

**ARTS PARTICIPATION AND ACCESSIBILITY
IN WILMINGTON, DELAWARE:
A YOUTH PHOTOVOICE PROJECT**

by

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ABSTRACT

Arts and cultural sites have been a defining characteristic of American cities since the 19th century and have been crucial to the social and economic wellbeing of urban communities. However, there are large disparities in the accessibility of arts and cultural resources in communities of color. The barriers to accessibility pose a threat to the resilience of these communities because arts and culture increase community capacity for resilience by fostering social engagement, aesthetic attraction, and economic development.

The purpose of this study was to better understand how Black teenage girls in Wilmington, DE participated in arts and cultural activities, and to learn more about their access to arts and cultural activities within their communities. Using survey and photovoice methods, participants identified the arts and cultural activities they participated in and explained why. They also documented their experiences with arts and culture in their community from their perspective and had critical discussions about community concerns in regards to the accessibility of arts and culture from their experience.

Findings indicated participation in 21 different arts and cultural activities. Additionally, the most salient barriers to accessibility included lack of representation of Black women, unavailable and unaffordable arts and cultural programs, and limited family support. The results of this study confirmed past research that indicated the importance of arts and cultural participation as a means to support the resilience of Black communities.

INTRODUCTION

The arts have power; the power to connect people, the power to communicate the incommunicable, and the power to heal. Arts and cultural sites have been a defining characteristic of American cities since the 19th century. Art spaces, like the Lincoln Center in New York City and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., have been major centers of social and cultural engagement, aesthetic attraction, and economic development (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010). However, communities of color have been historically excluded from these sites (DiMaggio & Ostower, 1990). However, being excluded from mainstream arts and cultural sites has not stopped communities of color from participating and thriving in the arts (DiMaggio & Ostower, 1990). In Black and Brown communities across the world, the arts have been a site of development and healing. From the gospel hymns and ring shouts of enslaved southern Blacks to the jazz and blues played in the Cotton Club during the Harlem Renaissance, to the rhymes of battle rappers on street corners, Black communities have created and consumed art as a means of resistance and resilience to the oppression they've faced in a racially stratified America (Massey & Denton, 1993; Payne, 2011; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989).

While the arts have played such an anchoring role in the state of Black communities in the United States, there are extreme disparities in their access to arts and cultural assets (Stern & Seifert, 2014). The arts can play a significant role in

increasing communities of color's capacity for resilience, however, there are multiple barriers to their inclusion and participation in formal arts and cultural spaces (ARUP, 2004; Markusen & Gadwa, 2010; Stern & Seifert, 2014).

The purpose of this study was to understand how teenage Black girls in Wilmington, DE participate in arts and cultural activities in their communities and explore the accessibility of arts and cultural assets from their experience. Using a survey and photovoice methods, participants were able to:

1. identify their participation and interests in arts and cultural activities,
2. use photographs to document and reflect on the accessibility of arts and cultural assets in their neighborhoods as identified by participants in group discussions prior to data collection,
3. and promote dialogue about important community concerns in regards to arts accessibility and participation through group discussions of photographs. (Stack, Magill, & McDonagh, 2004; Wang & Burris, 1997; Wang, 2006).

Based on responses to a survey derived from the 2008 Survey of Public Participation of the Arts (National Endowment of the Arts, 2009), the current study distinguishes trends in how the participants engage in creative activities in their communities. Using photovoice methodology, participants identified strengths of arts and cultural accessibility in their communities, as well as barriers to the accessibility.

I expected to find that some of the barriers to accessibility might have been associated with physical proximity of arts and cultural assets, limited awareness of resources within the community, and social anxiety about entering unfamiliar arts and

cultural spaces (Stern, 2011; DiMaggio & Ostower, 1990; DiMaggio & Useem, 1978). Instead, I found that the barriers to accessibility included the representation of black women, lack of affordable arts and cultural programs, and family support in their pursuit of the arts. Ultimately, the results of this study confirmed past research that indicated the importance of arts and cultural participation as a means to support the resilience of Black communities. The following chapters will (a) provide a review of current research, (b) describe the methodology and analyses utilized in the study, (c) explain the results, and (d) elaborate on the findings in the discussion and conclusions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Although the literature examining the impacts of arts and cultural assets on community resilience is growing, the available literature on the impacts of arts and cultural assets on the resilience of communities of color is very limited. As a result, a majority of this literature review focuses on arts accessibility and participation across racial communities to supplement literature on arts and community resilience. The information presented in this chapter is grounded in resilience theory and is organized as follows: (a) urban resilience, (b) arts and culture as a means to develop urban resilience, and (c) arts participation and accessibility across demographic cohorts.

Theoretical Framework: Urban Resilience

Urban resilience has been inconsistently defined in academia across disciplines, including psychology, ecology, sociology, and public policy. In an attempt to synthesize the multifaceted literature on urban resilience, Meerow, Newell, and Stultz (2015) analyzed 172 publications on urban resilience, and found 25 core definitions of urban resilience and formulated this culminating definition of urban resilience:

Urban resilience refers to the ability of an urban system-and all its constituent socio-ecological and socio-technical networks across temporal and spatial scales to maintain or rapidly return to desired functions in the face of a disturbance, to adapt to change and to quickly transform systems that limit current or future adaptive capacity (p. 45.)

While this definition encompasses most descriptions of urban resilience effectively, this broad and generalizable definition does not define the disturbances urban localities must adapt to and features that improve their adaptability. Disturbances to localities include chronic stresses, or "slow moving disasters that weaken the fabric of a society," and acute shocks, which are "sudden, sharp events that threaten a city" (Roden, 2004). Both of these kinds of adversity are experienced frequently and deeply by communities of color across the United States because modern American cities are hyper-segregated, and communities of color are isolated from crucial social, political, educational, and economic resources (Massey & Denton, 1993; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989). These communities are plagued by chronic stresses, like unemployment (Williams & Collins, 2001), lack of access to healthy food (Walker, Keane, & Burke, 2010), environmental issues like water and air contamination (Bullard, 1993), and substandard educational resources (Williams & Collins, 2001), which make it more difficult to cope with acute shocks like natural disasters and disease outbreaks (Elliot & Pais, 2006; Payne, 2011).

