 72; Reynolds, Lim 2007, 1; Reynolds 2010; Reynolds, Vivat 2010, 67; Reynolds, Vivat, Prior 2011, 328; Liddle, Parkinson, Sibbritt 2013, 330; Singh 2011, 160.

316 Brillantes-Evangelista 2013, 71

317 De Petrillo, Winner 2005, 211; Dalebroux, Goldstein, Winner 2008; Drake, Coleman, Winner 2011, 26; Drake, Winner 2012, 259.

318 Cohen 2009, 48; Lipe et al. 2012, 25; Lee, Long Lingo 2011, 316; Wright et al. 2013, 190; Davies 2012, 203;

There were several studies which focused on the impact of art, arts or culture to health and well-being or the development of the field of arts and health. These studies included, for example, the short mini-symposium by Calman on the use of arts and humanities in health and medicine, the study by Dileo and Bradt on creating the discipline, profession and evidence in the field of arts and healthcare, the editorial by Clift, Camic and Daykin on the arts and global health inequities, the description of what different forms the arts in health activity can take in order to enhance social capital by Macnaughton, White and Stacy, the study of how arts and public health can learn from each other by Cameron et al., and the examination on how cultural partnerships can grow a hospital arts program by Sznewajs.³¹⁹ There was also a set of studies of overall mappings of arts and health in different countries conducted, for example, by Sonke et al. and Clift et al.³²⁰

A few studies concentrated on viewing artworks. The studies by Goulding focused on viewing art in galleries, and especially considered art viewing as an activity and lifelong learning mode for older people. This perspective was followed by the examination of cultural capital habitus and class influence to the responses of older adults to the field of contemporary visual art by Newman, Goulding and Whitehead.³²¹

There were also studies in which the art practice could be considered more as a mode or part of formal or non-formal art education for children or young people, for example by Chin and Harrington and Barrett, Everett and Smigiel³²².

Reviews of literature or research were found. These included, as an example, a review of arts-based methods in health research by Fraser and al Sayah, a review of literature by Daykin et al. on how art and design were used to improve the environment of healthcare settings or other facilities, and a review of how arts and health programmes and projects in Primary Health Care evaluate their effectiveness by Tesch and Hansen³²³

Finally, in some cases, the study did not actually concern arts or visual arts, but rather the social, health or well-being outcomes of art projects or programmes, even though the title of the study might have misled to presume that it dealt with the arts.

The last surprising finding is illustrated by concrete examples. A study by Secker et al. *Promoting mental well-being and social*

319 Calman 2005, 958; Clift, Camic, Daykin 2010, 3; Macnaughton, White, Stacy 2005, 332; Sznewajs 2009, 183;

320 Sonke et al. 2009, 107; Clift et al. 2009, 6.;

321 Newman, Goulding, Whitehead 2013, 456; Goulding 2013, 1009; Goulding 2012, 215, Goulding 2012b, 215.

322 Chin, Harrington 2009, 14; Barrett, Everett; Smigiel 2012, 185;

323 Fraser, al Sayah 2011, 110; Daykin et al. 2008, 85.

inclusion through art: evaluation of an arts and mental health project (2011) sought to describe the evaluation of 29 introductory arts courses provided by one arts and mental health project. The method used in this study was formative evaluation comprised of focus groups which were attended by participants after four of the introductory arts courses. Outcomes were assessed through questionnaires measuring mental well-being and social inclusion at the beginning and end of the 29 courses. Secker et al. concluded that participants identified gains in well-being and social inclusion alongside a need to address expectations more clearly and provide more individualised learning. However, Secker et al. stated that while the results were promising, methodological issues limited the conclusions that could be drawn as “(...) controlled designs would enable impacts to be attributed to arts participation with greater certainty and further research is also needed to assess longer-term impacts.”³²⁴

As the study by Secker et al. utilized concepts such as art, arts, art courses, arts participation, art project and participatory arts one might be led to believe that the study considered arts. However, even when a thorough examination of the published study is made in detail, it remains unclear *what* is the art that was practised, as no artforms, techniques or genres are mentioned in the whole study. The only explanation about the content of the art practice itself by the authors is given in the following: “The core activity of *Open Arts* is the provision of introductory art courses that aim to provide relaxing, welcoming art groups. Courses run for 10–15 weeks with sessions in a variety of media.”³²⁵

From the aforementioned sentences we are able to learn nothing about the content of the art practice in the project. Another time when the actual art practice is mentioned very briefly in the study concerns quotes from the second focus group of participants. One participant had assumed that the art project would have been loose, and another was asked to take a canvas that the participant had brought to the project back home.³²⁶

From this we might deduce that some kind of painting was perhaps practised in the project, but we cannot be sure. This kind of research strategy for evaluation which ignores the practice of the arts is incomprehensible. It raises, therefore, the following questions:

(i) If the title of a study suggests that mental well-being and social inclusion could be promoted through art, why is the art practice not described or examined in depth or breadth?

324 Secker et al. 2011, 51.

325 Secker et al 2011, 52.

326 Secker et al 2011, 55.

(ii) Is it so that the art practice itself is not important for the evaluation of an arts and mental health project?

(iii) What can we then conclude about the importance of the arts in regard to evaluation strategy?

Another set of articles that was not included in the conceptual analysis but can be used as an example of the rather distant attitude towards the art practice itself are *Art on Prescription: a qualitative outcomes study* by Stickley and Eades (2013); *Social prescribing through arts on prescription in a UK city: Participants' perspectives (Part 1)*; and *Social prescribing through arts on prescription in a UK city: Referrers' perspectives (Part 2)* by Stickley and Hui (2012).

Stickley and Hui argued "(...) that the concept of usefulness of the arts to health has gained credence largely through community-based arts."³²⁷ Once again the concepts of 'evidence' and 'use' are brought into the discourse as Stickley and Hui claimed that there is an increasing evidence base for the usefulness of community arts delivery, but not so much evidence of the effectiveness of delivery of Arts on Prescription. The aim of Stickley and Hui was to research the experiences of people who have engaged with Arts on Prescription programme (Part 1) and referrers' perspectives to Arts on Prescription service (Part 2).

In the first article *Social prescribing through arts on prescription in a UK city: Participants' perspectives (Part 1)*, Stickley and Hui conducted sixteen interviews in community based arts venues. All the participants were using or had used mental health services. They concluded that the arrangement of a 'safe place' was identified as the most important consideration for the participants. Therefore, Stickley and Hui argued that the safety of the place and the quality of the human relationships were actually more important than the arts activities in relation to social, psychological and occupational benefits.³²⁸

The conclusion by Stickley and Hui raises the question of the meaning of the arts in these projects. In closer scrutiny, no specific art form is mentioned, nor is the art practice described or explained in the study. Stickley and Hui applied concepts that are related to community arts, such as 'community-based arts', 'community-based arts programme', and 'participatory arts' but failed to describe the actual content or practice. The concept of participatory arts occurred simply in one sentence: "(...) opportunities for friendships to develop can be facilitated through a non-threatening medium such as participatory arts."³²⁹

327 Stickley, Hui 2012, 574.

328 Stickley, Hui 2012, 578.

329 Stickley, Hui 2012, 578.

This begs the following questions:

- (i) If the most significant thing is the provision of a safe environment, why cannot art therapy provide this environment?
- (ii) If art therapy can provide a safe environment, what is the role of participatory or community arts?
- (iii) Could creative and safe environment be also, for example, a community garden?
- (iv) If creative and safe environment could also be a community garden, what is the specific need for *art* practice?

In the second article by Stickley and Hui, *Social prescribing through arts on prescription in a UK city: Referrers' perspectives (Part 2)* the vagueness concerning the art practice is continued. This study provided notions into the perceived benefits of an Arts on Prescription service according to the referrers. The study regarded the quality and effectiveness of the service. Ten referrers were interviewed. Referrers valued Arts on Prescription, considering it to be a therapeutic, relaxing and safe environment that was professionally led. Referrers also stated that the elements of the environment as relaxing and safe and the professionalism of how it was run and facilitated created the therapeutic environment.³³⁰ 'Therapeutic' was thus more due to the safety of the environment and facilitation than the act of art-making.

The concepts related to art practice in the study were 'art', 'the arts', 'art-making', 'arts activities', 'community arts', 'creativity', and 'creative activities' applied in a general level of discourse. Only one specific art form, photography, was mentioned in a quote by a referrer concerning a client and his further progress. However, this progress referred to the time after the research project and the further attendance of the participant at a night school.³³¹

This leads to the following question which could be considered as pivotal:

- (i) If a service is called Arts on Prescription, why is the art practice not the focus of the research of the service?

More recently, Stickley and Eades published another research *Arts on Prescription: a qualitative outcomes study* which is a follow-up study on the findings from interviews conducted with participants in the Arts on Prescription programme two years after the previous interviews were conducted. According to Stickley and Eades, the new study was done in order to assess the levels of the 'distance travelled'. Ten qualitative interviews were conducted in community-based arts venues. All the participants were using or had used mental health

330 Stickley, Hui 2012b, 585.

331 Stickley, Hui 2012b, 582.

services.³³²

Stickley and Eades concluded that the progress varied between respondents. The unifying factors were mostly, what they called as ‘soft outcomes’, such as raised confidence and self-esteem. Some specific art forms were mentioned in this study, such as botanical drawing, glass work and digital photography, but all of these art forms were practised by the study participants *after* the Arts on Prescription programme.

However, Stickley and Eades argued that Arts on Prescription had served as a catalyst for positive change when “(...) these outcomes come into sharper focus as the individual voices are brought together into a collective narrative of ‘distance travelled’.”³³³ Stickley and Eades further grouped these outcomes into emerging themes of education: practical and aspirational achievements; broadened horizons: accessing new worlds; assuming and sustaining new identities; and social and relational perspectives.³³⁴

What is most interesting is that Stickley and Eades accepted that this research and the previous study consider the programme in a very positive light. They noted that the social need to support the work may result to the respondents wishing to cast a positive light on the research in order to help secure further funding in the future. They concluded that they hoped that their study will enable discussion of the continuing need for innovation in the research methodologies suited to these kinds of practices.³³⁵

This begs the following questions:

- (i) Again: Why is the art practice itself not examined?
- (ii) Why are none of the several methods available and existing in the broad field of art and design research used for analysis and interpretation?
- (iii) Is it so that the methods of art and/or design research are not used, because art is actually not the focus of the study?

Finally, a study by Cameron, Crane, Ings and Taylor is interesting because it was made mostly by the same people and based on the evaluation of *Be Creative Be Well*, a publication which has previously been analysed in the Chapter Three concerning the research publications of Arts Council England. Now Cameron et al. claimed that arts and health professionals “(...) do not need to seek too hard to find a common language through which to discuss and plan to promote, the health and well-being of local communities.”³³⁶

332 Stickley, Eades 2013, 727.

333 Stickley, Eades 2013, 731.

334 Stickley, Eades 2013, 731.

335 Stickley, Eades 2013, 733.

336 Cameron et al. 2013, 59.

Furthermore Cameron et al. argued that ‘studies’ associated with well-being and participatory arts offer frameworks for this common language, their own study being one of these. However, one might ask: what are the other studies that provide these frameworks? Apart from their own publication, Cameron et al. referred only to the previously critically discussed publications by nef on well-being, 509 Arts on participatory arts and Arts Council England’s *Achieving Great Art for Everyone*. In addition to the aforementioned publications, a reference was made by Cameron et al. to a newspaper article by Guardian and to three other studies that could be considered as academic, but dealing with creative arts a public health resource, arts funding and realistic evaluation. This set of references, introduced by Cameron et al., can hardly be labelled as studies which offer frameworks in the connection between arts, visual arts, participatory arts and possible well-being.

4.3. The conceptual analysis of academic studies

Twelve studies were selected for a closer conceptual analysis from the total number of academic studies. Academic studies were critically reviewed in relevance and validity regarding the inclusion and exclusion criteria as well as the overall quality of the research. The studies presented in Table 25 were revisited several times to ensure that the selected and particular studies for conceptual analysis reflected the practice of visual arts in relation to well-being aims.

The sample size of twelve studies is sufficient and appropriate, in terms of both the critical review and conceptual analysis methodology, and the research aims. The set of academic journals in which the following studies have been published consist of the following: *Public Health*; *Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice*; *Perspectives for Public Health*; *The Arts in Psychotherapy*; *Disability & Rehabilitation*; *The Journal of the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health*; *Mental Health Practice*; *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, and, *American Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Dementias*.

The biggest issues considering the overall sample of the academic studies and the selection process were the following: 1) an academic study did not specifically concern visual art practice; 2) the projects or programmes in the research were not artist-facilitated or the role of the professional artist was vaguely described; 3) the study did not attempt to make a relevant difference between art therapy, art education or artist-facilitated visual art practice; 4) art or the arts were discussed in a general level; 5) no specific research design could be identified, and,

6) the study concentrated on the description of the outcomes or impacts instead of the content of visual art practice.

The twelve selected studies are presented in the following tables. Even though the research at hand focuses on the level of the primary research question on the issue of non-clinical participants, studies including also clinical participants could not have been completely excluded, because the sample for conceptual analysis would have been too small. The studies selected examine visual art projects or visual art programs that address the issue of well-being and have included professional artists in the projects or programmes.

The conceptual analysis follows the principles introduced previously in Chapter Three. As in prior chapter, the guiding thought is by Wittgenstein: “One cannot guess how a word functions. One has to *look at* its use and learn from that.”³³⁷ The target concept here is ‘visual art practice’ and the use of the concepts related to visual art practice is being investigated.

Table 30. Visual art forms and concepts related to visual art practice in the study by Margrove, Pope, Mark (2013)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Margrove, Pope; Mark (2013). <i>Public Health</i>	An exploration of artists’ perspectives of participatory arts and health projects for people with mental health needs	Qualitative research: semi-structured interviews; thematic analysis	Painting Sculpture Collage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Arts • Arts and health courses • Art-making • Arts participation • Arts projects • Community art projects • Creativity • Participatory arts and health courses • Participatory arts and health projects • Visual art courses • Visual participatory arts and health courses

The British study by Margrove, Pope and Mark *An exploration of artists’ perspectives of participatory arts and health projects for people with mental health needs* (2013) employed a rare research perspective, as it aimed to address the views of artists who run participatory arts and health courses for people with mental health or social problems. The study design was a qualitative research consisting of interviews with eleven artists from three different organizations providing participatory arts and health courses.³³⁸

Margrove, Pope and Mark stated that little emphasis has been put on the artists’ experience in earlier research, but they offered no

337 Wittgenstein 1978, 109.

338 Margrove, Pope, Mark 2013, 1105.

systematic examination of the previous published literature to back this claim. However, even though the focus was on the artists' experiences, different art forms or their different levels of therapeutic benefit were not examined in their study.³³⁹

The aim of the study was to explore the perspectives of artists themselves on the benefits for the participants and the challenges involved in arts and health courses. The interview topics included, for example, the questions of how arts participation can improve well-being, and the ways in which courses can help broaden social change and networks.³⁴⁰

The more appropriate questions, however, should have been: Can arts participation improve well-being, and if so, what kind of well-being do the artists think is actually being improved?

Margrove, Pope and Mark stated that it is not yet understood what it may be about participatory arts and health projects that distinguishes them from other activities, for example, gardening or exercise that can help with mental health issues. This issue, however, remained unanswered in the study.

Furthermore, Margrove, Pope and Mark argued that a key aim in running participatory arts and health projects is to increase social networks of the participants. The arts activity can help develop friendships of the participants, but it is not known whether these social relationships have any longevity after the course.³⁴¹

Art forms appeared only anecdotally at the beginning and the end of the study. Materials such as clay, textiles and paint were mentioned as different mediums to work with. Sculpture, painting and collage are named as examples of the different mediums of working which were not considered.

It could thus be argued that the exploration of the perspectives of the artists was framed in order to create more evidence of the positive course benefits. The challenges of the arts and health courses were considered rather low. Moreover, Margrove, Pope and Mark failed to record the official qualifications of the artists. Instead, they noted anecdotally that several 'artists' were trained therapists. Furthermore Margrove, Pope and Mark concluded that courses were manageable and fairly low-risk. This was justified by the relatively high number of courses that had been run by the artists.³⁴²

This strategy leaves the conceptualization of the difference between the practice by the artist facilitator and mental-health practitioner vague. It results in yet another lack of understanding of

339 Margrove, Pope, Mark 2013, 1109.

340 Margrove, Pope, Mark 2013, 1106.

341 Margrove, Pope, Mark 2013, 1108.

342 Margrove, Pope, Mark 2013, 1109.

what specifically distinguishes art from other activities and art forms from each other in relation to well-being interests. ‘Art’ consists of diverse and different practices. Rather than designing yet another study to prove the positive impact of the arts, one should ask, for example, what type of painting as an activity can enhance psychological well-being or what specific forms of architecture can better the sense of security in urban environment.

Table 31. Visual art forms and concepts related to visual art practice in the study by Jensen (2013)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Jensen (2013) <i>Arts & Health: International Journal for Research, Policy & Practice</i>	Beyond the borders: The use of art participation for the promotion of health and well-being in Britain and Denmark.	Case studies	Printmaking Painting Portfolio preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Arts • The arts • Art activities • Art activity • Art creation • Art participation • Art practice • Art project • Art and health community projects • Arts and cultural activities • Art workshops • Community art • Community arts and health projects • Creative arts • Creative process • Creativity • Participatory art • Participatory arts • Participatory art projects • Participatory arts-based approaches

In the study *Beyond the borders: The use of art participation for the promotion of health and well-being in Britain and Denmark* (2013) Jensen compared British and Danish promotion of well-being through participation in art activities in order to empower the individual. The research design is described as based on two case studies with an approach of psychosocial inquiry.³⁴³

However, it remains unclear what art activity and empowerment actually mean in the research. More space is preserved for the descriptions of art and health organizations, service delivery and funding procedures than to the study of the art activity itself. Additionally, more information is provided about the organizational models of the two institutions offered as examples of visual arts and well-being work: GAIA Museum and GAIA Academy in Denmark, and The Other Side Gallery (TOSG) in Great Britain.

³⁴³ Jensen 2013, 204.

For example, Jensen noted that TOSG had been recognised for its value in the art and health setting, whereas GAIA Academy was still striving for the recognition by healthcare professionals.³⁴⁴ However, GAIA Academy was partly funded by the local Danish council, whereas TOSG had to use a majority of its resources on fundraising from different sources, rather than service delivery.³⁴⁵

Thus the study did not actually examine the art activities. The perspective of the study could be considered more as cultural policy than art research. Art forms are mentioned only anecdotally in regard to TOSG as "Workshops and activities included printmaking, painting, portfolio preparation and national as well as international art partnerships."³⁴⁶

Furthermore, the concept of well-being is considered in a highly general manner. Jensen bypassed the complex question of well-being by referring to a Foresight report from 2008 as a definition of well-being. I will quote exactly the original report by Foresight here, which applies the concept of 'mental wellbeing': "This is a dynamic state, in which the individual is able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others and contribute to their community."³⁴⁷ This broad conceptualization is rather poorly suited to the detailed contemporary research in psychology.

However, Jensen is one of the few researchers who briefly brought up the question of ethics. Jensen stated that art participation may create a false identity for the participant as an artist, and unrealistic expectations of what being an artist means. Jensen considered these negative impacts as false hopes for individuals aspiring for a career as an artist. However, neither organization could offer any routes into the creative industry.

Thus Jensen offered the 'Do No Harm' principle as a consideration for participants' suitability for art activity. She argued that a set of practical guidelines for the communication between artists, participants and healthcare professionals would be needed in the future.³⁴⁸

Jensen can be commended for bringing about the possible negative impacts of participatory arts. The Latin phrase 'Primum non nocere' is a fundamental principle of healthcare and medicine. But the real question here is as follows:

(i) Does an artist really need to adopt principles of a physician or other healthcare professionals?

344 Jensen 2013, 212.

345 Jensen 2013, 211.

346 Jensen 2013, 208.

347 Foresight 2008, 10.

348 Jensen 2013, 213.

Table 32. Visual art forms and concepts used by Margrove, Heydinrych, Secker (2013)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Margrove, SE-SURG (South Essex Service User Research Group) Heydinrych, Secker (2013) <i>Perspectives in Public Health</i>	Waiting list-controlled evaluation of a participatory arts course for people experiencing mental health problems	Service evaluation: Outcome measures Intervention Group/ Control Group	Painting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Arts • Arts courses • Arts participation • Art making • Art therapy • Arts skills • Creative activity • Creative art • Creative arts activity • Creativity • Participatory arts • Participatory arts course • Participatory arts projects • Therapeutic arts

The British study by Margrove et al. *Waiting list-controlled evaluation of a participatory arts course for people experiencing mental health problems* (2013) aimed at conducting a naturalistic waiting list-controlled evaluation of the 12-week courses routinely provided by Open Arts and to explore participants' experiences of their course.

It is important to note that this study of 2013 actually deals with the same organization, Open Arts, as the previously critically analysed, evaluative study by Secker et al. of 2011.³⁴⁹

Margrove et al. stated that the hypothesis of the new study was that the people on the waiting list who were given places in the Open Arts programme would gain improvements in well-being and social inclusion compared to those who were still on the waiting list and were not given a place in the Open Arts programme. The research participants consisted of an intervention group of individuals who had been allocated a place on the courses, and a control group of individuals who had remained on the waiting list. The outcome measures used were a 14-item Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) and the Social Inclusion Scale (SIS) developed previously for a national arts and mental health study by Secker et al. and published in 2009. The overall research design was named as a service evaluation.³⁵⁰

In comparison to the previous study by Secker et al. (2011), the work by Margrove et al. now introduced the principle of Open Arts: "The aim of Open Arts is to promote well-being and social inclusion by providing relaxing, welcoming art groups in community venues for people with mental health needs."³⁵¹

349 Secker et al. 2011, 51.

350 Margrove et al. 2013, 28.

351 Margrove et al. 2013, 29.

The introductory courses of Open Arts run for 12 weeks on one day per week, with sessions in a variety of visual media. According to Margrove et al., the sessions are facilitated by professional artists with mental health and group work experience and arts skills. The content of the courses is explained as an approach that brings together concepts derived from the field of art therapy relating to the therapeutic experience of art-making within a group art studio which is complemented with Rogerian principles of facilitated learning.³⁵²

Margrove et al. concluded that their evaluation provided further evidence in support of the effectiveness of arts participation for people with mental health problems. The participatory arts groups are likely to have benefits in terms of improved well-being and social inclusion. However, their research actually, more than anything, justified the further research on randomized trial and economic appraisal. Margrove et al. themselves posed the question of the further need to study “(...) the impact of the social milieu provided by art groups and the creative activity itself, and establishing whether positive outcomes achieved in the short term are maintained in the long term.”³⁵³

But several other problems can be raised in regard to the lack of the research of visual arts in the study. Firstly, Margrove et al. stated that Open Arts uses community venues which meet the basic requirements of a studio, such as sufficient light, space and access to running water. Moreover, Margrove et al. argued that the utilization of community venues is a key to the aim of promoting social inclusion and working in cooperation with other organizations.³⁵⁴

The environment of the participatory arts courses is called an art studio or adapted studio environment. However, sufficient light, space and access to running water do not transform an environment to an art studio. These requirements would also be met, for example, in a kitchen. It begs the following question:

(i) Could cooking courses provide the same outcomes as art courses?

Secondly, the actual qualifications of the artists as facilitators are not described, nor discussed. Thirdly, the distinction between a participatory arts course in relation to the principles and foundation of art therapy or art education is missing. Fourthly, only one visual art form occurs once in the whole study by Margrove et al. and it can be found in a short quote by a male participant: painting.

Thus, it is clear that it is not the visual arts as an activity or practice that is evaluated in the study, but rather the outcomes.

352 Margrove, Heydinrych, Secker 2013, 29.

353 Margrove, Heydinrych, Secker 2013, 34.

354 Margrove, Heydinrych, Secker 2013, 29.

Table 33. Visual art forms and concepts used by Titus, Sinacore (2013)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Titus, Sinacore (2013). <i>The Arts in Psychotherapy</i>	Art-making and well-being in healthy young adult women	Phenome- nology	Printmaking Jewellery Painting Drawing Ceramics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Art-making • Art practice • Art session • Artistic process • Artistic project • Creative activity • Creative activities • Creative arts • Creative process • Creativity • Creative design process • Community artistic projects • Visual art

The Canadian study by Titus and Sinacore *Art-making and well-being in healthy young adult women* (2013) had a rare perspective as the researchers could actually state both their approach: a feminist standpoint, as well as methodology: phenomenology. Moreover, the participants of the study were young female visual artists. The aim of Titus and Sinacore was to investigate the relationship between art-making and well-being in a group of young women artists, while addressing the context in which art-making occurred. Titus and Sinacore concluded that overall, in certain contexts, art-making can foster well-being in young adult women. The real achievement of the study was that Titus and Sinacore dared to discuss the possibility that in some circumstances the unproductive art sessions may result in negative thoughts and emotions.³⁵⁵

According to Titus and Sinacore the participants in the study were self-identified visual artists who had created art at least once in the prior month to the start of the study and reported being in good physical and mental health. Of the ten participants, nine had received formal training in fine arts, and only one was self-taught.³⁵⁶

However, there are problems in the research design in regard to the foundation of the study. Even though healthy young women artists are being investigated, the underlying epistemology originates actually from art therapy. Firstly, Titus and Sinacore referred to American Art Therapy Association, and Canadian Art Therapy Association, in the claim that the process of art-making can help to improve the physical, mental, and emotional well-being.³⁵⁷ This is the basic assumption of art therapy.

355 Titus, Sinacore 2013, 34.

356 Titus, Sinacore 2013, 32.

357 Titus, Sinacore 2013, 29.

Secondly, Titus and Sinacore described their approach to visual arts as ‘inclusive’. They utilized a description of “(...) art making as encompassing the creation of any form of visual art or craft that resulted in a tangible end product.”³⁵⁸ However, the aforementioned description of ‘art-making’ can be attributed to the previous studies by Reynolds and Reynolds et al., which have mainly dealt with art-making as a leisure activity in the lives of women living with a chronic disease.³⁵⁹

From the perspective of art history, there is an obvious contradiction if a broad concept of ‘art-making’ is utilized in the context of both professional visual artists and hobbyists. Therefore the concept of art-making will be discussed separately in this chapter.

Thirdly, as healthy young female artists and art-making is being researched, one would presume that the study would deal with visual arts. However, the data was collected through journals, focus groups and an individual interview. Visual art works were not analysed in any way. The few visual art forms or mediums appeared only anecdotally in two interview quotes by the female artists.

Fourthly, the complex artistic process of professional visual female artists, and the visual art practice with its social, economic, political and cultural frames and pressures was narrowed down as ‘art-making’, and a brief examination of the identity as an artist.

Fifthly, even though the study participants consisted of young female *artists*, Titus and Sinacore concluded that in certain contexts “(...) art-making can foster well-being in young adult women.”³⁶⁰ Thus a specific professional group is taken to represent all young women.

Table 34. Visual art forms and concepts used by Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu (2012)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu (2012). <i>Arts & Health: International Journal for Research, Policy & Practice</i>	Acrylic Rx: A program evaluation of a professionally taught painting class among older Americans.	Arts program evaluation	Painting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Arts • Art classes • Art participation • Art production • Art programme • Arts program • Artistic process • Creative activity • Creative arts • Creative arts class • Creative arts interventions • Creative arts participation • Creative endeavor • Creative expression • Creative process • Creativity • Community arts interventions

358 Titus, Sinacore 2013, 32.

359 Reynolds, Vivat 2006; Reynolds, Lim 2007; Reynolds, Vivat, Prior 2008.

360 Titus, Sinacore 2013, 29.

In the American study *Acrylic Rx: A program evaluation of a professionally taught painting class among older Americans* (2012) Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu aimed to examine the impact of a professionally taught painting class on the health and well-being of fixed-income senior participants in San Antonio, Texas. The research methods used were formal surveys, semi-structured and spontaneous interviews, and participant observation over a 14-month period. The professionally taught painting classes were conducted in the gallery of Bihl Haus Arts on the grounds of a fixed-income senior (55 +) residential complex in San Antonio, Texas.³⁶¹

The research approach in general originates from a previous study by Cohen et al. This study measured the impact of professionally conducted community-based art programmes on the physical health, mental health, and social activities of individuals aged 65 and older.³⁶²

Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu concluded that participants perceived significant improvements in mental and psychosocial health through increased social engagement, self-awareness, empowerment, and a sense of calm and relaxation.³⁶³ Well-being, however, was not conceptualized with any existing psychological theoretical framework and the number of study participants was small, eleven.

In addition, Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu stated that there should be flexibility in pedagogy, attendance and in-class focus, a professional pedagogy that facilitates participant's experiences, as well as free materials and instruction in order for an arts programme to succeed.³⁶⁴ Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu also suggested that further research is needed in order to construct a measure to the psychosocial and mental health dimensions of the process of creating. This new construct would measure the degree to which art facilitates positive self-assessment.³⁶⁵

Criticism of the research design can be raised in regard to the study of visual arts. Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu stated that "(...) three types of qualitative data were analyzed using standard textual analysis: narratives in semi-structured interviews about arts, aging, and the classes at Bihl Haus, conversations and social interaction during the classes as recorded in fieldnotes: and the art produced by the participants."³⁶⁶

The only visual art form that is considered in the study is painting. However, no methods of the analysis of paintings were described as being used, such as visual semiotics, formal analysis, art historical

361 Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2013, 262.

362 Cohen et al. 2006, 726.

363 Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2012, 262.

364 Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2012, 272.

365 Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2012, 271.

366 Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2013, 264.

hermeneutics or iconography. Furthermore, in closer review, the study did not comprise any analysis of the artworks, such as interpretation of subjects, themes, techniques or cultural contexts. The references to painting are mostly presented in the quotes by the study participants and concern their views of the artworks or art in general. Thus, the study is actually based on textual data, rather than analysis of visual artworks as conducted in art research.

A great deal of emphasis in the study was placed on the description of the process of the class, such as how the students arrived to the class, how the teachers did not force participation in group instruction, and how the structure of the class was flexible.³⁶⁷

However, the above-mentioned issues could also be considered as elements of adult art education in general, conducted for example in community educational institutions. However, no differentiation or comparison was made to adult art education and its prevailing theories of reflective practice or facilitation.

Furthermore, Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu stated that classes met with a professional artist-teacher. It is, however, unclear by which methods the classes were labelled as professionally taught, as no qualifications of the artist-teachers in visual arts, facilitation or art education were given in their study.

Table 35. Visual art forms and concepts related to visual art practice in the study by Beesley et al. (2011)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Beesley, White, Alston, Sweetapple, Pollack (2011). <i>Disability & Rehabilitation.</i>	Art after stroke: the qualitative experience of community dwelling stroke survivors in a group art programme.	Qualitative research: Focus groups/ Individual interviews; Qualitative data analysis	Painting Charcoal Wax resist Drawing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • The arts • Art activities • Art group intervention • Arts interventions • Art making • Art process • Art projects • Arts health intervention • Arts health programme • Art programme • Arts health group programme • Visual arts intervention

The Australian study by Beesley et al. *Art after stroke: the qualitative experience of community dwelling stroke survivors in a group art programme* (2011) aimed to explore the experience of community dwelling stroke survivors' participation in an arts and health group programme and possible health benefits to quality of life (QOL) and well-being. The method used was qualitative data collection through focus groups and individual interviews, and qualitative data analysis

367 Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2012, 266.

through a grounded theory approach.³⁶⁸ The focus groups were held after the final session for each group and qualitative interviews were conducted a few weeks after each focus group.³⁶⁹

The first context of the study is clearly the activity limitation and reduced quality of life of stroke survivors. It could be noted that yet another concept ‘arts health’ is used to mean roughly the same as ‘arts in health’ or ‘arts and health.’

Art is considered in the context of ‘arts health’, an area of health which is understood as addressing quality of life issues such as reduced self-efficacy and altered participation. According to Beesley et al. “The arts health paradigm is centred on the belief of the intrinsic value of art making and that participation in the arts promotes health and well being”.³⁷⁰

However, well-being is not described in relation to any psychological framework, only as arts interventions which address “(...) aspects of wellbeing such as confidence and participation.”³⁷¹

The short chapter which described the actual visual arts activity was titled Intervention, informing that the art groups followed a similar format and were led by a fine arts graduate, a member of the Community Stroke Team, and an assistant. The specific art mediums which were mentioned comprised of painting on canvas, charcoal, wax resist and drawing.³⁷²

Beesley et al. stated that the art group programme created several benefits. Self-expression through individual and group art tasks created positive impact. Participants benefited from comparing their situation with other stroke survivors, and sharing a common experience of stroke. Beesley et al. argued that a major benefit was an increased sense of confidence, a sense of accomplishment from the quality of artworks, and the opportunity to interact socially with the other group members. There were also lifestyle benefits, because the art group was an opportunity to do something different with the day, and served as a distraction from worries.³⁷³

Therefore, Beesley et al. concluded that an arts health programme after stroke made a substantial impact on well-being and to the quality of life of the participants who had suffered a stroke. The key finding was the enjoyment gained from the social interaction and exploration of a new activity facilitated by an art group.³⁷⁴

368 Beesley et al. 2011, 23.

369 Beesley et al. 2011, 2348.

370 Beesley et al. 2011, 2347.

371 Beesley et al. 2011, 2347.

372 Beesley et al. 2011, 2347.

373 Beesley et al. 2011, 2350–2352.

374 Beesley et al. 2011, 2353.

However, there were also challenges as “Many participants felt challenged by high level creative and cognitive demands in the areas of mental flexibility, processing, problem solving and grasping new concepts.”³⁷⁵All the participants themselves stated that they would not have participated in the art group if the art group would not have been specifically targeted at stroke survivors.³⁷⁶

Thus, it is unclear how much of these benefits can be concluded to originate from the actual art activities, or more especially the activities of visual arts and how much from the opportunity to meet with other stroke survivors with an agreeable and a new activity. It should be asked whether the real reason for the possible well-being benefits is community participation in a new joint experience rather than the arts themselves.

In addition to the aforementioned, the visual artworks are neither described, nor analysed and there is no explanation of the content of the actual art activities. The facilitation principles, and the individual art sessions are not described, nor analysed. The data is textual and based on post-experience interviews.

Thus, the approach to the visual arts is limited in the study. It should be questioned, whether creative writing group or drama group might offer the same possibilities for self-expression, self-awareness, increased confidence, social interaction and lifestyle benefits as well. Thus, the study fails to offer information how visual arts as a specific practice can enhance well-being.

Table 36. Visual art forms and concepts related to visual art practice in the study by Syson-Nibbs et al. (2009)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Syson-Nibbs, Robinson, Cook, King (2009) <i>Arts & Health: An International Journal for Research, Policy and Practice</i>	Young farmers' photographic mental health promotion programme: A case study	Case study	Photography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts • Arts activity • Arts-based health initiatives • Arts-orientated mental health promotion programme • Arts projects • Community arts • Community arts-based projects • Community arts projects • Community-based arts projects • Creative expression • Creative process • Participatory arts

The British study by Syson-Nibbs et al. *Young farmers' photographic mental health promotion programme: A case study* (2009) aimed to document and describe a public health programme targeting young

375 Beesley et al. 2011, 2351.

376 Beesley et al. 2011, 2352.

farmers. The research design was a case study methodology which was guided by Friere's empowerment model of health promotion. Syson-Nibbs et al. took an interesting perspective to evaluation methods. They decided not to use them, because it would have compromised the individual confidentiality of the participants.³⁷⁷

Syson-Nibbs et al. stated that the project was set in the context of a social model of health, rather than a medical model. The social model of health acknowledges larger social determinants of health, such as income, social capital, and the environment. Syson-Nibbs et al. stated their specific aim as to describe "(...) a photographic arts project targeting Derbyshire young farmers, to promote self-efficacy and self-esteem as a defence against future psychosocial problems."³⁷⁸

The background of the study was the situation of rural communities in the United Kingdom. Syson-Nibbs et al. stated that there are many health and social inequalities experienced in the rural communities in the United Kingdom which cannot be detected by the indicators relevant to urban populations. They claimed that there have been severe psychosocial effects from the downward economic trend that accelerated from the 2001 foot and mouth disease and changes in the national farming policy. The participants in the Young Farmers Clubs expressed concerns of the perceived detrimental effect of the farming policy and its effects on the mental health and well-being in the farming families.³⁷⁹

A participatory health needs assessment (HNA) of the agricultural community in the West Derbyshire Rural Development Area of Peak District National Park was made by Syson-Nibbs in 2002. In consultation with young farmers an arts-orientated mental health promotion programme was developed. Photography was selected as an art medium following a scoping exercise by the project steering group.³⁸⁰

The project appointed three professional photographic artists as consultants to the project. The photographers' role was to facilitate the creative expression of the ideas of the young farmers.³⁸¹ Syson-Nibbs et al. claimed that, with the support, advice, and technical expertise of the professional photographers the young farmers were able to gain a unique experience of the art of visual communication. They concluded that the participants acquired new skills and demonstrated increased self-confidence.³⁸²

377 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 165.

378 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 152.

379 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 152.

380 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 152.

381 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 155.

382 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 165.

What is of credit to the study is the fact that, Syson-Nibbs et al. considered photographs themselves as a way of evaluation. The key sentence was the following: “In this programme, the photographic outputs could be viewed as narratives themselves and thus act as a proxy indication of improvement in self-efficacy and self-esteem.”³⁸³

However, they did not explain how ‘photographic outputs’ could be viewed as narratives, and furthermore, failed to discuss photography as a specific form of knowledge. Photography is considered in a concise manner in the context of documentary photography, referring to, for example to the work by Jacob Riis and Bill Brandt. However, there is an evident lack of knowledge of the history of art photography and its theories. Furthermore, the photographs are presented with captions in the study. According to the classical semiotic concept by Roland Barthes (1915–1980), ‘anchorage’, linguistic elements serve to anchor the preferred reading of the image, such as a photograph. This perspective would have provided an interesting starting point for the research of the photography.

Thus, from the perspective of art research, the study is yet another opportunity that has been lost. Once again, a great deal of emphasis is placed on the framework and theories originating from the field of social sciences, as well as the explanation of the outcomes, and little on the analysis of the photographic art that was actually practised in the project.

Table 37. Visual art forms and concepts related to visual art practice in the study by Hacking et al. (2006)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Hacking, Secker, Kent, Shenton, Spandler (2006) <i>The Journal of the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health</i>	Mental Health and arts participation: the state of the art in England.	Survey questionnaire	Drawing Painting Photography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art activities • Art activity • Arts-based projects • Artistic work • Arts participation • Arts activities • Arts activity • Arts project activity • Arts projects • Participatory arts • Participatory arts activity • Participatory arts projects

In the British study *Mental Health and arts participation: the state of the art in England* (2006) Hacking et al. aimed, as a first phase, to map current participatory arts activity, to identify appropriate indicators and develop measures for use in the second phase of the research. The research design was a survey of participatory arts projects for people

383 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 165.

with mental health needs aged 16 to 65 in England.³⁸⁴ As the study related to participatory arts, it did not therefore include art therapy.³⁸⁵

The aforementioned principles imply that participatory arts itself, as a concept, excludes art therapy. However, the complex and sometimes overlapping nature of participatory arts and art therapy is not discussed further in the study.

Hacking et al. utilized the term of ‘mental health needs’ instead of psychiatric diagnoses, because it was considered less stigmatizing and pathologizing. In addition ‘mental health needs’ was considered as emphasizing on the perspective that “(...) people have specific mental health needs that arts projects may be able to meet.”³⁸⁶

Furthermore, Hacking et al. suggested that the terms ‘social inclusion’ and ‘social exclusion’ should be separated. It is recommended that social inclusion and social capital should be studied in the context of ‘distance travelled’, which provides a link between mental health and social inclusion outcomes.³⁸⁷

The study by Hacking et al. is included in this conceptual analysis, because in the 102 projects that were researched the most common art activities were visual arts in the form of drawing and painting (77%).³⁸⁸ The most common and important outcomes of the projects were: improved self-esteem, improved quality of life, personal growth in the sense of transformation of identity, and increased artistic skill.³⁸⁹

Hacking et al. initially thought that it might be possible to develop a typology of participatory arts and mental health projects. This, however, was not considered possible, because there was no single way of categorizing the projects.³⁹⁰

The focus of the study was on evaluation and the possibility of developing evaluation methods for participatory arts projects. Hacking et al. concluded that in the arts projects evaluation appeared to be limited. There were low reported funding and staffing levels that hindered the procedure of routine evaluation.³⁹¹

It is of importance to note that Secker et al. developed a further measure which was published in 2009, in the study *Development of a measure for social inclusion for arts and mental health project participants*.³⁹²

384 Hacking et al. 2006, 121.

385 Hacking et al 2006, 122.

386 Hacking et al. 2006, 122.

387 Hacking et al. 2006, 122.

388 Hacking et al. 2006, 124.

389 Hacking et al 2006, 125.

390 Hacking et al. 2006, 123.

391 Hacking et al. 2006, 127.

392 Secker et al. 2009, 65.

Table 38. Visual art forms and concepts related to visual art practice in the study by Acharya-Baskerville (2006)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Acharya- Baskerville (2006). <i>Mental Health Practice</i>	Arts in health care: Evaluation within a child and adoles- cent mental health service	Service evaluation/ Question- naires; Diary	Mosaics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts • Art • Art interventions • Arts-centred activities • Arts project

The British study by Acharya-Baskerville *Arts in health care: Evaluation within a child and adolescent mental health service* (2006) aimed to evaluate an arts project within a mental health service for children and adolescents. The research design was service evaluation with two questionnaires. In addition to this the commissioned artist kept a diary of the project. The first questionnaire was distributed and collected by the artist after each session, and the second questionnaire was used after the project was completed. Acharya-Baskerville explained the reason for evaluation in general as a concern with value for money in public art and the rise of evidence-based practice in healthcare and related fields.³⁹³

The aim of the artist-facilitated project was to improve access and create a child-friendly environment in a clinic. An ‘end product’ was considered as the priority of the project. The artist created mosaics on a series of five panels in conjunction with the staff and clients and their families. Even though the arts project was set up in a clinic, the arts practice was not considered as art therapy. Acharya-Baskerville concluded that the study supported the role of arts in engaging clients who found it difficult to connect with services, including those who find it difficult to verbalise the emotions. In addition to the aforementioned, Acharya-Baskerville concluded that the study provided positive evidence to support the importance of “(...) combining quality in architecture, art and design for patient and staff satisfaction and well-being.”³⁹⁴

Even though there are some participant comments and the comments of the artist that are introduced in the study about the art practice, the commentary is on very general level, such as “(...) lots of texture, different materials and surfaces are important.”³⁹⁵ Most of the study concerns the evaluation practice of the project, not the actual practice of the visual arts in the project. Thus, the specific mechanisms of how visual art practice can enhance well-being and what the quality of visual arts could mean are unfortunately left unclear.

