

A National Survey of Teaching Artists Working in Schools: Background, Preparation, Efficacy and School Experiences

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Several studies have described the characteristics and employment situations of teaching artists in the United States. This study adds to that literature by describing the characteristics of teaching artists working in K-12 school environments, the nature of the classroom roles of such teaching artists, the professional development and supervision they have received, and the sense of teacher efficacy expressed by such teaching artists. Based on a survey of a national sample of teaching artists working in school settings, the study provides support for prior findings that most teaching artists have been engaged in such activities for fifteen or more years, spend most of their classroom time demonstrating or teaching their craft, and also support the integration of arts into subject matter content. Teaching artists tend to have experiences across grade levels and in diverse school contexts. Teaching artists report a variety of experiences regarding professional development and mentoring. The majority of teaching artists report that they have been supervised and that they have received positive feedback from teachers, school administrators, and other teaching artists. Teaching artists report high levels of efficacy related to teaching. Implications of the study are also discussed.

Keywords: *teaching artists, arts integration, art education*

Teaching artists (TAs) are those artists who actively engage in providing instruction in schools or other settings. Whether they have served to ensure a presence for arts in schools that have lost arts as a core part of the curriculum or to further promote academic preparedness in core subjects, teaching artists have been a part of the topography of American schools for more than 60 years (Rabkin, Reynolds, Hedberg, & Shelby, 2011). These artists provide arts education and they may also support the integration of arts as part of instruction in core content areas (arts integration). Local, state and national organizations provide funding to promote the engagement of teaching artists in order to provide K-12 students with exposure to, and engagement with, the arts. The need for such exposure is especially great in schools serving low-income, Hispanic, or African American students, where school-based arts programs are especially rare (Rabkin, et al., 2011).

A substantial number of these programs are served by teaching artists. One of the reasons that TAs are brought into schools is to improve student performance through the integration of arts into academic areas . For example, based on the largest survey of teaching artists:

Nearly two-thirds of survey respondents who teach in schools indicated that “integrating arts instruction with other subjects” was of high or highest importance to their work, almost twice as many as those that indicated “teaching local or state arts standards” was of high or highest importance. (Rabkin et al., p. 95)

In an effort to structurally link arts education with academic achievement on standardized tests related to No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the U.S. Department of Education initiated the Arts in Education-Model Development and Dissemination Grants Program (AEMDD). This funding initiative supports school-based programs that demonstrate effectiveness in integrating

the arts into the core curricula and strengthening arts instruction while improving academic performance in elementary and middle schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). In 2014 alone, 18 grants were awarded with a total investment of \$8.47 million for the first year of the grants (U.S. Department of Education, 2015). Though the level of education training varies (Saraniero, 2009), many teaching artists are placed in educational settings with little or no prior knowledge of educational pedagogy, such as instructional strategies, classroom management, or student engagement (Sinsabaugh, Kasmara, & Weinberg, 2009).

One study estimated that teaching artists were working in one-third of American schools (Carey, Kleiner, Porch, Farris, & Bums, 2002). NCLB legislation considered art to be a core subject but did not tie it to school accountability. The recently passed reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Every Student Succeeds Act; ESSA) includes art as part of a well-rounded education, includes specific wording related to the integration of arts into STEM disciplines, and addresses funding to support such education. However, the act does not tie arts education to accountability and does not require highly qualified or certified teachers to provide arts instruction or arts integration. As a result the current practice of hiring teaching artists as a mechanism for teaching the arts and integrating arts education into subject matter learning is likely to continue for the duration of ESSA.

While many school systems employ teaching artists, little research has been conducted concerning the backgrounds, attitudes, and behaviors of teaching artists. Although programs exist in every state to support teaching artists, a systematic review of published research and dissertations identified no national studies of teaching artists working in schools regarding their background, training, classroom experiences, or teaching efficacy. In light of the explicit support for the arts in the ESSA, without parallel requirements for highly-qualified status for arts

educators, it is important to gain better understanding of the individuals who are serving as teaching artists in U.S. schools.