Cities can adopt a number of characteristics to improve the capacity of communities of color to cope with chronic stressors and acute shocks (ARUP, 2014). The City Resilience Framework provides, "a comprehensive, holistic framework that

combines the physical aspects of cities with the less tangible aspects associated with human behavior,” and organizes 12 characteristics of resilient cities into four categories, the health and wellbeing of individuals (people); urban systems and services (place); economy and society (organization); and leadership and strategy (knowledge), and are presented in table 1.1 (ARUP, 2014.)

Table 1 City Resilience Framework

Leadership and Strategy	Health and Wellbeing	Economy and Society	Infrastructure and Ecosystems
Effective leadership and management	Minimal human vulnerability	Sustainable economy	Reliable mobility and Communications
Empowered stakeholders	Diverse livelihoods and employment	Comprehensive security	Efficient provision of critical services
Integrated development planning	Effective safeguards to human health and life	Rule of Law	Reduced exposure and fragility

(ARUP, 2014)

This section has outlined the characteristics of urban resilience and what it means to communities of color. Understanding urban resilience and it’s components provides a lens through which to assess the importance of arts participation and accessibility, especially in communities of color where disturbances are frequent and severe (Massey & Denton, 1993; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989). Now that I have reviewed the literature on urban resilience and factors that contribute to a communities

capacity to be resilient, I will describe how the arts can improve these factors in the next section.

Arts and Urban Resilience

As mentioned in the previous section, The City Resilience framework emphasizes the importance of both physical and social characteristics in developing resilient communities. The arts can be used to support the physical, social, and aesthetic development through a process called creative placemaking which is when community partners strategically shape the physical and social characteristics of locality around arts and cultural activities (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010).

Creative placemaking seeks to revitalize communities with creative initiatives and results in gains in livability and economic development. Livability outcomes include heightened public safety, community identity, environmental quality, and increased collaboration between community stakeholders (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010). Economic development is encouraged by increasing local earnings and recirculating those earnings through local jobs, business, and collaborations. Americans for the Arts (2012) estimates that the arts and cultural sector generated \$ 61.1 billion in economic activity in 2010 alone. Even when economic resources are lacking, access to arts and cultural assets improve indicators of social well-being including social stress, personal health, and school effectiveness and security in urban communities (Stern & Seifert, 2004.) Combined, the impacts on a community's livability and economic prosperity

through creative placemaking increases their capacity for resilience in the face of both chronic stressors and acute shocks.

Resilient communities perform a variety of functions including stimulating economic prosperity, facilitating human relationships and identity, and protecting, maintaining and enhancing a community's assets (ARUP, 2004.) Successful integration of arts and cultural activities allow communities to perform several of these functions and makes arts and cultural accessibility an important component of developing resilient communities. In the next section, I will discuss patterns in arts and cultural participation based on demographic indicators and barriers to arts and cultural accessibility in communities of color.

Arts Participation and Accessibility

There are multiple benefits of arts and culture in communities of color, however, there are disparities in the level and access to arts and cultural assets (Dimaggio and Useem, 1978; DiMaggio, 1987; Dimaggio and Ostower, 1992; and Stern, 2011). In order to analyze the importance of access to arts and cultural activities, it is important to study trends in participation to understand which groups participate and why.

Studies on arts participation across social groups identify educational attainment, income, and race has been identified as salient indicators of arts participation and engagement (Dimaggio and Useem, 1978; DiMaggio, 1987; Dimaggio and Ostower, 1992; and Stern, 2011). Dimaggio (1987) argues that, in accordance to social

capital theory, participation and engagement in arts and cultural spaces translates to higher social and cultural capital and thus people of higher socioeconomic status are more inclined to participate in the arts (Dimaggio, 1987). However, this is only true of the consumption of Eurocentric high art forms like ballet and opera (Dimaggio and Useem, 1978). For popular art forms, such as the cinema and rock music, participation is prevalent across all socioeconomic classes (Dimaggio 1987). Although age is assumed to be an indicator of arts participation and engagement, Stern (2011) disproves this by analyzing data from Survey for Public Participation in the Arts (SPPA) since 1982 and determined that age was not a salient indicator of arts participation, but class and educational attainment were. There are higher rates of arts participation amongst higher socio-economic classes, but this is not to say that people from lower socioeconomic classes do not want to participate in the arts.

In regards to race and arts participation, white people were more likely than black people to participate in the arts in Eurocentric high art forms (Dimaggio & Ostower, 1992). Despite being less likely to engage in Euro-American art forms, blacks were more likely than whites to participate in historically Afro-American art form about which respondents were asked, such as listening to jazz, soul, blues, and rhythm-and-blues music (DiMaggio & Ostower, 1992). These results show that black communities participate and engage in the arts at similar rates to white communities, depending on the context of the art. Black people are more likely to participate and engage in arts and cultural activities that reflect their cultural background, however formal arts and cultural

spaces are Eurocentric. This poses a barrier to the participation of black communities in high art spaces.

An additional barrier to accessibility of arts and cultural resources is the formal and informal exclusion of black people in high-arts spaces (Dimaggio and Ostower, 1992). Black people have been historically excluded from Euro-American art spaces by segregationist policies until the 1970's (American Association of Museums 1972; DiMaggio and Ostower, 1992; Hart 1973). Even after the end of Jim Crow laws, without older generations to socialize them into high art spaces Black people have continued to be excluded from these spaces socially (Dimaggio and Ostower, 1992).

Another barrier to arts participation and engagement is the lack of arts and cultural assets in neighborhoods (Stern and Seifert, 2014). Low socioeconomic neighborhoods also tend to be arts deserts, where there are no arts and cultural assets or programs available to community members. Cities have begun to collect data on arts and cultural programs, resources, and activities in their neighborhoods. The data is used to map the cultural assets in their communities. One of the benefits of mapping a city's cultural assets is that it helps stakeholders to identify "art deserts," and can be used to distribute these resources more equitably. Some examples of cities who have done this are Baltimore, MD with their GeoLoom Project and Philadelphia, PA with their Culture Blocks project (Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance-Jacob France Institute, 2017, CultureBlocks.com). On both of these maps, we see areas where there are high concentrations of African Americans who have very little cultural assets in their neighborhoods.