393 Acharya-Baskerville 2006, 18.

394 Acharya-Baskerville 2006, 22.

395 Acharya-Baskerville 2006, 22.

Table 39. Visual art forms and concepts related to visual art practice in the study by Walsh, Culpepper Martin, Schmidt (2004)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Walsh, Culpepper Martin, Schmidt (2004) <i>Journal of Nursing Scholarship</i>	Testing the Efficacy of Creative-Arts Intervention With Family Caregivers of Patients With Cancer	Pre-posttest quasi- experimental design	Poster Monoprint art activity Mandala Silk wall hanging Silk rubbing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Art activities • Art-making activities • Art-related activities • Creative activities • Creative arts intervention • Creative-arts activities • Creative-arts programs • Creative process

In the American study by Walsh, Culpepper Martin and Schmidt, *Testing the Efficacy of Creative-Arts Intervention With Family Caregivers of Patients With Cancer* (2004) the aim was to test the efficacy of a creative arts intervention (CAI). The background of the study was the situation of families with a member who is diagnosed with cancer. Walsh, Culpepper and Schmidt stated that family caregivers often assume a major responsibility for the care of the relative.³⁹⁶

The CAI consisted of different creative arts activities designed for delivery at the bedside. The aim of the study was to measure the efficacy of the Creative-Arts Intervention (CAI) in order to reduce stress, lower anxiety, and increase positive emotions in family caregivers of cancer patients. Walsh, Culpepper Martin and Schmidt explained that there had been discussion in literature in the subjects of viewing art to promote feelings of well-being, art objects placed in a healthcare environment, and creative activities for patients and family members. The principles of Creative-Arts Intervention (CAI) were mainly explained by referring to previous studies by Walsh and Walsh et al. Following these previous studies, a variety of activities were combined to constitute the five activities of CAI in this research.³⁹⁷

Walsh, Culpepper Martin and Schmidt used, in addition to demographic data, Mini Profile of Mood Sates (Mini-POMS) that contained seven questions about anxiety, sadness, depression, confusion, energy and anger; Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI) which contained 21 items to describe symptoms with anxiety; and The Derogatis Affects Balance Scale (DABS) which is used to measure negative and positive affect.³⁹⁸

The Creative Arts Intervention (CAI) itself consisted of an ArtKart which was taken to the patient's bedside by the ArtKart nurse-artist intervention team. The activities included: healthy image poster; monoprint art activity; a mandala; a silk wall hanging; a silk

396 Walsh, Culpepper Martin, Schmidt 2004, 214.

397 Walsh, Culpepper Martin, Schmidt 2004, 215.

398 Walsh, Culpepper Martin, Schmidt 2004, 215–216.

rubbing. The caregiver chose one or more activities and the nurse-artist interventionist team then gave the caregiver supplies and demonstrated how to complete the chosen activity. Walsh, Culpepper Martin and Schmidt concluded that Creative-Arts Intervention provided a powerful short-term effect on caregiver’s anxiety, stress and emotions. They stated, however, that the type of activity may have been a factor, and one type of activity might be more beneficial than other.³⁹⁹

Furthermore, the family caregivers were often uncertain whether or not to participate because “(...) art did not appeal to them (“I’m no artist”).”⁴⁰⁰ Walsh, Culpepper Martin and Schmidt explained that “(...) their attitude changed when they saw the samples of the art activities on a bulletin board attached to the side of the ArtKart.”⁴⁰¹ Unfortunately, no visual imagery of the research is provided. However, the textual descriptions of the art activities raise the following questions:

- (i) How can the CAI activities of healthy image poster; monoprint art activity; a mandala; a silk wall hanging; and a silk rubbing be labelled as creative arts instead of crafts?
- (ii) If the CAI activities could be considered as crafts why is it necessary to call them creative *arts*?

The study is clearly positioned in the field of health and social sciences. Walsh, Culpepper Martin and Shaw stated that “Nurses are in a position to judge whether either the patient or family members are likely to benefit from creative-arts approach.”⁴⁰² Thus Creative-Arts Intervention (CAI) could be considered as a service which could be conducted by nurses as ‘art at the bedside’ and not a specific service of professional artists or the arts industry.

Table 40. Visual art forms and concepts related to visual art practice in the study by Rentz (2002)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Rentz (2002). <i>American Journal of Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementias</i>	Memories in the Making©: Outcome-based evaluation of an art program for individuals with dementing illnesses	Service evaluation	Drawing Painting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Art activity • Art class • Art program • Art project • Art sessions • Creative process

The background of the American study by Rentz *Memories in the Making©: Outcome-based evaluation of an art program for individuals with dementing illnesses* (2002) is in the art practice sponsored by the

399 Walsh, Culpepper Martin, Schmidt 2004, 217.
 400 Walsh, Culpepper Martin, Schmidt 2004, 217.
 401 Walsh, Culpepper Martin, Schmidt 2004, 217.
 402 Walsh, Culpepper Martin, Schmidt 2004, 218.

Greater Cincinnati Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association. The aim of the study was to present the results of a pilot project, an outcomes-based evaluation of *Memories in the Making*. Participants in the weekly art program used paints in order to express themselves by creating images on paper or fabric. She concluded that overall preliminary results suggested that the participation contributed to the participant's sense of well-being. Rentz also noted that more rigorous study was needed in order to determine whether the enhanced sense of well-being can be attributed to the *Memories in the Making* art programme or not.⁴⁰³

In the study by Rentz the art practice is clearly described along with the concept of well-being. The art practice in the programme was as follows: the participants were guided in weekly art sessions by skilled artist facilitators, they used watercolours and acrylics to express themselves by creating 'colourful' images on paper or canvas. The goals of the *Memories in the Making* programme were for the participant to experience: an opportunity for sensory stimulation; the pleasure of being involved in the creative process; a sense of well-being, if only momentarily; and an increased self-esteem with having created something of value to oneself and others.⁴⁰⁴

The staff in the programme used M.P. Lawson's conceptualization of psychological well-being as a framework. Lawson identified such domains as affect state, happiness, morale, life satisfaction, and self-esteem in the realm of psychological well-being. The staff selected two domains of psychological well-being, affect state and self-esteem and developed an outcomes measurement instrument that defined both domains in specific, observable indicators. Indicators included engagement, expression of pleasure, self-esteem and expression of emotions and feelings.⁴⁰⁵

It is slightly vague who actually was 'the staff' in this development work. However, the results Rentz reported were promising. The indicators suggested that the participants worked with sustained attention, had pleasurable sensory experience, experienced pleasure and verbalized feeling good about themselves and their accomplishments.

It must be noted that this pilot project was conducted in the context of dementing illnesses. Rentz stated that most individuals with dementia have difficulty with attention and concentration in task completion. Thus, one of the most positive indicators of well-being was that the participants were able to sustain attention in *Memories in the Making*.⁴⁰⁶

403 Rentz 2002, 175.

404 Rentz 2002, 176.

405 Rentz 2002, 177.

406 Rentz 2002, 178.

The merit of Rentz’s work lies in the fact that she was willing to discuss openly the limitations of the project. Firstly, she noted that it is important to understand that the study was a pilot project. Secondly, demographic data and the stage of the disease were not recorded. Thirdly, serial evaluations should be considered, and, fourthly, there were several ambiguities concerning the instrument, the statements and the indicators. She concluded that “(...) it was difficult to ascertain whether the outcome was a result of the actual art activity (aesthetic/creative experience), intervention (reminiscence, verbal prompts), or the result of pleasant interactions with peers and friends who happen to be participating in meaningful activity.”⁴⁰⁷

Table 41. Visual art forms and concepts related to visual art practice in the study by Kinney, Rentz (2005)

Author(s) Year, Journal	Title	Research design	Visual art forms	Concepts related to visual art practice
Kinney, Rentz (2005) <i>American Journal of Alzheimer’s Disease and Other Dementias</i>	Observed well-being among individuals with dementia: Memories in the Making©, an art program, versus other structured study	Service evaluation	Painting Drawing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art • Art activities • Art program • Art project • Art sessions • Art therapy • Artistic expression • Creative process • Creativity

The further study by Kinney and Rentz, *Observed well-being among individuals with dementia: Memories in the Making©, an art program, versus other structured study* (2005) aimed to provide a more methodologically rigorous evaluation of the extent to which Memories in the Making contributed to the affected person’s sense of well-being. The aim of the study was to analyse the use of the Greater Cincinnati Chapter Well-Being Observation Tool in observing seven domains of well-being among individuals with dementia. The observation of the participants in the art programme were compared to the observation of the same participants during more traditional day care activities, such as events and crafts. Kinney and Rentz concluded that the participants demonstrated significantly more interest, sustained attention, pleasure, self-esteem, and normalcy during participation in Memories in the Making than other activities.⁴⁰⁸

Kinney and Rentz argued that in recent years researchers and practitioners had expressed the need to explore and understand the concept of quality of life (QOL) in individuals with dementing illnesses. They considered the work by Lawton as the most sophisticated among the conceptualization of quality of life for individuals with dementia.

407 Rentz 2002, 180.

408 Kinney, Rentz 2005, 220.

The four components identified by Lawson that constitute the quality of life are: behavioral competence, environmental quality, perceived quality of life, and general psychological well-being.⁴⁰⁹

Kinney and Rentz stated that the artist facilitator was knowledgeable about Alzheimer's disease and its effect on functional abilities. They further determined that Memories in the Making was "(...) an art program designed for persons in the early and middle stages of Alzheimer's disease that encourages self-expression through the visual arts."⁴¹⁰

Two specific research questions were addressed: to what extent do the participants experience a sense of well-being while participating in Memories in the Making; and do individuals experience the same degree of well-being while they participate in Memories in the Making as they do while participating in other structured activities, such as events and hobbies?⁴¹¹

A revised version of the tool used by Rentz in the previous pilot study was designed for this research as the Greater Cincinnati Chapter Well-Being Observation Tool©. The outcomes-based observation tool for well-being consisted of seven domains of well-being: interest; sustained attention; pleasure; negative affect; sadness; self-esteem; and normalcy with operational definitions.⁴¹²

Kinney and Rentz concluded that the Greater Cincinnati Chapter Well-Being Observation Tool offered a systematic way to determine if affected individuals are experiencing a sense of well-being while participating in a structured activity.⁴¹³

Kinney and Rentz suggested that the tool is viable for the assessment of well-being among individuals with dementia. Participants demonstrated significantly more interest, sustained attention, pleasure, self-esteem and normalcy during Memories in the Making than in other activities. There were no statistical differences in observed negative affect or sadness between participation in Memories in the Making and other activities. Kinney and Rentz asked important questions regarding the further research which was outside the scope of their research. Firstly, is it the involvement in the art project, the creative process itself that brings pleasure? Or, secondly, is it "(...) the sense of belonging that occurs when individuals are involved in regularly scheduled failure-free activity with peers along one-on-one attention from the artist facilitator?"⁴¹⁴

409 Kinney, Rentz 2005, 220.

410 Kinney, Rentz 2005, 221.

411 Kinney, Rentz 2005, 221.

412 Kinney, Rentz 2005, 223.

413 Kinney, Rentz 2005, 223.

414 Kinney, Rentz 2005, 226.

Even though the actual visual art practice is not explained in detail, the studies by Rentz and Kinney show respect to the visual art practice by placing it in its context. They could have explained more of the role of the artist facilitator in the creation of one-on-one attention to participants. Also a deeper understanding of the differences between the methods of art therapy and the visual art practice in *Memories in the Making* would have been useful.

Overall these two studies provide a relevant view of the possibility of visual art practice for enhancing well-being. Eventhough the studies concern individuals with Alzheimer's disease, there are many lessons that can be learnt from the work by Rentz and Kinney regarding the research of visual art practice for enhancing well-being, even when the participants are not clinically diagnosed with an illness.

Finally, a conclusion can be drawn from the academic studies discussed here. There is clearly a need to describe the concept of well-being always in the *appropriate* context. Furthermore, there is still a need to determine and explain the *justification* for visual art practice or visual art activities, rather than other activities in the context of well-being.

4.4. Key concepts and their use

The use of the concepts related to visual art practice in the context of well-being is diverse, wide-ranging and often overlapping in the sample of twelve academic studies. Compared to the previous research material, the research publications of Arts Council England, the number of different concepts is not as extensive.

Even though specific art forms occurred in the research material, none of the twelve studies in the sample discussed in breadth or depth what attributes these visual art forms have specifically in enhancing well-being, what are the specific mechanisms of the visual art forms in enhancing well-being, or what the practice of these visual art forms especially means in the context of well-being.

For the clarity of description, applicability of the concept, consistency in meaning and differentiation of the concept from related concepts, seven conceptual resemblance groups are analysed as they appeared in the research material. The hypothesis was that the concepts related to visual art practice would have been described in the research material. Nonetheless, this hypothesis did not actualize and the concepts related to visual art practice were used in a general level of discourse. The analysis follows the principles introduced previously in Chapter Three.

In the following I will concentrate on the concepts of **1) art, arts and the arts; 2) artistic process; 3) arts activity; 4) arts intervention; 5) creativity; 6) community arts; and 7) participatory arts**. These are the concepts that rose from the research material and which are considered as the most relevant to the conception of visual art practice in relation to well-being. They are also the same concepts which rose from the research publications of Arts Council England.

Art, arts or the arts are often employed as 'open' concepts in a general meaning when the positive impact of the arts activities is justified by 'evidence'. Researchers have largely focused on presenting art or arts in the context of utility, as 'a means' or 'a tool'.

For example, Margrove, Pope and Mark used the expression of "(..) arts as a recovery tool."⁴¹⁵ Acharya-Baskerville noted that "(...) the arts have been seen as a tool for improving public health, reducing health inequalities and promoting social inclusion."⁴¹⁶

Syson-Nibbs et al. offered the highly overused form of statement: "There is a growing body of evidence to support the use of arts in mental health promotion initiatives."⁴¹⁷ However Syson-Nibbs et al. actually failed to offer this evidence. Instead they referred to the review by the Health Development Agency from 1999 and the previously critically discussed research by Matarosso of 1997.

The aforementioned proclamation is closely related to following statement by Beesley et al. "(..) that participation in the arts promotes health and well-being."⁴¹⁸

Furthermore, Margrove, Heydinrych and Secker argued about their results that "The social gains identified by participants included increased motivations to do arts and other activities, enhanced social skills and reduced social isolation (...)."⁴¹⁹ Jensen discussed the methods she used in her study and a comparison between two projects: "This in turn may be useful for a future, more general discussion of the best way to use arts to promote health and well-being."⁴²⁰ Rentz concluded in her first research concerning Memories in the Making that "The individuals experienced pleasurable, sustained activity while engaged in making art."⁴²¹ Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu argued that their evaluation "(...) documented the impact of the class on how participants conceptualized and incorporated art, health and well-being into their daily lives."⁴²²

415 Margrove, Pope, Mark 2013, 1.

416 Acharya-Baskerville 2006, 19.

417 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 152.

418 Beesley et al. 2011, 2347.

419 Margrove, Heydinrych, Secker 2013, 33.

420 Jensen 2013, 207.

421 Rentz 2002, 175.

422 Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2012, 262.

The examples seem to suggest that the more resolute the statement about the positive impact is, the more broader is the concept used for the art practice, i.e. art, arts or the arts.

Artistic process is one of the most important concepts for professional artists. However, it is not common to use the concept of artistic process or concepts that relate to artistic process in the research material. Concepts occur in arbitrary way as ‘artistic process’, ‘artistic work’, and ‘artistic expression’ only. It is noteworthy to mention that no study applied the concept of ‘artistic practice’.

However, it should be questioned whether the concepts of artistic work or artistic process can be used in regard to the activities of the participants which can often be considered as hobbyists. At least clear preconditions for the use of the concepts should be made. The situation develops into a conceptual confusion especially when the participants in the research are called ‘artists’, even though they are not professional artists, but participants in art projects.

For example, Jensen discussed the purpose of GAIA Academy as ”(...) to support individuals’ move away from the label disabled, by increasing their self-confidence and supporting their artistic development.”⁴²³

Another prime example of this strategy is the reference by Titus and Sinacore to the work by Reynolds et al. from 2011: ”In their study, for twelve women aged sixty-two to eighty-one with arthritis, art pieces demonstrated their uniqueness, allowing them to be different from others on the basis of being an artist instead of a person with an illness.”⁴²⁴ Another example by Titus and Sinacore is the following: “However, in some studies the artists described both their own and family members negative reactions towards pieces of art.”⁴²⁵

This begs the following question:

(i) Who are the artists?

(ii) What is their artistic occupation and practice?

I examined closely the original studies by Reynolds (2002), Reynolds and Vivat (2006), Reynolds and Lim (2007), Reynolds, Lim et al. (2008) and found out that *none* of these studies examined professional artists. They concerned individuals with health issues and older adults. The study participants’ art-making was examined. However, the study participants were called ‘artists’, even though they had no professional artistic occupation.

423 Jensen 2013, 210.

424 Titus, Sinacore 2013, 30.

425 Titus, Sinacore 2013, 31.

In comparison, the study participants of the research by Titus and Sinacore were actually young female artists. Nonetheless, Titus and Sinacore argued that they found many similarities to previous studies by Reynolds or Reynolds et al.⁴²⁶

It is also noteworthy that Rentz and Kinney and Rentz used systematically the confusing concept of ‘artist participant’. They stated that “Implemented by the Alzheimer’s Association of Greater Cincinnati in 1997, *Memories in the Making* is offered to affected individuals who attend adult day centers (ADCs) or reside in assisted-living or long-term care facilities.”⁴²⁷

However, an explanation how these affected individuals would be artists in particular is nowhere to be found. This detail is of great importance, because there are rigorous studies of artists and their cognitive skills. So if these individuals are participants who make art in weekly sessions, and not artists, why are they called ‘artist participants’, which might imply that they are *artists* who suffer from dementing illness. This adds to the confusion of the conceptual frameworks that have been used.

Arts activity or art activity are among the most utilized concepts in the academic studies. Art activity relates to: ‘art-making activities’, ‘art-related activities’, ‘arts centred activities’, and ‘arts and cultural activities’.

Rentz systematically used the concept of art activity in her study of *Memories in the Making*. Her central question was: “Does the intervention (participation in the art activity) contribute to the individual’s sense of well-being?”⁴²⁸ Thus, participation in art activity is here considered also as an intervention by Rentz.

Furthermore for Kinney and Rentz arts activity is something that is facilitated as “The facilitator guides and supports in thematic arts activities (...) ensuring that each activity provides a pleasurable, failure-free experience.”⁴²⁹

Jensen stated that her study “(...) examines the outcomes of art activity (...).”⁴³⁰ In addition, she argued that “The two cases represent examples where art activity has been used to promote well-being, to create social capital and thereby empower the individual.”⁴³¹

However, we do not learn what the elements of art activity or art activities actually are, as the information that concerns the actual content of the projects is described on a very general level by Jensen,

426 Titus, Sinacore 2013, 35.

427 Kinney, Rentz 2005, 221.

428 Rentz 2002, 178.

429 Kinney, Rentz 2005, 221.

430 Jensen 2013, 204.

431 Margrove, Heydinrych, Secker 2013, 207.

Kinney and Rentz. Also the conceptions of art as therapy, art as activity and art activity as an intervention are blurred.

Arts intervention is applied in academic studies relating to concepts of: ‘creative arts interventions’, ‘community-arts interventions’, and ‘visual arts interventions’.

However, it is unclear what exactly is meant by arts intervention in the academic studies. There are several mismatching aspects of the link between the concepts of art and intervention, the first being that these two concepts do not traditionally belong together. Confusing in the context of art, the inclusion of ‘intervention’ gives a clinical tone or connotation to art, creative arts, community arts and visual arts. The problems of the use of the concept of arts intervention were discussed also in the Chapter Three.

Acharya-Baskerville mentioned the concept of art interventions in the context of the previous study by Staricoff: “A review of the literature shows that art interventions provide support for both the patient and the mental health professional (...).”⁴³² Beesley et al. used the concept of arts interventions as “Arts interventions are supported in the literature for various disease groups (..); “(...) there is a significant lack of research into arts interventions in relation to stroke.”; “(...) there is only one stroke specific study of a visual arts intervention (...).”⁴³³

From the above-mentioned sentences we can conclude that the concept of ‘arts intervention’ is connected to medical and health sciences. But although Beesley et al. referred to an earlier study which used art therapy as an intervention, they did not specify how the visual art practice in their project actually differed from art therapy. This begs the following question:

(i) Why is not clearly described what is the difference between a group art programme as an intervention and art therapy as an intervention?

Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu mentioned the concept of ‘community arts interventions’ in the context of the previous studies by Cohen et al. In addition to that, they used another concept of intervention, when they argued that their results have implications for ‘creative arts interventions’ for older or aging populations.⁴³⁴

However, it is unclear how these two concepts of intervention differ from each other, as neither is explained by the authors. This begs the following question:

(i) Could a creative arts intervention be aimed at an individual without a community, i.e. group work?

(ii) If so, would it not be useful to separate these by description?

432 Acharya-Baskerville 2006, 19.

433 Beesley et al. 2011, 2347.

434 Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2012, 263.

Walsh, Culpepper Martin and Schmidt employed another way to use the concept of creative arts intervention, which they abbreviated as CAI. According to Walsh, Culpepper Martin and Schmidt "The CAI consisted of several creative arts activities designed for delivery at the bedside."⁴³⁵

My recommendation is that the concept of intervention should not be used, if the content of the arts project does not meet the criteria of an intervention as understood in medical, health and social sciences. However, even in those fields the meaning of 'intervention' changes according the research discipline. Finally, the conception of art as an intervention raises many doubts about its appropriateness and justification when thinking about the essence of art as an intrinsic dialogue with the self.

Community arts is applied in academic studies relating to the following concepts: 'community arts-based projects', 'community arts and health projects', 'community arts projects', and 'community-based arts projects.'

Jensen stated that "(...) social capital can be generated in community arts and health projects when successful conditions for improving social inclusion are achieved and/or there is an increased well-being of project participants."⁴³⁶ Thus, community arts is linked to two other concepts: social capital and social inclusion.

Syson-Nibbs et al. considered the community-based arts projects by referring to the review by the Health Development Agency in 1999 on the good practice on community arts projects.⁴³⁷ Syson-Nibbs et al. especially emphasized on the social participation as one of the important indicators of success in community arts projects.⁴³⁸

As explained also in the Chapter Three, it should be noted that when 'community art' is substituted by the concept of 'community-based arts project', the meaning of art is drained of the latter concept. A community-based arts project could, for example, be led by a social worker, include participants that are older people, be conducted in a community centre and include the decoration of walls as the 'art' project. This is a strategy of either deliberately or by ignorance dismissing the the long history of artist-initiated art in the community as 'community art'.

Creativity occurred in different forms. The actual use of the concepts related to creativity or creative arts varied in the research material. Creativity relates to: 'creative activity', 'creative art', 'creative arts', 'creative art activity', 'creative activities', 'creative-arts

435 Walsh, Culpepper Martin, Schmidt 2004, 214.

436 Jensen 2013, 205.

437 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 153.

438 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 156.

activities', 'creative process', 'creative arts class', 'creative art participation', 'creative arts programs', and 'art creation'.

It is interesting to note from the above-mentioned list, that art is therefore considered to be something that requires an additional value. It is not simply art, but *creative* art. However, all the conceptions in regard to creativity have something in common. Creativity or creative art are used when strong arguments and proposals of the positive outcomes are made in the research material.

For example, Syson-Nibbs et al. used the concept of creative expression when they discussed the photographer's role in the project as a facilitator of the creative expression of the ideas of the participants.⁴³⁹ Furthermore, creative expression is employed when Syson-Nibbs et al. argued that "Photography proved very successful as a means of engaging the young farmers in creative expression and comment where, by their own admission, other art forms wouldn't have succeeded."⁴⁴⁰

This kind of statement would open doors to the examination of what actually distinguishes photography from other visual art forms. Syson-Nibbs et al., however, did not lead this statement any further. They claimed that "It was not only the production of a photographic image that improved young farmers' self-esteem. Participation in the creative process had a very powerful impact on some young farmers."⁴⁴¹

When interpreting this in other words, we may conclude that 1) Photography was a more successful art form than others in creative expression, 2) However, it was not only photography, but the participation in 'the creative process' that provided for the powerful impact on self-esteem. But Syson-Nibbs et al. did not offer any rigorous impact study, or evaluation to back these two claims, nor did they discuss the limitations of their approach. Thus, my suggestion is that when the argument of the positive impact of the arts is the boldest, the broadest concept is also used. In this kind of rhetoric by persuasion, the concept of 'art' is transformed into an even more open and catch-all concept of 'creative expression' or 'creative process' or 'creativity.'

This suggestion can be examined further. Let us consider the following question by Kinney and Rentz in relation to the positive impact of the arts activity: "Is it the actual involvement in the art project, the immersion in the creative process that taps into brain reserves unaffected by disease process?"⁴⁴²

This begs the following question:

(i) How exactly does the creative process differ from arts activity?

439 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 155.

440 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 163.

441 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 165.

442 Kinney, Rentz 2005, 226.

The conceptualization of the creative process would have been the essential research question. Unfortunately it is left unclear what exactly is the content or the elements of the creative process for Kinney and Rentz.

Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu used several times the concept of creative arts when talking about the participants or older people's activities in general. Most clear example is the following: "They used creative arts as means of connection and social, psychological and, sometimes, physical empowerment."⁴⁴³ Now creative arts is a tool for connection, as well as social, psychological and physical empowerment. What is more, Greer, Fleurier and Cantu declared that "(...) if a creative arts class, as a proxy for social engagement or sense of control, mediates positive health outcomes, these results are an important move forward in developing interventions including community-specific treatment modalities in a population at risk for health disparities."⁴⁴⁴ But what is left unclear is the content and components of the concept of creative arts, as well as the mechanisms of creative arts. This begs the questions: (i) How do *creative* arts differ from visual arts? (ii) How can the creative arts be considered as an intervention?

Margrove, Heydinrych and Secker argued that the main strength of their study was that it provided "(...) the first controlled evaluation of participation in creative arts activity for people with a variety of mental health needs, and has also illuminated some of the ways in which the theoretical underpinnings of the intervention may contribute to achieving the results documented."⁴⁴⁵ Thus, again creative arts activity is connected to the concept of intervention.

For further research Margrove, Heydinrych and Secker suggested "(...) differentiating more clearly between the impact of the social milieu provided by art groups and the creative activity itself (...)."⁴⁴⁶ It is tempting to utilize the commutation test by Barthes here.

(i) Deletion: If we leave the adjective 'creative' out, will the meaning of the above-mentioned sentences change? The answer is, the meaning does not significantly change. Thus 'creative' is an unnecessary adjective. Its main purpose is to create more value for the word 'activity'.

(ii) Substitution: If we replace the concepts of 'creative arts activity' and 'creativity activity' with 'sports', does the meaning of the above-mentioned sentences significantly change?

The answer is, the meaning changes, because the meaning is always context-related. But what we can see more clearly now is the conclusion

443 Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2012, 272.

444 Greer, Fleuriet, Cantu 2012, 272.

445 Margrove, Heydinrych, Secker 2013, 34.

446 Margrove, Heydinrych, Secker 2013, 34.

that can be made. There is an impact of being in a social group, and, secondly, an impact of the activity itself.

Participatory arts relate to: ‘participatory art’, ‘participatory arts course’, ‘participatory arts activity’, ‘participatory arts-based approaches’, ‘participatory arts projects’, ‘art participation’, and ‘arts participation’.

Unlike in the research publications of Arts Council England, the more active adjective ‘participative’ does not occur in the academic studies. However, the concept of ‘participatory arts’ is in a key role in many studies.

For example, according to Margrove, Heydinrych and Kent “(...) arts participation is not an intervention that can be applied to people with mental health problems regardless of level of interest, but requires active choice and participation (...).”⁴⁴⁷ Thus, arts participation is considered also as an intervention. This begs the following question:

(i) Is there not a difference between the connotations of intervention and arts participation?

Similar perspective was presented by Syson-Nibbs et al. who argued that “Participatory arts are increasingly being used as a tool to promote mental well-being through improved self-esteem.”⁴⁴⁸ This naturally raises the question:

(i) If participatory arts are used as a tool, what kind of tool are they?

Syson-Nibbs et al. did not describe what they meant by the participatory arts. Instead they mentioned the highly criticized work⁴⁴⁹ of Matarasso from 1997, which they considered an excellent example of participatory arts.⁴⁵⁰

Jensen concluded that both The Other Side Gallery and GAIA Academy “(...) aspired to create social capital using participatory arts to promote health. In both examples, the well-being of service users improved through arts participation.”⁴⁵¹

However, it is unclear in what activity, process or practice of arts the participants actually participate in and what is the ontological foundation, theoretical framework or methodology of this participation.

447 Margrove, Heydinrych, Secker 2013, 29.

448 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 153.

449 Belfiore 2002, 2009; Merli 2002, Selwood 2002.

450 Syson-Nibbs et al. 2009, 153.

451 Jensen 2013, 214.

4.4.1. Other conceptualizations

It is of interest to note that there was also a division of concepts that have an educational dimension in the academic studies included in the conceptual analysis. This approach differed from the research publications of Arts Council England. These include the following: ‘arts courses’ in the study by Margrove, Heydinrych and Secker, ‘art classes’ in the study by Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu, ‘art class’ and ‘art sessions’ in the study by Rentz and ‘art sessions’ in the study by Kinney and Rentz. This raises the following question:

(i) Do the academic studies provide answers to what actually is the difference between art education and art courses or classes that aim at enhancing well-being?

Rentz employed the concepts of art sessions several times and art class once. In the art programme, the individuals participated in the weekly “art sessions”, quotation marks by Rentz.⁴⁵² The concept of ‘art class’ is mentioned, when according to Rentz, one participant was able to articulate his sense of ego integrity when participating in art class.⁴⁵³ However, we do not learn what kinds of visual arts were practised in art sessions or how the practice can be described as art class. No distinction is made between education and other modes of practice.

Other occasionally utilized concepts were art making and art therapy, in the study by Margrove, Heydinrych and Secker; art practice, art workshops, art initiatives, art and health initiatives in the study by Jensen; art production in the study by Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu; art making, art process in the study by Beesley et al.; workshops, art-based health initiatives in the study by Syson-Nibbs et al.; and art therapy in the study by Kinney and Rentz, even though there was no therapist working with the patients.

Actually ‘art therapy’ is used as a key word for the study by Kinney and Rentz. However, it is unclear how the art programme could be considered as art therapy as they explained that the “(...) individuals meet weekly as a group to create art with an artist facilitator who is knowledgeable about Alzheimer’s disease and its effect on functional abilities.”⁴⁵⁴ It is mentioned nowhere that an art therapist would have worked in the project, and neither are any specific mechanisms of art therapy discussed.

Workshop is one of the most common concepts of visual art practice. Therefore, it is interesting to note that it does not belong to the discourse of the academic research to a large extent. Syson-Nibbs et al.

452 Rentz 2002, 176.

453 Rentz 2002, 180.

454 Rentz 2002, 221.

discussed the workshops of their project. They stated that the young farmers clearly benefited from attention provided to them through small workshops and one-to-one support.⁴⁵⁵

There were many studies that did not meet the inclusion criteria of a structured and artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being, even though the title or abstract might have referred to these issues. In reviewing the total number of studies, a particular concept started to emerge from the research material: 'visual art-making' or simply 'art-making'.

The concept of 'art-making' has often been used in art therapy and refers to the making of art by patients. However, I found a set of studies that concentrates mainly on visual art-making in the lives of women. This art activity as 'art-making' is not considered as art therapy, nor are the study participants considered as clinical participants or patients of art therapy. This research approach utilizes the theoretical framework that has been derived from the work of one particular author: Reynolds.

Most of the studies concerning 'art-making' have been published in the journals of health and social sciences. Next I will examine the suitability and the use of the concept of 'art-making' and the links between different studies to their antecedents, outside the field of art therapy. I note if the studies contained any possible problematization of the usage of the concepts, or any possible links to art history, art theory or aesthetics, as well as to the professional practice of visual arts.

As explained previously, the concept of 'art-making' was particularly central to the study by Titus and Sinacore, which is included in the conceptual analysis only because it dealt with the self-identified young female artists. According to calculation, Titus and Sinacore referred over 80 times to the research by Reynolds or Reynolds et. al. Thus, it can be argued that Titus and Sinacore have based their research approach quite uncritically to the antecedent of Reynolds. It is a fact that Reynolds has studied study participants who can be considered as hobbyists in arts and crafts, whereas Titus and Sinacore have researched self-identified artists. This begs the following question:

(i) How is it possible that the same theoretical approach and methodology could be used in the research of two totally different groups of study participants: arts and craft hobbyists and professional artists?

This kind of research approach neglects completely, for example, the demands of cultural ethnography as an exploration of how a particular cultural group works, beliefs, behaves and faces issues such as culture-sharing, power, occupation or identity. In order to make my

455 Syson-Nibbs, Robinson, Cook, King 2009, 163.

point of view clear, I will explain what is considered as a cultural group in ethnography. According to Creswell, typically it is a group that has been together for an extended period of time, it has a shared language, patterns of behaviour, as well as attitudes which have merged into discernable patterns. Thus, Creswell argued that the final product of ethnographic analysis is a holistic cultural portrait of the group, which includes the perspectives of the participants (emic) as well as the perspectives of the researcher (etic).⁴⁵⁶

Eventhough arts and crafts hobbyists may not present a holistic cultural portrait, professional artists most certainly do, as the artists usually share the same language of artistic styles, techniques, materials, motifs and themes as a result of the higher art education. Artists also share similar patterns of behaviour due to the exhibition and gallery system of professional art world. It is possible to find different sub-cultures among artists, such as art photographers, fine art painters, illustrators, comic artists, textile designers, media artists or environmental artists. Each of these subcultures have their own specific use of language in relation to art, as well as artistic identity.

So let us examine the contexts of the application of the concept of ‘art-making’ further. In 2007 Reynolds and Lim examined the accounts of women who were diagnosed with cancer and engaged regularly in art as a leisure activity. The aim of the study was “(...) to explore participants’ views about the contribution of art-making to their subjective well-being in the context of living with cancer.”⁴⁵⁷

Thus, the first context of the study is living with cancer, and the second art as a leisure activity. The study was based on interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) which actually consisted of semi-structured interviews of 12 women and the analysis of these interviews. No description, definition or contextualization of subjective well-being was made. No scale or measure of subjective well-being was used.

Reynolds and Lim offered a very broad ‘definition’ of ‘art-making’. To Reynolds and Lim ‘art-making’ is an inclusive definition to “(...) encompass the practice of any form of visual art or craft resulting in a visible end-product, whether at an amateur or advanced level of expertise.”⁴⁵⁸

As can be seen from the aforementioned definition, the perspective utilized by Reynolds and Lim differs significantly from most of the descriptions of art in aesthetics and art history. However, the ‘definition’ of ‘art-making’ is not problematized, nor contextualized in the study

456 Creswell 2013, 96.

457 Reynolds, Lim 2007, 1.

458 Reynolds, Lim 2007, 2.

by Reynolds and Lim. Even though art forms are anecdotally listed, such as painting, textile art, card-making, collage, pottery, watercolour painting and acrylic painting, little can be learnt about the actual content of the art-making, or the artworks themselves. Instead a lot of space is used to present the quotes by the study participants in regard to the possible positive impacts of art-making.

In 2009 Reynolds aimed “(...) to examine the experiential factors that older women perceive as encouraging their take-up of, and participation in, visual art-making during later life.”⁴⁵⁹ The research method used by Reynolds was yet again interview of twelve older women and interpretative phenomenological analysis of the interviews. Thus the sample size of study participants was small, and the research was based on textual data.

The conclusion by Reynolds was that the study may “(...) encourage occupational therapists to help clients to regain wellbeing through exploring novel creative arts occupations.”⁴⁶⁰ It is important to understand that the concept of ‘occupation’ is utilized here in context of occupational therapy.

There is an implication of underlying political motive in the final sentences by Reynolds: “Creative leisure occupations offer powerful means of promoting successful ageing, positive identity and wellbeing, and are not the preserve of a creative élite.”⁴⁶¹ The aforementioned sentence suggests that Reynolds thinks that there exists somewhere a creative élite, who preserves the rights for creative activities. In deed, Reynolds argued also that creative occupations “(...) are not the preserve only of the lifelong artist.”⁴⁶²

In 2010 Reynolds examined older women’s motives for visual art-making. The title suggested that the study concerned “(...) exploring the influences of visual art-making as a leisure activity on older women’s subjective well-being.”⁴⁶³ Yet no description, measure or scale of subjective well-being was introduced or used.

This time thirty-two study participants were interviewed. The analysis method of interviews was the previous interpretative phenomenological analysis. Reynolds adapted yet again a very broad description of visual art-making as it included “(...) various forms of painting (on paper, canvas, lampshades or tiles) pottery, textile art, card-making, weaving, lace-making, and other arts and crafts made primarily for aesthetic rather than ‘practical’ purposes.”⁴⁶⁴

459 Reynolds 2009, 393.

460 Reynolds 2009, 393.

461 Reynolds 2009, 400.

462 Reynolds 2009, 400.

463 Reynolds 2010, 135.

464 Reynolds 2010,137.

The visual art-making was also explained by using the concepts of ‘art’, ‘arts and crafts’, ‘art-making’, ‘art-making activities’, ‘artistic activities’, ‘artistic projects’, ‘visual art-making’, ‘creativity’, ‘creative activities’, ‘creative activity’, and ‘creative art-making’. It must be noted that now the concepts of ‘artistic activities’, ‘artistic endeavours’, and ‘artistic projects’ have entered to the discourse of the research, although the research concerned leisure activities of older women who considered themselves as amateurs.

Reynolds herself stated that almost all the study participants regarded themselves as hobbyists, rather than professional artists.⁴⁶⁵ It must be clearly stated here that for a professional artist, for example, an ‘artistic project’ consists of project planning, project financing, co-operation with the commissioner or the client, cooperation with the subcontractors, creation of the artworks, communication with the audience and project reportage.

Thus the ‘artistic endeavours’ of hobbyists and professionals differ significantly from each other. The latter practice is conducted within the arts industry, not as a leisure hobby.

In 2010 Reynolds and Vivat aimed to research the contributions of leisure-based art-making to the positive reconstruction of identity for women living with chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME.) The sample of study participants consisted of thirteen women and the data was collected by interviews and written answers to the interview questions.⁴⁶⁶

All the study participants “(...) had taken early retirement from full-time work for reasons of poor health.”⁴⁶⁷ Reynolds and Vivat identified two subgroups within the participants. For one sub-group art-making was not considered as being wholly positive, but constrained by their illness. These participants acknowledged their artistic limitations, had modest aspirations, and did not identify themselves as artists. The other sub-group was considered by Reynolds and Vivat to have managed to engage more fully in the process of art-making.⁴⁶⁸

The study participants were asked whether they regarded themselves as artists. One needs to ask why the question of becoming an *artist* is raised if the study concerns women living with CFS/ME and their leisure activities of art-making. This strategy has no justification and it implies that being an artist is not full-time work and can be done regardless of poor health. One must ask what this tells us about the attitude of the researchers towards the profession of an artist.