There has not been a study that investigated the level of teaching self-efficacy held by artists. According to Fives (2003), the construct of teacher efficacy emerged from Rotter's theory of locus of control (1966) and from Bandura's theory of self-efficacy (1977, 1986). According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) "A teacher's efficacy belief is a judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated" (p. 783). The Tschannen-Hoy model posits that teacher efficacy, the teacher's belief of the degree to which they can be successful in planning and completing a task successfully, is influenced by how they perceive the task, how they perceive their own abilities, and the sources of efficacy information (mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological cues) proposed by Bandura (1977).

Teacher efficacy has been shown to influence teachers' persistence in the workforce, enthusiasm, commitment, and teaching behavior (Allinder, 1994; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, & Steca, 2003; Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006; Coladarci, 1992; Guskey, 1988; Holzberger, Philipp, & Kunter, 2013; Lee, Dedrick, & Smith, 1991; Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007). A teacher's sense of self-efficacy is also important because of its relationship to student achievement (Anderson, Greene, & Loewen, 1988; Capara, Barbaranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006; Guo, Connor, Yang, Roehrig, & Morrison, 2012; Ross, 1992; Ross, Hogaboom-Gray, & Hannay, 2001), student motivation (Midgley et al., 1989), and student self-efficacy (e.g., Anderson, Greene, & Loewen, 1988). Recent analyses have

highlighted the transactional and longitudinal nature of the relationships between teaching quality and teacher efficacy (Holzberger et al., 2013).

While studies have documented the characteristics and perceptions of teaching artists, there has been only one prior study with a national sample (Association of Teaching Artists, 2011). The ATA (2011) study provided little information about the demographics and experiences of teaching artists, and did not provide information on whether the artists worked with students, adults, or both. Two other substantial studies (Anderson & Risner, 2012; Rabkin, Reynolds, Hedberg, & Shelby, 2011) reported demographics, attitudes toward work, and teaching experiences of teaching artists, but approximately half of the respondents in those studies worked with adults rather than K-12 students. No study has focused exclusively on the background, classroom experiences and efficacy beliefs of teaching artists working in K-12 schools in the U.S. Given the national trend of school systems employing teaching artists to provide itinerant arts instruction and to also integrate the arts in content instruction as a mechanism for facilitating student learning, there is a need to better understand the characteristics of such artists and their experiences. This paper presents the results of a national study of teaching artists working in k-12 schools as regards their backgrounds, school and classroom experiences, professional development and teacher efficacy beliefs.

Background

Several scholars have investigated the characteristics, training, experiences, and perceptions of teaching artists (e.g., ATA, 2010; Anderson & Risner, 2012; Rabkin, et al., 2011; Saraniero, 2009). The most significant study that has been done was completed by Rabkin and his colleagues via the National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago (Rabkin, et al., 2011). The study investigated the demographics, conditions of employment, training,

experiences, and perceptions of teaching artists. The three-year investigation included teaching artists in Boston, Chicago, Providence, Seattle/Tacoma, San Diego, Los Angeles, San Bernadino, Bakersfield, Santa Cruz, Salinas, the Bay Area, and Humboldt County. While the sites included rural, suburban, and urban communities across five states, the state of California was disproportionately represented by the sampling frame as eight of the twelve study sites were in California. Over 3,550 surveys were collected from teaching artists and program managers, and over 200 in-depth interviews were conducted. There has not been another study of teaching artists that involved either as many surveys or as many interviews. The 270-page report of the study includes analyses of both qualitative and quantitative results. The average age of teaching artists in the study was 45 with a median age of 38. The majority of teaching artists (68%) were female, white (77%), had a Bachelor's degree or higher (88%), spent most of their time teaching children or adolescents (60%) and held their highest academic degree in an art form (68%). On the average teaching artists in the study had worked for twelve years. Half of the TAs indicated that they did not feel adequately prepared when they started to work as a teaching artist. The reader is referred to the report by Rabkin, et al. (2011) for more details. Reports from the Rabkin, et al. (2011) study have not provided separate analyses for teaching artists who work primarily in schools and those who primarily work with adults or in other settings. The study provided information about the demographics of teaching artists, information about employment, training, and salary; and attitudes concerning work experience. However, the study did not solicit information about specific characteristics of the teaching environment or teacher efficacy. In addition, the study was limited to twelve metropolitan areas, including eight cities from California.