This study aimed to explore arts and cultural participation and accessibility in Wilmington, DE from the perspective of Black and Latina teenage girls. Youth participation in photovoice offered the perfect opportunity for vulnerable and stigmatized community members to define, identify, document, and articulate their communities assets and needs in regards to arts participation and accessibility. In the next section, I will describe photovoice methodology and how I implemented it in this study.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to understand how teenage Black and Latina girls in Wilmington, Del. experience arts participation and accessibility in their communities. To do this, the study identified what arts and cultural activities the population participates in and why, as well as the activities the population would like to participate in, but do not, and why. Identifying this helped to reveal barriers to arts accessibility for Black and Latina teenage girls in Wilmington.

Philosophical Approach

Since the purpose of this study was to explore and understand lived experiences, it was best to use quantitative and qualitative approach to data collection and analysis. Quantitative methods revealed trends, and qualitative methods allow for a nuanced understanding of a complex phenomenon (Patton, 2015; Berg & Lune, 2012; Sofaer, 1999). By inquiring about arts participation and accessibility, this study inquired about a multidimensional experience that may vary based on a number of factors including race and ethnicity, gender, and age within the context of a specific locality. Qualitative methods allow for a rich and complex look at these multiple intersecting identities and

how they inform experiences with arts and culture (Patton, 2015; Berg & Lune, 2012; Sofaer, 1999). It allowed more opportunities to capture details, values, and meaning, leading to a more dynamic and colorful portrayal of the participants' experiences that were better suited to answer the research question than a quantitative approach alone (Patton, 2015; Berg & Lune, 2012; Sofaer, 1999). I adopted a participatory approach to data collection and analysis. The participatory approach to scientific inquiry makes the construction of knowledge a collaboration that is informed by both the researchers and the participants as co-researchers (Lincoln, Lyman, & Guba, 2011; Park, 2006). A participatory approach assumes a relationship between power and the construction of knowledge and enables participants to define, document, discuss, and share their experiences as a way to empower them. (Reason and Bradbury, 2006). In the context of this study, it encouraged the participants to identify their arts and cultural interest, the activities they participated in, and the barriers to their participation for themselves (Lincoln, Lyman, & Guba, 2011).

In this section, I framed my approach to the methodology. In the next section, I provide an overview of photovoice as a participatory action research method. After describing photovoice methodology, I will detail how I implemented photovoice methods in this study.

Research Method

Data was collected for this study using a survey and photovoice research methods. Photovoice is a participatory action research (PAR) strategy developed to

“identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique” (Wang and Burris, 1997). Photovoice “entails providing people with cameras so they can document their everyday realities” under the assumptions that images teach, pictures can influence policy, and community people ought to participate in creating and defining the images that shape healthful public policy (Wang, 2006). This aligned with the goals of this study which were to use photographs to document and reflect on the accessibility of arts and creative activities in their neighborhoods, promote dialogue about community concerns in regards to arts accessibility and participation (Stack, Magill, & McDonagh, 2004; Wang & Burris, 1997; Wang, 2006).

Photovoice offers an equal playing field for the perspectives of all people to be communicated and valued (Wang, 1997). Anyone can learn to use a camera and because of this, photovoice maybe particularly effective in empowering people with socially stigmatized status (Wang, 1997). This makes it a powerful strategy for youth participation. Youth participation entails the active engagement of young people, not passive roles in adult institutions, and assumes young people to be "competent citizens, rather than passive recipients of services" (Checkoway, 2011; Checkoway and Gutierrez, 2006). While there are several strategies for youth participation, photovoice offers an effective way for young people to be engaged in the policy process, in spite of negative stigmas of being disengaged and incompetent members of society, this strategy allows youth to define, shape, and articulate community issues and assets based on their own valuable lived experiences (Checkoway, 2011; Wang, 2006; Strack, Magill, and McDonagh 2004). This makes photovoice an ideal way to involve people who may not

traditionally be involved in the policy process, like teenage Black and Latina girls in Wilmington, and have them share their lived experiences and community characteristics with representatives from local arts and cultural organizations. Now that I have described photovoice and its benefits in relation to this study, I will detail how this method was utilized in this study.

Participants

The participants of this study were selected through purposive sampling (Robinson, 2014). The criteria were 10-12 teenage girls between the ages of 13 and 18, who resided in Wilmington, Delaware, and identify as either Black or Latina. Literature shows that those with the lowest access and participation in the arts are those with low socioeconomic status (Stern, 2011; DiMaggio and Useem, 1978). In Wilmington, DE the people with the lowest socioeconomic status are children under 18, female, and people who identify as Black or Latino (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). These characteristics make Black and Latina teenage girls the ideal targets for this study about arts accessibility and participation. They are the group of people who have the least amount of access and participation according to literature and are often excluded from formal arts and cultural programs within Wilmington, DE. Participants from a variety of artistic backgrounds were included in the study since the purpose of this study is not to understand the experiences of arts participation and accessibility from only girls who

are highly engaged in formal arts and cultural activities, but the experiences of those at all levels of engagement.

The participants were recruited using face-to-face advertising (Robinson, 2014). Face-to-face advertising is a useful sampling method for studies that target vulnerable or hard to reach populations by directly providing information about the study to potential participants in person (Robinson, 2014). Since teenage Black and Latina girls are a vulnerable and hard to reach population, face-to-face advertising is an effective recruitment strategy for this study. School principals and teachers were identified as potential liaisons. These liaisons were sent a letter describing the study and requesting assistance with recruiting participants. The liaisons that agreed to assist allowed me to meet with their students in person, describe the study, including what they would be asked to do, and potential risks and benefits of their participation. Interested parties who met the sample criteria were sent additional information through email. It is recommended that 7 to 10 participants be recruited per round of the study to allow for practical ease and in-depth discussion (Wang 2006). Initially, 9 participants were recruited, all of which attended the photovoice training meeting. However, only 5 participants attended the second photovoice meeting. The five participants will be referred to as Sylvia, Kyras, Sarah, Leticia, and Ashanti. Of these 5 participants, 4 identified themselves as Black and 1 identified herself as mix-raced. The participants were 16 and 17 years old, in 11th and 12th grades. They came from various neighborhoods in Wilmington including Edgemore, Beechwood, and Claymont.