465 Reynolds 2010, 137.

466 Reynolds, Vivat 2010, 67.

467 Reynolds, Vivat 2010, 69.

468 Reynolds, Vivat 2010, 71.

In 2011 Reynolds, Vivat and Prior (2011) explored whether and how visual art-making, as a leisure activity, provided a coping resource for older women affected by arthritis. The study sample was small, twelve women. The method was once again interview of the women, followed by interpretative phenomenological analysis. Not surprisingly visual art-making (again consisting of all sorts of arts and crafts, such as embroidery, card-making, tapestry, silk painting and watercolour painting) was found to be beneficial in several ways.⁴⁶⁹

So now we have uncovered a pattern of research design in the studies by Reynolds and Reynolds et al. A small sample of female study participants is interviewed and the interviews are analysed through interpretative phenomenological analysis. It must be noted that the interpretative phenomenological analysis originates from the work by Smith and Smith et al. Visual art-making is considered to comprise a large variety of arts and crafts and it is conducted as a leisure activity. Nonetheless, more meaning and power are given to words by labelling an activity or project as 'artistic'.

In addition to the aforementioned Titus and Sinacore, also Singh (2011) applied the framework of 'art-making' introduced by Reynolds and Lim. Singh conducted a study in order to understand how 'artists' used art making, without a therapist, when faced with cancer to fulfill their psychosocial needs.⁴⁷⁰ The problems of the study by Singh have been discussed previously in the Chapter Two. In order to recapitulate the most serious concerns concerning this research: 1) There were only three study participants; 2) The identification of the study participants as artists was vague; 3) The framework was derived uncritically from Reynolds and Lim; 4) The differentiation between 'art therapy' and 'art-making' was unjustified and conceptually flawed.

Another example of the employment of the concept of art-making is the Australian study by Liddle, Parkinson and Sibbritt (2013) explored the nature of older women's participation in arts and crafts activities. The aim of the study was also to conceptualize links between participation in these activities and health and well-being. Liddle, Parkinson and Sibbritt used, yet again, a very broad 'definition' of art and craft activities originating from Reynolds as "(...) any visual art or craft practice that aims to produce a tangible item regardless of the level of expertise."⁴⁷¹

Although a large number of specific visual art forms were mentioned in the study by Liddle, Parkinson and Sibbritt, such as painting, drawing, printing, design, sculpture, pottery, ceramics, glass

469 Reynolds, Vivat, Prior 2011, 328.

470 Singh 2011, 161.

471 Liddle, Parkinson, Sibbritt 2013, 331.

work, jewellery, textiles, photography, video and film, these art forms were used as search terms to identify the open text comments by study participants. The study did not discuss the visual art forms or their content to any depth or breadth.

There are many theoretical problems by applying the broad 'definition' of art-making. Firstly, arts and crafts were entwined into one, symmetrical conception. Secondly, arts and crafts activities are most likely to be considered as hobbies by study participants. However hobbyism as a concept, nor as a contextual situation was not examined in the study.

Thirdly, serious concerns rise by the use of the concept of flow. Liddle, Parkinson and Sibble referred to one work by Csikszentmihalyi, *Creativity: Flow and the psychology of discovery and invention* (1996). However, they interpreted Csikszentmihalyi's complex theory in a brief and misleading way, excluding completely the main essence of the flow phenomenon: flow is experienced if the challenge of the activity will match the *skill*. The study of the flow phenomenon is particularly interested in the relationship between the task and the level of expertise in the experience. Therefore, it is theoretically flawed to use the concept of flow, when the researchers themselves stated that they studied visual arts or crafts activities regardless of the level of expertise.

Fourthly, the aim of the research was to conceptualize the links between the participation in arts and crafts activities and health and well-being. This raises the following questions:

- (i) Why have the researchers used all the following concepts: art, art participation, art and craft activities, art-making activities, art-making practice, art and craft, art and craft making, arts and crafts, creative activity, visual fine-art participation and visual art-making?
- (ii) What link is being conceptualized: the link between creative activity and health and well-being? Or the link between visual fine-art participation and health and well-being?

If the above two conceptualizations were really made, they would differ in meaning, as creative activity is an 'open' concept, which could refer to gardening, gourmet cooking, or game planning. Instead, visual fine-art participation is a more closed concept that referring specifically to the visual fine arts, but not to the creation of artworks as mere participation does not mean the same as creating something.

I have explained how the concept of 'art-making' has been used in the academic studies. The employment of the concept of art-making has similar characteristics in different studies:

- 1) 'art-making' refers to a broad perspective of arts or arts and crafts activities;

- 2) the description of ‘art-making’ does not differentiate sufficiently between hobbyism and professional art practice;
- 3) level of the skills and expertise by the study participants in the arts activities are rarely discussed;
- 4) the quality and value of the end product by the study participant, the artwork, is not discussed in relation to aesthetics, art history or art theory;
- 5) any possible tensions between the use of the concept of ‘art-making’ and the theoretical frameworks of art history, art theory or aesthetics as well as the professional visual art practice have not been discussed.

4.5. The main findings of the conceptual analysis

A result of conceptual analysis is also the discovery and identification of what is missing. In launching various research projects, academic researchers have outlined their aim to further the studies proving the positive impacts of the art practice or arts activities in relation to well-being and health. However, different visual art forms have not been differentiated sufficiently from each other, nor has their specific mechanisms been examined.

Not surprisingly, the research done according to this perspective consists of separate empirical studies with small numbers of study participants as well as little theoretical background in art research. Art research is understood here as comprising the fields of art history, art theory, aesthetics and their sub-fields.

The academic studies in the sample of twelve studies did not contain any discussion of the possible problematic nature of the used concepts. They did not include any debate of the art philosophical perspectives into this kind of work, nor did they contain any analysis of the visual art practice itself or artworks by using the methodology of art research.

Only few studies considered the views of artists themselves. It was discovered that the twelve academic studies included in the concept analysis, as well as the total number of academic studies reviewed were mainly based on the frameworks of social and health sciences.

However, the academic studies in the sample did not consider the conceptions of subjective or psychological well-being as understood in contemporary psychology.

Table 42. The main findings of the conceptual analysis of academic studies

1. The number of different concepts related to visual art practice in the context of well-being is extensive.
2. Differentiation of the concepts from related concepts is unclear.
3. The concepts of visual art practice in relation to well-being have not been sufficiently described in the research material.
4. The concepts of visual art practice in relation to well-being have been used in diverse, wide-ranging, and often over-lapping way.
5. The distinction between different forms of visual arts and their individual mechanisms in relation to well-being is lacking.
6. The discourse differs significantly from art history, art theory and aesthetics.
7. The discourse applies the language of health and social sciences.
8. The practice of the visual arts is often generalized.
9. The practice of the visual arts is justified in terms of utility.
10. The artistic practice is considered as the facilitation of arts activity.
11. Well-being is in many studies superficially defined and used as a catch-all concept.
12. The research questions have been framed in order to reinforce the ethos of positive outcomes of the studies.
13. The research has mostly an evaluative approach.
14. Theoretical frameworks, if mentioned, originate from the fields of health and social sciences.
15. Research methodology and individual methods, such as interviews and questionnaires originate from the fields of health and social sciences.
16. Research methods focus on gathering verbal and written data, not visual research material.
17. Theoretical frameworks of art history, art theory or aesthetics have not been utilized.
18. There is a lack of analysis of the art works themselves.
19. There is a lack of examination of the visual arts practice itself.
20. Questions of aesthetics are mostly ignored.
21. Questions of art history are mostly ignored.
22. Questions of the artistic praxis, such as art studio practice, techniques, materials and copyright are ignored.
23. The small study participant sizes do not allow relevant analysis of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics and their effect on possible outcomes.
24. Some of the arguments can be considered as metonymical fallacies.
25. Some of the arguments can be considered as *circulus in probando*.
26. Many studies apply the rhetoric of constructing scientific reasoning.
27. Possible neutral or negative outcomes of visual arts practice are not sufficiently discussed.
28. The research lacks in many cases sound study design in regard to the specific and different mechanisms of visual arts practice and their possible effect on well-being.
29. Interdisciplinarity is not a genuine situation of research.
30. The possible connection between the practice of visual arts and well-being is theoretically underdeveloped.

1) The number of different concepts of visual arts practice in the context of well-being is extensive. However, when compared with the research publications of Arts Council England, there are fewer different concepts that relate to visual art practice.

2) The differentiation of the concepts from related ones is unclear. Most of the research does not distinguish between related concepts of art or visual arts. There is relatively little consistency in the meaning of the concepts such as 'art intervention' or 'creativity'. Art has been used as a boundless, catch-all concept. This strategy can be seen to demonstrate the need of an explanation for the undetailed and generalized outcomes of the research in relation to well-being.

3) The concepts of visual art practice in relation to well-being have not been sufficiently described in the research material. If we accept the notion that a research field needs a common language in order to examine its arguments, we cannot find this common language in regard to the tradition of art research as interpretation of the artistic process and visual artworks from the research material.

4) The concepts of visual art practice in relation to well-being have been used in diverse, wide-ranging and often overlapping ways. The use of concepts creates situations of uncertainty about the meaning and valid knowledge of visual art practice in the research.

5) The distinction between different forms of visual arts and their individual mechanisms in relation to well-being is lacking. Even though specific visual art forms occur in the research material, none of the studies examine, nor discuss, what attributes and mechanisms these visual art forms specifically have in enhancing well-being. However, for example, painting, drawing, photography or sculpture are distinctive art forms in their own rights and discourses.

6) The discourses differ significantly from art history and aesthetics. The meaning of the concept of 'art' is context-dependent. As no theoretical frameworks, approaches, methodology, connection or language common to art history and aesthetics are used, most of the studies are unable to offer convincing proposals as to how the practice of visual arts can specifically enhance well-being. There is a difference in perspective compared with art history and aesthetics of what actually constitutes as research in the visual arts.

7) The discourses apply the language of health and social sciences. The complex issue of visual art practice is reduced to reasoning that appears on the surface to be scientific. The adaptation of the visual arts into the frame and presentation rules of health and social sciences would require a major shift in the ontological foundation in regard to art research, which should be discussed thoroughly.

Another problem occurs when people lose their individuality and are broadly categorized as objects with terms such as participants, older people or older women. According to the American Psychological Association, this is a common phenomenon in scientific writing.⁴⁷²

8) The practice of the visual arts is often generalized. Even though the academic studies aim to create intellectual achievements concerning the practice of visual arts or the activities of visual arts, they examine and discuss visual arts in a general manner. The narrow knowledge of visual arts as an art research field or professional practice indicates the lack of the awareness of the history of visual arts, as well as a lack of contextualization.

9) The practice of the visual arts is justified in terms of utility. Most of the academic research raises concerns about the uncritical usage of 'art', 'arts' or 'the arts' as 'a tool' in order to promote well-being and health. Using something as a tool refers to the concept of utility.

However, none of the studies in the research material recognized the two classical thinkers of moral philosophy and utilitarianism. English philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) was the founder of utilitarianism and English philosopher and economist John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) was his most prominent successor. According to Bentham, pain and pleasure govern us in everything we do, think and say. Bentham explained that:

By the principle of utility is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question: or what is the same thing in other words, to promote or to oppose that happiness.⁴⁷³

It is relevant to quote John Stuart Mill here exactly, as he has presented the essential dilemma of utilitarianism and the description of 'good' citing as examples medicine and the arts:

Whatever can be proved to be good, must be so by being shown to be a means to something admitted to be good without proof. The medical art is proved to be good by its conducing to health; but how is it possible to prove that health is good? The art of music is good, for the reason, among others, that it produces pleasure; but what proof is it possible to give that pleasure is good?⁴⁷⁴

Let us consider the last sentence for a while. Mill argued that music is good, because of several reasons. One of the reasons is that music produces pleasure. Adapting this to visual arts, we might argue: visual

472 American Psychological Association 2001, 63.

473 Bentham 1993, 526.

474 Mill 1993, 530.

arts are good for several reasons. One of the reasons is that visual arts produce pleasure. Hence, we should ask:

- (i) What are the other reasons why visual arts are ‘good’?
- (ii) What are the preconditions of the assumption that pleasure is ‘good’?

As I have proved before, the research publications of Arts Council England, representing the arts sector, try to offer a viewpoint on the practice of arts as something that is useful to the society. By comparison, some of the academic studies also repeat the same ethos of art as something that may be able to fulfil larger societal aims. This begs the following question:

- (i) Whose interests are served by the conceptualization of the practice of arts as a means to satisfy societal aims?

To answer the question, best served is the health and social sector and the artists who focus their work to suit the aims of enhancing social inclusion, participation and social capital. Probably the least served are the individual artists working within the gallery system of the contemporary professional art world producing artworks for the art market. When art is used for utility, as a means to another end than art itself, from what might the individual artist benefit? The most logical explanation is that the artist benefits from more value and prestige if the artistic work is considered to enhance the larger aims of well-being, health and social improvement.

10) Artistic practice is considered as the facilitation of arts activity. However, the complex relationship between the artists and participants is not discussed extensively or in depth. Probably the ‘bona fide’ principle of a facilitator is to improve the life of the participants. But who is held accountable for all the consequences an artist-facilitator may set in motion as the outcomes may actually be positive and/or negative?

11) Well-being is in many studies superficially described and used as a catch-all concept. This finding leads to the issue of well-being to be examined more closely in the next chapters.

12) The research questions have mostly been framed in order to reinforce the ethos of positive outcomes of the studies. The aims of the studies centre on the positive impacts of the arts in general. The original hypotheses are rarely contested or changed because of the study findings. Limitations of the studies are not sufficiently discussed.

13) The research has mostly an evaluative approach. It presents the practice of visual arts as something that ‘naturally’ creates positive outcomes in relation to well-being. Only few studies have utilized rigour evaluation methods. This strategy of evaluation should raise serious concerns, especially if the designer and provider of the service,

such as ‘creative arts intervention’, ‘visual participatory arts and health course’ or ‘community arts and health project’, just to name a few, is also the researcher or part of the research group of this intervention, course or project.

14) Theoretical frameworks originate from the field of health and social sciences, not from art research. The theoretical frameworks apply the formula of question-hypothesis-empirical research-results-conclusions. Most typically, the practice of the visual arts is diminished into a narrow empirical study, which include little knowledge about visual arts outside its empirical topic.

15) Research methodology and individual methods originate from the field of health and social sciences. Even though the academic research claims to study arts or visual arts, it does not examine, nor analyse visual artworks or visual research material.

16) Research methods focus on gathering verbal and written data, not visual research material. Apart from few studies, the verbal and written accounts acquired by different study methods such as focus group interviews, individual interviews or questionnaires dominated the research. Most often the data is acquired by post-experience research. Doubt can be raised about the relevance of verbal and written data in studies concerning the practice of *visual* arts. In addition, according to Veenhoven, interviews concerning well-being and their results can be influenced by the precise wording of questions, sequence of questions and the context of the interview.⁴⁷⁵

17) Theoretical frameworks of art history, art theory or aesthetics have not been utilized. The unjustified adaptation of different concepts without any reference to the theoretical frameworks or methodologies of art research raises questions of how the academic studies can provide the necessary depth in the visual art practice which they claim to underpin.

18). There is a lack of analysis of the artworks themselves. The research does not utilize any of the established research methods of art history, such as iconography, formal analysis, visual semiotics or art historical hermeneutics. Research based on written or spoken language has been appraised at the expense of visual arts. The almost complete lack of analysis of the artworks makes it impossible to determine what is the actual effect of the creation of artworks on well-being. In addition to that, the lack of the analysis of the artworks makes it impossible to determine what is the actual effect of the quality of the artworks in relation to different well-being factors. This raises the question:

(i). Why are the artworks themselves neither examined, nor analysed in depth?

475 Veenhoven 1991, 12.

Perhaps it would be intellectually more demanding for researchers of the health and social sciences to create a consistent and convincing research narrative for their studies if they took the full complexity, depth, history and cultural meaning of visual art practice and the visual artwork itself into account. The elements of visual artworks, the process of visual arts or artistry or the contemporary methods of art research may actually be unfamiliar to the researchers with a background in health and social sciences. The knowledge of art research, art history, theories of art or aesthetics of the researchers in the field of arts, health and well-being would be an interesting topic to study further.

19) There is no examination of the visual arts as a practice. The lack of description and analysis of techniques of art practice questions the validity and significance of any positive outcome results that may come from these studies. Additionally, most of the studies do not include a detailed description of the mechanisms and process of each art form, nor do they include descriptions or analysis of any of the individual art sessions. In order to be useful, the research should include detailed description and analysis of visual art practice on a session-by-session basis, considering several situational and contextual factors.

20) Questions of aesthetics are mostly ignored. The historical aesthetic questions of the value and quality of the art practice or the artworks themselves are mostly ignored. The aesthetic questions concerning the artistic process, such as art practice as an expression or an interpretation or as a symbolic expression are ignored. The question of artistic-aesthetic experience compared with aesthetic experience is ignored.

21) The art historical questions such as style, form, content, theme, genre, influence, reference, and imitation are ignored. The art historical questions of cultural, institutional, societal and political frames and preconditions are ignored. These questions, however, are essential to the analysis of artworks.

22) The questions of the artistic praxis, such as studio practice, techniques, materials and copyright are ignored. However, these questions are pivotal to the visual art practice.

23) The small study participant sizes do not allow a relevant analysis of demographic and socioeconomic characteristics and their effect on possible outcomes. Validity problems of the generalizations of the positive impact of the arts activities are evident. Few of the studies presented a reliable comparison of demographic elements, such as age, gender, race or socioeconomic characteristics. such as education level, income level, occupation, marital status or religion and the effect of these differences in relation to the perceived benefits

of the arts activities in regard to well-being.

This begs, for example, the following question:

(i) Is a 'community arts intervention' found to have a positive outcome for older people also effective for children?

24) Some of the arguments can be considered as metonymic fallacies. Synecdoche is a special kind of metonymy, meaning that one term is more comprehensive than the other. Synecdoche is a substitution of a part for the whole, genus for species or vice versa. Chandler has explained that this fallacy usually means that a represented part is introduced as standing for the whole.⁴⁷⁶

In the academic research the whole is used for a part, i.e. 'the arts' are taken to be an accurate representation of a part, whether the part is painting, drawing or photography, without any problematization. Vice versa, the part, for example, a painting is taken as a substitution for the whole 'arts'. This situation presented in the studies can be called a metonymic fallacy or a synecdochic fallacy.

25) Some of the arguments can be considered as *circulus in probando*, a circle in proving. Circulus in probando begins with what is being tried to conclude, but the conclusion is actually one of the premises. Circulus in probando often takes the form: X is true because of Y. Y is true because of X. The fundamental circular reasoning found in the research material can be formulated as 'art promotes well-being because well-being is promoted by art', or 'art-making promotes well-being because well-being is promoted by art-making'.

26) Many studies apply the rhetoric of constructing scientific reasoning, although, for example, no secondary analyses of large samples of participants with relevant demographic characteristics have been made. Unexpected distancing language, typical of scientific writing, and atypical of art research, has been used in the studies. It may be explained by the rhetoric of constructing scientific reasoning. Scientific reasoning involves a process of naturalization that has been explained by Barthes and warranting scientific belief which has been examined by Gilbert and Mulkay. According to Gilbert and Mulkay, the correct scientific belief is presented as experimentally supported and incorrect belief as lacking in experimental support.⁴⁷⁷

The discourse, however, distances the reader from what is argued about the actual practice of the visual arts. I ask the reader to compare these quotes. Gilbert and Mulkay argued that "Thus each scientist creates a world which appears to conform to the traditional version of scientific rationality"⁴⁷⁸ and "Painting is a world of its own, it's

476 Chandler 2005, 134.

477 Gilbert, Mulkay 1982, 388.

478 Gilbert, Mulkay 1982, 385.

self-sufficient”⁴⁷⁹ by the artist Francis Bacon (1909-1992). This leads to the following question:

(i) How can painting ever be considered as evidence for scientific reasoning?

27) Possible neutral or negative outcomes of visual art practice are not discussed, apart from few studies. This begs the following question:

(i) Would neutral or negative results incline the researcher to abandon or rephrase the hypothesis of the connection between the practice of visual arts and well-being?

(ii) Is it so that the connection between the practice of visual arts and well-being is taken as a correct belief, and thus, unproblematic?

28) The research lacks in many cases sound study design in regard to the specific and different mechanisms of visual art practice and their possible effect on well-being. Because there is no rigorous study design concerning the practice of the visual arts themselves, most of the studies may present a misleading research situation concerning art practice.

29) Interdisciplinary is not a genuine situation of research. Instead interdisciplinarity can, in some cases, be considered to have been used as instrumental reasoning. Bal argued that, firstly, the territorialism or boundary policing of traditional disciplinary thinking is like colonialism. Secondly, the solution of the arts and humanities has been to apply interdisciplinary approaches. Bal noted that disciplines are no longer what they used to be before the interdisciplinary movement.⁴⁸⁰ But, thirdly, Bal warned that the danger of colonialism can be found also within the interdisciplinary research approach. Bal described a situation where students claimed that an image is an illustration of a theoretical or political point, while “(...) turning a blind eye to what the image itself has to say.”⁴⁸¹

The academic studies show that the disciplines of social and health sciences have reserved their boundaries as disciplines quite well. However, ‘art’ or ‘visual arts’ is actually examined in a sub-servient role and without adapting the concepts, methodology, theories, discourses, values and culture of art research or artistic praxis.

30) The possible connection between the practice of visual arts and well-being is in many studies theoretically underdeveloped in regard to contemporary psychology.

479 Bacon 2004, 171.

480 Bal 2002, 287.

481 Bal 2002, 327.

4.6. Discussion

Academic research on the whole does not raise the profile of visual art practice, nor does it explain how the visual arts can specifically enhance well-being. Better formulations and clearer descriptions are needed in order to identify what components of visual art practice may be related to positive outcomes in regard to well-being.

The study questions and theoretical approaches are framed so that they reinforce the ethos of positive impacts. In the few studies where artists are given an opportunity to express their views, their voice is restricted mostly to personal accounts. The number of studies concerning the visual arts or the arts in relation to well-being has grown, but the theoretical scope and depth has not increased. Thus, my findings subject the related academic research to criticism. Here are a few of the key reasons:

- 1) The study designs based on the interviews of post-experience of the participants raise questions;
- 2) Reasoning concerning visual art practice is done by generalization;
- 3) There is a lack of proportion in regard to neutral or negative outcomes;
- 4) There are several blind spots in the research concerning the influencing factors of visual art practice.

The academic research mostly concentrates on the inquiry of the participants' views. The participants' reports of their well-being as post-experience can be criticized from the perspective of social judgment. Schwarz and Strack argued that

From this perspective, reports about happiness and satisfaction with one's life are not necessarily valid read-outs of an internal state of personal well-being. Rather, they are judgments which, like other social judgments, are subject to a variety of transient influences.⁴⁸²

Schwarz and Strack explained that when considering the judgments of well-being, the information that comes to the mind most easily can enter into the judgment of the degree of happiness. Schwartz and Strack conducted an experimental study and concluded that individuals who were encouraged to think about the positive aspects of their life described themselves happier and more satisfied than those who had been induced to think about negative aspects.⁴⁸³

When utilizing the views by Schwarz and Strack, caution should be taken when analysing the results of the research concerning the possible positive outcomes of visual art practice related to well-being.

482 Schwarz, Strack 1991, 28.

483 Schwarz, Strack 1991, 29.

If we take a look at the research material from the perspective of social judgment, we will find out that only few research publications in the arts sector and academic studies wanted to problematize the question of the validity of the measurements of well-being. In fact, if the research is already conducted by presenting the visual art practice as something that may better the well-being of the participants, it may be likely that the participants in the research will report favourable results.

What is more, transient influences, such as the nature and order of research questions may influence the judgment of well-being by the study participants. Schwarz and Strack noted that what researchers also often overlook is the fact that "(...) the list of response alternatives may also constitute a source of information for the respondent."⁴⁸⁴ Furthermore Schwarz and Strack stated that the impact of mood states, i.e. how one feels at the time of the judgment, is likely to influence the judgments of well-being. They concluded that study participants may evaluate their well-being on the basis of comparison processes or on the basis of their affective state at the time of judgment. Schwartz and Strack argued that it is important to establish a difference between "(...) judgments of happiness and satisfaction with one's life-as-a-whole versus judgments of specific life domains."⁴⁸⁵ What is more, Schwarz and Strack emphasized on the importance of communication of the judgment of one's well-being to the researcher. They argued that "(...) depending on the nature of the response situation, self-presentation and social desirability considerations may bias reports at this stage."⁴⁸⁶

The fallacy of sweeping generalization is to reason with a generalization, such as 'the arts enhance well-being', as if there exist no exceptions to the general idea. Both the research publications of Arts Council England as well as academic studies tend to present mostly 'evidence' in favour of the general idea of the positive impact of the arts. Vice versa, there have not been sufficient attempts to search for disconfirming evidence, or pay attention to the possible neutral and negative outcomes of art practice. The research material shows that the belief of positive impacts has been adopted dogmatically.

Most of the academic research utilizes the rhetoric of persuasion. Gilbert stated that referencing to the earlier, published work can be seen as a method of providing persuasive support for the new research. The logic of referencing by persuasion is that the earlier research has already been accepted as 'valid science' by the research community and thus, the claims made previously do not need to be argued again in detail.⁴⁸⁷

484 Schwarz, Strack 1991, 35.

485 Schwarz, Strack 1991, 39.

486 Schwarz, Strack 1991 42.

487 Gilbert 1977, 114.

Some researchers have warned against the misuse of concepts. Grix argued that if a concept is used frequently and in many situations, its original meaning may become obscured. According to Grix, a catch-all concept would then be impossible to pin down, but nevertheless would be considered to signify something that is desirable.⁴⁸⁸ Bal considered the misuse of concepts as jargon. According to Bal, if concepts are used as labels, they lose their working force, are subject to fashion and quickly become meaningless.⁴⁸⁹

There is a lack of proportion in regard to neutral or negative outcomes. So far, we have learnt that the principal agenda of the research material, whether originating from the arts sector or the academic research sector, is to provide evidence that the arts can enhance well-being in general, while neutral or negative impacts are widely ignored or downplayed. Let me propose the following question as a starting point:

(i) Is the discussion in the research material about the possible neutral or negative outcomes of art practice suppressed by the self-censorship of the researchers, or simply 'missing' for some other reason?

This is also a question of ethics. When talking about the classification of problems in ethics, Dewey and Tufts noted that one of the problems is to determine 'the good'. What Dewey and Tufts searched for was the ability to understand the real good from the things that seem to be so, or, the permanent good from transitory and fleeting goods. Thus, according to Dewey and Tufts the fundamental matter of morals is to be able to distinguish between ends that only *promise* good and ends which actually constitute good.⁴⁹⁰

I regard this philosophical dilemma of the promise and its actual fulfilment as an essential question for research on well-being. On the whole the research material makes a lot of promises but fails to explain how exactly the promise can be constituted by the specific practice of visual arts.

This type of strategy of clouding the issue should be more typical of policy-making than research. It begs the question:

(i) Why is the evaluation of positive impacts so necessary for the field?

The first reason is to do with the policy attachment and instrumental reasoning as explained before in the Chapter Three. The second reason, also explained before, is my suggestion of the 'stated ideal', the actual belief in the generalization of the positive impacts of the arts. The third reason is the need for evidence of the positive impacts in order to secure financing.

488 Grix 2010, 29.

489 Bal 2002, 23.

490 Dewey, Tufts 1947, 194.

It is understandable that in the contemporary climate of limited resources in the arts sector, the evidence for positive outcomes becomes an important issue. Macnaughton, White and Stacy claimed that those who provide funding for arts in health are increasingly demanding results that indicate a measurable health gain from the art projects.⁴⁹¹ Cohen explained that we live in an evidence-driven society. According to Cohen, if there is no clear understanding of the factors to explain outcomes, science becomes doubtful and dismissive of even positive reported findings.⁴⁹² Clift et al. argued that there are many difficulties in evaluation and research of the arts and health practice, such as the complex nature of artistic and creative endeavours, the broad range of art forms, individuality of different healthcare and community settings, diversity of participants in projects, the large range of health issues that might be addressed and the wide range of health interventions from prevention to treatment.⁴⁹³

An example of the problems of proving the positive health outcomes can be given. Eades and Ager reported of an Arts on Prescription project, Time Being, highlighting the difficulties in integrating arts in health. Time Being, a project governed by Healing Arts, was evaluated by using the following methods: entry interview, entry questionnaire, personal journals, worksheets, participant record sheets, review meetings, focus groups, exit questionnaire and six-monthly follow-up questionnaires.⁴⁹⁴ Two thirds of the completed evaluation records for Time Being showed positive health outcomes. However, Eades and Ager concluded from the response to the evaluation by the commissioners, that providers in the sector of arts in health are required to undertake further detailed cost-benefit, cash-efficiency, and quantified health-gain analysis on the role of arts in healthcare for it to become integrated into NHS healthcare delivery. Eades and Ager concluded that for the NHS to commission arts as health programmes, clear health gain, cost-benefit and service improvements have to be demonstrated based on quantitative data-based research, rather than the social model of health and qualitative research.⁴⁹⁵

However, neutral or negative outcome results have also been achieved concerning the impact of the practice of the arts. For example, Young, Winner and Cordes argued in their study that there is a heightened incidence of depressive symptoms in adolescents involved in the arts. In their study of 2,482 15 to 16-year-old adolescents they found out that teens that were involved in afterschool arts had higher

491 Macnaughton, White, Stacy 2005, 332.

492 Cohen 2009, 48.

493 Clift et al. 2009, 13.

494 Eades, Ager 2008, 63–64.

495 Eades, Ager 2008, 67.

depressive symptom scores than those who were not involved.⁴⁹⁶

Another challenging view is provided by Martin et al. in their longitudinal study *The Role of Arts Participation in Students' Academic and Non academic Outcomes: A Longitudinal Study of School, Home and Community Factors* (2013). This study was based on a sample of 643 elementary and high school students. Martin et. al used in their study the following instruments: the General Self-Esteem Scale of the Self-Description Questionnaire II by Marsh (2007) in order to examine participants' overall evaluation of their self-worth; World Health Organization Quality of Life instrument by World Health Organization Quality of Life (WHOQOL) Assessment Group (1998) in order to study the sense of meaning and purpose of life and Satisfaction With Life Scale by Diener et al. (1985) in order to examine the satisfaction with life in general.⁴⁹⁷ External Arts Tuition proved to have some negative effects which was a big surprise to the researchers.⁴⁹⁸

The Canadian sociologist Alex C. Michalos conducted a large research *Arts and the quality of life: an exploratory study* (2005) among the adult residents of the city of Prince George, British Columbia. The aim of the investigation was to measure the impact that the arts broadly construed on the quality of life. Michalos noted that it would be wrong to generalize his findings to the whole population of Prince George or to any larger population. However, he concluded that relative to the satisfaction obtained from other domains of life, such as self-esteem or friendship satisfaction, the arts had a very small impact on the quality of life of a sample of residents of Prince George who generally cared about the arts. Furthermore, he argued that the strongest positive associations with life satisfaction are satisfaction obtained from gourmet cooking and embroidery, needlepoint or cross-stitching.⁴⁹⁹

It is necessary to examine closer the terms of arts, the arts and arts-related activities in this study. Firstly, what should be questioned is the broad description of arts by Michalos. According to Michalos:

In this study, the term 'the arts' or simply 'arts' is used in a very broad sense to include such things as music, dance, theatre, painting, sculpture, pottery, literature (novels, short stories, poetry), photography, quilting, gardening, flower arranging, textile and fabric art.⁵⁰⁰

Secondly, the description of arts-related activities can be criticized. The questionnaire Michalos applied listed 66 activities that he considered as related in one way or another to the arts, for example,

496 Young, Winner, Cordes 2013, 197.

497 Martin et al. 2013, 717.

498 Martin et al. 2013, 722.

499 Michalos 2005, 49–51.

500 Michalos 2005, 14.

listening to music, graphic designing, working on community festivals, telling stories.⁵⁰¹

However, I examined the whole list of these 66 activities and found out that Michalos considered as arts-related activities among others knitting or crocheting; embroidery, needlepoint or cross-stitching; designing a garden; arranging flowers; decorating a home, gourmet cooking; figure skating; visiting historic, heritage sites and visiting the public library. From the point of view of art history, it is quite incomprehensible how, for example, gourmet cooking or figure skating could be considered as arts, or even arts-related activities.

Michalos continued his work with Kahlke in *Impact of Arts-Related Activities on the Perceived Quality of Life* (2008). The aim of Michalos and Kahlke was to measure the impact of arts-related activities on the perceived or experienced quality of life, with a total of N=1027 questionnaires returned. Once again Michalos and Kahlke noted that the findings should be regarded as merely representative of some British Columbian residents who had some interest in the arts. The arts were referred to similarly as in 2005 in a very broad sense and the above-criticized sixty-six kinds of arts-related activities, including gourmet cooking and figure skating, were identified in the questionnaire. It should also be noted that these activities were identified in the Appendix as Time spent and Levels of Satisfaction with Artistic Activities.⁵⁰²

Michalos and Kahlke used seven different scales to measure respondents' overall assessment of their lives, 1) self-reported general health (5-point scale), 2) satisfaction with life as a whole (7-point scale), 3) satisfaction with the overall quality of life (7-points), 4) happiness with life as a whole (7-points), 5) satisfaction with life as a whole (5-item index), 6) contentment with life (5-item index) and 7) subjective well-being (4-item index).⁵⁰³

Michalos and Kahlke concluded that based on the relative impact of all the arts-related activities and the satisfaction obtained from the activities on seven overall life assessment variables, the arts-related activities and their corresponding satisfaction contributed relatively little on the perceived quality of life.⁵⁰⁴ In a very humble way, Michalos and Kahlke reflected whether their inability to find total impacts of arts-related activities on the perceived quality of life could be the result of their use of the wrong search instruments for the possible values involved. However, they argued that the place for the philosophical discussion of the most relevant values to the arts-related activities was

501 Michalos 2005, 20.

502 Michalos, Kahlke 2008, 252.

503 Michalos, Kahlke 2008, 193.

504 Michalos, Kahlke 2008, 250–252.

not in their study.⁵⁰⁵

There is no reason to overemphasize the issue of disconfirming evidence. However, there is no reason to suppress the possible neutral or negative outcomes and presume that there is always an evident causal connection between an arts activity and well-being, or art practice and well-being.

Creativity is one of the most utilized concepts in the research publications of Arts Council England and the total number of academic studies. Creativity is understood as something ‘good’ which will enhance well-being and health. Credit can be given to the research publications of Arts Council England as well as the large number of academic studies for treating the question of creativity in a positive manner. In that sense both the research publications by the arts and academic sector provide for the conceptualization of creativity and visual arts as enablers of well-being and health. Also the consideration of artists as facilitators differs significantly from the prevailing myths of a ‘troubled artist’ presented especially in the popular culture. Thus, it is unfortunate that more emphasis has not been put on the inquiry of the role of the artist as a facilitator and the overall quality of the artistic process.

However, there is an evident blind spot in both the research publications by Arts Council England and the academic studies, which concerns the myths about creativity and artistry. There is a discussion of ‘creativity’ which can be mentioned here, but is out of scope of the research at hand. From the perspective of art history, it seems that there are two fields in the debate about creativity and its possible link to mental disorders. The first approach argues that there is no sufficient link between creativity and mental disorders, and the second perspective argues that there is a link between creativity and some mental disorders. Several studies concerning creativity and its possible connection to mental disorders have been made.⁵⁰⁶

It is noteworthy that in this research the concept of ‘art’ usually transforms itself into an even larger catch-all concept of ‘creativity’. However, there is also a constant debate of what constitutes as ‘creativity’, how it could be measured or whether it should be measured at all. For example, Piffer has argued that there is much confusion regarding the measurement of creativity because of the insufficient clarity of the definition of creativity.⁵⁰⁷ Silvia, Kaufman and Pretz tried to examine whether creativity is domain-specific by using two questionnaires of

505 Michalos, Kahlke 2008, 251.

506 Young et al. 2013, 197; Johnson et al. 2012, 2; Kyaga et al. 2012, 88; Nettle 2005, 876; Glazer 2009, 755; Akiskal, Akiskal 2007, 2; Vellante et al. 2011, 28; Kyaga et al. 2013, 86.

507 Piffer 2012, 258.

creative accomplishments and creative self-descriptions.⁵⁰⁸ Kaufman and Beghetto studied whether ‘laypersons’ understand the conceptions of creativity, and more specifically the ideas presented on the Four C Model of Creativity by Kaufman and Beghetto (little-c, mini-c, Big-C and Pro-c creativity). They concluded that personality predicted how study participants understood different levels of creativity.⁵⁰⁹ We may add to the above-mentioned statements that if ‘creativity’ is considered as a term, definitions can be made. However, as a concept ‘creativity’ is necessarily open.

The myth of the ‘troubled artist’ may nevertheless also influence how participants consider artists or the artistic practice and may even prevent them from participating in the art projects aimed for increasing the well-being of the participants. Schlesinger explained that the notion of ‘the mad artist’ began with a mistranslation of Plato’s ‘divine madness’ and led to viewing artistic inspiration as a symptom of psychopathology.⁵¹⁰ Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi stated that the notion of the personality of artists as somehow disordered obtained the so-called “scientific” credence by Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909) in *The Man of Genius* in which Lombroso argued that genius resembles many forms of mental disorder.⁵¹¹

There are, however, more mundane reasons for the myth of the ‘troubled artist’ to survive in the context of creativity. The artist-writer group Inter Alia pointed out: industries even in the field of art need markets so badly that they create them.⁵¹²

Unusual stories of the artists are useful tools for marketing of the artworks. The myth influences the interpretation of the artworks and changes their meaning-making process. In this process the artistic personality and even possible mental disorders of the artists are offered as explanations of the artworks.

The most notorious example of this is the treatment of Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890). Van Gogh has been diagnosed by health professionals retrospectively dozens of times, for example by Henri Gastaut (1915–1995) in 1956, Nagera in 1979 and more recently for example by Blumer in 2002, Hughes in 2005 and Voskuil in 2013.⁵¹³

Blumer, for example, has written an overview of the illnesses of van Gogh. I listed the different, historical diagnoses of van Gogh from Blumer’s study: eccentric personality, unstable moods, psychosis, temporal lobe epilepsy precipitated by the use of absinthe in the

508 Silvia, Kaufman, Pretz 2009, 139.

509 Kaufman, Beghetto 2013, 229-230.

510 Schlesinger 2009, 63.

511 Getzels, Csikszentmihalyi 1976, 34.

512 Inter Alia 1994, 37.

513 Blumer 2002; Hughes 2005; Voskuil 2013.

presence of an early limbic lesion, depression, bipolar, hypomania, mania, epilepsy, early brain injury, lead poisoning, Ménière's disease, interictal dysphoric disorder, psychosis due to epilepsy, schizophrenia, neurosyphilis and epileptoid personality.⁵¹⁴

According to Hughes, possible physical diagnoses of van Gogh might include glaucoma, Ménière's disease, acute intermittent porphyria, and chronic lead poisoning, even though he considered these diagnoses unlikely. What is more, Hughes argued that possible psychiatric diagnoses might include borderline personality disorder, anxiety–depressive disorder with episodes of depression and hypomania and paranoid schizophrenia.⁵¹⁵

One of the most sophisticated and sound explanations for the pathologizing of van Gogh has been offered by Voskuil who explained why van Gogh's health is still such a fascinating subject. He argued that because van Gogh's paintings and writings are admired for their great artistic value, doctors and patient groups find it interesting to mould van Gogh's diseases into their own speciality field or illness.⁵¹⁶

Even though it might be tempting to analyse an individual art work, series of artworks, oeuvre or artistic production through artist's biography and possible mental disorders, this strategy may prevail into mythical and even stereotyped attitudes. Roland Barthes (1915-1980) explained the myth as something expressed as a phraseology, a corpus of phrases, that culture creates in order to be able to understand or conceptualize history into the 'natural'.⁵¹⁷

The myth ignores the situation of artistic production and the social and institutional structures that govern it. According to Nochlin: "Here we have the mad Van Gogh, spinning out sunflowers despite epileptic seizures and near-starvation, or perhaps because of them; Cezanne, braving paternal rejection and public scorn in order to revolutionize painting (...)." ⁵¹⁸ Nochlin urged to leave the world of self-fulfilling prophecy behind in research and instead cast a dispassionate eye on the actual situations in which art has been produced. This means that the range of social and institutional structures of the situation, the actual production of the art, should be taken into account in research.⁵¹⁹

In addition to the above-mentioned, we should be especially cautious about the prejudices we may create in the context of 'creativity'. Gadamer has explained the hermeneutical situation which involves the act of interpreting historical phenomena, such as a

514 Blumer 2002, 519–526.

515 Hughes 2005, 504.

516 Voskuil 2013, 177.

517 Barthes 1984, 164.

518 Nochlin 1998, 319.

519 Nochlin 1998, 319.

work of art. According to Gadamer, our historical consciousness is determined by the prejudices that we bring with us. These prejudices constitute the horizon of a particular, cultural presence. However, prejudices that Gadamer links to the constitutive character of our culture, are not a fixed set of opinions and evaluations that determine and limit the horizon of the present. This horizon is being continually formed, and we have to test all our prejudices.⁵²⁰

Schlesinger stated that she detests the patronizing caricature of ‘the mad genius’ and the fact that it devalues the artistic product.⁵²¹ She stated that there are creative people with psychological problems, as there are for example lawyers, librarians or teachers.⁵²² Furthermore Schlesinger argued that there are possible negative impacts of the notion of the ‘mad artist’ on creative persons. Artists may be stigmatized in social situations, and those who really have serious mental disorders may deny themselves treatment. Another serious consequence, which I consider to be grave, is that the healthcare professionals may use stereotypes in their work with creative people.⁵²³

I strongly suggest that the myth of the troubled artist is harmful to the well-being of artists and reduces a complex matter of the artistic production and creativity into obscurity. In this process the artwork itself is still too often seen as a manifestation or documentation of the illness, even though it has taken great strength, effort, skills, training, talent and intelligence to be created. These are factors that should be researched in artistic work also in regard to well-being.

Thus, creativity is recommended to be conceptualized as Dewey did: “An incredible amount of observation and of the kind of intelligence that is exercised in perception of qualitative relations characterizes creative work in art.”⁵²⁴ This pivotal statement by Dewey leads to the last discussion in regard to the research material of academic studies.

1) What is considered as the outcome of the research in relation to the visual arts themselves? By following the philosophical perspectives like ‘art has no end’, or ‘the end of the art is in itself’, or ‘art has several ends’, we come into different conclusions as to what might be considered as the end result. However, the issue of the end result as understood in aesthetics is not discussed in the research material.

2) Whose preferred state of well-being is being enhanced? There are several categorizations that could be made from the academic research material, for example ‘art activity’ could be considered as

520 Gadamer 1988, 245–247.

521 Schlesinger 2012, 11.

522 Schlesinger 2012, 12–13.

523 Schlesinger 2012, 94.

524 Dewey 1934, 51.

promoting well-being of older adults, or older women, or people living with chronic illness, or people with mental health needs. Apart from few studies the concept of well-being has not been described, nor conceptualized in regard to contemporary psychology in the research material. Therefore a question can be raised as follows:

(i) Is the preferred state of well-being the one of the participant or the one of the researcher?

3) Who will facilitate in visual art practice?

Most academic research informed anecdotally that the facilitation of art projects is done by artists. However the professional skill sets of artists who facilitate has not been examined. There is no way to conclude anything about the influence of the facilitation process, as the requirements of the facilitator and the actual facilitation, its theoretical framework and procedure, have been left out from the inquiry. Hence there is considerable need for further work to be undertaken in order to identify, specify and define the theoretical frameworks as well as the practical skills and expertise sets of the 'facilitation' in visual art practice. This leads to the next question.

4) What is 'facilitation' in visual art practice?

Facilitation can be considered as a concept of education. Though not employing the concept of 'art education' as such, many researchers have referred to the practice of visual arts by using concepts that have educational connotation, for example arts courses (Margrove, Heydinrych and Secker), art classes (Greer, Fleuriet and Cantu), art class and art sessions (Rentz), and art sessions (Kinney and Rentz.) This strategy of using concepts that relate to art education begs the following questions:

(i) How does facilitation of visual arts differ from art education?

(ii) Should we not consider visual art practice for promoting well-being as a part of a larger field of art education?

(iii) If it is not considered as a part of a larger field of art education, what are the actual reasons for this?

Furthermore 'facilitation' is conducted in the research material without any description whether the facilitator would require a professional teacher education. One of the reasons why the concept of 'art education' is not used in the research may be that the use of the conception of art education would require different sort of formal qualifications from the artist than 'facilitation'.

However, art education has long, established roots and it is a mode of practice in adult education as well as in schools. For example, according to Whitford art education was first introduced to the public-school curriculum as an experiment in 1821 in the United States. Massachusetts was first to adopt art education as a part of its general

education program in 1860.⁵²⁵

Finally, even though the research publications of the arts sector and academic studies claim to study "good practices", the illusionary world of 'art-making' or 'arts activities' or 'creativity' without the problems of authenticity, originality and copyright is presented unproblematically in the research material. None of the studies included in the overall research material considered or raised the question of the copyright of the visual artworks produced in the projects, workshops, courses or interventions in regard to the role of the artist facilitator. Thus, the complex relationship between the artists and participants is not discussed extensively or in depth. This obvious blind spot raises important questions:

- (i) Is the lack of the debate on authenticity, originality and copyright an indication that the artworks do not fulfil the requirements of copyright law as independent, original artworks?
- (ii) Is the absence of the debate on authenticity, originality and copyright a revelation of an utopian perspective of the visual art practice for promoting well-being?

In 2003 Caust suggested that 'art' should be put back in the language of arts policy. Her perspectives were as follows: there had been an introduction of the language of industry and business to the arts sector as 'cultural industry' and 'creative industry', and arts funding agencies had been restructured to reflect a market-driven agenda rather than an arts-driven agenda.⁵²⁶ Caust stated that the arts sector had developed economic reasons and arguments about the economic value of the arts in order to continue the government funding, "(...) giving this greater value than arguments about the intrinsic value or worth of the arts to society."⁵²⁷ Although Caust described the situation in Australia, it can be argued that the market-driven agenda was similar to other Western countries in the 1990s and early 2000s.

There are many issues in the above-mentioned statements that can be considered as parallel to the contemporary situation in research concerning the arts and well-being. The focus of the research concerning visual art practice and well-being should be more on the particular mechanisms of visual arts themselves. The core of the research should be visual art practice and its elements, not the possible outcomes or benefits.

All in all the development of artist-facilitated visual art practice for promoting well-being through academic research falls short. There is no guarantee that several, separate empirical studies will take us any

525 Whitford 1923, 109.

526 Caust 2003, 51.

527 Caust 2003, 52.

closer to the answer of the most important question of whether there is a connection between the practice of visual arts and well-being, and if one does exist, how can we research it by applying theoretically more rigour and valid research methodology? The focus on the description of outcomes provides little knowledge of what the practice of visual arts actually consists of.

Despite a wealth of studies concerning the arts in relation to well-being the research is still theoretically underdeveloped in regard to both the practice of visual arts and its actual connection to subjective or psychological well-being, the two major conceptions of contemporary psychology. This leads us to the next phases of my research: the theoretical examination of the concept of well-being in contemporary psychology. This examination will guide us to new theoretical and conceptual frameworks that can be utilized in the practice-based or empirical research concerning visual art practice and psychological well-being.

CHAPTER 5

5. The Connection of Visual Art Practice with Conceptions of Well-Being in Psychology

So far, we have learnt that the identification of different well-being frameworks or concepts is underdeveloped in the research material of arts and academic sector. No critique is sufficient, if it does not create a path for alternative, new considerations. From now on, my research concentrates on the task of creating a more rigorous epistemological foundation as well as theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being. The aim is to connect visual art practice to relevant and valid conceptions of well-being in contemporary psychology.

The interest here is to concentrate on the concept of well-being in the context of psychology, rather than philosophy. However, important questions that are in their essence philosophical should be asked. Ethical discussion about the values of different well-being frameworks is almost non-existent in the research material. The research of visual art practice in relation to well-being, however, should have clear value contexts and priorities. We might ask whether we should position values such as ‘originality’, ‘innovation’, ‘artistry’, ‘artistic freedom’ or ‘talent’ before values such as ‘equality’, ‘social relations’ or ‘social inclusion’? These questions cannot be asked, nor answered if we do not know what constitutes as the well-being we are supposed to promote through the practice of visual arts. This leads us to the following questions:

- (i) What conceptions of well-being should be applied in relation to visual art practice?
- (ii) What conceptual differentiation of well-being should be used in relation to visual art practice?
- (iii) What is the theoretical framework of well-being which is the most relevant for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being?

I propose that the epistemological foundation, the nature and scope of our knowledge, could be found in an interdisciplinary way by connecting art research to contemporary psychology. In the matters of well-being, positive psychology has many perspectives that are relevant to the research of visual art practice. Vice versa, research of the practice of visual arts could contribute significantly to the field of positive psychology, and in particular to studies of subjective and psychological well-being.

5.1. The development of well-being research in psychology

As argued with evidence before, well-being is a very complex area of study when discussed in relation to visual art practice. But it is also a very complicated conception in regard to psychology. Contemporary psychologists disagree on how well-being should be described. There are several approaches to the issue. I have identified four principal perspectives, even though it must be stated that this distinction is not exhaustive. The first is subjective well-being research, which stems from the research of the social indicators of welfare from the 1970s, a notable researcher being Ed Diener. Second is the research of psychological well-being which stems from the need to concentrate more on the study of emotions, a notable researcher being Carol D. Ryff. Thirdly, there is a research perspective that makes a distinction between hedonia and eudaimonia, notable researchers are Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci, Alan Waterman and Veronika Huta. Fourthly, there is an approach against the distinction of hedonia and eudaimonia and an initiation towards a broader conceptualization of well-being, including mindfulness, a notable researcher being Todd B. Kashdan.

In history, well-being has been positioned within the concept of health. In 1948 The World Health Organization, WHO, defined health in its Constitution. Health was defined as "(..) a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely absence of disease or infirmity."⁵²⁸ It is unfortunate that the adjective *complete* was used in the definition of health. It may be difficult to find a person who is completely physically, mentally and socially well.

There is thus a wider classification for health issues. ICF is short for The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health. It is a classification of health and health-related domains which was issued in 2001. The domains are classified from body, individual and societal perspectives. A person's functioning is seen in context.

528 WHO 2013, 4.

Therefore, the ICF also includes a list of environmental factors. At the time of the writing, WHO has published the first draft of the ICF Practical Manual for comments.

WHO also took over the responsibility for the International Classification of Disease, ICD in 1948. The ICD is used to classify diseases and other health problems internationally. The ICD dates back to the 1850s and the International List of Causes of Death.⁵²⁹ The International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10th Revision came into use in WHO Member States from 1994. The 11th revision of the classification is in progress.⁵³⁰

However, the rise of well-being as a specific subject and area of research in psychology is fairly recent in history. In 1969, the highly influential American psychologist Norman M. Bradburn argued in his seminal work *The Structure of Psychological Well-Being* that well-being had only recently become described as a psychological problem. Bradburn stated that in the field of mental health the unfortunate split between theorists and empiricists had resulted in unifying theories that dangerously approached explaining everything and therefore explained nothing or in disparate empirical findings that did not add up to anything.⁵³¹

It is important to understand that Bradburn's work did not concern the diagnosis of psychiatric cases. Instead, his research question was to understand the psychological reactions of normal individuals to the stresses and strains of everyday life.⁵³²

Bradburn stated that there was a fundamental divergence of approaches to the study of mental illness and health. The first approach was physiological and the research was directed towards the neurological and biochemical properties of emotional reactions. The second approach focused on an individual's life situation and how he coped with it. According to Bradburn, in the second approach the problems could not actually be considered medical at all, but instead ethical, i.e. the problems of proper behaviour. Bradburn specifically criticized the imperialism of those who were concerned with mental health problems. He argued that since the Freudian revolution the language of pathology had been used to describe ordinary living problems in psychiatry.⁵³³

Bradburn's research approach must be understood in the spirit of the time. Bradburn referred to the work by American psychiatrist Thomas Szasz (1920–2012) who had published his influential critique

529 WHO 2007, 4.

530 WHO 2013, online.

531 Bradburn 1969, v.

532 Bradburn 1969, 1.

533 Bradburn 1969, 3.

of psychiatry *The Myth of Mental Illness* in 1960. In his original article published in *American Psychologist*, Szasz argued radically that there is no such thing as mental illness, but instead diseases of the brain, not of the mind. According to Szasz, the question of mental illness is an ethical one and connected to the behaviour that other people regard as something that is not accepted in society. Szasz argued that the notion of mental illness served to obscure the everyday fact that life for most people is a continuous struggle for a peace of mind or some human value.⁵³⁴

Bradburn commended the general view of Szasz's work even though he acknowledged that he might disagree on details. Szasz continued to publish extensively and his views still stir up conversation for and against his notions. Bradburn's conclusion was that the modern concern about mental health is really a concern about "(...) a subjective sense of well-being, or what the Greeks called eudaemonia."⁵³⁵

One of the most important aspects of Bradburn's work was the division of positive and negative affect. Bradburn found out that the positive affect measures were correlated with social involvement and new or varied experiences.⁵³⁶

Since Bradburn's seminal work, several publications on psychological well-being have been published. This development is due to an epistemological shift within the discipline of psychology in general. Many psychologists began to note that psychology had been preoccupied with the determination of mental illness, rather than studying the elements of well-being and human happiness.

The American psychologist Ed Diener began his influential study *Subjective well-being* in 1984 by stating that unlike philosophy, psychology had ignored positive subjective well-being, while exploring the human unhappiness in depth.⁵³⁷ The American psychologist Carol D. Ryff noted in her classical study in 1989 that there was increased interest in the psychological well-being, because it was recognized that the field of psychology had devoted more attention to human distress than positive functioning. What is more, she stated that there had been a fundamental neglect in defining the essential features of psychological well-being.⁵³⁸

The American psychologist Martin Seligman proposed in 1999 that the basic fundamentals of social science should be developed. He argued that active movement should take place in order to further 'positive psychology'. He, too, noted that modern psychology had

534 Szasz 1960, 115–118.

535 Bradburn 1969, 224.

536 Bradburn 1969, 227.

537 Diener 1984, 542.

538 Ryff 1989, 1069.

been too preoccupied with the healing of mental disorders. Seligman's main argument was that psychology had understood the human functioning within a disease model, hence its main mode of action had been the repair of the damage. Even though Seligman praised the victories of previous psychology in treating mental illness, he argued that psychology had lost its connection to the positive side of life. In Seligman's view this may have led into victimology in which human beings are viewed as passive and mere responders to external stimuli. Therefore he proposed that social science should take as its mission to promote the human fulfillment in a new way as "(...) the knowledge about what makes human life most worth living, most fulfilling, most enjoyable and most productive".⁵³⁹

In the United States this development resulted into the rise of the positive psychology movement. Sheldon, Frederickson, Rathunde, Csikszentmihalyi and Haidt created a manifesto of positive psychology during the Akumal I meeting in January 1999. The manifesto was revised following the Akumal II meeting in January 2000. According to the manifesto:

Positive Psychology is the scientific study of optimal human functioning. It aims to discover and promote the factors that allow individuals and communities to thrive. The positive psychology movement represents a new commitment on the part of research psychologists to focus attention upon the sources of psychological health, thereby going beyond prior emphases upon disease and disorder.⁵⁴⁰

The positive psychology research has flourished in the 2000s and spread to other countries, even though the movement can still be considered as very recent. *The Journal of Positive Psychology* was launched in 2006.⁵⁴¹ The International Positive Psychology Association, IPPA was founded in 2007.⁵⁴²

The Journal of Positive Psychology is new in the field of peer-reviewed academic journals. In his opening *Editorial* in 2006 Emmons stated that the time had come to create a flagship journal for the field of positive psychology, a field whose creation was accredited by Emmons to the initiation by Martin Seligman. The purpose of the journal was to bring the field of positive psychology together and provide an avenue for communication of the new knowledge. It is important to note that Emmons hoped to attract researchers within psychology as well as other social and behavioural disciplines, such as sociology, family studies, anthropology, neuroscience, philosophy,

539 Seligman 1999, 181–182.

540 Sheldon et al. 2011, 455.

541 *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 2015, online.

542 International Positive Psychology Association 2012, online.

medicine and the organizational sciences.⁵⁴³

Thus, and unfortunately, not art and design research, such as art theory, art history, aesthetics, design history, design theory, service design, experience design or visual communication. However, it is clear that art and design research, whether theoretical or practice-based might bring much needed new perspectives to the field of positive psychology and the study of human well-being and flourishing.

There has also been debate about the relationship between the humanistic and positive psychology. Waterman suggested that there are differences between the two perspectives within psychology in respect to ontology, epistemology and practical philosophy. Waterman's descriptions of the contrasts were received with several comments which emphasized the connection between humanistic and positive psychology and the dissimilarity in some respects.⁵⁴⁴

Personally, I suggest that the constructive dialogue between humanistic and positive psychology should continue. However, I have found out that the theory perspectives within the paradigm of positive psychology are perhaps most suitable for my theory building in relation to visual art practice.

The movement of positive psychology has brought new concepts in the research field of well-being. For example, Kashdan and Steger have suggested that well-being should be approached in a matrix of different dimensions. These include happiness, meaning and purpose in life, mindfulness, achievement, life balance and flexibility, psychological needs for belonging, competence and autonomy among others.⁵⁴⁵

However, there are areas in positive psychology that should be discussed critically. Firstly, concepts of positive psychology are sometimes misused in popular media, which can create confusion as to what is considered as positive psychology by the general public. Concepts, such as mindfulness, life satisfaction or life enjoyment appear in media, often without sufficient knowledge of the theoretical or operational constructs that these concepts present in the paradigm of positive psychology. For example, one can find numerous self-help books, commercial websites and non-academic practices on the Internet which utilize the concepts of positive psychology without any deeper knowledge of the theories, scientific results or complexity of the field.

Csikszentmihalyi noted that there are an increasing number of the so-called 'life coaches' who spread the ideas of positive psychology. But Csikszentmihalyi argued that there is a fundamental problem with

543 Emmons 2006, 1.

544 Waterman 2013, 124; Morley, 2014, 88; Friedman 2014, 89; Churchill, Mruk 2014, 90; Schneider 2014, 92; Waterman 2014, 92.

545 Kashdan, Steger 2007, 11.

this phenomenon. If a person chooses to practice a specific service, he or she may not be able to be critical of the practice. If there is a lot of criticism, the clients of the service may become suspicious about the principles applied.⁵⁴⁶

Secondly, it is not clear what is the specific research field of positive psychology. Kashdan and Steger stated that there is a lack of clearness of the topics that embody the discipline of positive psychology. They pointed out that positive psychology has too often been preoccupied with the concept of happiness. In their opinion, instead of regarding happiness as the ultimate criterion of life, attention could be directed towards mindfulness, acceptance and values.⁵⁴⁷

Thirdly, positive psychology could be criticized politically as being a movement of middle-class people of Western countries. Snyder and Lopez warned that positive psychology should not be reduced to a white American phenomenon.⁵⁴⁸ They argued that along with openness to new ideas and research in positive psychology, caution should be exercised. They stated that the scientific foundation, methods and principles of positive psychology should be approached with the utmost seriousness.⁵⁴⁹

Fourthly, Warren argued that positive psychology could be considered to be based on a discourse of lack. According to Warren, positive psychology has an aim that is actually improvement, not only understanding positivity.⁵⁵⁰

In order to provide an example of what positive psychology can be on a practical therapeutic level, a distinction by Kashdan and Steger between traditional cognitive, and mindfulness-based therapies is presented. Kashdan and Steger stated that in cognitive therapy clients are first informed that certain thoughts are dysfunctional. After that follows four steps: 1) Increasing self-monitoring and awareness of thoughts; 2) Pinpointing thoughts that are dysfunctional with appropriate labels; 3) Refusing or challenging the validity of these thoughts; 4) Replacing the negative dysfunctional thoughts with more positive, constructive thoughts. Kashdan and Steger stated that in mindfulness- and acceptance-based therapy clients are taught that thoughts are thoughts and they are neither good nor bad. Thus, they claimed that there is a struggle for control in cognitive therapy as the goal is to modify the contents of the client's thoughts and feelings. In mindfulness- and acceptance-based therapy the goal is to change relationships with thoughts and feelings, while being open and receptive

546 Csikszentmihalyi 2011, 4.

547 Kashdan, Steger 2011, 9.

548 Snyder, Lopez 2007, v.

549 Snyder, Lopez 2007, vi.

550 Warren 2010, 320.

to internal experiences. However, Kashdan and Seger stated that it is important to remember and pay attention to individuality. Different people will need different strategies for particular circumstances.⁵⁵¹

To conclude with, the epistemological foundation for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being interests can be positioned within the field of positive psychology. However, reflection should be exercised when positioning the research.

Moreover, it is necessary to understand how to differentiate between the well-being concepts that are utilized in the field of positive psychology. These concepts include especially subjective well-being (SWB), psychological well-being (PWB), and hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (EWB). These are also the key concepts that should have been used, or at least referred to in their right contexts in the research material by the arts and academic sectors.

5.2. The formulations of subjective well-being (SWB)

The Dutch sociologist Ruut Veenhoven wrote a classic statement in 1991: “The history of happiness research is the history of confusion.”⁵⁵² He explained that the confusion came from the variety of meanings the word happiness has in common language and the lack of conceptual discipline defining happiness in research. Moreover, he claimed that

An additional problem is that seemingly technical discussion about the proper use of words in fact covers up an ideological debate about value priorities. In many arguments the term “happiness” is used as a synonym for “the good”. “Defining” happiness is then propagating an ideology.⁵⁵³

In these early stages, Veenhoven classified well-being concepts as objective well-being, subjective well-being and mixed conceptions. In subjective well-being he classified for example self-appraisals, job satisfaction, self-esteem and overall life satisfaction.⁵⁵⁴ In addition to this, Veenhoven concluded that characteristics found among the happy people were: identity integrity, ego-strength, mental maturity, inner control, social ability, activity and perceptual openness.⁵⁵⁵ Furthermore, Veenhoven argued that happiness depends heavily on the relationships that people have with spouse, family and friends.⁵⁵⁶

551 Kashdan, Steger 2011, 11.

552 Veenhoven 1991, 8.

553 Veenhoven 1991, 8.

554 Veenhoven 1991, 9.

555 Veenhoven 1991, 19.

556 Veenhoven 1991, 21.

However, what is interesting, is the thought of the well-being research being ideologically motivated. Veenhoven actually proposed that there is an underlying ideological debate about values in the research concerning well-being. The defining acts of happiness in research could be understood as reproducing the ideology of ‘the good’. The real question would then be: Who has the power to define ‘the good’?

Previously in history, Bradburn argued that most people failed to live up to some standards of behaviour that were judged good or desirable by other people. Bradburn stated that moralists caution people to lead better lives, but the people who preach a doctrine of positive mental health in terms of self-actualization, creativity, or zest of living, in fact *judge* the very behaviour as well.⁵⁵⁷

Keeping the caution of an ideological agenda in mind, I will first study what is generally meant by the concept of subjective well-being (SWB). The concept of subjective well-being and its origins in the history of social sciences are examined in order to assess whether it is relevant to utilize this concept in the research concerning visual arts and well-being.

In 1984, Diener stated that the rise of studies in subjective well-being (SWB), could be considered as the impact of the journal *Social Indicators Research*, founded in 1974.⁵⁵⁸ Schwarz and Strack explained that the so-called subjective social indicators of well-being dominated the welfare research for a long time. However, Schwarz and Strack noted that the subjective social indicators and their measurement methodology proved to be problematic, as the relationship between the objective conditions of life and the individuals’ sense of well-being was found to be weak and sometimes contrary.⁵⁵⁹

Also Brandstätter criticized the social indicators studies. According to Brandstätter the traditional ways of measuring subjective well-being were to ask people for their ratings of their satisfaction with various domains of life, such as self, spouse and family, work or school, neighbourhood and community, friends, sports and recreational facilities or with life as a whole. Brandstätter criticized these measures and explained that the random time sampling of subjective experience should be applied instead.⁵⁶⁰

The most influential and methodologically relevant descriptions of subjective well-being are the result of the research work by Ed Diener and colleagues. The three review studies by Diener and Diener et al. from three different decades: 1984, 1999 and 2012, are

557 Bradburn 1969, 4.

558 Diener 1984, 542.

559 Schwarz, Strack 1991, 27.

560 Brandstätter 1991,175.

essential in order to examine the evolution of the concept of subjective well-being as well as the history of the research concerning subjective well-being.⁵⁶¹ As a starting point, we may use Diener's general description of subjective well-being (SWB) as an area of psychological research which studies life satisfaction, satisfaction with important domains and positive and negative affects.⁵⁶²

Diener started his publication career in the 1970s by studying aggression and deindividuation in group situations.⁵⁶³ By the 1980s his research focus had shifted. Diener's 1984 extensive review article *Subjective Well-Being* can be considered as one of the turning points in the research history of subjective well-being. At that time, Diener grouped descriptions of well-being and happiness into three categories. Firstly, well-being could be seen as construed by external criteria, such as virtue or holiness. Secondly, subjective well-being could be considered as life satisfaction evaluated by the standards of the individual's determination of what is good life. Thirdly, happiness could be considered as the predominance of positive affect over negative affect, a perspective influenced by Bradburn. Furthermore, Diener explained that subjective well-being had three attributes. Firstly, it was considered as the subjective experience of an individual. Health, comfort, virtue or wealth were seen as potential influences of SWB, but they were not regarded as inherent parts of SWB. Secondly, SWB dealt with positive measures. Thirdly, subjective well-being consisted of the global assessment of all aspects of a person's life. Diener concluded his theoretical review by demanding more empirical research in the field.⁵⁶⁴

As a consequence, during the next year, Diener et al. published a measure for subjective well-being, The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS). In this research, three separate elements of subjective well-being were identified: positive affect, negative affect and life satisfaction. Diener et al. explained that positive and negative affect referred to the emotional aspects of SWB, and life satisfaction to the cognitive-judgmental aspects of the individual. The conception of life satisfaction and its subjective nature is one of the achievements of this research and development work. Subjective well-being was regarded to focus on the person's own judgments in regard to life satisfaction, instead upon external criteria judged to be important by the researcher. According to Diener et al., "(...) the judgment of how satisfied people are with their present state of affairs is based on a comparison with a standard which each individual sets for him or herself; it is not

561 Diener 1984, 542; Diener et al. 1999, 276; Diener 2012, 590.

562 Diener 2000, 34.

563 Diener, Dineen, Endresen 1975, 328.

564 Diener 1984, 543–544.

externally imposed.”⁵⁶⁵

Thus, life satisfaction was considered as a cognitive-judgmental process by an individual. The fundamental difference between SWLS and other, previous scales was that the SWLS left the respondent free to weight various domains, for example health or wealth and feeling states, for example loneliness, in the way he or she chose most relevant. The suggestion by Diener et al. was that the future research should explore in more depth the relationship between affect and life satisfaction and the relationship between life and domain satisfaction.⁵⁶⁶

In 1985 Diener and Emmons published a study on the relation between positive and negative affect. The starting point of the research was Bradburn's idea of well-being as composed of two separate feelings: positive and negative affect, instead of a unitary construct. Diener and Emmons concluded that positive and negative affect are relatively independent.⁵⁶⁷

Furthermore, in the same year, 1985 Diener et. al stated that previous research on emotions had suggested that positive and negative affect are strongly inversely correlated. However, they defended the perspective of subjective well-being and argued that positive and negative affect are independent across persons over time. In order to develop their view they proposed that two dimensions of affective structure should be used: the frequency of positive versus negative affect and the intensity of affect. In their opinion, the emotional intensity could explain the relative independence of positive and negative affect.⁵⁶⁸

In 1991 Diener, Sandvik and Pavot argued that subjective well-being can be associated with the relative amount of time a person experiences positive versus negative affect. They emphasized that the frequency of positive affect is more important to well-being than the intense but relatively infrequent positive experiences. Furthermore they suggested that interventions or events that aim to increase well-being should centre on increasing the frequency and duration of happy experiences. They concluded that intense but infrequent positive experiences are unlikely to enhance long-term happiness to a substantial degree.⁵⁶⁹

Furthermore in 1991, Diener et al. argued that intense positive affect (PI) can provide a person with momentary happiness, but not for long-term happiness. Diener et. al argued again that subjective well-being depends on the frequency of positive versus negative

565 Diener et al. 1985, 71.

566 Diener et al. 1985, 74.

567 Diener, Emmons 1985, 1105.

568 Diener et al. 1985b, 1253.

569 Diener, Sandvik, Pavot 1991, 136–137.

affective experiences. They explained that self-reported PI affected little to subjective well-being when the frequency of positive affect was taken into account. Diener et al. noted that intense positive affect occurred very rarely and it appeared to have costs that counterbalance the positive effects of intense positive affect. Diener et al. argued that an intense positive event can make other events seem less positive. In addition, the more persons valence success in a task, the more happier they will be if they succeed, but unhappier if they fail. This led Diener et al. to conclude that there were psychological costs in intense positive affect (PI).⁵⁷⁰

In 1993 Pavot and Diener reviewed The Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) and stated that there had been a dramatic rise in the research of subjective well-being during the last decade. They suggested that SWLS should be used as a complement to scales that focus on emotional well-being.⁵⁷¹ In 1996 Suh, Diener and Fujita researched life events in relation to subjective well-being. In a 2-year longitudinal study they explored the effects of life events to subjective well-being and concluded that only life events during the previous 3 months influenced life satisfaction and positive and negative affect.⁵⁷²

In 1999 Diener et al. presented an overview of the development of subjective well-being in three decades. The starting point for the overview by Diener et al. was Warner Wilson's 1967 review on subjective well-being, in which Wilson concluded that a happy person had the following characteristics: young, healthy, well-educated, well-paid, extroverted, optimistic, worry-free, religious, intelligent, married with high self-esteem, high job morale and modest aspirations.⁵⁷³

Diener et al. noted that as the field of subjective well-being had developed, a large number of Wilson's conclusions had been overturned. Diener et al. suggested that further research in subjective well-being should have four main directions and concentrate more on psychological factors. The recommended directions were: 1) Causal direction of the correlates of happiness; 2) Interaction between internal factors and external circumstances, e.g. Person x Situations interaction; 3) Adaptation processes to good and bad circumstances; and, 4) The influence of input variables to components of subjective well-being.⁵⁷⁴

In 2000, Diener positioned subjective well-being as an area of positive psychology. He emphasized the importance of understanding the process of adaptation, personal goals, personality and temperament

570 Diener et al. 1991, 492.

571 Pavot and Diener 1993, 164.

572 Suh, Diener, Fujita 1996, 1091.

573 Diener et al. 1999, 276.

574 Diener et al. 1999, 276.

and cultural differences in the context of subjective well-being. Consistent with previous research, Diener explained that subjective well-being (SWB) referred to people's subjective evaluations of their lives. The separable components of SWB were: 1) life satisfaction (global judgement of one's life); 2) satisfaction with important domains (for example, work satisfaction); 3) positive affect (experiencing many pleasant emotions and moods); and, 4) low levels of negative affect (experiencing few unpleasant emotions and moods). Furthermore Diener stated that SWB is an approach to defining good life and thus is sometimes actually labelled as happiness.⁵⁷⁵

In the same study, Diener presented a clear overview of how subjective well-being had been researched previously. He stated that, in history, researchers usually relied on a single self-report item for each construct. However, as research methodology developed, measures began to consist of multiple items. These measures included, for example, PANAS, Positive and Negative Affect Scale by Watson, Clark and Tellegen in 1988; the aforementioned Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS) by Diener et al.; and, naturalistic experience-sampling method (ESM) employed by several researchers and studying how subjective well-being varied in different situations and time. Furthermore, Diener stated that additional measures should be included in the complete assessment of subjective well-being. These included, for example, physiological measures, reports by informants, and memory and reaction-time measures. Additionally Diener suggested that researchers should use the measures of both positive and negative affect, because they are the major components of subjective well-being.⁵⁷⁶

It is important to note that Diener started to extend the concept of subjective well-being on a societal and policy level, by proposing the creation of National Index of subjective well-being. He urged that "Societies need to afford the same importance to SWB as they do now to economics: tracking the phenomenon, supporting research to understand it, and educating people about it."⁵⁷⁷

More recently, Diener's research has evolved to concern the subjective well-being in different nations. In 2012, Diener explained that

Subjective well-being (SWB) represents people's evaluations of their lives, both in terms of cognitions (e.g., "My life is satisfying") and feelings (e.g., "My experiences are pleasant and rewarding"). SWB represents people's beliefs and feelings about whether they are leading a desirable and rewarding life.⁵⁷⁸

575 Diener 2000, 34.

576 Diener 2000, 35.

577 Diener 2000, 41.

578 Diener 2012, 590.

What is more, Diener stated that national wealth is a major predictor of the average SWB in nations.⁵⁷⁹ Another change in Diener's focus was the perspective to adaptation. Diener explained that the idea of adaptation to good or bad conditions prevailed in the field of SWB. Diener claimed that circumstances can have a large impact on SWB and it may take many years for adaptation to occur, and it may not be complete. This means that people may not fully adapt to, for example, unemployment or severe disabilities.⁵⁸⁰ Furthermore, Diener argued "(...) that the good society is one offering the most SWB to the greatest number of its citizens."⁵⁸¹

This shift in perspective to a more explicit political agenda has resulted, for example, to the study of the relationship between income and the subjective well-being in nations. Diener, Tay and Oishi concluded that changes in household income were related to changes in life evaluations and positive and negative feelings. However, the change of gross domestic product (GDP) had significance only for life evaluations.⁵⁸²

As to the future research methods in subjective well-being, Diener has suggested that the further research should include more rigorous methods. According to Diener, these include longitudinal and experimental research designs, in addition to employing multi-method measurement. Diener especially warned about the interpretation of correlations in cross-sectional findings. People may be selected to present for example having children or being unemployed. He explained that many correlations may be due to the selection of individuals into the condition than to the condition itself. Therefore the interpretations of the correlations may fail to explain the causal direction. Diener also offered suggestions for the possible research of SWB in the health domain. According to Diener, these approaches may, for example, include the analysis of SWB on health by raising or lowering moods of study participants and assessing physiological variables. Moreover, Diener suggested that "Health and well-being researchers can follow people over time and can also employ experiments with animals where moods and emotions are likely altered as well as conduct longitudinal studies with humans."⁵⁸³

The development of the conception of subjective well-being (SWB) in history points to the direction that it might not be considered as the most relevant conception of well-being in regard to visual art practice. The presentation of the development of the concept of

579 Diener 2012, 591.

580 Diener 2012, 592.

581 Diener 2012, 594.

582 Diener, Tay, Oishi 2013, 267.

583 Diener 2012, 595.

subjective well-being (SWB) can be criticized for concentrating on one, leading researcher. However, it is an undisputed fact that Diener and colleagues have been highly influential in the field of subjective well-being research. Hence, the concept of subjective well-being (SWB) cannot be utilized without any reference to these considerations.

However, visual art practice has not been connected to subjective well-being to a large extent. In order to evidence this finding, the contents of the *Journal of Happiness Studies* were examined thoroughly. The peer-reviewed *Journal of Happiness Studies*, founded in 2000, is especially devoted to understanding subjective well-being. In the first editorial, the leading researchers of the field, Diener, Veenhoven and Michalos stated that the journal was meant to follow two traditions in happiness research: speculative reflection on the good life, and empirical investigation of subjective well-being.⁵⁸⁴

My question for the inquiry was:

(i) Has the *Journal of Happiness Studies*, that concentrates specifically on subjective well-being, published studies about the practice of visual arts in relation to subjective well-being?

On the timescale between March 2000 and August 2014, 15 volumes, 70 issues, and 732 articles were available in the *Journal of Happiness Studies*. None of the 732 articles concerned the practice of visual arts. Only two of the articles dealt with what is considered as arts in general. In specific, both of the articles concerned what is regarded as audience response of the arts. The first article examined the listening of music by older adults in Sweden.⁵⁸⁵ The second publication was actually a book review, and not an original article, concerning a book about watching films as a means of enhancing happiness.⁵⁸⁶

If the concept of subjective well-being (SWB) is utilized in the research of visual art practice, a researcher should understand that the concept includes different elements of what is considered to be the subjective appreciation and evaluation of life satisfaction. It is important for a designer of research to comprehend that subjective well-being is a concept that embodies both affective evaluations of life as positive and negative affects and cognitive evaluations of the so-called life-as-a-whole as well as more separate life domains. Thus, if a researcher uses the concept of subjective well-being (SWB), he or she should design the research so that it would question the affective mood states as well as the appreciation of life (global judgement) with appropriate subjective well-being measures.

584 Diener, Veenhoven, Michalos 2000, vi.

585 Laukka 2007, 215.

586 Bergsma 2010, 655.

5.3. The formulations of psychological well-being (PWB)

The distinction between psychological and subjective well-being is a very complex research issue. In order to try to clarify the field within psychology, few researchers have attempted to study whether psychological and subjective well-being are considered as two different concepts or two theoretical approaches.

Chen et al. noted that two views of psychological and subjective well-being have been persistent. The first view argues that psychological and subjective well-being are different constructs. The second view argues that psychological and subjective well-being are different perspectives on the same construct, making them more alike than different. Chen et al. took a very unique research approach by studying statistically these two different views. They suggested that psychological and subjective well-being are strongly related at the general well-being construct level, but the individual components are distinct once the overlap with the general construct of well-being is partialled out. In other words, Chen et al. concluded that psychological and subjective well-being seem to be two distinguishable constructs, as their components can be interpreted to present unique explanatory power, beyond the overall well-being. Chen et al. suggested that the merit of the research depends on the level of analysis, i.e. whether the level is general or specific.⁵⁸⁷

Other researchers have decided to solve the problem by applying a very broad notion of well-being. For example, Nisbet et al. argued that "Psychologists typically operationalize happiness as one or more various manifestations of well-being, rarely capturing the concept's entire possible breadth."⁵⁸⁸ Nisbet et al. referred especially to the work by Ryff and Diener. Hence, Nisbet et al. decided to employ an extensive approach to well-being as constructs of positive functioning, such as affect, life satisfaction, psychological well-being, and vitality.⁵⁸⁹

Some of the psychological constructs probably do not capture the complete breadth, nor the depth of the concept of well-being. However, a broad approach of well-being will not benefit or provide any new knowledge to the research of visual art practice. Thus, it is necessary to try to locate a suitable theoretical and conceptual framework in regard to well-being.

One of the most sophisticated conceptualizations of psychological well-being has been made by Ryff. In her seminal article, Ryff criticized the previous research on psychological well-being, i.e. the constructs

587 Chen et al. 2013, 1063.

588 Nisbet et. al 2011, 306.

589 Nisbet et al. 2011, 306.

of positive and negative affect and life satisfaction. Ryff argued that previous conceptions of well-being were not sufficiently theoretically grounded, and therefore had ignored the importance of self-actualization and life span developmental perspectives. Ryff considered the conception of self-actualization by Abraham Maslow (1908–1970), the conception of maturity by Gordon Allport (1897–1967), the psychosocial stage model by Erik Eriksson (1904–1994), the basic life tendencies by Charlotte Bühler (1893–1974), the descriptions of personality by Bernice Neugarten (1916–2001), and the positive criteria of mental health by Marie Jahoda (1907–2001) more richer in theoretical level. However, she explained that these theories had often been neglected because of their lack of empirical impact.⁵⁹⁰

Originating from these previous perspectives Ryff established six dimensions of psychological well-being: 1) Self-acceptance: acceptance of self and of one's past life, positive attitude toward oneself; 2) Positive relations with others: warm relating to others, ability to love; 3) Autonomy: self-determination, independence, regulation of behaviour from within; 4) Environmental mastery: ability to choose and create environments suitable to one's psychological conditions; 5) Purpose of life: beliefs that give one the feeling of the meaning of life, a sense of directedness and intentionality; 6) Personal growth: continuation of the development of one's potential, openness to experiences, self-realization.⁵⁹¹ The more detailed approaches of Ryff's psychological well-being can be found in Appendix IV.

There had been many scales before in history that measured the symptoms of mental disorders, whereas there had been less instruments for the measure of psychological well-being. Thus, Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scales (PWB) can be considered as important to the research of the psychology of well-being. Abbott et al. evaluated the precision of measurement of Psychological Well-Being Scales (PWB).⁵⁹² They concluded that the six subscales of Psychological Well-Being Scales (PWB) adequately measured average levels of well-being, but had low precision of measurement at high levels. They suggested that identification and addition of questions that deal with the high well-being or positive end of the well-being continuum should be developed.⁵⁹³

It is suggested that Ryff's Psychological Well-Being Scales (PWB) could be utilized in the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being. The PWB could be used in the beginning of the research and in the final assessment by the participant. The researcher would

590 Ryff 1989, 1070.

591 Ryff 1989, 1071.

592 Abbott et al. 2010, 359.

593 Abbott et al. 2010, 371.

be able to examine what impact the practice of the visual arts may or may not have on the psychological well-being of the participant. The researcher could also use the PWB in the design of the art activity itself. PWB could be used to hypothesize what type of visual arts activity could enhance psychological well-being best.

5.4. Hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (EWB) in contemporary psychology

Some contemporary researchers have distinguished between the different conceptions of well-being in another way, by treating well-being as hedonia and eudaimonia, a perspective originating from the long history of Western philosophy and especially from the theories of Aristotle.