I was able to gain entrée with participants and liaisons by participating in an arts-based research project, Women of Consequence, as a performer and project coordinator. Women of Consequence was performed in several Wilmington middle schools and high schools. The performance was accompanied by in-class workshops with students. This project provided me the opportunity to develop a presence and build trust amongst potential participants, prior to recruitment. This also allowed me to develop a relationship with potential liaisons as a lead contact person for the project.

Procedure

The photovoice study took place over the course of two 2-hour meetings. The meetings were held at Mt. Pleasant High School, which is located in Wilmington and is easily accessible to participants. The first meeting served as a photovoice training meeting. Participants were asked to fill out a survey about their participation in arts and cultural activities adapted from the 2008 Survey for Public Participation in the Arts (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009), which was used to collect data on the types of arts and cultural activities the participants engaged with, inside and outside of Wilmington, and to familiarize the participants with several examples of arts and cultural activities they may want to explore during the study. After completing the survey, the participants received information about photovoice, and the purpose of the study. Then, participants participated in a photography activity that was designed to familiarize them with elements of photography including color, composition, light, and

perspective, while also serving as an icebreaker to make the participants more comfortable with one another. Following the photography activity, they had a facilitated group discussion to set the scope of the project and define what arts and culture meant to them. These discussions were audio recorded and transcribed for analysis. Finally, they discussed ethical considerations for taking pictures including appropriate places to take pictures and requesting permission to take pictures of others.

During the first meeting, they were instructed to take pictures for the project and write reflections for each of the pictures using the SHOW'D method (Wang, 2006). The SHOW'D is a mnemonic spelling of questions to encourage participants to frame stories about their photographs (Wang, 2006). They were asked to take pictures of their experience with arts and cultural activities within their community and had 2 weeks to take all of the photographs they will be using for the project. The participants took pictures using the cameras on their phone because participants already have them and know how to use them. This made it an affordable and easy-to-use tool to take photographs. Pictures were texted or emailed to me in order to be prepared for presentation during the second meeting. Their reflections were handwritten or typed in templates that were given to them during the first meeting and handed in to me during the second meeting.

The second meeting was an opportunity for participants to share their photographs and reflections with each other and identify common issues and themes. Like the first meeting, the discussions in this meeting were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis. They took turns talking about two or three of the photographs

that they believe to be the most significant (Wang, 2006). Through group discussion, they identified and elaborated on common themes and issues. The group discussion was recorded and transcribed.

Limitations

There were few limitations to using photovoice methods. First, the potential risks to participants, as documenting their community reality and discussing community change are political acts. They may censor themselves to serve their best interests (Strack, Magill, and McDonagh, 2004; Wang and Burris, 1997). This may be remedied by offering confidentiality to the participants because they may be more comfortable discussing their views if their name is not attached to their views during the dissemination of the project. Second, personal judgment may intervene at different levels of representation, including who used the camera, what the user photographed, what the user chose not to photograph, who selected which photograph to discuss, and who recorded whose and what thoughts about whose and which photographs (Strack, Magill, and McDonagh, 2004; Wang and Burris, 1997). I dealt with this by limiting my role as a facilitator and empowering the participants to make the ultimate decisions of what they photograph, what they discuss, and what themes to use for analysis, in order to authentically capture their experiences. My personal judgment was used as a resource for the participants at their own discretion. Third, photographs were easy to gather but difficult to analyze and summarize because they yield a lot of data that can be difficult

to digest (Strack, Magill, and McDonagh, 2004; Wang and Burris, 1997). I counteracted this by using the SHOW'D reflections to frame their analysis on particular aspects of the photographs that helped to answer the research question.

There are several other limitations that are more specific to my personal experiences throughout the implementation of the study. Time was a major constraint during the course of this study for a number of unforeseen circumstances. I needed approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to implement this study, which was a long and challenging process. After several revisions to the project in order to meet IRB standards, I received approval to continue the study. I went straight into recruiting the participants for the study which was another long process with challenges of its own. After reaching out to several potential liaisons about the project, I was met with a variation of responses. To recruit the desired number of participants for the study I needed multiple opportunities to speak with potential participants in order to generate enough interest. One liaison was particularly helpful in giving me multiple opportunities to speak with potential participants over the course of a month. While almost 20 girls expressed interest in participating in the study, many struggled to return the necessary consent forms. Since the participants were under the age of 18, their participation required signed consent forms from both them and their parents. Getting parents signatures required me to speak with them directly about the study during an event they attended with their daughters. After signatures were collected, and the photovoice meetings could start, I struggled to find a time and a place to conduct these meetings without losing more participants. For several participants, transportation was an issue

and the meetings had to be scheduled around other school, work, and family obligations. This was made all the more challenging after school let out for the summer. Several participants could not continue with the project due to other time commitments.

These factors made the process of conducting this study a lot lengthier than anticipated, and sacrifices were made in order to complete this thesis in a timely matter. The study could have benefited from having more participants and more time to discuss their experiences with arts and cultural activities within their community. One of the benefits of conducting a photovoice study is its ability to capture the complexities of people's lived experiences. I would have liked to dig deeper into the participant's perceptions of what arts and culture mean to them, and the ideas that color the way they experience creative activities in their lives. However, opportunities to explore the nuances of their experiences were missed due to the time constraints. This had an impact on my findings and their connection to the literature on urban resilience. I've learned how important it is to plan for these unforeseen circumstances and in the future, I plan to allot more time to recruit participants and to implement the study. I plan to make the photovoice meetings longer in order to allow participants to be more descriptive when sharing their experiences. I also plan to conduct a lot more rounds of the study in order to increase the number of participants without sacrificing the intimacy of the conversations I was able to have with a smaller group.

Ethical Considerations

The identities of the participants were kept confidential in the dissemination of this paper through the use of pseudonyms due to the political nature of the topic of study. In papers and presentations, the participants will be referred to by alternative names. However, during the course of the study, there was no promise that information shared with other study participants during the meetings would be kept confidential. Participants were in the same age group and likely knew each other from school and extracurricular activities. I requested that anything discussed in the meetings was kept within the group. However, there was a risk that the identities of the participants could be shared outside of the group by other participants. There were also risks of harm associated with taking pictures inappropriately. The participants were advised not to photograph others without permission and to avoid taking pictures in venues where photography was prohibited.

ANALYSIS

Based on the methods for data collection, there were multiple data types for analysis. First, quantifiable survey data was collected on the arts and cultural activities participants have engaged within the past year via attendance, learning, and leisure activities, and demographic information about the participants of the study. Second, qualitative data was collected from the photovoice project in multiple forms. This included pictures the participants took of their experiences arts and cultural assets in their communities, as well as reflections of the photographs using the SHOW'D method. Additionally, data collection yielded audio tapes and transcripts of the discussions from the first and second meetings. The first meeting's discussion provided definitions of art and culture, participation, and accessibility according to the participants that guided them during data collection. The second meeting's discussion involved the participant's discussion of their photographs and reflections in an effort to make assertions based on their collective experience.

As with the methodology, the analysis adopted the participatory approach, which assumed an inductive or grounded approach to data analysis (Lincoln, Lyman, & Guba, 2011; Babbie, 2010; Reason & Bradbury, 2006). Using the participatory approach for data analysis meant that the participants had agency in determining the

themes, issues, and theories that arose from the data collected (Lincoln, Lyman, & Guba, 2011; Babbie, 2010; Reason & Bradbury, 2006). They were given the ultimate power in analyzing their collective experience by inducing issues, themes, and theories from critical discussions about their photographs and reflections (Delgado, 2015; Wang, 2006; Wang & Burris, 1997).

The audio recording and transcripts of the discussion from the second meeting illuminated issues, cross-cutting themes, or theories that arose from the participant's photographs and reflections. After those themes and theories were identified by the participants, I reviewed their SHOW'D reflections for each of their photographs. The SHOW'D method asks:

1. What do you *See* here? (Describe who is in the picture, what is going on, and where and when the picture was taken.)
2. What's really *Happening* here? (Is this something that you do? If it is something that you do, why do you do it? Is this something you would like to do? If it is something you would like to do, what is keeping you from doing it?),
3. How does this relate to *Our* lives? (What does your participation or nonparticipation in this activity say about the arts in your community?)
4. *Why* does this situation, concern, or strength exist? and
5. What can we *Do* about it? (Wang, 2006).

SHOW'D provides participants a reflection template that encourages them to create narratives around their photographs using thick description. The reflections were

sorted into the themes identified by the participants using focused coding, (Delgado, 2015, Saldana, 2009; Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Focused coding is a second-cycle coding method used to find the most salient themes by figuring out which initial codes are most frequent or significant in the data (Saldana, 2009). The themes identified by participants in the second meeting constructed the initial codes for analysis (Delgado, 2015; Saldana, 2009). I used focused coding by using the initial codes, or themes identified by participants, to categorize their reflections. I counted how many reflections included each theme to determine which of the initial codes were most salient among their photographs (Delgado, 2015; Saldana, 2009; Wang and Burris, 1997). In order to preserve the authenticity of their perspectives, I categorized as many photographs as I could based on the participant's reflections. Photographs are rich in data and difficult to analyze and summarize on their own (Strack, Magill, and McDonagh, 2004; Wang and Burris, 1997). As to not impose my own experiences onto those of the participants, I used the reflections to provide context for the photographs when I could, and looked at the transcripts from the second meeting to supplement my analysis of the reflections.

The knowledge that was accumulated during the analysis of the data collected helped to determine patterns of participation and accessibility of arts and culture for teenage girls in Wilmington. This contributed to a general understanding of barriers to arts participation and accessibility within their communities and allowed for further exploration of factors that may be beneficial or concerning to the overall resilience of their communities (ARUP, 2014; Stern & Seifert, 2014; Markusen & Gadwa, 2010).

Many strategies were used to ensure data quality throughout the study. Involving the participants in the research design, as well as the data collection and analysis ensured authenticity (Whittmore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001). The triangulation of data collected from surveys, photographs, and reflections, and group discussion helped to establish credibility (Whittmore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001). Criticality and integrity of the data analysis were evaluated by participants during the discussion and were considered in the results (Whittmore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001).

RESULTS

In this section I will discuss the results of the data collection and analysis of the survey responses, photographs, reflections, and discussions in order to answer my research questions. The purpose of this study was to explore the accessibility of arts and cultural assets in Wilmington, Delaware from the experience of Black and Latina teenage girls. To do this, the study identified what arts and cultural activities the population participated in and why, as well as the activities the population would have liked to participate in, but did not, and why. Identifying this helped to reveal barriers to arts accessibility for Black and Latina teenage girls in Wilmington. Five participants completed surveys, took 30 photographs, and completed 13 reflections on those photographs. In addition to 2 hours of group discussions were recorded and analyzed. In this section, based on the data, I will first describe the arts and cultural activities the participants/participants participated in. Then I will discuss the barriers the participants/participants have identified to their participation, as well as opportunities that encourage them to participate in creative activities. The results will be presented in the following format: results of the survey, followed by results of the photovoice photos, reflections and discussion.

Survey Results

The participants participate in arts and culture a number of ways. Through the survey, they were asked about their participation in 41 different arts and cultural activities identified in the 2008 Survey for Public Participation in the Arts (National Endowment for the Arts, 2009), which were classified as participation via attendance, reading, leisure, and learning. The respondents participated in 21 of the 41 activities. Out of 5 respondents, all of the individuals participated in arts and culture via leisure activities, while only 3 individuals participated in arts and cultural activities via attendance, and 2 individuals participated in arts and cultural activities via arts learning. The table below provides more information about their participation in activities across these four categories, by showing the number of respondents that participated in each activity.