Deci and Ryan divided research in the psychology of well-being as following two traditions: 1) the hedonistic tradition, focusing on happiness, generally described as the presence of positive affect and the absence of negative affect, and 2) the eudaimonic tradition, focusing on living life in a full and satisfying way. Deci and Ryan explained that subjective well-being (SWB) is "(...) most often interpreted to mean experiencing a high level of positive affect, a low level of negative affect, and a high degree of satisfaction with one's life."⁵⁹⁴

Deci and Ryan suggested that Ryff's model of psychological well-being falls within the eudaimonic tradition and specifies the content that represents eudaimonic living. Deci and Ryan argued that Waterman and colleagues assess eudaimonia in a different way as a relation to particular activities, and whether these activities leave one fulfilled and expressive of one's true self. However, Deci and Ryan stated that the concepts of hedonia and eudaimonia considerably overlap in research.⁵⁹⁵

In 2008 Ryff and Singer revisited the theories of Aristotle and positioned Ryff's psychological well-being within the eudaimonic approach to well-being in psychology. Ryff and Singer explained that Ryff's original work drew also from Waterman. Furthermore they argued that Bradburn's seminal research of 1969 rested on a mistranslation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Ryff and Singer argued that the most troubling issue in Bradburn's work was that the essence of eudaimonia, the idea of striving towards excellence based on one's unique potential was left out by Bradburn in the conception of

594 Deci, Ryan 2008, 1.

595 Deci, Ryan 2008, 5.

psychological well-being.⁵⁹⁶

More recently, Huta and Waterman argued that researchers new to the field of well-being recognize only measures of psychological and subjective well-being and not the other measures. Huta and Waterman argued that the larger view of eudaimonia and hedonia and their measures actually fall into four analysis categories: 1) orientations, values, motives, goals; 2) behaviour characteristics and contents; 3) cognitive-affective experiences, and 4) ways of functioning. Huta and Waterman provided a theoretical analysis of how the conceptions of eudaimonia and hedonia have been employed by different researchers.⁵⁹⁷

The theoretical research by Huta and Waterman should be commended. Firstly, Huta and Waterman were able to show many asymmetries in the study of eudaimonia and hedonia. Secondly, they offered a classification system for studies in eudaimonia and hedonia. Thirdly, they presented an overview to the research programmes of different contemporary researchers in historical order, as well as their considerations of eudaimonia and hedonia. These theoretical constructions by Huta and Waterman provide much-needed clarity to the conceptualization of hedonia and eudaimonia in contemporary psychology.

Let us first examine how Huta and Waterman considered eudaimonia and its distinction from hedonia. Firstly, Huta and Waterman stated that they did not attempt to review the several different ways in which eudaimonia and hedonia have been regarded in philosophy. Instead Huta and Waterman differentiated in a concise manner between the perspectives in philosophy. They considered hedonia and hedonic as having the focus on happiness as pleasure, i.e. enjoyment and the absence of discomfort as subjective affect states. Their understanding of eudaimonia or eudaimonic well-being originated from the theories by Aristotle. Huta and Waterman argued that

The traditional translation of the term is as "happiness", though many contemporary philosophers prefer the translation as "flourishing". In eudaimonic philosophies, the principal focus is on activity reflecting virtue, excellence, the best within us, and the full development of our potentials (...).⁵⁹⁸

596 Ryff, Singer 2008, 14.

597 Huta, Waterman 2014, 1430.

598 Huta, Waterman 2014, 1427.

Their view was that in the classical philosophical understanding of eudaimonia, the term was not intended to refer to a subjective state, but instead to what is worth pursuing in life. Furthermore, Huta and Waterman distinguished between the perspectives of philosophy and social sciences. They stated that in philosophy, hedonia and eudaimonia are competing ethical theories of how people should live, whereas in the social sciences hedonia and eudaimonia are potentially compatible and both could be pursued in order to produce well-being. Furthermore, social scientists strive to understand well-being through empirical research and do not make explicitly ethical claims about the good life, unlike philosophers.⁵⁹⁹

This perspective begs the question: what could the empirical research concerning eudaimonia and hedonia be like in psychology? Firstly, Huta and Waterman argued that previous factor analysis and exploratory research had focused on hedonia being regarded as cognitive-affective experiences, such as positive affect, negative affect, life satisfaction, happiness and enjoyment, whereas eudaimonia had been regarded as positive mental functioning, such as self-actualization, maturity, openness to commitment or personal growth.⁶⁰⁰

Secondly, asymmetry of hedonia and eudaimonia in research seems to be a major concern for Huta and Waterman. In order to prove their point of view, Huta and Waterman stated that researchers mainly use Ryff's Scale of Psychological Well-Being (PWB) to operationalize eudaimonia and Diener's definition of subjective well-being (SWB) to operationalize hedonia. Huta and Waterman criticized this procedure: "(...) it can be problematic when constructs such as psychological well-being and subjective well-being are directly contrasted as if they were operationalized in symmetrical terms."⁶⁰¹

Huta and Waterman categorized twelve researchers who they considered as having contributed to the research of eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. These researchers included Waterman himself, Huta herself, and Ryff, Keyes, Fowers, Ryan, Deci, Seligman, Vittersø, Bauer, Steger and Delle Fave. Without going into a detailed description of what core or close-to-core element is present in different researchers' work, it is more important to the study at hand to consider the elements that Huta and Waterman suggested for assessing eudaimonia and hedonia in general.

According to Huta and Waterman, for most of the researchers the elements of eudaimonia are: 1) Growth, self-realization, self-actualization, development of potentials, full functioning,

599 Huta, Waterman 2014, 1428.

600 Huta, Waterman 2014, 1430.

601 Huta, Waterman 2014, 1430.

maturity; 2) Meaning, purpose, long-term perspective, caring about and contributing to the broader context; 3) Authenticity, identity, personal expressiveness, autonomy, constitutive goals, integrity; 4) Excellence, virtue, using the best in oneself, reaching a high standard, signature strengths, 5) Relatedness, positive relationships, social well-being; 6) Competence, environmental mastery; 7) Engagement, interest, flow; 8) Awareness, contemplation, mindfulness; 9) Acceptance, self-acceptance; 10) Effort, engaging with challenge. In comparison, for most of the researchers, the elements of hedonia are 1) Pleasure, enjoyment, life satisfaction, happiness; 2) Low distress, comfort, relaxation.⁶⁰²

Huta and Waterman argued that Waterman was the first to make an empirical research in order to contrast eudaimonia and hedonia already in 1993.⁶⁰³ Waterman has been one of the few researchers to consider eudaimonia as a relation to particular activities, and regard the activity as the level of analysis. Thus, Waterman's work is highly relevant to my study. Let us consider more how Waterman has conceptualized hedonia and eudaimonia over the years.

In 1990 Waterman suggested that Aristotle's conception of eudaimonia would be relevant for the psychological study of happiness. Waterman argued that the efforts a person makes to live in accordance with the 'daimon' can be called personally expressive. The concept of 'daimon' was regarded as including both one's aptitudes and talents and one's purposes in living. But Waterman stated that he has a departure point from Aristotle's theories. His aim was "(...) to consider eudaimonia to have a subjective component embodying the experiences that flow from efforts to live in truth to one's daimon by striving to develop one's aptitudes and talents for purposes deemed worth having in life."⁶⁰⁴

Furthermore, Waterman argued that as a subjective psychological condition, eudaimonia is related to a number of cognitive-affective concepts which refer to optimal psychological functioning, such as intrinsic motivation (Deci and Ryan, 1985), flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975), and peak experience (Maslow, 1968). Most importantly, Waterman argued that the cognitive-affective conditions of eudaimonia can be distinguished from hedonic enjoyment.⁶⁰⁵

According to this early theoretical proposition by Waterman, eudaimonia is experienced in connection with activities that advance one's highest potentialities, from one's active strivings for excellence, or when one recognizes that one is making progress in

602 Huta, Waterman 2014, 1435.

603 Huta, Waterman 2014, 1426.

604 Waterman 1990, 40.

605 Waterman 1990, 40.

the development or advancement of personally significant potentials. Moreover, according to Waterman, opportunities for the repeated experience of eudaimonia are continually sought, the activities giving rise to eudaimonia are idiosyncratic, and eudaimonia is more likely experienced only with respect to some relatively specific actions.⁶⁰⁶ The more detailed distinction between eudaimonia and hedonic enjoyment by Waterman can be found in Appendix V.

In this early research Waterman concluded that the distinction among activities in different categories will give rise to the possibility of differentiating between eudaimonia and hedonic enjoyment as a subjective condition of an individual. The categories were 1) activities giving rise to both eudaimonia and hedonic enjoyment, 2) activities giving rise to hedonic enjoyment, but not eudaimonia, 3) activities giving rise to eudaimonia, but not hedonic enjoyment (theoretically a null category), and 4) activities giving rise to neither eudaimonia nor hedonic enjoyment.⁶⁰⁷

In his seminal research from 1993 Waterman stated that eudaimonia can be considered as a theory of self-realization. Waterman argued that Aristotle's concepts of eudaimonia and hedonic enjoyment constitute two philosophical conceptions of happiness. For this research Waterman developed an instrument: The Personally Expressive Activities Questionnaire (PEAQ) which was designed to assess hedonia and eudaimonia as states when engaged in self-defining activities. By conducting two studies involving samples of undergraduate and graduate students, Waterman suggested that there was a strong positive correlation between eudaimonia as personal expressiveness and hedonic enjoyment. However, the study discovered significant differences between eudaimonia and hedonic enjoyment in regard to activities for the following variables: opportunities for satisfaction, cognitive-affective components, level of challenges, level of skills, and importance. Thus, Waterman concluded that the two conceptions of eudaimonia and hedonia are related but distinguishable. According to Waterman, the signifier of success in the process of self-realization is eudaimonia as personal expressiveness, and not hedonic enjoyment.⁶⁰⁸

Moreover, Waterman argued that the feelings of personal expressiveness and hedonic enjoyment differ with respect to their association to activities. The key distinctions were the following: 1) Hedonic enjoyment arises in conjunction with activities either actively or passively performed, whereas feelings of personal expressiveness are experienced in association with one's active strivings for

606 Waterman 1990, 40–41.

607 Waterman 1990, 41.

608 Waterman 1993, 678.

excellence. 2) Hedonic enjoyment may arise from activities without regard to the quality of performance, whereas experiences of personal expressiveness are associated with making progress with respect to the development of personally significant potentials. 3) Activities yielding hedonic enjoyment result in satiation, whereas opportunities for personally expressive activities are more continually sought. 4) Hedonic enjoyment may arise from any range of possible activities as relatively interchangeable, whereas feelings of personal expressiveness are experienced with respect to some relatively specific activities.⁶⁰⁹

In 2005 Waterman studied the situation when effort is enjoyed by presenting two studies of intrinsic motivation for personally salient activities. In two studies with college students a modified version of the Personally Expressive Activities Questionnaire (PEAQ) was utilized in order to contrast the activities, which were all enjoyed, but which differed in the level of effort involved. Waterman concluded that high effort activities, in comparison to low effort-liked activities, were "(...) associated with greater interest, flow, and feelings of personal expressiveness, greater perceived competence, and high scores for both self-realization values and importance."⁶¹⁰

Consistent with the early studies, in 2008 Waterman et al. argued that there are three categories of activities: 1) activities for which both hedonic enjoyment and eudaimonia are experienced, 2) activities for which hedonic enjoyment, but not eudaimonia are experienced; and 3) activities giving rise to neither hedonic enjoyment nor eudaimonia. This means that activities that are not related to the growth of personal potentials will give rise to hedonic enjoyment but not eudaimonia. The category of activities of giving rise to eudaimonia but not hedonic enjoyment was considered as a theoretical null by Waterman et al. However, Waterman et al. argued that hedonia and eudaimonia are not independent constructs. On the contrary, "When individuals consider the development of personal potentials important, and when they are engaged in activities yielding some success in realizing those potentials, then both hedonic enjoyment and eudaimonia will be experienced."⁶¹¹

In this study PEAQ-S, for Standard, contained subjective experience measures of personally salient activities and a series of scales tapping intrinsic motivations, the balance of challenges and skills, self-realization values, and the level of effort invested in the performance of the activity.⁶¹²

It is relevant to study closer the PEAQ-S as an instrument as it focuses on activities, instead of global life-satisfaction, life evaluations

609 Waterman 1993, 690.

610 Waterman 2005, 165.

611 Waterman et al. 2008, 43.

612 Waterman et al. 2008, 52.

of important domains or personality traits. Thus, the unit for the study is an activity rather than the trait of the individual. The opening question for PEAQ-S was as follows: "If you wanted another person to know about who you are and what you are like as a person, what five (5) activities of importance to you would you describe?"⁶¹³

It must be argued that this kind of question directs also the answer, as the study participant is likely to choose a socially accepted activity, rather than something that could be considered as socially unacceptable. Another criticism could be focused on the highly theoretical way of presenting the research. One learns nothing about the content of the activities themselves, i.e. whether the study participants considered as salient, for example, sports, art, quilting, watching films or cooking.

However, Waterman et al. concluded that activities giving rise to both hedonic enjoyment and eudaimonia are intrinsically motivated, whereas activities giving rise to hedonic enjoyment alone are hedonically motivated. Furthermore, Waterman et al. claimed that self-determination should be considered as a necessary but not sufficient condition for intrinsic motivation that entails both hedonic enjoyment and eudaimonia.⁶¹⁴

In 2010 Waterman et al. developed a trait instrument, the Questionnaire for Eudaimonic Well-Being (QEWB), in order to assess eudaimonic functioning at the trait level, in other words, at the level of personal character. The items of the questionnaire pertained to six inter-related core and close-to-core eudaimonic elements: 1) self-discovery, 2) perceived development of one's best potentials, 3) a sense of purpose and meaning-in-life, 4) investment of significant effort in the pursuit of excellence, 5) intense involvement in activities, and 6) enjoyment of activities as personally expressive.⁶¹⁵

As evidenced Waterman and colleagues have been able to study eudaimonia and hedonia in psychology with scope and depth. In conclusion, firstly, the core concept of eudaimonic well-being for Waterman is self-realization, which Waterman considers as integral to the nature of well-being. Waterman argued that feelings of personal expressiveness serve as a signal that one is acting in a way consistent with one's intrinsic nature. Therefore, they serve to reinforce such actions. Secondly, near-core markers of eudaimonia for Waterman include authenticity, purpose and meaning in life, and dedicated effort in the pursuit of excellence. However, Waterman considers mental health qualities (self-acceptance, positive social relationships, and societal contribution) as major correlates instead of defining elements

613 Waterman et al. 2008, 54.

614 Waterman et al. 2008, 72.

615 Waterman et al. 2010, 49.

of eudaimonia. Thirdly, Waterman described hedonia in terms of subjective experiences of enjoyment and life-satisfaction, and these are viewed with respect to self-realization aims.⁶¹⁶

This means that for Waterman there is a relationship or interaction of these two conceptions of well-being, hedonia and eudaimonia and they may act in connection with one another. This perspective is consistent with the view by Huta and Ryan, who argued that "(...) hedonia and eudaimonia occupy both overlapping and distinct niches within a complete picture of well-being, and their combination may be associated with the greatest well-being."⁶¹⁷

The research by Waterman, Waterman et al. and Huta and Waterman is very useful, especially when a researcher wants to understand the complex field of how hedonia and eudaimonia are understood in contemporary psychology of well-being. Huta and Waterman asked future researchers to specify explicitly their core elements, categories of analysis, and levels of measurement. We may agree with this notion. Furthermore, Huta and Waterman argued that if eudaimonia and hedonia are treated asymmetrically in research, a reason for its appropriateness should be given in the context of the study and the theoretical framework adopted.⁶¹⁸

However, considering future research and returning the thinking to the level of the practical research design, the PEAQ-S could probably be more useful to the research of visual arts in relation to well-being than the QEWB. However, the usage of both instruments will require knowledge and skills in psychological research. This request means that the future research should be genuinely interdisciplinary, combining the perspectives of both art research and contemporary psychology.

Yet another conceptualization of well-being has been developed, labelled as The Functional Well-Being Approach (FWBA) by Vittersø et al. in 2010 and Vittersø and Soholt in 2011. In this approach a distinction is being made between feelings of interest and engagement, and, between feelings of pleasure and satisfaction. In other words, Vittersø and Soholt also divided hedonic and eudamonic well-being as they argued that pleasure and interest are separable emotions, with their own distinct functions and phenomenology. The new aspect is that FWBA "(...) offers arguments that run counter to the widespread belief that the development of skills and potentials is pleasant, and the life satisfaction leads to personal growth."⁶¹⁹

Vittersø and Soholt argued that several researchers have noted that hedonic feelings, such as pleasure have little to do with the active

616 Huta, Waterman 2014, 1425-1456.

617 Huta, Ryan 2009, 735.

618 Huta, Waterman 2014, 1425-1456.

619 Vittersø and Soholt, 327.

search for new challenges. Furthermore, Vittersø and Soholt claimed that studies have shown that subjective changes may actually decrease hedonic experiences. On the contrary, personal growth experiences may even produce negative affects in regard to hedonic feelings. Vittersø and Soholt concluded from this that personal growth is linked with the emotion of interest, while life satisfaction is linked with the emotion of pleasure. By referring to several studies Vittersø and Soholt also claimed that it is in fact *easiness* that produces pleasure and satisfaction even if situations that are perceived as too simple can also produce boredom as in flow measure by Csikszentmihalyi. Moreover, “(...) a constant push to perform beyond current abilities is needed for expertise and abilities to grow.”⁶²⁰ Therefore, Vittersø and Soholt argued that

This fact may explain why amateurs seldom improve their performances once they have attained an acceptable level; it is at the habitual level of amateur performance that satisfaction is at its highest, which is probably the reason why it motivates amateur behavior. (...) The crucial message here is that it seems to be easiness and stability, not challenges and change, that are linked to satisfaction.⁶²¹

Vittersø and Soholt argued that their conceptualization of FWBA does not support the idea that hedonic feelings are dominating during the pursuit of eudaimonic activities. Vittersø and Soholt criticized several other researchers, among others Ryff’s psychological well-being. To sum up, Vittersø and Soholt argued that 1) Subjective feelings are a core ingredient of well-being; 2) Pleasure pairs up with satisfaction, while engagement pairs up with growth and the development of skills; 3) Hedonic well-being and eudaimonic well-being are different and hedonic well-being can only reflect to a limited part of positive experiences; 4) Measures of life satisfaction may be insensitive to the areas of well-being that concern personal growth; 5) Both hedonic and eudaimonic elements are needed in the study of well-being.⁶²²

However, what we must ask now is the following: Should eudaimonia and hedonia be used as conceptions or more as theoretical approaches in research? Is it really necessary to distinguish between eudaimonia and hedonia in the psychology of well-being? I am not the only researcher who has asked similar questions. Highly important and illuminating debate about hedonia and eudaimonia was central to *The Journal of Positive Psychology* during the 2000s.

620 Vittersø and Soholt 2011, 327.

621 Vittersø and Soholt 2011, 327.

622 Vittersø and Soholt 2011, 332.

The somewhat heated debate on eudaimonia and hedonia started when, in 2008, Kashdan, Biswas-Diener and King wrote a provocative critique of the distinction being made between eudaimonic and hedonic forms of happiness in research. In this original paper Kashdan, Biswas-Diener and King argued that

In recent years well-being researchers have distinguished between eudaimonic happiness (e.g., meaning and purpose; taking part in activities that allow for the actualization of one's skills, talents, and potential) and hedonic happiness (e.g., high frequencies of positive affect, low frequencies of negative affect, and evaluating life as satisfying). Unfortunately, this distinction (rooted in philosophy) does not necessarily translate well to science.⁶²³

Moreover, Kashdan, Biswas-Diener and King argued that empirical evidence suggested that hedonic and eudaimonic well-being overlap conceptually, and may represent psychological mechanisms that actually operate together.

The critique by Kashdan, Biswas-Diener and King resulted in a series of responses. Firstly, by Waterman, in 2008 and Ryan and Huta, in 2009, resulting to a new response by Biswas-Diener, Kashdan and King in 2009.⁶²⁴ Waterman responded to the critique by presenting conceptual and operational descriptions of hedonia and eudaimonia as two conceptions of happiness. He argued that hedonia and eudaimonia represent interrelated but reliably distinguishable and qualitatively distinct conceptions of happiness.⁶²⁵ Ryan and Huta stated that there are problems associated with reducing the conceptualization of well-being to subjective well-being (SWB). They saw merit in SWB, but argued that eudaimonic thinking broadens and differentiates the hypotheses and the study of outcomes. Ryan and Huta considered Aristotle's theories as the central focus of eudaimonic thinking.⁶²⁶

In their response, Biswas-Diener, Kashdan and King argued that the researchers applying the concept of eudaimonia were actually disagreed about its definition. They claimed that there were problems in the translation of eudaimonia from philosophy into psychology. Biswas-Diener, Kashdan and King argued that even though many authors had interpreted Aristotle's writings, there were not sufficient consensus for scientific purposes.⁶²⁷

Biswas-Diener, Kashdan and King concluded that they stand by their original claim that the ambiguous eudaimonic construct in psychology adds an unnecessary layer of obscurity to theory. The main

623 Kashdan, Biswas-Diener, King 2008, 219.

624 Waterman 2008; Ryan, Huta 2009; Biswas-Diener, Kashdan, King, 2009.

625 Waterman 2008, 234.

626 Ryan, Huta 2009, 202.

627 Biswas-Diener, Kashdan and King 2009, 209.

aspect of Biswas-Diener, Kashdan and King was that they did not understand the value of adding additional terminology to categorize the self-determination theory as eudaimonia. Furthermore, Biswas-Diener, Kashdan and King argued that subjective well-being components, i.e. positive affect, negative affect, and judgments about life are not separate from other well-being components. Thus, they concluded, that there are two intellectual traditions of happiness research, not two types of happiness.⁶²⁸

Personally, I understand the critique by Kashdan, Biswan-Diener and King, while I also embrace the work done by Ryan, Deci, Waterman, Waterman and colleagues and Huta. Hedonia and eudaimonia are strong concepts that have their own history within the discipline of philosophy. But they are not closed concepts, neither do they require 'a definition', as a means of setting the boundaries, or as in logic the necessary and sufficient conditions. Thus I suggest that in the future the very problem of 'translation' of the writings of Aristotle into contemporary psychology should be conceptualized as a supplementation and renewal that produces the original in an new context. In addition to that, I follow Wittgenstein's view that concepts should be studied in the context of their usage, not as ontological entities.

It is clear that the field of well-being research in the contemporary psychology can be considered as diverse, and sometimes contradictory. It could be questioned whether subjective well-being (SWB), psychological well-being (PWB), eudaimonic well-being (EWB) or functional well-being approach (FWBA) represent four distinguishable conceptions of well-being or should they be considered more as four different theoretical frameworks or approaches. This is something future will probably tell, as the eudaimonic well-being research is still yet to mature at larger scale. However, it is disappointing that contemporary psychologists have sometimes divided the complex matter of well-being into binary divisions of for and against SWB, PWB or EWB.

Huta and Waterman argued that the construction of the research question may put the perspectives of hedonia and eudaimonia in opposition with each other. As an example, they argued that a research question might be as follows: Does the pursuit of a pleasurable experience produce greater, equal or less positive affect than the pursuit of self-realization?⁶²⁹

628 Biswas-Diener, Kashdan and King 2009, 210–211.

629 Huta, Waterman 2014, 1425–1456.

Taking this consideration by Huta and Waterman further and to the research of visual arts, we might ask, for example: Does the activity of painting produce greater, equal or less positive affect than the activity of painting as a way of self-realization? As we can see, the question is misformulated. The real questions would be as follows:

- (i) Does the activity of painting produce any pleasurable experience at all, and if it does – how, and who is likely to benefit from it?
- (ii) Does the activity of painting produce the sense of self-realization at all, and if it does – how, and who is likely to benefit from it?

The issue of the application of the concepts of self-realization and personal expressiveness is not a simple one when discussing visual arts and certainly not if we consider professional artistic practice. No visual artwork is created in an illusionary vacuum of personal expression or self-expression alone. Rather, the artistic process and the artwork itself are arenas of cultural and social negotiation. They are also an interpretation by the artist of the visual communication of the other artworks. Furthermore, a professional artist creates symbolic interpretation of cognitive-affective mental states. This symbolic interpretation is multi-faceted, complex and highly related to personal experience, but also to the contemporary culture, society and art world as well as the history of art.

As I have evidenced, there are different ways of describing subjective, psychological, hedonic and eudaimonic well-being in contemporary psychology. The researcher of visual arts in relation to well-being should be able to clearly position her or his study within the frameworks of subjective, psychological or eudaimonic and hedonic well-being and understand both the distinguishable conceptions as well as their overlapping nature.

However, personally, taking the lead from the contemporary psychology that originates from the perspective of the eudaimonic tradition and considers activities as consisting of both hedonic and eudaimonic or from hedonic pursuits, is a relevant starting point. Furthermore, the specific nature of the practice of visual arts in relation to well-being must be acknowledged. Thus more emphasis is placed on the conception of flow. It is recommended that the design of research should also include the methodology developed by Csikszentmihalyi and colleagues. The conception of flow is included, for example, within the instruments developed by Waterman and Waterman et al. PEAQ-S has a dimension of deep immersion in an activity, and QEWB has a dimension of intense involvement in activities.

5.5. The conception of flow

So far, perhaps the most appropriate approach that could be utilized for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being interests is to consider well-being as a subjective experience of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being when a person is engaged in the art activity. Only a few researchers have actually concentrated on activity as the level of analysis of well-being, apart from the flow researchers and those who follow the eudaimonic tradition.⁶³⁰ The concept of flow is one of the most interesting in regard to visual arts as an activity.

Several researchers have offered interpretations of flow. Massimini and Carli argued that most of the life is a stream of ordinary experiences, but occasionally “(...) the notes fall into a harmonious chord – when that happens, information in consciousness is ordered, and we experience flow.”⁶³¹ Argyle and Martin explained that flow is an experience of joy, an absorption, which includes a dimension of depth and intensity when tackling a demanding task.⁶³² Diener stated that lasting happiness can partly come also from activities, such as being involved in flow activities.⁶³³ Vittersø argued that flow is considered as an autotelic and optimal experience and has the following characteristics: high involvement, deep concentration, intrinsic motivation and high challenges corresponding to adequate skills.⁶³⁴

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi is considered to be the founder of the concept of flow. Csikszentmihalyi’s concept of flow, when rarely mentioned, was mostly misunderstood in the research material of the arts and academic sector. Only few know that the origins of the concept of flow can actually be found in the studies concerning the professional, visual artistic process as “(...) artists provided the clue for the importance of intrinsic motivation.”⁶³⁵ Hence flow is a valid and relevant conception for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being.

Csikszentmihalyi received his B.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago and worked as the head of the Department of Psychology at the University of Chicago. Csikszentmihalyi’s dissertation, called *Artistic problems and their solution: an exploration of creativity in the arts* was accepted in 1965 at the University of Chicago.

630 Waterman 1993, Waterman 2005, Waterman et al.2008; Delle Fave, Massimini 1988; Delle Fave, Bassi 2009.

631 Massimini, Carli 1998, 267.

632 Argyle, Martin 1991, 79.

633 Diener 2000, 41.

634 Vittersø 2003, 141.

635 Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, xii.

Csikszentmihalyi has stated that the first publications that appeared in print of the flow experience were his article *Play and intrinsic values* (1975) in *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, and the book *Beyond Boredom and Anxiety. The Experience of Play in Work and Games* (1975), which offered the first comprehensive theoretical model of optimal experience as a flow state.⁶³⁶

Csikszentmihalyi has explained that the ideas of an enjoyable experience as flow started to crystallize to him as he observed artists at work. Csikszentmihalyi noticed that artists seemingly enjoyed their work immensely, spending hour after hour at work with great concentration. This observation led Csikszentmihalyi to question what accounted in the activity for the deep fascination and attention. He concluded that “(...) the reasons might be within the activity: that the rewards of painting came from painting itself.”⁶³⁷

Csikszentmihalyi has stated that there were few researchers who were interested in the phenomenon of intrinsic motivation in the 1960s. Thus his approach was closest to Maslow’s conceptualization of the peak experience and the motivation for a desire of self-actualization as a need to discover one’s potential through intense activity. But according to Csikszentmihalyi Maslow’s conceptualization left several questions open such as could any activity give intrinsic rewards, or only few ones, like artistic process?⁶³⁸

In 1975 Csikszentmihalyi considered different activities such as play which he considered as intrinsically motivated. After that he examined different individuals who spent great amounts of time in diverse activities, such as amateur athletes, chess masters, rock climbers, dancers, high school basketball players, and composers of music. By this time the concept of flow did not concern the artistic process alone anymore. Csikszentmihalyi stated that the most immediate impact of his studies was on the research of psychological and sociological implications of free time, such as sports, leisure and recreation.⁶³⁹

Thus, the concept of flow extended from the original experience felt by visual artists while painting or sculpting into an optimal experience that could be experienced at work, at home and at school, that is in daily life. This was actually the agenda of the flow research. Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi stated that the ultimate goal of the studies concerning flow was “(...) to find piecemeal and experimentally what combinations of challenges and skills can be accommodated in a schoolroom, a neighborhood, or a home...[in order

636 Csikszentmihalyi, 1998, 3.

637 Csikszentmihalyi 1998, 4.

638 Csikszentmihalyi 1998, 5.

639 Csikszentmihalyi 1998, 8.

to] maximize flow involvement in as many people as possible.”⁶⁴⁰

It is interesting to study how the original concept of flow was used. First of all, Csikszentmihalyi changed the concept from ‘autotelic experience’ to flow in the midcourse of his original research. The concept of flow had been used as a metaphor by the study participants, and Csikszentmihalyi decided to apply it instead of the autotelic experience. This was done also because, according to Csikszentmihalyi, there was no need to make an assumption anymore that flow would not have external goals or external rewards. Flow was considered as a holistic sensation which people feel when they act with total involvement. Moreover, the flow experience was regarded as an experience of present, not past, nor future, and it included an element of loss of the sense of time.⁶⁴¹

On the level of experience the elements of flow were considered to include the following: 1) merging of action and awareness as the person is aware of the actions, but not of the awareness itself, 2) centering of attention on a limited stimulus field, 3) loss of self-consciousness, 4) being in control of action and environment, 5) coherent, noncontradictory demands for action and clear feedback, 6) autotelic nature as having intrinsic, rather than external rewards.⁶⁴²

The original flow model of 1975 by Csikszentmihalyi consisted of the variables of challenges and skills compared to feelings of anxiety, boredom and flow. The flow was the area where the challenges equal to skills for optimal experience.⁶⁴³ The next stage of the development of the flow model was a revision by Massimini and Carli at the University of Milan in 1985. In this model the flow experience starts only when challenges and skills are above certain level, and are in balance. When both challenges and skills are below what is customary for a person, the person will not experience flow.⁶⁴⁴ Massimini and Carli’s new conceptual model consisted of eight channels in relation to low and high challenges and skills.

- Channel 1 AROUSAL: High challenge, moderate skill
- Channel 2 FLOW: High challenge, high skill
- Channel 3 CONTROL: Moderate challenge, high skill
- Channel 4: BOREDOM: Low challenge, high skill
- Channel 5: RELAXATION: Low challenge, moderate skill
- Channel 6: APATHY: Low challenge, low skill
- Channel 7: WORRY: Moderate challenge, low skill
- Channel 8: ANXIETY: High challenge, low skill⁶⁴⁵

640 Csikszentmihalyi, Csikszentmihalyi 1998, 251.

641 Csikszentmihalyi 1975, 36.

642 Csikszentmihalyi 1975, 38–47.

643 Csikszentmihalyi 1975, 49.

644 Csikszentmihalyi, Csikszentmihalyi 1998, 260.

645 Massimini, Carli 1998, 270.

The revisionary model by Massimini and Carli aimed to describe the variations of the perceived quality of the subjective experience. Flow was considered as the optimal experience, meaning that the perceived quality of the experience is optimal. When skills are greater than the opportunities for using them, boredom will follow. A person who has great skills and few opportunities to use his or her skills will acquire the state of anxiety. When the person does not have all the skills the action demands for, he or she will feel worry. If the person is bombarded with demands, he or she feels unable to meet in the context of his or her skills, the state of experience is anxiety. When challenges and skills are both high, the situation may create a flow experience. When challenges and skills are high, people also feel in control, happy, strong, active, involved, and wishing to be doing the activity at hand.⁶⁴⁶

Massimini and Carli argued that almost any activity in everyday life can produce flowlike experiences. This means that productive and structured activities such as schoolwork and studying could be conducive to the flow experience as well as leisure activities.⁶⁴⁷

I have established that the conception of flow is relevant and valid to the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being. With regard to the concept of flow, it is pivotal to understand that for the optimal experience the challenges and skills should actually be quite high in an activity.

Next I will examine an example of the empirical research of flow in order to find out whether the flow measure, as an instrument, could be appropriate for the research. The example is a classical study of everyday activities by Csikszentmihalyi and Wong from 1991.

Csikszentmihalyi and Wong argued that there are two principal ways to approach the question of happiness in general. First approach considers the personal trait, which is "(...) the relatively permanent disposition to experience well-being regardless of external conditions."⁶⁴⁸ Second approach considers the state, "(...) or a transitory subjective experience responsive to momentary events or conditions in the environment."⁶⁴⁹

The flow model starts from the presumption that the cause of happiness is a psychological state, the subjective experience of an activity or activities. Csikszentmihalyi and Wong argued that external conditions like health, wealth, love or good fortune can sometimes help bring happiness about. However, these external conditions must first be subjectively evaluated as conducive to happiness by an individual.⁶⁵⁰

646 Massimini, Carli 1998, 271.

647 Massimini, Carli 1998, 277.

648 Csikszentmihalyi, Wong 1991, 194.

649 Csikszentmihalyi, Wong 1991, 194.

650 Csikszentmihalyi, Wong 1991, 196.

The research by Csikszentmihalyi and Wong was designed with care. Firstly, the background of the study participants was similar. The study concentrated on American and Italian high school students with similar, mostly middle class backgrounds. Secondly, the data was collected with ESM, the Experience Sampling Method, which repeats measurement of activities, thoughts and feelings in natural environment utilizing an electronic beeper, instead of a psychology laboratory. When signalled by an electronic pager, the participants filled out Experience Sampling Forms (ESF). The ESF consisted of open-ended questions about the activity and a number of Likert scales measuring dimensions of subjective experience.

Thirdly, the coding of the answers in relation to activity were collapsed into four major types of activities: 1) productive, 2) structured leisure, 3) unstructured leisure, and 4) maintenance. The companionship, i.e. the question who the participant was with, was also coded. Fourthly, experience of the activity was coded in eight channels as described before. Fifthly, quality of the experience of the activity was coded with a seven-point Likert scale: alert-drowsy, active-passive, strong-weak, excited-bored, involved-detached, clear-confused. Finally, the perceived choice was also coded. The interesting question here was whether the participant perceived the activity as an obligation, a voluntary decision, or something done because there was nothing else to do.⁶⁵¹

Csikszentmihalyi and Wong concluded that the results concerning the relationship between activities and happiness showed that the highest levels of happiness in daily life were reported when participants' activities were sports and games, socializing, eating, art and hobbies.⁶⁵²

In summary, the most important issues for further consideration of research design concerning visual art practice are: 1) Homogenous background of the study participants; 2) Natural environment of the activity; 3) Adaptation of the Experience Sampling Method (ESM) and Experience Sampling Form (ESF); 4) The coding of the answers in relation to art activity; 5) The coding of the influence of the social group; 6) The coding of the experience of the activity by using the channel model; 7) The coding of the motivation of the activity.

However, as ESM was originally developed as a time-sampling instrument to study experiences in everyday life by Csikszentmihalyi, Larson and Prescott at the University of Chicago in 1975 and 1976⁶⁵³, it would not be relevant to utilize it as such in a situationalized research in visual arts, especially if the artist facilitator also observes the activity

651 Csikszentmihalyi, Wong 1991, 199–200.

652 Csikszentmihalyi, Wong 1991, 210.

653 Csikszentmihalyi, Csikszentmihalyi 1998, 252–253; Massimini, Carli 1998, 268.

in the role of the researcher. However, an adaptation of ESM and ESF could be utilized. This problem of psychological measures requires further studies of the relevant arts-driven in situ research methods that could be best utilized.

As explained before, few of the studies in the research material of the arts and academic sector applied any relevant methodology or method concerning the dimensions of an activity or practice of the visual arts. Moreover, doubts were raised whether interviews and questionnaires can ever separate the actual activities of visual arts from the cultural and social norms of both the researcher and the participant which may influence the interview or questionnaire.

This view gains even more support from Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi who argued that the limitations of an interview as a way of reconstructing the stream of consciousness are obvious. According to Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi interviews can be considered to have only a very rough resolution in research. Moreover, “(...) interviews are limited by the vagaries of memory and by the difficulty that persons unused to reflection have in reporting events, especially internal events that only take place in consciousness.”⁶⁵⁴

Thus, one of the most important instructions that can be learnt from the flow studies by Csikszentmihalyi and colleagues in regard to methodology is the need for situationalized and contextualized research of subjective experience, rather than relying to post-experience data gathering by interviews.

It is evident that flow is a useful conception for the study of the subjective experience of an activity, but questions about the use of the conception can also be raised. The first issue concerns the phenomenon of flow as a universal, rather than a culturally related concept. Csikszentmihalyi and Wong noted that the flow as a perspective on well-being has been criticized of being typically ‘American’ as it can be seen to be founded on pragmatic and competitive cultural values. However, based on samples from Asian and European cultures, Csikszentmihalyi and Wong argued that the notion of flow is a universal subjective state.⁶⁵⁵ Moreover, Csikszentmihalyi argued that the mechanisms of the experience that make enjoyment possible are probably the same regardless of the culture.⁶⁵⁶

The second question concerns the demand for personal growth, which as Vittersø and Soholt noticed, may not always be pleasurable. This criticism indeed rings true if we take a look on this statement by Csikszentmihalyi and Csikszentmihalyi: “(...) flow is a force for

654 Csikszentmihalyi, Csikszentmihalyi 1998, 252.

655 Csikszentmihalyi, Wong 1991, 196.

656 Csikszentmihalyi, 1998, 10.

growth: Unless people get better at what they are doing, they can't enjoy doing it any longer."⁶⁵⁷ I suggest that instead of applying the phrase of 'getting better', we should perhaps talk about obtaining a deeper knowledge and vision in regard to activities and their meaning to our life and well-being.

The third issue concerns the conception of the intrinsic motivation. As the use of the concept of flow has extended from painting and rock climbing to everyday activities at school or work, something essential has perhaps been lost from the original conception of flow as autotelic, and thus appearing to need no goals or rewards external to the experience itself.

We could, for example, argue that a lot of the activities at work may not be voluntary and originating from intrinsic motivation but instead deemed upon legal work contracts. Moreover, basic education at school can hardly be considered as a voluntary choice, at least in Finland, where basic education is compulsory and all children permanently residing in Finland must attend compulsory schooling or otherwise obtain the knowledge corresponding to the basic education syllabus.⁶⁵⁸ Thus, an essential question in regard to the intrinsic motivation and art activity would be: *Why* were you doing this particular art activity?

The fourth question is as follows:

(i) Do people benefit in regard to the quality of life from optimal experience of flow?

This question could be formulated also as:

(ii) What are the preconditions to assume that the experience of flow is always good for overall well-being of an individual?

Massimini and Carli noted that what might produce flow for one person may not be the same for anyone else. Some people may continuously describe their opportunities for action as very high, and others deem their opportunities most of the time low. In addition to that some people will rate their skills as very high, while others with the same skills set may deem them low.⁶⁵⁹

However, flow researchers tend to consider the experience of flow beneficial in general. Massimini and Carli argued that "(...) to develop one's potentials one must take a daily dose of high challenges. The secret is to come as close as possible to the deep enjoyment of the flow experience while doing it."⁶⁶⁰ Csikszentmihalyi stated that "Flow is a sense that humans have developed in order to recognize patterns of action that are worth preserving and transmitting over

657 Csikszentmihalyi, Csikszentmihalyi 1998, 261.

658 Basic Education Act 1998, 11.

659 Massimini, Carli 1998, 269.

660 Massimini, Carli 1998, 286.

time.”⁶⁶¹ Thus, Csikszentmihalyi considered flow as important to the quality of individual well-being and to the development of culture and society in general. According to Csikszentmihalyi the flow experience reaffirms the order of self and consciousness, and is in itself enjoyable. Thus, people try to replicate the flow experience whenever possible. Moreover, for Csikszentmihalyi almost any experience is *potentially* enjoyable.⁶⁶²

But the fifth question is the following: There may be a situation when the skills are perceived as low and the challenge as low or moderate by an individual. Yet the experience of the activity may be one of enjoyment and the disappearance of the sense of time may follow. This situation could exist, for example, when painting with water colours for the first time. The mixing of colours could be perceived as a pleasurable flow experience, even though the skills and challenges might be perceived to be at a beginner’s level.

Waterman was able to offer a mediating connection between the conceptions of eudaimonia, hedonia and flow. First of all, Waterman argued that there is a link between personal expressiveness and the concept of flow. Waterman interpreted Csikszentmihalyi’s conception of flow in terms of the balance of relatively high skills and challenges, and a distinctive cognitive-affective state. Waterman suggested that “(...) the description of flow as a cognitive-affective state involves an amalgam of personal expressiveness and hedonic enjoyment, whereas its conceptualization in terms of a balance of challenges and skills is tapping only the former conception of happiness.”⁶⁶³

In other words, according to Waterman, components of flow as a cognitive-affective state associated with personal expressiveness, such as deep concentration and using one’s best potentials are linked to eudaimonic well-being, whereas the other cognitive-affective states of losing the track of time and forgetting one’s problems are associated more to hedonic enjoyment. Moreover, Waterman argued that the perceived levels of skills and challenges were unrelated to hedonic enjoyment.⁶⁶⁴ It is also interesting that in his early study with college students, “(...) a significant positive association between eudaimonia and flow was obtained, but no relationship between hedonic enjoyment and flow was observed.”⁶⁶⁵ Thus, I concur with Waterman. The concept of flow actually has two dimensions: the cognitive-affective states which can be linked to hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, and the balance of skills and challenges.