Table 2 Survey of Participation in Arts and Culture Results

Participation via Attendance	# of Participants
Activity	
Toured Historic Park Monument, Neighborhood, or Building with historic value	2
Visited Art Museum or Gallery	1
Live Classical Music Performance	1
Live Musical Stage Play	1
Live dance performance other than ballet	1
Total	3
Reading Questions	
Type of Material Read	
Novels or short stories	3
Poetry	3
Plays	2
Articles	3
Essays	2
Total	4
Leisure	
Activities	
Painting, drawing, sculpture or printmaking	2
Creative writing	2
Gardening or indoor planting	2
Pottery, jewelry, ceramics, jewelry , leatherwork, or metal work	1
Make photographs, movies, or video tapes as an artistic activity	2
Movies	3
Theater or dance performance at a church, mosque, synagogue, or other religious institution	1
Total	5
Arts Learning	
Activities	
Music (Voice training , musical instrument)	2
Creative writing	1
Acting, theater	1
Music Appreciation	1
Total	2

Photovoice

Meeting One In addition to the activities they marked on the survey, the participants expressed their interests more deeply through their photographs and reflections. During the 1st meeting the participants received training on photovoice methodology. They completed a photography activity meant to teach them the elements of photography including lighting, perspective, composition, and color. Then, the participants were given the assignment of the photovoice study. The participants were asked to photograph their experiences with arts and culture in their community, and reflect on those photographs using the SHOWeD method, which asks 5 questions.

1. What do you *See* here? (Describe who is in the picture, what is going on, and where and when the picture was taken.)
2. What's really *Happening* here? (Is this something that you do? If it is something that you do, why do you do it? Is this something you would like to do? If it is something you would like to do, what is keeping you from doing it?),
3. How does this relate to *Our* lives? (What does your participation or nonparticipation in this activity say about the arts in your community?)
4. *Why* does this situation, concern, or strength exist? and
5. What can we *Do* about it? (Wang, 2006).

In addition to receiving training on photography and photovoice methods, participants were involved in setting the scope for the project during the first meeting. They were asked to define what arts and culture meant to them in order to determine what types of activities to include in their data collection. Collectively, they defined arts and culture as ways to creatively express oneself and connect to other people. They listed ways they express themselves creatively, which included cooking, hairstyling, poetry, photography, dressing themselves, dancing, writing and telling stories, acting, singing.

Meeting Two Prior to the second photovoice meeting, the participants sent me thirty photographs they took for the study. The photographs were taken in their neighborhoods and included a variety of images including family members, friends, role models, books, murals, ceramics, woodwork, floral arrangements, architecture, nature, and self portraits of them doing their favorite activities.

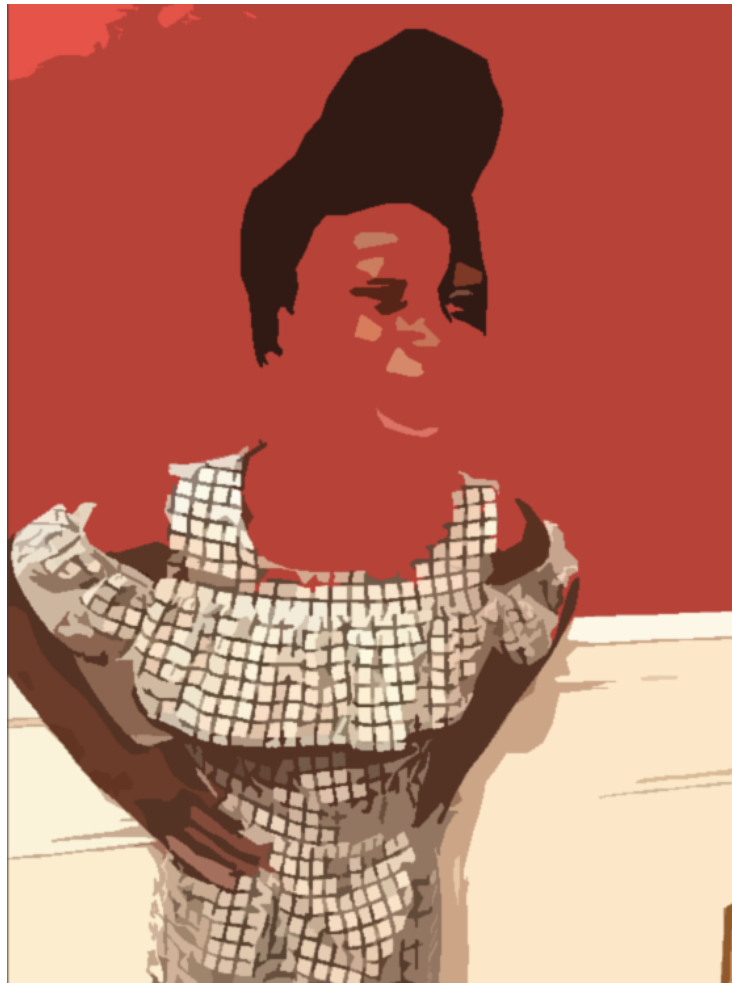


Figure 1 Picture of Kyras's sister. Kyras styled and photographed her.

Reflections were collected at the beginning of the second meetings. In the reflections the participants expressed interest in a variety of arts and cultural activities including photography, painting murals, singing, acting, creating floral arrangements, reading, architecture, fashion styling, and hair design. In the discussion that took place during the second photovoice meeting, each of the participants were asked to self

select 2 or 3 of their favorite pictures and reflections to share with the group. After discussion of each of their photographs they were able to form connections between their experiences.

During the discussion, three of the 5 participants, Sylvia, Leticia, and Ashanti, expressed interest in having creative careers. Sylvia aspired to be a photographer, Leticia aspired to be a musician, and Ashanti aspired to be a hairdresser. Another participant, Sarah, expressed that part of her experience with the arts in Wilmington has been facilitated through her job as a youth ambassador at a local non-profit organization.