661 Csikszentmihalyi 1998, 34.

662 Csikszentmihalyi 1998, 34.

663 Waterman 1993, 690.

664 Waterman 1993, 690.

665 Waterman 1990, 43.

5.6. A theoretical framework for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being

So far I have intended to clarify the theoretical perspectives concerning the relevant conceptions of well-being in contemporary psychology. This was done in order to be able to propose new relevant theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being.

The study at hand connects visual art practice with the psychological conceptions of eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. The principal proposition is: It is the meaningfulness of the visual art practice which may offer the opportunity for eudaimonic and hedonic well-being and the optimal experience of flow. Following Waterman and colleagues, eudaimonia and hedonia are understood as dimensions of psychological well-being, and in particular in regard to activities that may offer opportunities for personal expressiveness and growth. The conclusions from this chapter can be produced as a table that guides the future research.

Table 43. A theoretical framework for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being
<p>Epistemological foundation of well-being Positive psychology ↓</p>
<p>Theoretical framework of well-being Psychology of well-being and the dimensions of eudaimonic and hedonic well-being ↓</p>
<p>Methodology Interdisciplinary: psychology of well-being; psychology of arts and aesthetics; theoretical and practice-led art research ↓</p>
<p>Methods Trait level psychological measure In situ visual art workshop research State level psychological measure Analysis of visual art production, process and products</p>

The theoretical framework for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being consists of the epistemological foundation of well-being, theoretical framework of well-being, methodology and methods. Epistemological foundation is understood here as the study of the knowledge construction in research. The knowledge construction and its justification differ in scientific disciplines and research fields. The premises of the theoretical framework are as follows.

1) The relevant theoretical framework for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being originates from the epistemological foundation of positive psychology as a specific research field which has its focus on the interest in human potential, flourishing and well-being.

2) The theoretical framework of well-being is psychology of well-being, and the dimensions of eudaimonia and hedonia as overlapping, yet distinguishable conceptions of contemporary psychology are acknowledged.

3) The principal conceptions of well-being suggested to be applied in the research concerning visual art practice are psychological well-being (PWB), hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (EWB), and flow as an optimal experience.

4) Psychological well-being is understood especially in the context of Ryff's theories, whereas eudaimonia and hedonia as psychological conceptions are understood especially in the context of the theories by Waterman and colleagues, Deci, Ryan and Huta. Flow is considered in the context of the original theories by Csikszentmihalyi, Massimini and Carli, and with the distinction made by Waterman.

5) The conceptual distinction and application of the conceptions depends on the research question and hypothesis at hand. It should be distinguished whether the purpose of the inquiry is focused more on eudaimonic living, or assessing eudaimonia as a relation to particular traits, states or activities in regard to visual art practice.

6) A distinction should be made in regard to trait or state level analysis of well-being. Trait level psychological measure is regarded as an instrument or a psychological measurement in order to understand the construct of trait in the context of person's typical or average degrees of psychological well-being and values. State level psychological measure is regarded as an instrument or a psychological measurement in order to understand the construct of state in the context of a particular type of activity in time.

7) The concept of eudaimonic well-being is construed in terms of the realization of personal expression and meaning, in the context of developing one's strengths and potentials in regard to the visual art practice, whereas hedonia is understood in the context of enjoyment and pleasure.

8) Methodology is regarded as necessarily interdisciplinary in order to consider the both conceptions: visual art practice, as well as well-being. Interdisciplinarity is understood as a cooperative dialogue across the field boundaries of art research and psychology. Theoretical or practice-based art research consists of different disciplines of research which focus on the study of the arts.

9) Methods include both psychological measures and analysis of visual art production, process and products. The research should be situationalized and contextualized instead of focusing on the post-experience data gathering. The research should be preferably accompanied also by a sufficient visual record of the art production, process and/or artworks.

All in all, the utilization of the theoretical framework depends on the design of the research question itself. Thus, my next purpose is to discuss what could be a new conceptual framework for the problem of the relevant research question and hypothesis formulation in regard to the dimensions of visual art practice in relation to eudaimonic and hedonic well-being.

CHAPTER SIX

6. A Conceptual Framework for the Research of Visual Art Practice in Relation to Well-Being

One of the main purposes of conceptual analysis in general is to develop new conceptual frameworks. A conceptual framework is understood here as a theoretical approach and a means for discussion about the use and relations of different concepts. It aims to encourage dialogue about the relevant directions of future research. Consistent with the previous research approach, concepts are discussed in relation to their possible use in research, not as ontological entities. Rather than a restrictive structure, the framework aims to be communicative in its nature.

The conceptual framework does not aim to offer ‘the truth’ about how the research concerning visual art practice in relation to well-being should be designed. One of the most sophisticated explanations of ‘truth’ and ‘fact’ is Langer’s conceptualization of the truth, not within logic, but within the construction of meaning and in the context of the concept of the fact. For Langer, a fact is not a simplistic notion, instead a fact is “(...) which we conceive to be the source and context of signs to which we react successfully (...)”.⁶⁶⁶ Referring to Wittgenstein, Langer explained that our world divides into facts, because we, as people, divide it. Thus, facts could be considered as the guarantee of truth.⁶⁶⁷

However, ‘the facts’ can be interpreted differently in various research fields. Langer argued that science is an intellectual scheme for handling facts, a context in which whole classes of facts may be understood. But according to Langer, science is not the most decisive expression of realistic thinking. It is instead the historical sense, or the historical fact. Langer described the task of the historian as he “(..) does

666 Langer 1957, 267.

667 Langer 1957, 273.

not locate known facts in a hypothetical, general pattern of processes; his aim is to link fact to fact (...)"⁶⁶⁸

The truth is a relative concept, but it is 'a fact', in the Langerian sense, that during its evolution, art history has offered several methodologies in order to study visual arts, such as formal analysis, iconography, visual semiotics and art historical hermeneutics. Aesthetics has provided several perspectives to examine visual art practice, such as art as an art-impulse (Hirn), art as emotional expression (Collingwood), art as institutional artworld (Danto), or art as symbolic expression (Langer), just to name a few.⁶⁶⁹

Hence it is unfortunate that, despite these facts of existing theoretical approaches and methodology, the language of art research was mostly unspoken on the benefit of the discourse of social and health sciences in the research material. So far we have learnt that most of the research material actually considered visual arts in a subservient role in the study designs. The research methods concentrated on gathering textual and verbal data through interviews or questionnaires. The artistic process, specific mechanisms of a particular visual art form, or visual artworks themselves were rarely examined or analysed.

None of the research publications of the arts or academic sector in the sample utilized methodology of art history, art theory, aesthetics or design research, nor did they aim at a genuinely interdisciplinary research combining the fields of arts, humanities, health and social sciences. Furthermore, no specific cultural portraits of different groups of visual artists as facilitators were made. Sometimes the concept of 'an artist' was dislocated and mixed with groups of hobbyists in study designs. The academic research relied mostly on the views of small groups of study participants, thus ignoring the possibility to gain information from multiple sources. The outcome was constructed by an expectation of how the research would fulfil it, even though room should be left for different possibilities of research findings. The underlying belief of the research could be described as 'art increases well-being', without the need to examine what exactly is the problem for the artist to be solved in regard to well-being.

This situation could be conceptualized as 'a system of beliefs'. Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels stated that the 'system of beliefs' means that the society presents the problem to the artist to be solved. The artistic problem is defined by societal needs and the task of the artists is to translate these problems into visual form.⁶⁷⁰ In other words, there would be no need for the artist to find out what the problem in regard to

668 Langer 1957, 277.

669 Hirn 1900, Collingwood 1960, Danto 1964, Langer 1953, 1957.

670 Csikszentmihalyi, Getzels 1976, 195.

well-being should be, because the society has already provided it from the top-down perspective.

My suggestion is that if research claims to study visual arts in any way, the problem should be formulated also from the perspective of arts, and described in terms of both visual arts and well-being. The reflective knowledge of artists of the visual art practice should play a larger role in research. The art activities and engagement of visual art practice can be seen as intrinsically motivated, without the need to resort to instrumentalist reasoning and objectives.

6.1. The conceptual framework

So far I have connected visual art practice to the epistemological foundation of positive psychology and the theoretical framework of psychological well-being and its hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions. This was done in order to design a more rigorous theoretical research framework for visual art practice in relation to well-being interests.

The new conceptual framework can be used when formulating a research question or hypothesis concerning the connection between visual art practice and psychological well-being. The framework could also be utilized when selecting methodology or particular methods, or when making a choice between different psychological well-being measures in regard to the research of visual art practice. Moreover, the conceptual framework could also be applied when research of visual art practice in relation to well-being is discussed. The framework can thus benefit a wide range of research in the fields of arts and humanities, as well as health, social and leisure sciences.

In addition, the conceptual framework should be considered as an invitation for the exchange of perspectives across disciplinary boundaries. Thus, it aims for advancing dialogue and discussion about the different research approaches and conceptions, and should not be considered as restrictive, nor exhaustive.

Moreover, the conceptual framework itself is context-dependant and the concepts of visual art practice are aimed to be discussed here more in the context of art research with a relation to contemporary psychological dimensions of eudaimonia and hedonia. This interdisciplinary approach seeks to contribute to a better understanding of how mediating conceptual links could be developed.

It is necessary to state what the key perspectives of the conceptual framework are. Visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits is considered as: 1) A professional visual art practice conducted by an artist facilitator; 2) Activities that may enhance hedonic and eudaimonic well-being of the participant; 3) Knowledge that may be invoked by the arts facilitation, arts participation, art activities, artistic process, and the visual artwork itself. Thus, visual arts are considered as a particular mode of understanding which cannot be interpreted only by gathering textual or verbal data as a post-experience.

Both the art activity by the participant and the practice of the artist facilitator should be contextualized and situationalized. The main principles are introduced in the following table.

Table 44. The main principles of the conceptual framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual arts are considered as an activity of a group of participants. • The group consists of non-clinical participants. • The activity is the participants' leisure time. • The activity is facilitated by a professional artist. • The facilitation of visual art activities is considered as a practice of the artist. • The practice of the artist facilitator is considered as a professional service. • Visual arts as a practice, activity, process, production and product are considered as knowledge. • Well-being is conceptualized as psychological well-being, comprising the dimensions of eudaimonia and hedonia as overlapping, yet distinguishable constructs of psychology. • The concepts of eudaimonia and hedonia are recognized as central to the research of psychological well-being in regard to activities on state level. • Eudaimonia is conceptualized in terms of: self-realization, self expression, meaning, value, signature strengths, interest, effort, flow. <p>The core conception of eudaimonia is meaningfulness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close-to core conceptions of eudaimonia are considered as positive relationships and communication, acceptance and self-acceptance, and environmental sensitivity. • Hedonia is conceptualized in terms of the subjective experiences of pleasure, enjoyment and relaxation.

Art activity as a concept is understood here as a pursuit in which an individual is active, and a form of organized, structured and facilitated recreation for performing a specific function of enhancing eudaimonic and hedonic well-being of the participant. Artist-facilitated visual art practice is understood here as the actual performance of a mode of service practice which can be conducted in the arts industry or in cooperation between the arts, health, social care and leisure industries. Furthermore, both concepts are regarded mostly in the context of

research, even though practical implications are apparent.

A non-clinical participant is regarded here as a participant with whom the practice is not concerned as a treatment of disease or mental disorder. Confinement to non-clinical participants is made due to several reasons. First is the issue of the evidence-based practice of health and social sciences, especially medicine. The qualitative research methods of art research may be problematic if the outcomes of the visual art practice would be evaluated by the standards of the healthcare sector.

Dileo and Brandt argued that when providing evidence of arts in healthcare, it is important to consider the current standard in healthcare, which is evidence-based practice (EBP). According to Dileo and Brandt, EPB stands for patient treatment, that is safe, effective and cost-effective. It is a decision-making process of healthcare in which the "(...) the professional relies upon: (1) the best scientific evidence available, (2) his or her own clinical expertise, and (3) input from the patient, to arrive at the best course of treatment for that patient."⁶⁷¹

The demand of evidence-based research (EBP) represents several difficulties for art research or qualitative research in relation to well-being interests that need to be addressed. Firstly, an artist as a facilitator of visual art practice cannot be considered to have clinical expertise in health, unless she or he has also a qualification to practice a health or medical profession. Secondly, this leads to the conclusion that visual art practice is considered within a well-being model, rather than a disease model.

Thirdly, visual art practice is not considered primarily in the context of health, whether it be a social or medical model of health, but instead in the context of psychological well-being. Fourthly, visual art practice is not considered as a treatment, and participants of art activities are not regarded as patients. Fifthly, artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being aims is considered as a preventative mode of practice in regard to psychological well-being, and does not comprise any aspects of therapy.

Sixthly, in many cases the previous research has been driven from the perspective of the disability, even though the art practice is not labelled as art therapy. However, these studies have been constructed so that the disability is the signifying framework, the baseline of the participants. Thus, the practice of the arts is examined and discussed in the context of the disability. In other words, the study participants are firstly recognized through their disability, not the artistic or aesthetic motivation. In contrast, in the new conceptual framework study participants are recognized in regard to the artistic and aesthetic

671 Dileo, Brandt 2009, 170.

interest. Therefore, seventhly, visual arts are not considered as a treatment for psychological problems. Furthermore, eighthly, a visual artwork is not regarded as a visual indication or a document of psychological symptoms.

Most of the previous studies concentrated on discussing art activities in general, making it impossible to determine the actual impact of different situationalized and contextualized factors and the artistic and aesthetic dimensions of the visual art practice itself. Hence, here visual art practice is considered as an artist-facilitated practice in order to promote hedonic and eudaimonic well-being of non-clinical participants. It is a human-centered practice that places focus on the motivation and interests of the participant in regard to both the meaningful visual art activities and the sense of well-being.

It is necessary to state what the conceptual framework is not. The framework does not consider art therapy, the creation of artworks for improving healthcare settings, health promotion through artworks or project development work of health and social sector through arts-based methods, or medical humanities.

Instead, the conceptual framework is designed by keeping in mind the perspectives of both the artist as a facilitator and the individual as a participant. The premise of the framework in regard to hedonic and eudaimonic well-being takes it lead especially from the work by Waterman, Waterman et al., Ryan, Deci and Huta.⁶⁷² The new conceptual framework focuses on state level conceptions, rather than the trait level analysis. State-level here refers to a particular point in time, or a particular type of activity, or class of circumstances.⁶⁷³

By adapting the categories of analysis by Huta and Waterman, the framework aims to discuss, from an arts-driven perspective, 1) orientations, as motives, values and goals of arts facilitation, arts participation, art activities and artistic process, 2) behaviour, as the content and characteristics of the arts facilitation, arts participation, art activities and artistic process, 3) subjective experiences in the context of environment, arts facilitation, arts participation, art activities, artistic process and the artwork itself, 4) functioning as a possible outcome of positive functioning and flourishing. However, the conceptual framework does not concentrate on functioning as positive mental health. Moreover, as Huta and Waterman argued, positive functioning could be discussed in the context of possible outcomes as ways of behaving which may be achieved after a prolonged period of time. The level and category of analysis depend on the specific research question

672 Waterman 1990; Waterman 1993, Waterman 2005, Deci, Ryan 2006; Waterman 2008; Waterman et al. 2008; Ryan, Huta, Deci 2008; Waterman et al., 2010; Huta, Ryan 2010; Huta, Waterman 2014

673 Huta, Waterman 2014, 1428, 1434.

and the hypothesis at hand. Thus, the possible research approaches are discussed as an initiative for further development and should not be regarded as exhaustive.

Intrinsic motivation is considered as the key explaining conception in regard to the participant's goals and choices. Thus, I argue that the sense of personal growth and meaning as eudaimonia depends largely on human motivation. Regarding overall visual art practice, this consideration is conceptualized as the meaningfulness of the practice.

Connecting different core and close-to-core elements in the descriptions of eudaimonic and hedonic well-being by Huta and Waterman (2014) to the practice of visual arts, my suggestion is that the visual art practice could be conceptualized in the context of the following eudaimonic pursuits of the participant:

- personal growth, self-realization;
- meaning, long-term perspective;
- identity,
- self-expression;
- signature strengths;
- positive relationships;
- environmental sensitivity;
- engagement, interest;
- flow;
- acceptance, self-acceptance.

Visual art practice could also provide for the subjective experiences of hedonia as:

- pleasure;
- enjoyment;
- low distress;
- relaxation.

However, following Huta and Waterman, subjective experiences are here understood more as accompanying the pursuits and possible outcomes. As Huta and Waterman argued "(...) from a contemporary psychological perspective it is theoretically plausible to posit that there is a distinctive set of subjective experiences (...) that accompany the pursuit of that which is worthwhile, and that they are distinguishable from pleasure in the hedonic meaning of that term."⁶⁷⁴

There are a few points of departure. Instead of the concept of personal expressiveness by Waterman and Waterman et al., the concept of 'self-expression' is utilized as it belongs to the common discourse of art research. The conception of flow is understood in the original meaning of Csikszentmihalyi, Massimini and Carli as comprising the

level of skills and challenges, and the optimal experience.⁶⁷⁵

However, a differentiation in the concept of flow is made, which takes its lead from the theories by Waterman. Flow as a conception is understood to include two dimensions: the cognitive-affective states which can be linked to both hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, and the balance of relatively high skills and challenges for optimal experience which relate more to eudaimonic well-being. Moreover, environmental sensitivity is understood in reference to Ryff's psychological well-being, but instead of 'mastery' the conception of sensitivity is used here, referring to the aesthetic and contextual dimensions of environment.

The conceptual framework does not aim to examine empirically the aforementioned pursuits as such. Instead, relevant and valid psychological well-being measures are needed depending on the specific research question and hypothesis at hand. However, the framework considers the possible research aspects of different situations and contexts that may influence eudaimonic and hedonic well-being of the participant when engaged in visual art practice. The concept of 'aspect' is utilized here as an element for discussion.

The conceptual framework is arts-driven, situationalized and contextualized. Thus, the framework differs from any other previous work by placing several arts-driven conceptions in the modelization. As proved before there is an evident need for common understanding of how visual arts as a specific practice in relation to well-being could be researched.

Firstly, well-being should not be used as an all-encompassing concept. Secondly, the possible outcomes of the research concerning well-being should be hypothesized with rigour and also neutral or negative impacts should be regarded. Thirdly, it is not enough to examine a question of visual arts by gathering only verbal and written data. Therefore, fourthly, it is essential that the art activity, the artistic process and the artworks themselves are studied and analysed in the context of art research and not only within the theoretical frameworks of social and health sciences. Art research here refers to both theoretical research in the field of arts, humanities and aesthetics, as well as practice-based art research.

The new conceptual framework for the further discussion of the possible research aspects comprises the concepts of 1) environment, 2) arts facilitation, 3) arts participation, 4) art activity, 5) artistic process, and 6) artwork, including several possible research aspects. However, the framework is not intended to be exhaustive or restrictive.

675 Csikszentmihalyi 1975, 1988; Massimini and Carli 1988.

Instead, the aim of the framework is to present the minimum amount of conceptions which should be taken into consideration when designing a research question or hypothesis concerning the possible connection between the practice of visual arts and the subjective experiences of well-being by the participant. Any attempt to offer a definitive synthesis for interpretation of a concept related to visual arts is destined to fail of its own impossibility. By comparison, we can discuss different choices of concepts, as by comparison we normally adapt to a new piece of art.

Visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits consists in fact of multiple situations and layers of meaning. The intention is not to draw tight boundaries or framing around or between the individual conceptions. Rather, I suggest that the different conceptions should be considered as open and expansive as possible.

Furthermore, although the different concepts are separated in the framework in order to communicate their importance, the concepts should be understood in interaction with each other. Moreover, the more detailed aspects are interrelated and work in connection with another.

The framework considers dimensions of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, focusing on eudaimonic well-being as the goal of the visual art practice. The conception of eudaimonic well-being also creates requirements considering the quality, meaning, importance and value of the visual art practice as a whole.

If the art activity, artistic process and creation of the artwork by the participant is motivated by external values or pressures and is not self-motivated, if the practice as a whole offers no possibilities for personal growth or self-expression, and if the skills and challenges are considered as low by the participant, the visual art practice may lose the very qualities and mechanisms that may enhance eudaimonic well-being and the sense of optimal experience as flow. Thus, the main contribution to well-being of some art activities may actually be hedonic, as the subjective experiences of pleasure, enjoyment and relaxation, rather than eudaimonic.

Figure 1. The conceptual framework for the research approaches of visual art practice in relation to well-being

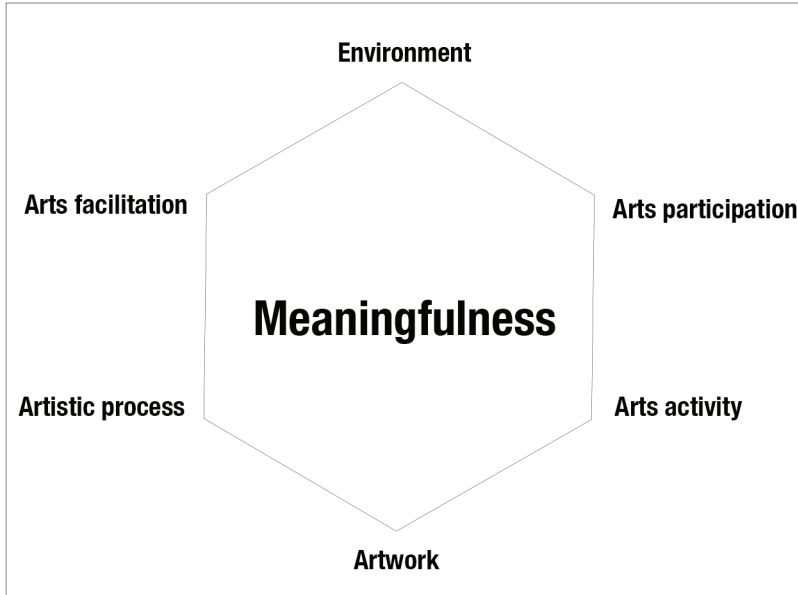


Table 45. The conceptual framework of visual art practice in relation to well-being: research aspects

Environment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indoor/outdoor spaces • Architecture • Interior design • Ergonomics
Arts facilitation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Event and time • Demographics • Personality traits • Values • Artistic knowledge and skills • Facilitation principles • Service design principles • Communication skills • One-on-one communicative relationships • Group communicative relationships

Arts participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics • Personality traits • Values • Aesthetic values • Motivation • Cognitive skills • Perceptual skills • Artistic knowledge and skills • Physical capacity and health • Learning skills • Communication skills • One-on-one communicative relationships • Group communicative relationships
Art activity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Field-specific activity • Activity mode • Techniques • Motivation • Interest and effort • Skills and challenges • Flow
Artistic process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem finding • Cognitive choices • Self-expression • Interpretation • Artistic-aesthetic experience
Artwork
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal elements • Referential relations • Negotiated value • Aesthetic experience

As can be seen from the framework above, there are many intertwining aspects that could be taken into account when conducting situationalized and contextualized research concerning artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to the well-being pursuits of a non-clinical participant. The key question that should be researched is whether the visual art practice is considered as meaningful to the participant. As explained, regarding the practice of visual arts I will refer to this by using the concept of **meaningfulness**.

All the research aspects are not discussed in detail. Rather, the conceptual framework should be considered as a discussion of the possible directions of future research, and not as limiting.

6.1.1. Environment

Instead of concentrating firstly on the social interaction of the visual art practice, the focus is placed on the concept of environment, a subject matter that has been largely ignored in earlier research. There are complex and multidimensional relationships between built and natural environment, human experiences and the sense of well-being. The perceived quality of the environment could be understood in the context of environmental sensitivity. It should be studied how the participants interpret the environment and how meaningful for their own goals they perceive it. The proposition is that the interaction with the environment may depend largely also on the contextual setting of the space.

Thus, there should be more discussion on what is the actual environment of the research of visual arts for well-being pursuits and whether the studies are conducted in a physical space that best enables the actual visual practice. Therefore, it is suggested that visual art practice for well-being pursuits could be studied in its most relevant environment, which is the art studio. The meaning of the art studio and studio art is connected to the *value* of the specific knowledge production of visual art practice. The importance of the art studio was also presented by Langer, who stated that the philosophy of art should begin from the art studio⁶⁷⁶.

The art studio is designed for artistic aims with a purpose. Thus, the art studio as a concept can be considered as a specific spatial setting that serves artistic aims and allows flexibility, liberty and continuity in work which can enable also both eudaimonic and hedonic well-being pursuits.

The art studio as an environment consists of several aspects which should not be overlooked in research. These are, for example, the aspects of the site, architecture, the measurements and proportions of space, dimensions of space as closed, or open, as well as sustainability and accessibility. Moreover, interior design, such as the amount of natural light, design of lighting system, flooring, wall and ceiling surfaces, colours, furniture, resting areas, acoustic environment, the amount of space for each participant and work ergonomics, such as spatial orientation and direction of movement may have a strong impact on the sense of well-being of the participant in regard to the space.

676 Langer 1953, ix.

As an example, the amount and quality of light and the perception of colour is highly important for the creation of artworks in an environment. Tilley and Henry Dreyfuss Associates stated that the perception of colour in an environment depends on visibility of colours, time of exposure, surrounding colours, previous fixated colours and light sources.⁶⁷⁷ The perception of colour may also depend on whether general, localized or task lighting is used, whether the lighting is direct, indirect or shielded and what is the luminous intensity, luminance and illuminance of the light. Also the colour temperature of the light source will influence the perception of colour⁶⁷⁸.

The art studio as a concept embodies also other meaning-making levels, as a space of cultural importance. It is the place where the artistic-aesthetic experience and sensation is first created, perceived and felt. The meaning of the art studio should be interpreted with respect to the long chain of art history, as well as the contemporary community of artists who utilize the concept in praxis.

Baxter et al. argued that the art studio practice is still ignored as a necessary site and source for research of visual arts in general. They stated that the art studio setting is a space where ideas, interpretative stances and knowledge will emerge. According to Baxter et al. this knowledge production differs from the more traditional research modes of, for example, the social sciences, with which I agree.⁶⁷⁹

For a study of well-being benefits, the art practice could also be taken outdoors, to the nature settings. The aspects of the outdoors, such as perception of natural light, colours, organic forms, weather and soundscape can arouse the sense of well-being of the participant. Thus, when working in nature, the experiences of well-being may be due to several external reasons, other than the art activity itself.

The subjective connection to nature and its possible impact on well-being has been a recent subject matter for environmental psychology and psychology of well-being. Mayer and McPherson Frantz argued that a connection to nature is an important predictor of subjective well-being.⁶⁸⁰ Mayer et al. concluded that nature affects one's ability to reflect.⁶⁸¹ Nisbet et al. concluded that nature relatedness (NR) had a correlation with positive affect and therefore, nature relatedness could facilitate hedonic well-being.⁶⁸² Howell et al. argued that nature connectedness correlates with well-being in general.⁶⁸³ Herzog and Strevey drew also correlates between the connection of nature to

677 Tilley, Henry Dreyfuss Associates 2002, 85.

678 Langford 1992, 114.

679 Baxter et al. 2008, 17.

680 Mayer, McPherson Franz 2004, 503.

681 Mayer et al. 2009, 637.

682 Nisbet et al. 2011, 316.

683 Howell et al. 2013, 1681.

well-being.⁶⁸⁴ Zelenski and Nisbet argued that nature relatedness has a distinct happiness benefit.⁶⁸⁵ However, Beery and Wolf-Watz suggested that the elusive concept of ‘nature’ should be replaced with the relational concept of ‘place’ in the study of environmental connectedness.⁶⁸⁶

Thus, it is clear that if visual arts are researched as a practice with a relation to nature, the issue of the ‘environment’, ‘place’ or ‘nature’ should also be contextualised in regard to the possible well-being benefits. Moreover, it should be acknowledged that the research situation is complex concerning the possible causal connections of nature to the sense of well-being.

If the visual art practice for well-being purposes is held, for example, in healthcare settings, community centres or art museums, these environments and their impact should also be rigorously situationalized and researched. For example, creating artwork for display in a healthcare setting or a community centre could also have external motives due to the contextual setting, which are likely to impact on some level hedonic and eudaimonic well-being.

6.1.2. Arts facilitation

By utilizing the conception of arts facilitation, a more clear distinction can be made in regard to both art education and art therapy. As a concept, arts facilitation may overlap to art education but not to a large extent to art therapy. Facilitation as a word originates from Latin, *facilis* meaning easy or that which may be done, in regard to the verb *facere*, to do, make. Thus, facilitator, in general, can be considered as the one that facilitates; especially the one that helps to bring about an outcome by providing direct or indirect assistance or guidance for the participants.

When an artist is considered as a facilitator, several aspects should be examined. These include demographics such as age, gender, national and cultural origin, personality traits, values, artistic values and skills, facilitation principles and skills, service design principles and skills as well as communication skills. Moreover, the field of visual arts expertise and previous education in visual arts of the artist facilitator can provide important data.

684 Herzog, Strevey 2008, 769.

685 Zelenski, Nisbet 2014, 19.

686 Beery, Wolf-Watz 2014, 198.

Arts facilitation by an artist facilitator provides for a structure and organization of time. Thus, it should be distinguished what sort of an event the research situation is in regard to the arts facilitation. Event as a concept could be understood as something that occurs in a specific place during a particular, short-term interval of time. However, if the visual art practice is contextualized as a programme, a course, a workshop or a series of workshops, a session or series of sessions, it may be argued that these contexts bring with them two requirements: firstly, the need for the research of learning processes in regard to facilitation, and secondly, the need for the study of short-term and long-term time management. For example, a short-term art session as a transitory event differs in effort, motivation and engagement from a long-term programme of periodic courses.

The role of the facilitator in general can be understood by the conceptualization made by Heron. Heron stated that a facilitator is a person who has the role of empowering participants to learn in an experiential group. Furthermore, he described that the facilitator is formally appointed to this role and the participants will voluntarily accept the facilitator in this role. Thus, according to Heron, facilitation means enabling the self-directed learning, rather than teaching things to people.⁶⁸⁷

Although Heron stated that his conceptualization covers a wide range of different learning groups from, for example, social action training groups to personal development groups, I argue that facilitation as a concept can be seen as a part of education. Even though the work by the artist facilitator can be considered as a service practice requiring preferably also service design knowledge, my suggestion is that there should be also research concerning the educational training and skills of the artist facilitator.

As Sugerma et al. suggested, the facilitator in general should be knowledgeable of different learning and educational theories, principles and guidelines for good practice. Communication between the facilitator and participants plays a key role in the facilitation.⁶⁸⁸ Sugerma et al. noted that inappropriate facilitation practices may lead to miseducational experiences as well as counterproductive processes and outcomes. They suggested that a facilitator should be able to produce appropriate and productive learning experience for the participants as well as make ethical decisions about the learning processes.⁶⁸⁹

687 Heron 1999, 1.

688 Sugerma et al. 2000, 16.

689 Sugerma 2000, 17.

In research, the communication of arts facilitation should be regarded as a complex conception, consisting of written, verbal and visual communication as well as nonverbal communication. Facilitation should not be considered as a simple toolkit of facilitation techniques. In addition, there may be contradictions between the conceptualization of facilitation as a group process and the nature of visual arts as an individual, often solitary and a subjective process.

Thus, it should be researched how an artist can identify herself or himself as a facilitator. If facilitation is seen as an enabling process of learning, the actual difference between the roles of the artist teacher and the artist facilitator should be identified and described in research.

The difficulty of reconstructing a new professional identity is a common situation to both the practice of an artist as a facilitator and artist as a teacher. Adams found out that the transformative identity process from an artist to a professional teaching practitioner was sometimes very challenging and difficult. This is due to the fact, that teaching differs from the other professional artistic systems, the critical art practice, and the commercially orientated visual art market. He suggested that this may often lead to the suppression of more critical art practices among artist teachers.⁶⁹⁰

Thornton saw the artist teacher identity as a mixture of three interrelated worlds: The world of art, the world of education, and the world of art education. He stated that in order to achieve a synthesis, an individual artist teacher needs to find an enabling teaching strategy. This means that the artist teacher should be able to identify her or his teacher identity, goals and methods and use them effectively. Furthermore, Thornton saw reflection as the essential framework for the work of an artist teacher.⁶⁹¹ Thornton specified an artist teacher as follows: “An Artist Teacher is an individual who both makes and teaches art and is dedicated to both activities as a practitioner”.⁶⁹²

The first difference between an artist teacher and an artist facilitator can be identified as the difference between the more formal art teaching according to the curricula and the facilitation practice as enabling the self-directed learning in non-formal contexts. The second dissimilarity is the institutionalized structure of art education when compared to the facilitation as a service practice of an artist. Third difference concerns the qualifications of an artist teacher versus an artist facilitator. In Finland, a fully qualified art teacher will need to have a teacher’s pedagogical qualification and a master’s degree. On the contrary, facilitation can be considered to require no specific

690 Adams 2007, 271.

691 Thornton 2005, 173.

692 Thornton 2005, 167.

and formal qualifications. Nonetheless, by considering the notion by Thornton of artist teachers, an artist facilitator can be described as follows: An artist facilitator is a practitioner who both creates art and facilitates art activities and is committed to both practices.

Reflection can be considered also as a key concept in arts facilitation. Reflection is understood here by adapting the theory of Schön as enabling participants to discover what they already understand and how they can understand more.⁶⁹³ Hence, I suggest that arts facilitation could also be conceptualized by utilizing the conception of reflective facilitation.

However, some artists may have personality traits and values that may be more suited for solitary artistic work and less suited to the values of facilitation as social interaction and enabling learning process. Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels stated that some of the personality traits and values of artists, such as high aesthetic value and low economic and social values are functional because they make it possible for the artist to tolerate the solitude, as well as the pressures and subjective conditions under which artworks are created.⁶⁹⁴

Furthermore, Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels stated that there are three main sets of obstacles which will threaten the integrity of the artist's work. Firstly, there are the contradictions built into the social institutions that lead to artistic status. The institutions require behaviour that may sometimes counter the artists' values and personality traits. Secondly, the "seamless web" of culture weakens the artists' self-confidence and induces the feeling of cynical helplessness. Thirdly, the tension between the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of the artistic process arouses problems. For example, making a painting should be its own reward but for a professional artist, attention and approval of others are of utmost significance.⁶⁹⁵

Thus, it should be studied what kind of enabling strategy the artist has been able to construct for his or her facilitation practice. It is suggested that the work of an artist as a facilitator could be considered in the context of human-centered service design. Facilitation as a cooperative strategy of an artist could have its reasoning in the new design research which is increasingly human-centered.

According to Hanington, the human-centered design takes into account design as an activity which is fundamentally tied to human needs and concerns. In Hanington's view the design research should concentrate more in identifying the interaction and emotional resonance between design and people. In human-centered design the people are

693 Schön 1983, 50.

694 Csikszentmihalyi, Getzels 1976, 187.

695 Csikszentmihalyi, Getzels 1976, 205–206.

included in the design process in the very early stages.⁶⁹⁶

Thus, by adapting the principles of human-centered design it should be researched how an artist facilitator as a designer of the visual art practice for well-being pursuits considers the participant's aims and customizes the arts facilitation according to the skills and previous knowledge of the participant. For the pursuits of eudaimonic well-being, the focus should be on individual work that will enable self-expression and the use of personal strengths in regard to skills and challenges.

There should also be an assessment of the possible risks and emotional safety of the arts facilitation in research. Researchers and practitioners should consider seriously whether the purpose of the arts facilitation should be to encourage drastic life or identity changes. Furthermore, suggestions or arguments towards the therapeutic impact of arts facilitation in relation to well-being should be avoided, if the artist facilitator does not hold a legally regulated, licensed professional position in mental health.

As Jensen noted, a major reorientation of the self and identity of the participant may also lead to unrealistic hopes of, for example, becoming a professional artist, a path that is difficult to conquer without a professional training and art world networks. This in turn may lead into unnecessary disappointments.⁶⁹⁷

Therefore, artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits should be considered more as a service for activities of non-clinical participants as suggested before. This new horizon enables the research of the identity of an artist as a reflective, cooperative and professional facilitator. It also connects artistry to principles of human-centered service design. For further discussion the arts facilitation could be understood to signify the following:

Table 46. Facilitation of visual art practice in relation to well-being

- Facilitation in visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits is a cooperative, personally customized and confidential relationship where the method is enabling the potential of the participant for self-realization, self-expression, growth of signature strengths, positive relationships, and the sense of interest and flow by providing quality art activities.
- There are negotiated goals that are shared by the facilitator and the participant, the facilitator and the participant group and the peers in the participant group.
- The facilitation is considered as a reflective process, including post-experience reflection.

696 Hanington 2003, 16–18.

697 Jensen 2013, 213.

6.1.3. Arts participation

Regarding arts participation it is important to create a distinction in general between: 1) The arts participation that is practised because of therapy; 2) The arts participation whose goal is educational; 3) The arts participation as a work place recreation that is motivated by work place attachment; 4) The arts participation which is self-motivated; 5) The arts participation whose goal is personal growth and self-realization; 6) The arts participation whose goal is recreation and pleasure.

As stated before, the purpose of this conceptual framework is to offer mediating links between eudaimonia and hedonia and visual art practice for further discussion. Thus, the focus is on the arts participation, which is self-motivated, and whose goal is personal growth and self-realization, as well as enjoyment and pleasure. Arts participation can provide for positive relationships, relatedness and acceptance but the actual mechanisms of how this impact is created should be more thoroughly examined.

There are many aspects that should be studied concerning the participant. These include demographics, personality traits, values, aesthetic values, cognitive skills, perceptual skills, artistic skills, physical capacity and health, learning skills, and communication skills. The research should acknowledge more clearly the difference between people. The 'participant' becomes too generic a category as soon as we consider, for example gender, cultural identity and age differences. The groups of participants should be identified, for example, as children, boys, girls, adolescents, men, women, adults, older people. Differences in motivation should be studied with care. For example, is arts participation found to be interesting and engaging by adolescent boys also inspiring for middle-aged men?

If study participants are selected on the basis of health, this context is likely to become a dominating dimension of the research. Thus, a mixed sample of study participants in regard to health would enable the study to concentrate more on the specific issue of the impact of visual art practice.

A baseline for the participants' previous experiences in regard to well-being should be created. If the baseline is of negative experiences, any improvement could too easily be interpreted as a benefit stemming from the practice of visual arts. The experiences and expertise in visual arts, such as previous art education should also be studied.

It is likely that many trait characteristics of the participant can influence the possible sense of well-being in regard to the activities of visual arts. It should be researched whether participants who are self-motivated and voluntarily participate to art activities already

have personality characteristics and high aesthetic values, which may influence the outcomes of the studies to be positive, regardless of the actual activities.

Communication and communicative relationships are likely to play a large role in arts participation. These can consist of one-on-one communication between artist facilitator and a participant, communication between the artist facilitator and the group of participants, one-on-one communication between the participants and communication as a group. Therefore the enabling or restricting discourses of participation could be researched.

According to Brown and Yule, in discourse analysis, language is usually considered to serve two functions: the expression of content, and the expression of social relations and personal attitudes.⁶⁹⁸ Bloor and Wood stated that discourse analysis is concerned how participants construct themselves and others through their discourse as analysis is always the study of the use of the language in context.⁶⁹⁹

There may be a given status of the situation of arts participation that frames the expectations of the participants, and therefore also the modes of communication. Script is understood here in the original sense by Schank as a prepackaged sequence of causal chains or as a “(...) key to connecting events together that do not connect by their superficial features but rather by the remembrance of their having been connected before.”⁷⁰⁰ In arts participation, the remembrance which allows the script to be invoked, can be a result of previous experiences in education, art education, or experiences that the participant has had in relation to art world.

If the situation of the arts participation is given the status of ‘facilitation’, this context itself is likely to influence the discourses used. The expectation-based discourses may follow a script which focus on learning process. However, if ‘visual art practice’ is the given status of the situation, the expectation-based script is likely to be more arts-driven, thus enabling discourses that are more typical to the artistic practice than learning processes in general.

If the verbal discourses by the artist facilitator and participants focus on encouraging, inspiring and giving support to the peers, this positive discourse itself may have an impact on the sense of purpose, meaning and personal growth as eudaimonic well-being, and enjoyment and pleasure as hedonic well-being of the participant. Therefore, it should be studied whether the artist facilitator and the participant change the content of discourse in order it to be more acceptable in the

698 Brown, Yule 1984, 1.

699 Bloor, Wood 2006, 53.

700 Schank 1980, 253.

group. The discourses concerning the artistic process, art activity and artwork may be modified in order to promote the well-being pursuits instead of more critical art practice.

Emotional safety is one of the most important issues in regard to the discourses used in arts participation. However, criticism is one of the traditional practice modes of the professional art education and art world. The professional artworks are discussed, analysed, interpreted, understood and misunderstood. Therefore, the feedback as criticism may be negative and discouraging.

The place of the criticism in the communication process of the arts participation is an essential question in regard to hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. For well-being benefits, instead of criticism, the concept of feedback could be used. However, this does not mean that the feedback would not consist of the reflection of the aims of the participant, for example, in regard to the quality of the finished artwork.

The conception of feedback is also an essential element of flow experience. According to Csikszentmihalyi, the flow experience usually contains “(...) coherent, noncontradictory demands for action and provides clear, unambiguous feedback to a person’s activities.”⁷⁰¹ Hence, it would be important to study whether the nature of the feedback in the situation of arts participation is direct and understandable in regard to the flow experience.