Through the discussion of their photographs and reflections in the second meeting, participants were able to identify common barriers to their accessibility of arts and culture based on their photographs and reflections. After each person presented their pictures, each participant was asked to share themes that emerged from the pictures that were discussed. Several themes were presented during the second meeting as initial codes, including hope, opportunity, representation, lack of programs, acceptance, change, family support, and community support. Using focused coding, which uses the initial codes, or themes identified by participants to categorize their reflections, I counted how many reflections were in each category to determine which of the initial codes were most salient among their reflections. (Delgado, 2015; Saldana, 2009; Wang and Burris, 1997). The most salient barriers that were identified by the participants were lack of representation of Black Women, unavailable and unaffordable programs, and limited familial and community support.

Theme 1 – Lack of Representation of Black Women

Representation of black women was addressed as a theme by all five of the participants, Sarah, Leticia, Sylvia, Kyrah, and Ashanti, in 16 photographs and reflections. Sylvia elected to do a series of photographs to challenge ideas of colorism and representations of Black women in her community. She used pictures of her best friend to depict Black women as sources of beauty, elegance, confidence, and joy. She explained, “it shows... happiness and joy in a lot of hatred.” When asked what her pictures said about her experience with arts and culture in her community, the participant responded “I think it says we need more representation, when it comes to dark-skinned women.” Sarah, Ashanti, and Kyrah used selfies as representations of self-love, and discussed the struggle of feeling beautiful and accepted in society due to poor representations of Black women in mainstream culture. In addition, when discussing her love of reading, Kyrah shared that she enjoyed books with Black female main characters especially because all the books she read in the past featured white main characters. When discussing barriers to the accessibility of arts and culture for Black girls in Wilmington, Leticia identified representation as a concern. She was in the drama club and the school marching band. She expressed her hesitation and apprehension towards participating in those clubs because of the response of her peers. She was the only black person in those clubs and claimed she was called “an oreo” because of her interest. When asked why, she responded “people are afraid of getting out of their comfort zones” and theorized that if more people who looked like her

participated in drama and marching band, more people would be inclined to participate.



Figure 2 One of the photographs in Sylvia's series on the representation of dark-skinned women.



Figure 3 Kyrah's books that have Black female main characters.

Theme 2 – Lack of Programs

Two participants, Sylvia and Sarah, also identified lack of programs as a barrier to their accessibility to arts and culture in 5 different photographs and reflections. When the participant who aspired to be a photographer was asked about things that may be limiting her from achieving her dreams, she explained that there was a lack of programs available to her. The photography class at her school was cut the year before she was able to take it. She inquired with her counselors for photography classes outside of school, but all of them were extremely unaffordable. “I get paid \$8.25 (an hour) and I don’t even get paid when I’m supposed to be paid.” Sarah addressed the lack of programs when reflecting on an interest in making ceramics. She never made ceramics because she claimed that there was a lack of opportunities to explore this interest. In her reflection she stated that we should “create more opportunities to make people in the community find what kind of art feels comfortable.” She also acknowledged this lack of affordable arts and cultural programs due to her experiences with her job. Part of her job is making arts and culture more affordable and available in low-income communities. Through her job, she has participated in the painting of a mural and facilitated pop-up arts activities during community events, bringing arts to these communities in affordable and accessible ways.



Figure 4 Ceramic sculpture in Sarah's home.



Figure 5 A mural Sarah helped to paint for her job.

Theme 3 – Importance of family and community support

A third theme that was discussed during the second photovoice meeting was the importance of family and community support when pursuing arts and culture. Three of the participants, Leticia, Sylvia, and Ashanti discussed their families influence on their participation in creative activities. While 3 of the participants expressed positive reinforcement from family towards their participation in creative activities, two participants shared challenges they've faced with garnering family support for their creative pursuits. Leticia wants to be a singer, and has experienced both support and judgment from her family on her journey to becoming a professional musician. When asked what inspired her to start singing, she responded her inspiration was her mother who sings at her church. However, when asked about what keeps her from singing in public, she explained that she fears judgment from her father, who has expressed dissatisfaction with her singing in the past. She and Sarah also shared fear of judgment and rejection from their community. While both loved to sing, they refrained from doing so in public as to not put themselves in such a vulnerable position.



Figure 6 Leticia's microphone.

In this section, I have outlined the results of this study based on survey responses, photographs, reflections, and discussions. From the survey results I am able to answer the research question, “What arts and cultural activities do teenage Black girls in Wilmington, DE participate in?” I have indicated 21 arts and cultural activities the participants participated in based on the survey responses. Based on 30 photographs, 12 reflections, and 2 hours of audio transcripts from the discussion in the second meeting, I am able to identify why these girls participate in some arts and cultural activities over others and the barriers to accessibility they may experience when participating in arts and culture. I have identified three barriers to the accessibility of arts and cultural activities for Black teenage girls Wilmington including representation of black women, lack of affordable programs, and limited family and community support. In the next section I will provide a discussion based on the results of this study.

I

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to understand how teenage Black girls in Wilmington, DE participate in arts and cultural activities in their communities and what barriers they may experience to their accessibility of arts and cultural activities. In this discussion I will talk about (1) the meaning of my findings (2) how my findings relate to past research (3) policy implications and (4) Suggestions for future research.

Meaning of Findings

My findings indicated that the participants are involved in arts and culture in 21 different ways, but most of their participation was facilitated through leisure activities as opposed to participation via attendance and arts learning. This included a variety of activities including painting, drawing, sculpting or printmaking, creative writing, gardening or indoor planting, pottery, ceramics, jewelry, leatherwork, or metal work, making photographs, movies, or video tapes, and watching movies. Other activities that were mentioned during the discussion, but not in the surveys included hairstyling, singing, cooking, and fashion styling. Their involvement in arts and culture as leisure activities shows that the girls were most inclined to participate in the arts when they were the creators. This could be for a number of reasons, but based on

the results of this study it could be a result of the barriers they experience to their participation in the arts.

Based on their survey responses, the participants involvement in arts and culture through learning is limited to classes that are available to them in school. Sylvia was eager to take a photography class, however, since the class was no longer available in school and classes outside of school were unaffordable, she was unable to fulfill that interest. Sarah was also interested in taking a class on ceramics, but she was unable to find a class that suited her interest. Therefore, their limited participation in arts and culture via learning could be due to the barrier of unavailable and unaffordable arts and cultural programs where they may be able to take classes.

In addition, the photovoice study revealed that the most prevalent barrier to accessibility of the arts and culture to teenage Black girls in Wilmington is the lack of representation of Black women in arts and cultural representation. The girls were drawn to arts and cultural activities where they saw themselves, their culture, their histories, their communities, and the people they love celebrated. This includes the books they read, the music they listen to, the way they style their hair, the movies they watched, the art they choose to create, and the artists they look up to. The creative interest and aspirations of the participants were reflections of how they wanted to see themselves represented. Like Kyrach, who went out of her way to find books that had strong black female characters, and Sylvia, who chose to photograph pictures of her best friend the way she saw her, or Sarah who participated in the painting of a mural that pays tribute to a Black woman who made important contributions to the well-

being of her neighborhood, the participants chose to fill the gaps where they felt themselves misrepresented or underrepresented. However, they felt that there was a lack of arts and cultural assets and activities that depicted them in positive ways.

Relation to Past Research

The artistic and cultural preferences of the participants relate to the findings of DiMaggio and Ostower (1992). They found that Black people were more likely to participate in Afro-centric arts and cultural activities (DiMaggion and Ostower , 1992). A barrier to the participation of Black people in arts and cultural activities is that most formal arts and cultural spaces are Eurocentric. In the context of this photovoice study, that is true. The participants were attracted to arts and cultural activities that depicted Black people, and more specifically Black women, in a positive light. Even more, through the experiences of Leticia with the school marching band and drama club, we see the discouragement of Black girls from entering White spaces. Leticia was hesitant to join those clubs because she was the only Black girl in a predominantly white space.

As it relates to resilience, the participants involvement in arts and cultural activities is detrimental to the social well-being of their communities. Their participation in the arts and culture is a reflection of the positivity they see and want to see in their communities. Without it, they would be void of arts and cultural

experiences that celebrate them, their culture, their communities, their history, the people they love, and the people they aspire to be.

According to ARUP (2014), one of the major components of a resilient community is the empowerment of its stakeholders. Empowered stakeholders lead to better leadership and strategy, and improved livability outcomes (Arup, 2014; Markusen & Gadwa, 2010). However, due to the underrepresentation and misrepresentation of Black women in mainstream arts and cultural outlets, the participants of this study have found it difficult to feel empowered. Still, they seek empowerment in the arts and cultural activities they do participate in, in both the arts they consume and the arts they create. They seek to empower themselves, their friends, their family, and the women they aspire to be through positive representations of Black women in the arts and cultural activities they participate in. They have also expressed the importance of arts and culture in challenging the negative attitudes about Black women that are perpetuate in mainstream culture. They view the arts as a way to empower the Black woman in the public mindset.

Policy Implications

While a plethora of arts and cultural programs exist to increase the participation of children and teenagers in the arts, there are very limited programs that cater to the specific demographic of Black and Brown girls in Wilmington. To improve community resilience by empowering stakeholders, I recommend more

programs that cater to the involvement and participation of Black girls in arts and cultural activities. These programs should seek to connect Black girls with arts and culture that positively represents them and allow Black girls to learn arts and cultural practices where they can create art that positively represents them.

Future Research

In the future, I would like to conduct 5 or more rounds of this study with 7 – 12 participants in each round. This would allow us to learn more generalizable information about their participation in arts and cultural activities, as well as their experience with barriers to their accessibility of arts and culture.

Additionally, I would like to know what participation in arts and culture looks like for teenage girls of multiple racial and ethnic backgrounds. There is more to explore about representation and its impact on arts and cultural participation. It would be interesting to learn if representation has a similar impact on accessibility of arts and culture across for girls of different races and ethnicities.

As for the dissemination of this research, I would like to organize an exhibit for the teenage girls to share their photographs and findings with representatives from local arts and cultural organizations. Discussing findings with stakeholders is an important component of photovoice studies. By directly sharing their findings with representatives of local arts and cultural organizations, the participants have the opportunity to catalyze changes to the arts and cultural assets that already exist in their

communities. It would also be beneficial to publish their photographs and narratives in a photography book that would be publically available, so that their findings are publically accessible information.

CONCLUSIONS

Arts and culture play a significant role in the social and economic well-being of communities and can improve their capacity for community resilience (ARUP, 2004; Markusen & Gadwa, 2010; Stern & Seifert, 2014). This may be especially true in communities of color constantly impacted by chronic stressors and acute shocks (Massey & Denton, 1993; Roden, 2004; Wacquant & Wilson, 1989.) However, there are large racial disparities in the accessibility of arts and cultural assets (DiMaggio & Ostower, 1992; Stern & Seifert, 2014).

The purpose of this study was to understand how teenage Black and Latina girls experience arts and cultural participation and accessibility in Wilmington, DE. Photovoice methods allow participants to have power in how their experiences with arts and cultural participation and accessibility are defined, documented, and discussed (Delgado, 2015; Stack, Magill, & McDonagh, 2004; Wang & Burris, 1997; Wang, 2006).

I found that some of the barriers to accessibility may be associated with physical and social barriers related to the socio-economic status of the participants (Stern, 2011; DiMaggio & Ostower, 1990; DiMaggio & Useem, 1978). These barriers include the representation of Black women, the lack of affordable arts and cultural programs, and

limited support from family and community. This research provides a better understanding of how race impacts arts and cultural accessibility and builds on the limited scholarship on how arts accessibility and participation are connected to the resilience of communities of color.

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Appendix A

IRB LETTER



RESEARCH OFFICE

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DATE: April 11, 2018

TO: Dianna Ruberto, BA
FROM: University of Delaware IRB

STUDY TITLE: [1192069-1] Arts Participation and Accessibility in Wilmington, DE: A Youth Photovoice Project

SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: April 11, 2018
EXPIRATION DATE: April 10, 2019
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited Review

REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # (6,7)

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Farnese-McFarlane at (302) 831-1119 or nicolefm@udel.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.