6.1.4. Art activity

The concept of art activity refers to the actual activity of creating visual artworks by the participant. In contemporary art we may see the process of art becoming something that may have no specific physical presence: we talk about art acts, processes or performances. In the context of art activity, the visual artwork is considered as a matter of object as the thing of appearance, as having a physical and/or experiential presence.

This proposition takes its lead from the reality of visual art practice and philosophy by Dewey. Dewey’s main concern was to recover the continuity of aesthetic experience with processes of living. Dewey criticized the conception of art that spiritualizes art out of connection with objects of concrete experience.⁷⁰² However, this framing does not indicate that visual artworks would not be considered as reflecting to what an artwork, paraphrasing Dewey, does with and in experience.⁷⁰³

701 Csikszentmihalyi 1975, 46.

702 Dewey 1934, 11.

703 Dewey 1934, 3.

One of the most essential distinctions in regard to activities in general is the division between the time spent at work versus leisure. The aim of the framework is not to consider the forms of recreational activity in order to increase work welfare in places of employment. Assignments of recreational art activities for work welfare may not be voluntary for participants and it would be misguided to discuss a concept such as intrinsic motivation in this particular context. For example, a work-related visual arts workshop for well-being aims as a service for the employer can be considered to be motivated to some extent by external pressure, i.e. the pressure from the employer for the employee to join in the activities.

In general we may agree with Argyle and Martin that leisure activities can provide intrinsic satisfaction. Argyle and Martin argued that intrinsic satisfaction could be provided by, for example, sports, hobbies, clubs and classes, voluntary work and home based leisure. Furthermore, Argyle and Martin noted that leisure activities provide social satisfaction because a lot of leisure is done in the company of others. Leisure can also provide a sense of identity and status. Furthermore an important aspect of leisure satisfaction for Argyle and Martin was relaxation.⁷⁰⁴

However, for more rigour research questions we need detailed conceptualizations of art activities as leisure. Robert A. Stebbins described leisure in three categories: casual leisure, serious leisure and project-based leisure. Stebbins stated that the conceptual framing is an on-going project and other areas of leisure may emerge in the future. Stebbins made the initial statement of serious leisure, using casual leisure as the comparative backdrop already in 1982. According to Stebbins “(...) serious leisure is the systematic pursuit of an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer activity that participants find so substantial and interesting that, (...) they launch themselves on a career centred on acquiring and expressing its special skills, knowledge and experience.”⁷⁰⁵

Stebbins explained in 1997 that casual leisure had served in his theory making as a foil for sharpening understanding of the framework of serious leisure. Stebbins noted that there had been a lot of research in casual leisure, but argued that a clear understanding of it was needed. Stebbins explained that casual leisure can be described as rewarding, “(...) relatively short-lived pleasurable activity requiring little or no special training to enjoy it.”⁷⁰⁶

704 Argyle, Martin 1991, 90–91.

705 Stebbins 1997, 117.

706 Stebbins 1997, 18.

Stebbins introduced a third category of leisure, project-based leisure, in 2005. According to him project-based leisure requires effort and sometimes skills or knowledge, but it is not intended to develop into serious leisure. Instead “(...) project based leisure is a short term, moderately complicated, one shot or occasional though infrequent, creative undertaking carried out in free time.”⁷⁰⁷

Thus, it could be examined which of these three categories, serious leisure, casual leisure or project-based leisure, is the most suitable for the research of visual art activities in relation to well-being pursuits. The most important difference between the three categories is the concept of a career. Stebbins followed the idea of a moral career, described by one of the most influential sociologists of the twentieth century Erving Goffman (1922–1982). For Goffman, the term career did not mean the rise within a respectable profession, but a broadened sense to refer to any social strand of any person’s course through life. Following the same perspective, Stebbins linked the concept of career to one of the categories: serious leisure, which includes the acquirement of specific skills sets of the activity.

My suggestion is that for the pursuit of eudaimonic well-being, the art activity of the participant could be conceptualized as serious leisure or project-based leisure, depending on the effort, motivation and time invested on the activity by the participant. Casual leisure as a concept can be interpreted to include hedonic dimensions.

For the pursuit of eudaimonic well-being, the art activity as a whole will take time to be fully understood and organized in the context of subjective experiences or modes of functioning. If personal growth, meaning and long-term perspective are considered as the principal well-being aims, intervals of art activities as well as pause and rest are needed for contemplation. If the experiences invoked by the art activities are cut short and not continued, it may be impossible to relate them to any relevant meaning for maturity and personal growth.

Thus, the research of long-term art activities is recommended for eudaimonic pursuits. Furthermore, the duration of each individual session of art activity should be long enough for artistic process and creation. If the art activities are not carefully designed in regard to time, there may be a danger of discontinuity, distraction and the loss of the tempo and rhythm of the artistic work at hand. This would also lead to the possible loss of flow as a beneficial subjective experience.

Participants’ different activity modes, such as individual work in a group situation or cooperation in a joint art project are likely to influence eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. My suggestion for the research of eudaimonic well-being is that the art activity should

707 Stebbins 2005, 2.

concentrate more on individual work, development of signature strengths and self-expression by the participant, rather than group activities.

Moreover, the art activities should be researched as field-specific modes of activities. The different visual art forms have their own mechanisms and techniques, and should be studied separately rather than utilizing the all-encompassing conception of 'art'. All different visual art forms have their own special and individual meaning-making processes and construction as well as referential relationships to what is considered as 'reality'.

For example, painting can be relevant as a facilitated art activity and can be practised in a small group, but nonetheless individually. The activity of painting can offer the experiences of flow as merging of action and awareness and centering attention to a limited stimulus field, loss of self-consciousness and the disappearance of the sense of time. Short-term activities of painting may provide for the hedonic enjoyment, pleasure and relaxation. If the challenges and skills are high and the activities offer continuity, painting may provide for the eudaimonic well-being of personal growth, meaning, and the discovery of signature strengths.

However, painting can be subcategorized as oil, acrylic, aquarelle, gouache, tempera, pastel, ink painting and mixed media painting. All these techniques guide the nature of activities and differ from one another as they require different work phases as series of activities. For example, the traditional oil painting technique will actually require a lot of time, effort, concentration and patience from the participant. Oil painting may be a suitable activity to one participant, whereas it may not suit as an activity to the aims of another participant. It would thus be necessary to study how one visual art form as an activity could provide to one participant's pursuits, whereas another participant might consider it as not suitable for his or her individual pursuits.

Thus, it should be studied whether the skills of the participant are on balance to the challenges of the art activity. However, there may be a situation where the skills and the challenges are low, and yet the activity is perceived as enjoyable by the participant. This may be due to the more hedonic enjoyment of the experience, as the activity itself may give rise to the sense of enjoyment, pleasure and relaxation. However, the eudaimonic pursuits such as personal growth, personal expression, and developing of one's potentials will require high quality in the art activities as well as self-motivation by the participant. If the activity is perceived as meaningless by the participant, it is unlikely to contribute to the eudaimonic well-being.

Therefore, intrinsic motivation in regard to the meaningfulness of the art activity should be in the key role when studying the possible benefits for well-being. The proposition is as follows: Interest guides the attention, rejection, selection and adaptation of what will be organized into the developing experiences or modes of functioning. Therefore, what is needed, is the research of participant's interest, motivation, effort, the balance of challenges and skills and the cognitive-affective states of flow in regard to the particular visual art activity.

6.1.5. Artistic process

The artistic process is conceptualized in regard to personal growth and self-realization, self-expression, interest and self-acceptance as eudaimonic well-being goals. Thus, the precondition for the use of the concept of 'artistic process' in regard to eudaimonic well-being would be that the visual art practice provides for sufficient quality, especially in the context of self-expression.

Interesting research results have been made concerning art-making in the context of mood elevation in psychology, which were discussed also in Chapter Two. Even though these studies should be considered more in the context of art therapy, and the studies have not researched professional artistic processes, the core argument is worth mentioning here, because it could be considered as a novel way of understanding the concept of self-expression.

De Petrillo and Winner (2005) argued that art-making improves mood for some through catharsis, and for others through redirection of thoughts.⁷⁰⁸ However, Drake, Coleman and Winner (2011) argued that mood valence is more positive when individuals used distraction instead of venting in art-making. They claimed that there is a conventional wisdom that creativity is healing because it allows self-expression through venting. However, they argued that for immediate improvement of mood it is better to use art-making to distract oneself, instead of expressing one's pain.⁷⁰⁹

Drake and Winner (2012) concluded that consistent with previous research, distraction is considered more beneficial than venting in short-term mood repair in art-making.⁷¹⁰ Venting meant expressing one's negative feelings and distraction expressing feelings that take one away from negative feelings. According to Drake and Winner, distraction is an effective way of coping with negative affect.⁷¹¹ In their

708 De Petrillo, Winner 2005, 211.

709 Drake, Coleman, Winner 2011, 26, 29.

710 Drake, Winner 2012, 259.

711 Drake, Winner 2012, 255.

view, this runs counter to the account that self-expression through art serves a therapeutic function. Therefore Drake and Winner suggested that the therapeutic in the activity of art-making should actually be the redirection of thoughts, not rumination.⁷¹²

I agree with the idea of redirection of thinking and distraction as a beneficial way of self-expression in regard to the possible well-being benefits. However, ‘venting’ has been a traditional way of understanding the self-expression as a release from suffering or pain by the expression through making art. The underlying assumption of venting is that self-expression is a direct mode of activity which emerges as an artwork. However, most often the creation of an artwork is a concentrated, symbolic visual interpretation and a cognitive-affective process, which requires technique and skills.

For Langer the artistic process was the application of human skill in order to create an expression, which is in its essence symbolic.⁷¹³ Langer explained that the symbolic agency of art has nothing to do with the iconographic functions.⁷¹⁴ To Langer art was foremost the creation of symbolic forms of human feelings.⁷¹⁵ Furthermore Langer criticized the treatment of aesthetic values as direct satisfactions, such as pleasures, or as instrumental values. According to Langer, in these considerations art is regarded either as valuable for strengthening morale, integrating social groups, or venting dangerous feelings in harmless emotional catharsis.⁷¹⁶ With regard to the question of self-expression, Langer’s main point was the following: “What art expresses is not actual feeling, but ideas of feeling; as language does not express actual things and events but ideas of them.”⁷¹⁷

The notion that art expresses the *ideas* of feeling means that no actual emotional conditions of the creator are directly expressed in art. This means that in a work of art one should not look for artist’s expression as the record or document of her or his actual emotions, but symbolic representations of emotions. An artwork is not a direct expression of artist’s feeling, nor does it imperatively present the artist’s state of mind.

Thus, any conceptualization of self-expression as a direct mode of artistic process should be reconsidered in research. This perspective gains support also from Nochlin: “The problem here lies (...) with the naive idea that art is the direct, personal expression of individual emotional experience, a translation of personal life into visual terms.”⁷¹⁸

712 Drake, Winner 2012, 260.

713 Langer 1953, 14.

714 Langer 1953, 22.

715 Langer 1953, 40.

716 Langer 1953, 36.

717 Langer 1953, 59.

718 Nochlin 2002, 315–316.

Instead, creative problem-finding could be understood as one of the key conceptions of the artistic process. According to Csikszentmihalyi and Getzels there is a crucial step of formulation of the creative problem to which the solution is a response in the visual arts. This emergence of a problem in visual arts is a continuous, cumulative process of discovery which begins before the execution of the artwork.⁷¹⁹ According to Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi the artistic process “(...) seeks out similarities between external objects and internal states; it uses symbolic means to express formless feelings, thereby disclosing which otherwise would go unperceived, articulating what otherwise would remain unarticulated.”⁷²⁰ This is what Langer also suggested.

Therefore, it could be studied, whether the participant considers several potential subject matters, themes and expressive elements in the artistic process. This means that the participant should have opportunities to experiment with various problem-finding and expressive strategies in the course of the artistic process, which are often also conscious choices.

As Dewey suggested, it is the consciousness that adds regulation, power of selection and redistribution to the artistic process.⁷²¹ Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi suggested that the solution of the artistic problem is the combination of various symbolic, expressive and formal visual elements⁷²².

Moreover, in the situation of the artistic process, the participant acts as both the creator and the spectator. The artwork is created by sequences of time. There is a constant mental process of reflection of whether the artwork is finished or needs more visual elements in order to convey its meaning. For a creator there is no possible way to isolate the aesthetic experience of the finished artwork from the process. Thus, the suggestion is that the artistic process as an experience in regard to the artwork should be conceptualized as two-fold, comprising both the artistic and the aesthetic, as an artistic-aesthetic experience of the participant. This is also the original thought by Dewey, who explained that the artistic-aesthetic experience consists of both doing and perception.⁷²³

Dewey regretted the fact that there is no word in English language which could include both the ‘artistic’ and ‘esthetic’ (sic). Dewey explained that ‘artistic’ referred more to the act of production and ‘esthetic’ to the perception. The fallacies Dewey suggested are

719 Getzels, Csikszentmihalyi 1976, 5.
 720 Getzels, Csikszentmihalyi 1976, 251.
 721 Dewey 1934, 25.
 722 Getzels, Csikszentmihalyi 1976, 247.
 723 Dewey 1934, 50.

the following: Firstly ‘art’ is superimposed to aesthetic material, and secondly perception and enjoyment are considered as reception, as if they had nothing to do with the artistic act and process. Dewey suggested that the conception of conscious experience as a perceived relation between doing and undergoing enables one to understand the connection of art as production and perception.⁷²⁴

The influences from the past and present often evolve in the artistic process through an appreciation of artworks done by others. Whatever concept we choose to use, influence, reference, transformation, difference or continuity, this interaction as interpretation with the art history can also be crucial to the participant’s artistic process. Artists select, reject, modify and create forms, colours, shapes, images. Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi pointed out that instead of ‘inspiration’, even the greatest innovators in the arts have relied on the work of their predecessors.⁷²⁵ As Francis Bacon put it: “In art it’s an endless chain. (...) to create something is exactly like that: it’s a sort of echo from one artist to another.”⁷²⁶

Moreover, the contemporary culture is likely to have impact on the artistic process. The participant’s interests in regard to up-to-date cultural, political and ethical issues as well as trends in popular culture including the Internet, film, media, literature and music may play a significant role in the problem and subject matter finding. Thus, contemporary artistic process by the participant should be seen more as an interaction, negotiation and interpretation of art, culture and society, as particular visual motifs and themes travel continuously in time.

According to Dewey, every integral experience moves towards a close. Dewey argued that when the active energies have done their work, there is a closure of a circuit of energy. This situation is especially evident in the artistic process.⁷²⁷ The situation of closure in the artistic process in regard to the artwork could be conceptualized as the ‘perceived quality’ of the artwork for the creator. This does not however mean that the artistic process would necessarily end, as the artwork continues its travel to the experiences of external spectators.

In conclusion, it should be researched whether the artistic process begins from the subjective interest, motivation, and creative problem-finding of the participant, instead of an external brief or subject matter given by somebody else, whether it is the facilitator or the group of peers. This strategy would enable the study of problem-finding and self-expression of the participant as an essential part of the artistic process in a more relevant way.

724 Dewey 1934, 47.

725 Getzels, Csikszentmihalyi 1964, 8.

726 Bacon 2004, 126.

727 Dewey 1934, 41.

6.1.6. Artwork

The finished artwork is suggested to be studied in regard to the formal elements, such as art form, genre, theme, subject matter, material, technique, stylistic development, one artwork's influence on another, possible art historical categories and referential relations. On the whole, these all may influence the experience the artwork itself may create. Other aspects of analysis could also be considered, depending on the research question.

Considering eudaimonic well-being it could be studied whether the finished artwork fulfils the aspirations that the participant had, and if the participant can feel satisfied with his or her artwork in regard to self-expression, personal growth, discovery of strengths and self-acceptance.

The negotiated value of the artwork by external reviewers may influence the subjective experience of the participant in regard to the artwork. The feedback from peers to the artwork may play a crucial role in the possible experience of the success of the self-expressive goals. If the feedback is negative, the participant may consider his or her artwork differently than in the beginning of the artistic process. Hence, it is essential to determine by which theoretical approaches the artwork is interpreted by the the participant, the artist facilitator, the peers and the researchers in the research situation.

As discussed before, the artistic-aesthetic experience of the participant in regard to his or her artwork is a process. The participant is the *first* percipient, spectator and evaluator of his or her artwork. In regard to the participant, it would be misconceived to isolate the finished artwork from the process, as the information coming from the artwork fuses with the information already stored in the participant's mind constantly in the artistic process. However, in regard to an external percipient, it should be studied whether the conception of aesthetic experience is the most suitable for the interpretation of the meaning of the artwork in well-being contexts.

Czikzentmihalyi and Robinson compared the criteria of aesthetic experience by Monroe Beardsley (1915–1980) to the criteria of the flow experience and suggested that there were similarities. Furthermore, Czikzentmihalyi and Robinson suggested that there is a structure to the aesthetic experience. They argued that the aesthetic experience begins when information coming from the artwork interacts with information already stored in the viewer's mind. The viewer focuses attention on the art object and a sense of concentration follows. The information from the artwork interacts with the information stored in the viewer's memory. An expansion of the viewer's consciousness follows with

emotional consequences. The structure of the aesthetic experience was considered as the aforementioned fusion.⁷²⁸

However, Dewey emphasized that there is work done on part of the percipient as well as the artist. The artist goes through a process of extracting what is significant, as well as the percipient among his or her interests. The percipient creates his or her own experience in relation to the artwork.⁷²⁹ Hence, it is questionable whether the aesthetic experience could be structured generally and whether it is always pleasurable. Furthermore, the gaze of the external viewer may be influenced by prejudices and presumptions.

The classical statement by Bourdieu is that there is no such thing as the innocent gaze, as a gaze has a historical and cultural context. The mechanisms of gaze will vary from one historical era to another and from one culture to another. According to Bourdieu “(...) the act of empathy, *Einfühlung*, which is the art-lover’s pleasure, presupposes an act of cognition, a decoding operation, which implies the implementation of a cognitive acquirement, a cultural code.”⁷³⁰ Thus Bourdieu suggested that the precondition for an act of empathy and pleasure is a decoding of the cultural code.

However, I support the view that the interpretation process of an artwork is not a closed system. Bättschmann concluded that in an interpretative effort of an artwork, one never operates in a closed system, but rather in one, whose coherency is always open to further development.⁷³¹ Furthermore, he suggested that a researcher should, wherever possible, examine the artwork in terms of whether the artist himself or herself could support it.⁷³²

Thus, I suggest that the interpretation of the meaning of the artwork should be regarded as a negotiated process, referred as the conception of ‘negotiated value.’ In visual art practice for well-being pursuits the value criteria could be more of a projection of the aims of the participant, and we should ask whether the participant can support the interpretation of his or her artwork.

However, the visual artwork as an object does not stand in isolation but is surrounded by the large number of other visual objects. Chandler argued that our understanding relates to framing, obvious ones being formal frames, such as a genre. Thus, contexts may provide primary frames which cannot be avoided in the interpretation.⁷³³

728 Czikzentmihalyi, Robinson 1990, 18–19.

729 Dewey 1934, 54.

730 Bourdieu 2002, 151.

731 Bättschmann 2003, 207.

732 Bättschmann 2003, 204.

733 Chandler 2002, 199.

Adapting this principle, if we are let to know that the artwork was created for well-being pursuits, the well-being pursuit as a context may become the primary frame of the interpretation of the artwork. This might lead to an unproductive quest in research of trying to find out what in particular could make an artwork itself beneficial for well-being. Thus, the concept of well-being would become a signifying frame, a preceding conception from which the interpretation of an artwork would be constructed. This is a situation that should be avoided. As artwork should not be regarded as a document or indication of psychopathology, nor should it be interpreted as a visual record of well-being.

In addition to the aforementioned, a visual artwork, such as a drawing or painting, should not be interpreted as a 'language'. All forms of visual arts have a logic of meaning-making of their own: for example photography with a reference to reality and documentation, film with movement, suspense, belief and disbelief, and painting with a presence of marks, colours, lines and strokes; the presence of the artistic act on a base.

Langer pointed out that the elements of a picture, the visual forms, such as lines, colours or proportions are just as capable of articulation, that is, of complex combination, as words. But according to Langer, and to which I agree with, the laws that govern this sort of articulation are altogether different from the laws of syntax that govern language. Langer explained that there is naturally a technique of picturing objects, but the laws governing this technique cannot properly be called a 'syntax', since there are no items that might be called the 'words' of, for example, a painting. Langer argued that it is impossible to find the smallest independent visual symbol, and recognize its identity when the same unit is met in other context. Thus, visual symbolism with many elements, cannot be broken up into basic units in the same way as language can. Langer argued that visual art forms are suited to the expression of ideas that defy linguistic projection and which no language-born thought can replace.⁷³⁴ Thus, Langer argued that we should not seek to fix linguistic models upon the interpretation of visual art forms. Langer suggested that treating visual art forms in linguistic terms leads us in fact to misconceive their very nature.⁷³⁵

Thus, what is essentially needed in the research concerning the visual artwork itself is the recognition of visual symbolism as a specific domain of understanding and knowledge, a perspective that has been too often ignored in studies.

734 Langer 1961, 86.

735 Langer 1961, 86–89.

6.2. Discussion

The new conceptual framework presented possible research approaches and different research aspects of visual art practice in relation to well-being. The conceptual framework was suggested in order to offer possibilities for more arts-driven research questions and hypotheses. However, the conceptual framework can serve also as a means of further discussion of the dimensions of visual art practice in the field of health and social sciences. The framework may also have practical implications, and can be applied in order to reconsider the problems concerning visual art practice and well-being in general.

The conceptual framework took its lead especially from the following theories: the distinction between eudaimonic and hedonic well-being by Waterman and colleagues, Ryff, Huta, Deci and Ryan; flow theory by Csikszentmihalyi; theories of artistic process by Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi; the philosophical theory of visual symbolism and expression by Langer, and the theory of artistic-aesthetic experience by Dewey. The mediating link between psychology of well-being and visual art practice is to consider visual arts as intrinsically motivated human activities in the context of eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. This link was conceptualized as the meaningfulness of visual art practice.

As evidenced before, eudaimonic well-being has emerged as a recent subject matter in contemporary psychology. The common perspective shared by the researchers, who concentrate on eudaimonia as a psychological construct (Ryff, Waterman and colleagues, Ryan, Deci and Huta) is that they all state to have been influenced by the philosophy of Aristotle and consider contemporary eudaimonia in the context of the choice of human activities.

In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle emphasized the notion that well-being requires value and skills in the activity. Aristotle explained that we choose activities that aim at some *end*. Some of these ends are used for new activities with other ends. The one that has the end itself is *eudaimonia*, the highest of all goods achievable in life.⁷³⁶ The English translator of *Nicomachean ethics*, H. Rackham (1868–1944), noted that the translation of eudaimonia to ‘happiness’ cannot be avoided, but he suggested that eudaimonia could be rendered as well-being.⁷³⁷ Aristotle described happiness, tested the proposition and revised it concluding that: “Now we stated that happiness is not a certain disposition of character (...).”⁷³⁸ Thus, for Aristotle, well-being

736 Aristotle 1956, 10.

737 Rackham 1956, 10.

738 Aristotle 1956, 607–609.

is a kind of activity in accordance with virtue.⁷³⁹ Furthermore, Aristotle explained that there are different aims in the arts. A man has virtue as a flautist, for instance, if he plays the flute well, since playing the flute is the distinctive activity of a flautist. In some instances, (i) the activity of practising the art is itself the end, (ii) some product over and above the exercise of art is the end, and, (iii) the end is certain things beside the practice of the arts themselves.⁷⁴⁰ In other words, following the Aristotelian view, well-being consists of *activities* chosen for their own sake and the activities manifest virtue. The activities are not merely pursued for amusement or pleasure.

The contemporary psychology has developed Aristotelian views, which should be interpreted in their historical context. I agree with Waterman who stated that eudaimonia arises from activities in which an individual is advancing his or her talents and/or purpose in living, and the activities which are experienced as most personally expressive afford opportunities to develop one's potentials more than activities which are experienced as hedonically enjoyed, but not personally expressive.⁷⁴¹

Thus, visual art practice can best enhance eudaimonic well-being if it is experienced by the participant as offering opportunities for self-expression, meaning, personal growth, and development of signature strengths. For the research of visual art practice as a service this conceptualization raises the need to study also the overall quality of the practice provided.

The conceptual framework focused on the intertwining aspects that may influence hedonic and eudaimonic well-being of the participant in regard to the visual art practice in situ and at the state level. However, as several researchers have suggested, the study of the traits of the participant are also important, as they are likely to influence the subjective experiences.

This requirement can be further justified by the notion that it is not a question of what people *do* but rather how they perceive and interpret what they are doing that makes an activity potentially enjoyable or offering possibilities for eudaimonic self-growth. As Waterman, Waterman et al. and Waterman and Huta noted some people may have positive traits that may influence the sense of well-being, regardless of the activity. In other words, due to the personality traits of the participant, the art activities could be considered as enhancing well-being. Moreover, due to the individual interests and motivation of different people, art activities may not be considered as meaningful or

739 Aristotle 1956, 5.

740 Aristotle 1956, 3.

741 Waterman 1990, 42.

personally expressive for some.

Dickie stated that there is a long-standing discussion and controversy in aesthetics as to whether the evaluation of art requires general principles.⁷⁴² But I suggest that we could consider art more as a human activity without any need for instrumental reasoning in the context of well-being. As the Finnish aesthetician Yrjö Hirn (1870–1952) outlined already in 1900, the criterion of art upheld by majority of authors in the history of aesthetics has been the question of the *ends* in regard to ‘genuine art’. According to Hirn

Metaphysicians as well as psychologists, Hegelians as well as Darwinians, all agree in declaring that a work, or performance, which can be proved to serve any utilitarian, non-esthetic object must not be considered as a genuine work of art. True art has its one end in itself, and rejects every extraneous purpose: - that is the doctrine which, with more or less explicitness, has been stated by Kant, Schiller, Spencer, Hennequin, Grosse, Grant Allen.⁷⁴³

However, the term aesthetics refers in its original Greek meaning to sensation and feeling, concepts that we might relate to the individual’s sense of well-being as well. Theory of aesthetics was set forth in Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten’s (1714–1762) treatise *Aesthetica* (1750), written in Latin as “*Aesthetica (theoria liberalium artium, gnofeologia inferior, ars pulcre cogitandi, ars analogi rationis)*.”⁷⁴⁴ Hirn explained that the theory of aesthetic, as in Baumgarten’s treatise, was a theory of liberal arts and beautiful thinking, dealing with a form of judgement which is neither purely rational nor purely sensual. Hirn argued that this conception of aesthetics as a mediative faculty is especially described in Baumgarten’s *Aesthetica* as *cognitio sensitiva*, a conception that combines cognition with senses.⁷⁴⁵

It is interesting to note that already in 1900, Hirn argued that the development of monistic philosophy and monistic morals had accounted for the judgement of taste to lose its importance. This notion sits also remarkably well to the contemporary society of the Internet era. Furthermore, Hirn argued that as the province of art was enlarged and its products differentiated, the art defied the generalizations of a uniform theory. Instead Hirn argued that “(...) art can no longer be deduced from general, philosophical, and metaphysical principles; it must be studied- by the methods of inductive psychology- as a human activity.”⁷⁴⁶ Hirn stated that the historical conception of art is actually

742 Dickie 1987, 229.

743 Hirn 1900, 8.

744 Baumgarten, 1961, § 1.

745 Hirn 1900, 2.

746 Hirn 1900, 5.

incompatible with the strict maintenance of the aesthetic criterion of art having an only 'end in itself'. Paraphrasing Hirn, art should be considered as an activity which has autotelic dimensions and the purpose of communicating different information and feelings.⁷⁴⁷

But the research cannot be made only by limiting the inquiry, for example, to cognitive choices, mood valences or affect states when a participant is engaged in art activities. Even though we may not consider art in the context of cultural competence, taste or class status, the historical and cultural situation of the art practice must also be taken into due account. This is a requirement for the more complex interpretation of the contextualized factors which influence the consideration of some visual object or production, rather than other as 'art'.

The 'artworld' (sic) is a sociological and philosophical conception which cannot be avoided in the discussion of visual art practice in relation to well-being. Arthur C. Danto (1924–2013) suggested that instead of some visible element, theory and history make people consider something as art: "To see something as art requires something that the eye cannot decry – an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an artworld."⁷⁴⁸

But, if we utilize Danto's original conception we might actually argue that most of the art activities presented in the research material of academic studies could perhaps not be considered as 'art', because no artistic theory, nor knowledge of art history is presented, the artworks are not necessarily introduced to the art world public at all, and thus are not candidates for the evaluation of artistic value by the art world system. Therefore, in the context of well-being research, the concept of art world will need to be rethought in order to include also artist-facilitated visual art practice in respect to the *quality* of the work.

The conceptual framework recognized the value of the knowledge production of visual arts. Any research that claims to study visual art practice in relation to well-being interests and ignores the nature of visual knowledge is destined to fail. The real problem is to transform the visual knowledge into scientific knowledge. This quest requires a considerable paradigmatic shift in research towards the recognition of visual arts as a specific mode of thinking and information.

Dewey argued that an artist has his or her problems and thinks while he works. He stated that the artist actually thinks as intently and penetratingly as a scientist. The difference for Dewey between an artist and a scientist is that the artist embodies his thought more closely in the

747 Hirn 1900, 12–17.

748 Danto 1964, 580.

object at hand, whereas the end of the scientific work is more remote.⁷⁴⁹

In visual art practice both the artist facilitator and the participant think and design, and the participant thinks within the art medium. However, the dimensions of thinking do not necessarily absorb or come together *directly* to the artwork at hand. The process of thinking within a visual art medium is complex and manifold, and sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between the completed artwork and its reason, nevertheless the cause.

The debate about the value of artistic knowledge has long roots in European history. As Goldstein pointed out, Giorgio Vasari wanted to develop an artistic academy which would have the attributes of liberal and intellectual subjects as Accademia del Disegno, founded in 1563. *Disegno* represented a parental concept for painting, sculpture and architecture. Vasari wanted the academy to be open to all these arts and stressed the importance of visual arts as intellectual knowledge.⁷⁵⁰ However, Goldstein, Jack and Hughes stated that the Accademia suffered setbacks as time passed and different sets of regulations were introduced.⁷⁵¹ Hughes suggested that artists, like any other people, belong to communities that they inherit. If artists try to change the long-standing institutional structures, they may find themselves inhibited by external and internal constraints.⁷⁵²

In relation to contemporary well-being research, this situation of constraints may be true with the field of practice-based research conducted by artist scholars themselves vs. arts-based research conducted by researchers with no background in visual arts in the fields of health and social sciences.

There is confusion with the application of the concepts of arts-based research and practice-based, or practice-led research which is conducted in the fields of art, design and architecture. The concept of 'arts-based research' has different, and even contrasting meanings that vary in approach and depth in research. In fact, arts-based research does not necessarily involve artists, the professional arts sector or arts industry. Instead, arts-based research has transformed into a concept of multiple disciplines, such as social science, health research and education.

This can be evidenced, for example, by exploring the study by Fraser and al Sayah. They conducted a review of the arts-based methods and included 30 studies in their review in the fields of nursing, health communication and therapy.⁷⁵³ None of the studies included in

749 Dewey 1934, 16.

750 Goldstein 1975, 149.

751 Goldstein 1975, 151; Mark 1976, 17; Hughes 1986, 3.

752 Hughes 1986, 50.

753 Fraser, al Sayah 2011, 119–126.

their review presented the fields of art history, art theory, aesthetics or practice-based art and design research.

Arts-based research can be considered as a research approach that utilizes the arts as a way, means or tool to record and gather different data. However, it may be unclear of which theoretical approaches the concept of 'art' consists in this research. Furthermore, much of the arts-based research could be considered more as visual documentation of different art-related activities, rather than presenting the aesthetic values, artistic processes or practices of visual arts.

Eisner argued that arts-based research can contribute access to forms of knowledge that traditional sciences cannot provide.⁷⁵⁴ He stated that in the future, the field of arts-based research will need people "(...) who know how to create films, videos, narratives, literature texts, as well as texts of other sorts."⁷⁵⁵ Sullivan suggested that 'arts-based research' is interested in how the arts can reveal insights about learning and teaching, 'arts-informed research' is interested in how the practitioner-researcher is capable of insightful inquiry, and the 'practice-based research' or 'practice-led research' is a term that is used in visual art programmes in higher education.⁷⁵⁶

According to Hockey and Allen-Collinson the practice-based art and design research differs from the more orthodox research in many ways.⁷⁵⁷ Rust, Mottram and Till adopted a basic explanation for practice-led or practice-based research as "(...) research in which the professional and/or creative practices of art, design or architecture play an instrumental part in inquiry."⁷⁵⁸ Daichendent offered the concept of 'artist scholar' for the use of research. According to Daichendent in artist scholar research art is seen as an art production rather than a cultural phenomenon or aesthetic product. For Daichendent art production is a type of artistic inquiry, reflection, interpretation and thinking process.⁷⁵⁹

However, the term 'arts-based' requires critical discussion here. It must be questioned, whether there is a need to reinvent the concept of 'art' as 'arts-based approach', 'arts-based programme' or 'arts-based projects' in research concerning artist-facilitated visual art practice, just to name a few concepts that emerged in the research material. Grammatically unnecessary, the inclusion of 'based' into the 'art' diminishes the meaning and value of 'art'. The application of 'arts-based intervention', 'arts-based project' or 'arts-based health

754 Eisner 2006, 11.

755 Eisner 2006, 17.

756 Sullivan 2006, 20–21.

757 Hockey, Allen-Collinson, 78.

758 Rust, Mottram, Till 2007, 11.

759 Daichendent 2012, 5.

initiative' is a mode of concept invention. By using the adjective 'arts-based', the problematic and important questions of the quality and value of the art production and process, as well as the end product, the artwork itself, need not be asked. In this situation the art may actually become barely recognisable. We may ask what 'arts-based arts' would be. Thus, I suggest that the need for the use of the term 'arts-based' should be seriously reconsidered, especially in the research of artist-facilitated visual art practice.

Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi positioned the practice of visual arts and visual artists in a very important role in society for their own sake. Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi considered several reasons for this recognition. Firstly, artists provide a framework for achievement and value beyond the emphasis on 'usefulness'. Secondly, this can be considered as not to comply with the pragmatic standards of utility. Thirdly, understanding the thought process of artists is relevant to other problem-solving processes, where the focus is on the discovery of fruitful problems for inquiry. Fourthly, the general artistic process can be conceptualized as a creative attitude, which encourages a person to seek uncertainty in obvious solutions and to raise questions.⁷⁶⁰

Thus, visual art practice in relation to well-being can be rethought beyond instrumental utility and reasoning. The discourse of art research need not to be unspoken. On the contrary, it is essential for interdisciplinary research. The meaningfulness of different dimensions of visual art practice is the key when the impact of visual arts on the eudaimonic and hedonic well-being of the participant is researched. This can offer new pathways to the study of well-being and the paradigm of positive psychology in general.

Finally, there is a need for an experiential in situ research design. An in situ art workshop as a possible research method is introduced here. A visual art workshop is understood as an arena for discussion and creation of new knowledge. In situ is regarded in terms of 'on site' and 'in place'.

The art workshop as a research method can be considered as an event that gathers study participants to a visual art activity in an experiential situation located in a suitable environment. It is also possible to design a long-term research programme consisting of several visual art workshops. The following principles for in situ art workshop research can be followed in the future:

760 Getzels, Csikszentmihalyi 1964, 125.

Table 47. Principles of in situ art workshop research

- The context and situation of the workshop is determined.
- The general work process of the workshop is designed beforehand.
- The research aims of the workshop are set.
- Visual art practice is designed with a schedule in regard to the nature of the event and time.
- The artistic materials are obtained and placed in the workshop beforehand.
- The workshop is held in an environment that enables the execution of the research, and the visual art practice.
- The workshop is documented through video and/or photography in the situation.
- Artworks are collected and documented with care.
- The visual data, i.e. the documentation of the production and process in video and/or photography and artworks are analysed with relevant and appropriate methodology.
- In addition to the documentation of the production and process in video and/or photography, and analysis of the artworks, in situ state level psychological measures are employed.
- Analytical conclusions are drawn from the results of the workshop.
- The new workshop is designed and the research is executed according to the findings.

The art workshop as a method comprises both state level psychological well-being measures and the study of visual arts as production, process and artworks. Thus, instead of post-experience research, the in situ art workshop aims to study visual art practice in situation and in context. It also places emphasis on visual methods in the data gathering phase and analysis of art production, process and artworks. The art workshop research is thus suggested to be accompanied by a sufficient visual record of the art production, process and/or artworks.

Depending on the research question and hypothesis, the trait level of psychological well-being of the participants could be examined by appropriate psychological well-being measures. It may also be important to study by one-on-one interviews how the workshop participants understand before the execution of the workshops the following issues: 1) the concept of well-being, 2) the field of visual arts, and 3) the possible connection between visual art activities and well-being.

It is also possible to design the in situ art workshop research by utilizing the human-centered design approach. Then the focus of the research is also on the interaction between the researcher and the participants as cooperative or participatory design of visual art practice in regard to the specific research question and hypothesis at hand.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7. Conclusions

This study addresses the reality and situation of research concerning visual art practice in relation to well-being. The focus is on concepts as constructed forms of language which carry layers of meaning and interests. The intention was not to examine the ‘state of being’ of concepts, but instead the ways in which different concepts have been used in the research. What began as interest in the possible connection between the practice of visual arts and well-being, and a quest for an empirical study, developed into a critical and conceptual analysis of the theoretical premises of the research approaches, frameworks and methodology.

During the research phase, ‘the travel with concepts’, as Bal put it, the territory was continuously remapped. The practice of visual arts in relation to well-being became more as a theoretical and critical concern. As the work progressed, I became more aware of the fact that many conceptual issues elementary to both art research and the study of psychological well-being were left unsolved in the research material.

Upon reflection, this changed the course of the research as it was discovered that especially the voices of artists, artist scholars and art researchers were missing from the research material. The aim thus became clear: In addition to the conceptual analysis of the research material, the second goal was to connect the knowledge of art research, artistic practice and contemporary psychology in order to develop theoretical and conceptual frameworks that can be used in the further studies.

This study, therefore, has led to many results which are new theoretical discoveries and have implications for several research fields. The main results and recommendations for further research are presented as follows.

7.1. The main research results

Table 48. The main results of the research

- The distinction between artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being and art therapy was made.
- The main research fields of the related academic studies were identified as health and social sciences.
- Most of the academic journals were identified to belong to the field of health and social sciences.
- The use of different concepts related to visual art practice was found to be extensive, diverse, often overlapping and sometimes contrasting in the research material of the arts and academic sectors.
- Conceptual analysis identified seven groups of key concepts related to visual art practice: 1) art, arts and the arts; 2) artistic process; 3) arts activity; 4) arts intervention; 5) community arts; 6) participatory arts; and, 7) creativity.
- Concepts of art and well-being were mostly used as generalizations in order to construct proof of the positive linkage between the practice of arts and well-being.
- Several asymmetries concerning the research approaches and methodology were discovered in the research material of arts and academic sectors.
- Conceptual analysis resulted into identifying the missing theoretical conceptions, frameworks, and methodology.
- Theoretical frameworks, methodology and conceptions of art history, art theory and aesthetics as well as subjective well-being, psychological well-being, hedonic and eudaimonic well-being were mostly missing in the research publications of the arts and academic sectors.
- Little evidence was found that the overlapping and generalized nature of the use of the concepts, the lack of theoretical frameworks concerning the visual art practice itself, or the use of research methodologies which do not consider the conceptions of contemporary psychology and are based on textual and verbal data provide for the necessary depth and rigour to enable the development and research in the field of visual arts and well-being.
- New theoretical and conceptual frameworks were developed by connecting visual art practice with the conceptions of contemporary psychology of well-being.
- Epistemological foundation of further research in visual arts in relation to well-being is suggested to be positive psychology.
- New theoretical framework of research is suggested to be interdisciplinary combining art research and the research of psychological well-being in regard to hedonic and eudaimonic well-being as psychological conceptions.
- New, arts-driven conceptual framework for situationalized and contextualized research was discussed as consisting of the conceptions of 1) environment, 2) arts facilitation, 3) arts participation, 4) art activity, 5) artistic process, and 6) artwork. The core conception of eudaimonia was described as meaningfulness.
- The meaningfulness of the visual art practice may offer the opportunity for a rise of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being of the participant.
- There is some evidence that the promotion of well-being through visual art practice could sometimes lead to disadvantages. More rigorous research of outcomes is needed in order to guarantee the emotional safety of the practice.

First of all, a distinction between artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being and art therapy was made. Art therapy is considered as a mental health profession, whereas artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being is considered as a service practice of arts industry, or a co-operative mode of practice between the industries of arts, health and social care, recreation and leisure. It was shown that visual art practice as a service has many dimensions. Careful considerations about the promises made in regard to the possible well-being benefits are recommended.

The main research fields of the related academic studies were identified as health and social sciences. Most of the academic journals which published studies concerning arts or visual arts in the context of well-being were identified to belong in the field of health and social sciences.

Conceptual analysis on a method level took its lead from the theories of Ludwig Wittgenstein and Mieke Bal. The conceptual analysis of the research publications by the arts and academic sectors led to the following main results regarding the use of the concepts:

- 1) The amount of the concepts related to art practice or visual art practice in the context of well-being was extensive.
- 2) The concepts related to art practice or visual art practice had not been described, nor problematized sufficiently in the research material.
- 3) The employment of the concepts concerning the practice of visual arts was diverse, often overlapping, in some respects incoherent and sometimes contradictory.
- 4) Few attempts had been made in order to examine, or explain the origins of the concept concerning the practice of visual arts or the context in which the concept had been previously used in regard to the fields of art research.
- 5) 'Art' was used as an encompassing catch-all concept in order to provide justification for the main argument of the research material: 'Art has a positive impact on well-being'.
- 6) 'Well-being' was mostly unsufficiently conceptualized, described or explained in regard to the conceptions of subjective or psychological well-being. Consistent with the employment of the concept of 'art', 'well-being' was often utilized in a generalized, not distinguished or detailed level.

Conceptual analysis identified seven conceptual groups related to art or visual art practice in the research material: **1) art, arts and the arts; 2) artistic process; 3) arts activity; 4) arts intervention; 5) community arts; 6) participatory arts; and, 7) creativity.**

The use of the concepts of art, arts and the arts, artistic process, arts activity, arts intervention, community arts, participatory arts, and creativity was analysed in detail. The aforementioned groups consisted of several overlapping sub-concepts forming family resemblances.

The overuse of concepts in the research material of arts and academic sectors indicated that there are no general concepts that have been agreed on to describe the specific phenomenon of visual art practice in relation to well-being. Only the concepts of 'participatory arts' and 'community arts' and their respective sub-concepts were used more systematically as to refer to some more particular art practices, rather than others. Both concepts could be considered to include societal and community-related connotations. The concept of 'arts intervention' has medical and mental health connotations, but was often used in an inconsistent way referring to artist-facilitated art practice or art projects in general.

At the level of discourse, in many cases, the discourse lacked multiple sides and critical voices regarding the research issue at hand. The research material described many social concerns that might favour generally art activities in relation to well-being. However, the research material offered relatively few artistic and aesthetic concerns that might favour the work.

The discourse of the academic studies mainly applied language originating from the fields of health and social sciences. The academic studies presented fundamentally different ways to organizing and recognizing concepts related to visual art practice than the paradigms of art research, including art history, art theory, aesthetics and practice-based art and design research. The practice of the arts in relation to well-being was often generalized and justified in terms of utility. The discourse was centred around the claimed positive impacts of the arts in general. The result is that the academic studies produce very similar results in regard to the positive outcomes of art activities in general, even though the research approaches and methodology may be different.

The research publications by arts and academic sectors present a clear agenda to regard art as an utility for purposes which have not been traditionally considered as the ends of art in art history, nor in aesthetics. However, the philosophical question in regard to the ends of visual arts was mostly avoided. Moreover, the detailed facts of how visual art practice specifically provide usefulness and advantageousness in regard to well-being was mostly left ambiguous and unclear.

A limitation of the research publications of arts and academic sectors was the absence of artists' views about how visual art practice should be designed in order to enhance the well-being of the

participants. By utilizing the theories of Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi, this situation was conceptualized as a system of beliefs, where the problem is given to the artists by society. There is thus little need for the artist to discover what the problem would be in regard to the connection between the visual art practice and well-being. More arts-driven research is needed.

At the level of the research methodology, theoretical frameworks, methodology and individual methods originated from the fields of health and social sciences in the research publications. Even though the studies claimed to research 'art', no theoretical frameworks or methodology of art research were utilized in the sample. The detailed distinction between different forms of visual arts and their field-specific mechanisms in relation to well-being and in comparison to one another was lacking in the research material of both the arts and academic sectors. Questions of art history, art theory and aesthetics, as well as artistic practice were mostly ignored. There was scant data on how art projects and programmes could be designed by utilizing the principles of human-centered service design.

The research questions had mostly been framed in order to reinforce the positive outcomes of the studies. The aims of the studies were formulated around proving the positive impacts of the arts in general. The original hypotheses were rarely contested or changed because of the study findings. Neutral or negative outcomes of the studies were rarely discussed, apart from few studies in the research material. In many cases the limitations of the studies were not sufficiently presented. However, possible neutral or negative results in relation to well-being benefits should not be ignored, or there may be a chance that important discoveries for further research may be missed. Evidence was found that in some situations the promotion of well-being through visual art practice can lead to disadvantages. More unbiased research of possible neutral or negative outcomes is needed in order to guarantee the development of the research.

The research evidence was constructed mainly in particular bodies of knowledge as written and verbal data. Research methods focused to a large extent on gathering verbal and written data of the participants, not the analysis of visual research material. Much of the research concerned participants' views of the possible outcomes of the art activities. Apart from the few observational research designs, the outcomes were mostly based on textual data originating from surveys, questionnaires and interviews as post-experience data gathering.

The accounts of the participants were, to a large extent, accepted as realistic views of the emotions and thoughts of the participants in regard to well-being. However, it was shown that several researchers

in contemporary psychology have questioned the usefulness of post-experience data gathering in regard to well-being questions. Nonetheless, in the research material of the arts and academic sectors the discussion about the premises of the methodology of post-experience data gathering were avoided.

The majority of the academic studies used a single group study design. Sample sizes of participants were relatively small, with the majority of studies having less than 20 study participants. The studies included a group or groups of participants that were engaged in one way or another in art activities that were performed in order to enhance the well-being of the participants. There were usually no psychological measures regarding the participant before the workshop, course, project or programme. Only few studies included a rigour psychological outcome measure after the project or a control group design.

A control group design would require that for comparison there would be a participant group which would not attend to any art activities or would attend to art activities which are not aimed for well-being. Instead majority of the studies did not make any detailed description of the goals and procedures of the art activities or artistic process nor did they examine in depth the impact of the environment, event and time, or the factors of the arts facilitation on the possible outcomes. The lack of detailed research of the factors of the visual art practice itself questions the relevance of the outcome results concerning the impact of visual arts.

In summary, the key asymmetries concerning the research approaches and methodology discovered in the research material of the arts and academic sectors are:

- 1) Art for art's sake vs. instrumental arts policy.
- 2) The methodology of art research vs. the methodology of health and social sciences.
- 3) Artist-facilitated visual art practice vs. art therapy.
- 4) Intrinsic self-expression vs. societal utility of arts.
- 5) Artist-led art projects vs. health and social organization-led arts-based projects.
- 6) The knowledge of visual art practice vs. verbal and written data.
- 7) In situ research vs. post-experience research.
- 8) Practice-based art and design research vs. arts-based social and health sciences research.
- 9) Visual art practice vs. visual arts-based practice.
- 10) Positive impacts vs. neutral or negative outcomes.

Most of the asymmetries in the research material may be considered to be due to the fact that the promise of the promotion of well-being by visual art practice has been constructed by using generalizations in

regard to both the practice of visual arts and well-being.

The critical review and conceptual analysis of the academic studies has proven that even though there are many studies concerning the positive impact of arts to well-being in general, the research has been unable, to a large degree, to examine specific factors of the practice of the visual arts, as well as to discuss the quality, value and meaningfulness of the arts facilitation, arts participation, art activities, artistic process and artworks themselves in detail. Moreover, it was discovered and proven that there is a lack of conceptualization of well-being in the research material in regard to subjective, psychological, hedonic and eudaimonic well-being. The actual dimensions of the visual art practice that may enhance the sense of eudaimonic well-being, such as intrinsic motivation, effort, flow by using high skills in high challenges, and development of one's signature strengths, were mostly left unexamined. Thus, the possible connection between the practice of visual arts and well-being was found to be theoretically underdeveloped in regard to the theoretical frameworks and conceptions of contemporary psychology. Moreover, interdisciplinarity could not be considered as a genuine situation of research.

The main conclusion is that the conceptions of visual art practice and well-being are utilized in order to persuade the positive linkage between the practice of arts and well-being in the research material by using generalizations in regard to both conceptions. By interpreting philosophy by Weitz, this strategy can be conceptualized as 'the stated ideal' of research. Little evidence was found that the overlapping and generalized nature of the usage of the concepts, lack of theoretical frameworks concerning the visual art practice itself, or the use of research methodologies which do not consider the conceptions of contemporary psychology provide for the necessary depth and rigour to enable the development and research in the field of visual arts and well-being. The number of studies concerning visual arts or arts in relation to well-being has grown, while the theoretical scope and depth has not. Thus, the conceptual analysis led to the development of new theoretical and conceptual frameworks suggesting the connection of visual art practice with contemporary psychology in a more relevant way.

Concerning the new theoretical framework, a set of relevant conceptualizations that connect visual art practice and psychological well-being have been identified and suggested. The overall theoretical framework for the research of visual art practice in relation to well-being consists of the epistemological foundation of well-being, theoretical framework of well-being, methodology and methods. The

epistemological foundation identified as most appropriate is positive psychology as a specific research field which has its focus on the interest in human potential, flourishing and well-being. The relevant theoretical framework of well-being is considered to be psychological well-being, and the dimensions of eudaimonia and hedonia as overlapping, yet distinguishable conceptions of contemporary psychology are acknowledged. The principal conceptions of psychological well-being recommended to be applied in the research concerning visual art practice are psychological well-being (PWB), hedonic and eudaimonic well-being (EWB), and flow as an optimal experience.

The conceptual distinction and employment of the conceptions depends on the research question and hypothesis at hand. Adapting the suggestion made by Huta and Waterman, it should be distinguished whether the purpose of the inquiry is focused more on eudaimonic living, or assessing eudaimonia as a relation to particular orientations, behaviour, subjective experiences or functioning in regard to visual art practice.

Methodology is regarded as necessarily interdisciplinary in order to consider the both conceptions: visual art practice, as well as well-being. Interdisciplinarity is understood as a cooperative dialogue across the field boundaries of art research and psychology. Methods include both psychological well-being measures, and analysis of visual arts as production, process and/or products. The research is suggested to be situationalized and contextualized instead of focusing on post-experience data gathering. The research should preferably be accompanied also by a sufficient visual record of the art production, process and/or artworks

Concerning the new conceptual framework, many steps of theoretical development have been made. The conceptual framework is understood as a theoretical approach and a means for more arts-driven discussion about the use and relations of different conceptions in research. In addition, the conceptual framework should be considered as an invitation for the exchange of perspectives. Thus, it aims for advancing dialogue and discussion about the different research aspects and concepts, and should not be considered as restrictive or limiting, nor exhaustive.

The premise of the conceptual framework in regard to hedonic and eudaimonic well-being takes its lead especially from the work by Waterman and colleagues, Deci, Ryan, and Huta. Flow experience is understood in the context of the original theories of Csikszentmihalyi, Massimini and Carli, with the distinction made by Waterman. The special nature of the visual artistic process is interpreted by adapting the theories by Langer of expression and visual symbolism, Getzels

and Csikszentmihalyi of problem-finding, and Dewey of artistic-aesthetic experience.

Visual art practice in relation to well-being pursuits consists of multiple situations and layers of meaning. The principles of the conceptual framework include the following: 1) Visual arts are considered as an activity of a group of participants; 2) The group consists of non-clinical participants; 3) The activity is the participants' leisure time; 4) The activity is facilitated by a professional artist; 5) The facilitation of visual art activities is considered as a practice of the artist; 6) The practice of the artist facilitator is considered as a professional service; 7) Visual arts as a practice, production, process and product is considered as knowledge; 8) Well-being is conceptualized as psychological well-being, comprising the dimensions of eudaimonia and hedonia as overlapping, yet distinguishable constructs of psychology; 9) Eudaimonia is conceptualized in terms of: self-realization, self expression, meaning, value, signature strengths, interest, effort, flow. The core conception of eudaimonia is meaningfulness; 10) Close-to core conceptions of eudaimonia are considered as positive relationships and communication, acceptance and self-acceptance, and environmental sensitivity; 11) Hedonia is conceptualized in terms of the subjective experiences of pleasure, enjoyment and relaxation.

The new, arts-driven conceptual framework for the discussion of possible research aspects in relation to eudaimonic and hedonic well-being aims consists of the following conceptions:

environment,
arts facilitation,
arts participation,
art activity,
artistic process, and
artwork.

The mediating link between eudaimonic and hedonic well-being and visual art practice is conceptualized as the **meaningfulness** of visual art practice.

Environment as a concept is considered in reference to the relationships between built and nature environment, human experiences and the sense of well-being. It is suggested that the interaction depends largely on the contextual setting of a particular environment. Visual art practice for well-being aims is recommended to be studied in situ, in its most relevant environment, which is the art studio. The art studio is described as a specific spatial setting that serves for practical artistic purposes and allows flexibility, liberty and continuity in work, which can provide for both eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. Furthermore,

art studio is regarded in the meaning-making level as the starting point of the visual knowledge production, and the first place where the artistic-aesthetic experience is perceived and felt. If visual art practice is studied in the outdoors environment, such as nature settings, it is recommended to research also the impact factor of nature relatedness or nature connectedness to the eudaimonic and hedonic well-being of the participant.

Arts facilitation is conceptualized as a cooperative, personally customized and confidential relationship where the method is enabling the potential of the participant for self-realization, self-expression, growth of signature strengths, positive relationships, and the sense of interest and flow by providing quality art activities. Facilitation is considered as a reflective process, including post-experience reflection. Furthermore, arts facilitation by an artist facilitator provides for a structure and organization of time. If arts facilitation is contextualized as a programme, a course, a workshop or a series of workshops, a session or series of sessions, these contexts bring with them requirements for the research of educational and learning processes in regard to facilitation.

Special problems of the practice of artists as facilitators are discovered and analysed. Facilitation is considered as an enabling identity strategy for an artist, rather than a restricting one. This is justified by regarding the identity as an arts facilitator in the context of artist teachers, reflection and human-centered design. Considering the view of Thornton in regard to the conception of artist teacher, an artist facilitator is described generally as follows: An artist facilitator is a practitioner who both creates art and facilitates art activities and is committed to both practices.

Arts participation is conceptualized as a means to offer potentially positive relationships and acceptance, two key dimensions of participation which may offer for the rise of eudaimonic well-being. A baseline for the participants' previous experiences in regard to well-being should be created, and the experiences and expertise in visual arts, such as previous art education is recommended to be studied. It should be researched whether participants who are self-motivated and voluntarily participate to art activities have personality characteristics and high aesthetic values, which may influence the outcomes of the studies to be positive in relation to well-being.

Communicative relationships play a key role in the arts participation. The conceptions of the given status of the situation and expectation-based script are suggested to be utilized. If the situation of the arts participation is given the status of 'facilitation', this context itself may influence the communicative discourses used. In other words, the discourses used by the artist facilitator and the participants

may be expectation-based and follow a script of 'facilitation'. However, if 'visual art practice' itself is the given status of the situation, the expectation-based script is likely to be more arts-driven, thus enabling discourses that are more typical to the artistic practice than learning in general. Feedback is one of the key conceptions of the original conception of flow. A recommendation is that feedback should be conceptualized in a relevant way in relation to criticism.

Art activity is conceptualized as the actual field-specific visual art activity by the participant. In the context of art activity, and following Dewey, the visual artwork is considered as a matter of object as the thing of appearance, as having a physical and/or experiential presence.

Participants' different activity modes, such as individual work in a group situation or cooperation in an art project may influence the subjective experiences of well-being. For eudaimonic well-being pursuits, the recommendation is that the research of an art activity could concentrate more on the individual self-expression and goals of personal growth and purpose of the participant.

A distinction between different leisure activities as a baseline has been made. For the pursuit of eudaimonic well-being, visual art activity of the participant should be considered in the context of serious leisure or project-based leisure, depending on the interest, self-motivation, effort and time invested on the activity by the participant. However, for the pursuit of eudaimonic well-being goals, the art activities will take time to be fully understood and organized as subjective experiences or functioning. Thus, the research of long-term art activities is recommended for eudaimonic pursuits.

In regard to activities and following the theories by Csikszentmihalyi, Massimini, Carli and Waterman, the flow experience is suggested to include two dimensions: 1) the balance of high challenges and high skills, and 2) cognitive-affective states. Instead of treating the flow experience as a uniform construct, and taking the lead from Waterman, a suggestion is made that some of the cognitive-affective states of the flow experience in regard to art activities fall into the conception of hedonic enjoyment, whereas others belong to the conception of eudaimonic well-being. In regard to art activities, the participant may experience both eudaimonic and hedonic well-being, or hedonic well-being.

Short-term visual art activities may provide for the hedonic enjoyment of pleasure and relaxation. If the challenges and skills are high and the activities offer possibilities for self-realization, visual art activities may provide for the eudaimonic well-being of personal growth, and the discovery of signature strengths. However, the activities of visual arts differ significantly from one another. Thus, it

would be necessary to study how one visual art form as an activity could suit to one participant's pursuits, whereas another participant might consider the activity as not suitable for his or her individual pursuits in regard to possible well-being benefits.

Artistic process is considered especially in the context of self-expression and personal growth as eudaimonic well-being goals of the participant. In regard to self-expression, Langer's notion that art expresses *ideas of feeling* is supported. Thus, in a visual artwork one should not look for the participant's direct self-expression as a visual record or document of his or her actual emotions, but visual and symbolic representations of feelings.

Following Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi, the artistic process is understood also as a specific mode of problem-finding. The participant himself or herself should be allowed to find the artistic problem through his or her intrinsic motivation, instead of regarding the creative problem as already described and framed by external reasons. Following Dewey, Langer, Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi, a proposition is made that the artistic process involves the actual thinking with various visual, self-expressive, symbolic and formal elements to which the visual artwork is a solution.

Moreover, in the situation of the artistic process, the participant acts as both the creator and the percipient. The artwork is created by sequences of time. There is a constant mental process of reflection of whether the artwork is finished. By adapting the theories of Dewey, the suggestion is that the artistic process as a subjective experience could be conceptualized more relevantly as an artistic-aesthetic experience of the participant in research.

Artwork as a concept is considered in reference to formal elements, referential relations, negotiated value, and aesthetic experience. The artwork is regarded as an object of interpretation. The negotiated value of the artwork by external reviewers may influence the subjective experience of the participant in regard to the artwork. If the feedback is negative, the participant may consider his or her artwork differently than in the beginning of the artistic process. The interpretation of an artwork in research requires also knowledge of the social and cultural context of the art production. Hence, it is essential to determine by which theoretical approaches the artwork is interpreted by the artist facilitator, the participant, the peers and researchers in the research situation. In visual art practice for well-being pursuits the value criteria could be considered more as a projection of the aims of the participant. In regard to eudaimonic well-being, it is recommended to study whether the artwork fulfills the aims of self-expression, self-acceptance, personal growth, and using one's signature strengths.

In addition to the aforementioned, a visual artwork should not be considered or interpreted as a 'language' or in linguistic models or terms in the research. By following Langer, the laws that govern the complex combinations of visual art forms, the articulation, are acknowledged to be different from the laws of syntax that govern language.

Finally, following the discussion of the conceptual framework, it is suggested that the visual art practice in relation to well-being interests could be studied in a situationalized and experiential art workshop. The main principles for an in situ visual art workshop method have been presented. An in situ art workshop as a research method is described as an arena for discussion and creation of new visual knowledge.

In conclusion, the results of this study are noteworthy from several perspectives. The research demonstrated through systematic critical review and conceptual analysis the missing theoretical frameworks and conceptions in the arts and academic sectors. A lack of theoretical frameworks and conceptions of both art research and contemporary psychology of well-being was discovered. The conceptions of subjective well-being, psychological well-being, eudaimonic and hedonic well-being were rarely used in their appropriate contemporary research contexts. Moreover, the concepts of 'art' and 'well-being' were used as all-encompassing concepts and in the context of reasoning with generalizations in regard to the positive impact of art. The result was that in many cases theoretical frameworks and conceptions in regard to the questions concerning both visual arts and well-being were found to be undeveloped in the research material of arts and academic sectors.

Thus, a grounded need for new theoretical and conceptual frameworks was discovered and identified in detail. The aspects of new theoretical and conceptual frameworks have been discussed and shared for the research field. In addition, the principles of an in situ visual art workshop as a research method have been produced. These discoveries can advance the development and understanding of the possible research designs in the future.

The results concerning the new theoretical and conceptual frameworks are important for several reasons. The new theoretical framework can guide the further research in regard to the relevant study approach. The new, more arts-driven conceptual framework can be used when formulating a research question or hypothesis concerning the connection between visual art practice and well-being. The conceptual framework can also be utilized when selecting methodology or particular methods, or when making a choice between different psychological well-being measures in regard to the research of visual art practice. The framework can serve also as a means of further discussion of the dimensions of visual art practice.

In addition, the framework can be used as an education tool in practice-based higher art and design education. As such, it can show the strengths and areas requiring development for art and design students and lecturers as well as offer possibilities for reflecting professional and personal development in regard to art projects concerning well-being aims. Thus, the conceptual framework can benefit a wide range of research in the fields of arts and humanities, practice-based art and design research, as well as health, social and leisure sciences. All in all, the utilization of the new theoretical and conceptual frameworks, or the in situ art workshop method depends on the design of the research question and hypothesis itself.

Finally, the new theoretical and conceptual frameworks should be considered as an invitation for the exchange of perspectives across discipline boundaries. The interdisciplinary approach presented in this research contributes to a better understanding of how mediating conceptual links could be developed in the future. The research of visual art practice can offer novel and innovative pathways to the study of eudaimonic and hedonic well-being and the paradigm of positive psychology.

In the process of approaching the end of this study, the limitations of the research should be acknowledged. The strict inclusion and exclusion criteria of the research material included in the conceptual analysis may have led to a situation where some of the studies have been unintentionally neglected. The concentration on the research publications of Arts Council England and peer-reviewed academic studies as research material carries with an unavoidable limitation of having to disregard some of the literature that could possibly have been beneficial for the study.

However, there is nothing to suggest that the systematically conducted critical review and conceptual analysis would not be representative of the research made by Arts Council England as presenting the arts sector. In addition, there is nothing to implicate that the total number of critically reviewed studies would not represent the research situation in the academic research sector.

The method of critical review itself is replicable. However, the conceptual analysis is always a result of the negotiation and reflective dialogue between the researcher and the research material. This is also the nature of the concept itself. Unlike a 'term' in a dictionary, the 'concept' is open for discussion and even for contrasting views.

As indicated in the beginning, this study included theoretical objectives. It was a systematic investigation in theory, instead of an empirical study. Correspondingly, the interest was focused on discovering and analysing critical theoretical problems. This research design had a significant advantage, because it allowed to explore a wide range of issues which were both methodological and conceptual in nature and novel to the field. The study connected the conceptions of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being as understood in the contemporary psychology with the practice of visual arts. Some general recommendations for further research can be given as a summary:

- 1) Different conceptualizations of well-being should be distinguished in valid and relevant manner.
- 2) Any research design in regard to the practice of visual arts and well-being should be able to describe four framework elements: the epistemological foundation of well-being, the theoretical framework of well-being, methodology and the particular methods in regard to both visual art practice and well-being.
- 3) In regard to psychological well-being, the research should acknowledge the different theoretical approaches and methodology of contemporary psychology. The differences between subjective well-being, psychological well-being, hedonic and eudaimonic well-being should be recognized and the research should be positioned in the appropriate framework in regard to the research question and hypothesis.
- 4) Different research methods should be applied according to the level of the research question in regard to well-being. Consideration of the different psychological measures of well-being should be made. If post-experience methods are used, a reason should be explained in regard to data gathering in situ.
- 5) The measures of psychological well-being should be recognized or developed in the context of contemporary psychology of well-being. The utilization of the measures developed within the disease model of mental disorders should be questioned in the research which connects visual art practice with psychological well-being unless the research question and hypothesis is formulated to concern specifically mental disorders.
- 6) The research should be considered as essentially interdisciplinary combining the perspectives of art research and psychology of well-being in regard to the research question and hypothesis at hand.
- 7) A suggested approach is to study the dimensions of hedonic and eudaimonic well-being when a person is engaged in the activities of visual arts, and, whether these situationalized and contextualized activities have the quality of being meaningful to the participant.

8) In regard to visual art practice, the particularity of different visual art forms as field-specific domains of knowledge and self-expression should be understood. More arts-driven research design should be used, if the research question and hypothesis centres around the possible outcomes of the practice of visual arts.

9) Terms such as 'arts-based' or 'arts-related' are not recommended to be utilized in the research of artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being. If the terms are utilized, an explanation should be given in regard to the conception of art, and art research, comprising of the fields of theoretical and practice-based art research.

10) Artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being can not be described in terms of art therapy, nor therapeutic, if the artist as a facilitator lacks the professional qualifications in art therapy.

11) Neutral or negative outcomes in regard to well-being should also be considered as important to the development of the well-being research in the context of the practice of visual arts.

12) In regard to visual art practice the conceptions of environment, arts facilitation, arts participation, art activity, artistic process, and artwork could be utilized in the research. The difference between visual arts as a practice by the artist facilitator, and as an activity of the participant should be understood. The possible influence of many situationalized and contextualized, intertwining factors of visual art practice should be acknowledged in research in regard to possible well-being outcomes.

The results obtained here provide theoretical support for the linkage between visual art practice and eudaimonic and hedonic well-being. A proposition can be made that long-term structured visual art practice may enhance eudaimonic well-being, whereas short-term and unstructured visual art practice may provide more for hedonic enjoyment. Eudaimonic well-being can be enhanced through the practice of visual arts, if the practice is perceived as having value, quality and meaning, and the activities and engagement are intrinsically motivated by the participant. These aims are conceptualized as the **meaningfulness of the visual art practice**.

To conclude overall, this study permits a systematic description of the research potential of visual art practice as a possible source on psychological well-being. It makes a contribution to the body of literature concerning visual arts in relation to well-being by adding new knowledge of the use of concepts. Theoretical and conceptual frameworks are presented which can be applied in future studies, enabling relevant research as well as informing practical projects in the industries of arts and design, social and health care service, leisure and recreation.

7.2. Suggestions for further research

The conclusions of this study suggest that it is evident that more research and education are needed in the subject matter of artist-facilitated visual art practice in relation to well-being. The new conceptual framework can be utilized in regard to raising questions concerning the possible impact of environment, arts facilitation, arts participation, art activity, artistic process, and artwork.

Apart from the utilization of the theoretical and conceptual frameworks presented, my first study suggestion concerns the professional practice of visual arts in general. There is a long-term possibility that the profession of the artist, as a professional individual whose main mode of practice is the creation of artworks for public display or the art market, might change. Thus, it would be important to examine the institutional structures that might or might not influence the visual art practice that aims for promoting well-being. Further research could study: 1) Has there been a change in the funding and grants policies of the artistic practice in the European Union; 2) Has there been a change of the values for measuring the productivity of an individual artist in regard to possible well-being projects by the arts sector and other funding authorities?

Further research might also question the quality of visual arts and well-being work and the quality of the evaluation procedures in praxis. The arts and well-being work strives for an ideal of the positive impact in the lives of people. But the real question is, how many practitioners in the arts sector as well as the health and social sector are actually knowledgeable about the research on subjective or psychological well-being. A further question would be, what sort of professionalism is required from the artists in order to guarantee the good practice in art and well-being projects.

Further research could also include the study of the design requirements of visual arts and well-being projects in praxis. The concept of the design brief was never mentioned in the research material. The structure of the research for a design brief should follow the necessary steps of: 1) need charting with stakeholders; 2) creation of a data base; 3) creation of design requirements; 4) focus group interviews; and 5) conclusions for a design brief. The actual design brief of the project should be examined before the research process of the procedures and possible outcomes of the project can begin.

The results of this study also substantiate a further practice-based research as an arts-driven examination of the possible connection between visual art practice and well-being. The premise of this research is that the quality, value and meaning are the essential dimensions

of visual art practice which can enhance the sense of eudaimonic well-being as meaningfulness. Further research should be genuinely interdisciplinary as the most innovative approaches are likely to be created at the interface of theoretical art research, practice-based art and design research and contemporary psychology. The nature of well-being is a common subject matter of several disciplines. Thus, forward-looking dialogue across the boundaries of art and science should be actively encouraged.

Appendixes and Bibliography

Appendix I

Study programmes in visual arts in five international art and design institutions of university level education 2013

1. Royal College of Art, London, Great Britain

- School of Architecture: Architecture; Interior Design
- School of Communication: Animation; Information Experience Design; Visual Communication
- School of Design: Design Interactions; Design Products; Global Innovation Design; Innovation Design Engineering; Service Design; Vehicle Design
- School of Fine Art: Painting; Photography; Printmaking; Sculpture
- School of Humanities: Critical & Historical Studies; Critical Writing in Art & Design; Curating Contemporary Art; History of Design
- School of Material: Ceramics & Glass; Goldsmithing, Silversmithing, Metalwork & Jewellery; Fashion Menswear; Fashion Womenswear; Textiles⁷⁶¹

2. University of the Arts, London, Great Britain

- Camberwell College of Arts: Graphic Design; Illustration; 3D Design; Drawing; Painting; Photography; Sculpture; Book Arts; Fine Art Digital; Printmaking; Conservation
- Chelsea College of Art and Design: Fine Art; Graphic Design Communication; Interior and Spatial Design; Textile Design; Interior Design, Art Theory, Curating, Fine Art, Arts Practice
- Central Saint-Martins College of Arts and Design: Acting, Drama Center; Architecture: Spaces and Objects; Ceramic Design; Criticism, Communication and Curating: Arts and Design; Directing, Drama Center; Fashion; Fashion Design with Knitwear; Fashion Design with Marketing; Fashion Design Menswear; Fashion Design Womenswear; Fashion: Fashion Print; Fashion Communication; Fashion Communication: Fashion History and Theory; Fashion Communication: Fashion Journalism; Fashion Communication: Fashion Communication and Promotion; Fine Art; Graphic Design; Jewellery Design; Performance Design and Practice; Product Design; Textile Design; Applied Imagination in the Creative Industries; Architecture: Cities and Innovation; Art and Science; Character Animation; Communication Design; Creative Practice for Narrative Environments; Culture, Criticism and Curation; Ceramics, Furniture or Jewellery; Dramatic Writing, Drama Center; Industrial Design; Innovation Management; Photography; Textile Futures; Exhibition Studies; Moving Image; Theory and Philosophy
- London College of Communication: Advertising; Animation; Design Cultures; Design for Graphic Communication; Design for Interaction and Moving Image; Film Practice; Film and Television; Games Design; Graphic and Media Design; Illustration and Visual Media; Journalism; Live Events and Television; Magazine Publishing; Media and Cultural Studies; Media Communications; Media Practice; Photography; Photojournalism and Documentary Photography; Public Relations; Sounds Art and Design; Spatial Design; Sports Journalism; Collaborative Performance; Contemporary Typographic Media; Documentary Film; Graphic Branding and Identity; Graphic Design; Graphic Moving Image; Interactive Media; Journalism: Print/Online; Journalism: Television; Media, Communications and Critical Practice; Public Relations, Publishing, Screenwriting, Sound Arts; Service Design Innovation
- London College of Fashion: Bespoke Tailoring; Cordwainers Fashion Accessories: Product Design and Development; Cordwainers Footwear: Product Design and Development; Cosmetic Science; Costume for Performance; Creative Direction for Fashion; Fashion Business; Fashion Contour; Fashion Design and Development; Fashion Design and Realisation; Fashion Design Technology: Menswear; Fashion Design Technology: Womenswear; Fashion Illustration; Fashion Jewellery; Fashion Journalism; Fashion Management; Fashion Media; Fashion Photography; Fashion Public Relations; Fashion Textiles; Fashion Sportswear; Hair, Make-Up and Prosthetics for Performance; 3D Effects for Performance and Fashion; Fashion Artefact; Fashion Footwear; Fashion Design Technology, Menswear; Fashion Design Technology, Womenswear; Fashion

⁷⁶¹ Royal College of Art 2013, online.

and the Environment; Costume Design for Performance; Strategic Fashion Marketing; Design Management for the Fashion Industries; Fashion Entrepreneurship; Fashion Retail; Fashion Media Production; History and Culture of Fashion; Fashion Curation; Fashion and Film; Fashion Photography; Fashion Journalism

- Wimbledon College of Art: Fine Art Painting; Fine Art Sculpture; Fine Art Print and Time-based Media; Theatre and Screen: Costume Design; Theatre and Screen: Costume Interpretation; Theatre and Screen: Set Design for Screen; Theatre and Screen: Technical Arts and Special Effects; Theatre and Screen: Theatre Design; Drawing; Digital Theatre; Theatre Design; Fine Art⁷⁶²

3. Finnish Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki, Finland

- Sculpture
- Painting
- Printmaking
- Time and Space Arts: Moving Image; Photography; Site and Situation Specific Art
- Praxis Master Programme: Exhibition Studies and Art Theory⁷⁶³

4. Aalto University; School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Helsinki, Finland

- Department of Architecture: Architecture; Landscape Architecture
- Department of Media: Photography; Media Lab; Curating and Exhibition Pedagogy; Graphic Design
- Department of Art: Art Education; Fine Arts; Creative Business Management; Curating, Managing and Mediating Art, ePedagogy Design–Visual Knowledge Building; Visual Culture
- Department of Design: Ceramic and Glass Design; Fashion and Clothing Design; Industrial Design; Interior Architecture and Furniture Design; Textile Art, Applied Art and Design; Creative Sustainability; Furniture Design; Industrial and Strategic Design; International Design Business Management; Spatial Design; Textile Art and Design
- Department of Film, Television and Scenography: Film and Television, Specialisation areas Documentary Film-making, Screenwriting, Film and television producing, Film editing, Directing, Cinematography, Sound design; Design for Theatre, Film and Television; Specialisation areas: Production Design, Scenography, Costume Design⁷⁶⁴

5. Konstfack, University College of Arts, Crafts and Design, Stockholm, Sweden

- Graphic Design and Illustration
- Industrial Design
- Interior Architecture and Furniture Design
- Ceramics and Glass
- Art
- Textile
- Jewellery Design
- Art in the Public Realm
- Storytelling
- Textile in the Expanded Field
- Teacher Education⁷⁶⁵

762 University of Arts London 2013, online.

763 Finnish Academy of Fine Arts 2013, online.

764 Aalto University 2013, online.

765 Konstfack 2013, online.

Appendix II

Statistical Classification of Economic Activities in the European Community, Rev. 2 (2008)

- A Agriculture, forestry and fishing;
- B Mining and quarrying;
- C Manufacturing;
- D Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply;
- E Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities;
- F Construction;
- G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles;
- H Transportation and storage;
- I Accommodation and food service activities;
- J Information and communication;
- K Financial and insurance activities;
- L Real estate activities;
- M Professional, scientific and technical activities;
- N Administrative and support service activities;
- O Public administration and defence; compulsory social security;
- P Education;
- P Human health and social work activities;
- R Arts, entertainment and recreation;
- S Other service activities;
- T Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing activities of households for own use;
- U Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies.

Appendix III

Ryff's theory-guided dimensions of psychological well-being

1. Self-acceptance

High scorer: Possesses a positive attitude toward the self; acknowledges and accepts multiple aspects of self, including good and bad qualities; feels positive about past life.

Low scorer: Feels dissatisfied with self; is disappointed with what has occurred with past life; is troubled about certain personal qualities; wishes to be different than what he or she is.

2. Positive relations with others

High scorer: Has warm, satisfying, trusting relationships with others; is concerned about the welfare of others; capable of strong empathy, affection, and intimacy; understands give and take of human relationships.

Low scorer: Has few close, trusting relationships with others; finds it difficult to be warm, open, and concerned about others; is isolated and frustrated in interpersonal relationships; not willing to make compromises to sustain important ties with others.

3. Personal growth

High scorer: Has a feeling of continued development; sees self as growing and expanding; is open to new experiences; has sense of realizing his or her potential; sees improvement in self and behavior over time; is changing in ways that reflect more self-knowledge and effectiveness.

Low scorer: Has a sense of personal stagnation; lacks sense of improvement or expansion over time; feels bored and uninterested with life; feels unable to develop new attitudes or behaviors

4. Purpose in life

High scorer: Has goals in life and a sense of directedness; feels there is meaning to present and past life; holds beliefs that give life purpose; has aims and objectives for living.

Low scorer: Lacks a sense of meaning in life; has few goals or aims, lacks sense of direction; does not see purpose of past life; has no outlook or beliefs that give life meaning.

5. Environmental mastery

High scorer: Has a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment; controls complex array of external activities; makes effective use of surrounding opportunities; able to choose or create contexts suitable to personal needs and values.

Low scorer: Has difficulty managing everyday affairs; feels unable to change or improve surrounding context; is unaware of surrounding opportunities; lacks sense of control over external world.

6. Autonomy

High scorer: Is self-determining and independent; able to resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways; regulates behavior from within; evaluates self by personal standards.

Low scorer: Is concerned about the expectations and evaluations of others; relies on judgments of others to make important decisions; conforms to social pressures to think and act in certain ways.

Ryff, Singer (2008). *'Know thyself and become what you are: a eudaimonic approach to psychological well-being.'* Journal of Happiness Studies, Volume 9, p. 25.

Appendix IV

Distinguishing Eudaimonia from Hedonic Enjoyment by Waterman (1990)

- (a) Whereas hedonic enjoyment may arise from a wide range of activities, eudaimonia is experienced only on connection with activities that advance one's highest potentialities, either in terms of aptitudes and talents and/or purposes in living,
- (b) Whereas hedonic enjoyment may arise from activities either actively or passively performed, eudaimonia is experienced only from one's active strivings for excellence,
- (c) Whereas hedonic enjoyment may arise from activities without regard to the quality of performance attained, eudaimonia is experienced only when one recognizes that one is making progress in the development or advancement of personally significant potentialities,
- (d) Whereas repeatedly engaging in activities yielding hedonic enjoyment results in satiation, opportunities for the repeated experience of eudaimonia will be continually sought,
- (e) Whereas most people experience hedonic enjoyment from the same broad categories of activities, the activities giving rise to eudaimonia tend to be idiosyncratic, more readily lending themselves to differentiating among individuals than to finding commonalities,
- (f) Whereas within any category of activities, hedonic enjoyment may arise from any of a range of possibilities considered as relatively interchangeable, eudaimonia is more likely experienced only with respect to some relatively specific actions.

Waterman, Alan S. (1990). *'The relevance of Aristotle's conception of eudaimonia for the psychological study of happiness.'* Theoretical & Philosophical Psychology, Volume 10, Issue 1, pp.39–44.

Appendix V

PEAQ-S items assessing hedonic enjoyment and feelings of personal expressiveness (eudaimonia) by Waterman et al.(2008)

Hedonic enjoyment items

1. When I engage in this activity I feel more satisfied than I do when engaged in most other activities
2. This activity gives me my strongest sense of enjoyment
3. When I engage in this activity I feel good
4. This activity gives me my greatest pleasure
5. When I engage in this activity I feel a warm glow
6. When I engage in this activity I feel happier than I do when engaged in most other activities

Feelings of personal expressiveness (eudaimonia) items

1. This activity gives me my greatest feeling of really being alive
2. When I engage in this activity I feel more intensely involved than I do when engaged in most other activities
3. This activity gives me my strongest feeling that this is who I really am
4. When I engage in this activity I feel that this is what I was meant to do
5. I feel more complete or fulfilled when engaging in this activity than I do when engaged in most other activities
6. I feel a special fit or meshing when engaging in this activity

Waterman et al. (2008). *The Implications Of Two Conceptions Of Happiness (Hedonic Enjoyment And Eudaimonia) For The Understanding Of Intrinsic Motivation*. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, p. 51.

Appendix VI

The Questionnaire for Eudaimonic Well-Being by Waterman et al.(2010)

This questionnaire contains a series of statements.

Strongly Disagree 0 1 2 3 4 Strongly Agree

1. I find I get intensely involved in many of the things I do each day.
2. I believe I have discovered who I really am.
3. I think it would be ideal if things came easily to me in my life.
4. My life is centered around a set of core beliefs that give meaning to my life.
5. It is more important that I really enjoy what I do than that other people are impressed by it.
6. I believe I know what my best potentials are and I try to develop them whenever possible.
7. Other people usually know better what would be good for me to do than I know myself.
8. I feel best when I'm doing something worth investing a great deal of effort in.
9. I can say that I have found my purpose in life.
10. If I did not find what I was doing rewarding for me, I do not think I could continue doing it.
11. As yet, I've not figured out what to do with my life.
12. I can't understand why some people want to work so hard on the things that they do.
13. I believe it is important to know how what I'm doing fits with purposes worth pursuing.
14. I usually know what I should do because some actions just feel right to me.
15. When I engage in activities that involve my best potentials, I have this sense of really being alive.
16. I am confused about what my talents really are.
17. I find a lot of the things I do are personally expressive for me.
18. It is important to me that I feel fulfilled by the activities that I engage in.
19. If something is really difficult, it probably isn't worth doing.
20. I find it hard to get really invested in the things that I do.
21. I believe I know what I was meant to do in life.

Waterman et. al (2010). *The Questionnaire for Eudaimonic Well-Being: Psychometric properties, demographic comparisons, and evidence of validity*. The Journal of Positive Psychology, Volume 5, Issue 1, p. 49.

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