Most other studies of teaching artists tend to be limited in sample size, locale, or art form. For example, a study of 17 teaching artist musicians by Sinsabaugh, Kasmara, and Weinberg (2009) indicated a general need for more pedagogical training for TAs and the need for information concerning classroom management. Saraniero's (2009) study of 92 teaching artists in San Diego County addressed mentoring and training as important experiences for the majority of teaching artists. A qualitative survey of five teaching artists by Alexander (2005) concluded that long term placements supported perceived improvements in teaching behaviors such as classroom management, increased complexity of lesson plans, and improved understanding of general educational method. A study by Anderson and Risner (2012) focused on 133 teaching artists in the areas of dance and theater. The sample was somewhat more educated than the National Opinion Research (NORC) sample (60% completing a master's degree), roughly equivalent in the average number of years worked, comprised of a lower percentage of respondents (44%) working primarily in K-12 schools, and with a slightly lower percentage (43%) indicating that they did not feel adequately prepared when they became a teaching artist.

There has been only one study of teaching artists that solicited national participation (Association of Teaching Artists, 2010). It does not appear that there have been peer-reviewed publications based on this study. Results reported on the TeachingArtists.com website summarize responses for 298 teaching artists across all 50 states. Quantitative (frequencies) and narrative qualitative results describe income, years served as a teaching artist, art discipline, educational background, desirable working conditions, factors that would support sustainability of the profession, and professional development needs. Qualitative data is reported verbatim on the website without thematic analysis. Demographics of participant teaching artists are similar to the Rabkin et al. (2011) study. The Association of Teaching Artists study does not indicate how

many respondents have recently worked in schools with K-12 students and teachers and provides no information about training, supervision, or teacher efficacy.

While research and scholarly literature provide insight about the characteristics of teaching artists, much of the research has involved teaching artists who work with adults rather than with K-12 students and in settings other than schools. Analyses that combine the two groups do not provide a clear picture of those artists who have recently worked in the K-12 context. In addition, the one national study of teaching artists has not been shared through peer-reviewed publications and did not provide information about many important characteristics including whether the teaching artists recently worked in K-12 schools, the training of such teaching artists, their classroom experiences, and the teaching efficacy of such artists. This study addressed those gaps in the literature. Specifically, this study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of teaching artists who had been working in a K-12 school within the year prior to receiving the survey?
2. What was the nature of the teaching experiences of the teaching artists?
3. How well prepared do teaching artists feel for their classroom experiences?
4. What are the overall levels of efficacy of teaching artists
5. What was the nature of supervision, professional development, and mentoring that they received as a teaching artist?

Methods

This study involved a national survey of teaching artists. The survey included items from the Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), as well as other descriptive data. Structured and snowball sampling approaches were applied. The research

questions for this study were answered by analyzing study data using descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, standard deviations) and chi-square analyses. Measurement and sampling approaches are described below.

Measurement

This study is part of a larger study that involved the development, piloting, and administration of an online survey that included questions regarding demographics, teaching experiences, training experiences, supervisory experiences, the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), and questions related to sources of teacher efficacy (Fisk, 2012; Fisk & Snyder, 2015). The survey was piloted by, and reviewed with, teaching artists in a southeastern city. Based on feedback from the focus group and pilot administration, modifications were made to the initial survey.

The Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES), also known as the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), has been established to yield a three-factor solution with teachers. The factors are teaching efficacy related to student engagement, instructional strategies and classroom management. Respondents are asked to indicate how much they can do in a series of 24 prompts (1=nothing, 9=a great deal). The instrument has acceptable reliability with coefficient alphas of .87 for student engagement, .91 for instructional strategies and .90 for classroom management (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). To validate the scale for use with teaching artists, item responses from subjects surveyed during this study were submitted to principal components analyses. The results replicated the original three-factor structure with two minor item-level exceptions. One item ("How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?") was removed because of complexity challenges. Another item ("How much can you do to foster student creativity?") moved from the student engagement to

the instructional strategies subscale. The authors determined that both of these changes were understandable given the nature of the population and obligations. The resulting Cronbach alpha coefficients were .88 for engagement, .89 for instructional strategies and .93 for classroom management. The Cronbach alpha for the overall scale was .96.

Sample and Sampling

The targeted population for this study was teaching artists in all 50 states. The second author performed a systematic search of teaching artists programs offered in the United States and identified such programs in each of the 50 states of the United States. The second author made a list of contact information for 1,735 teaching artists who were listed on teaching artist registries. The list of teaching artists was generated from the directory of TAs maintained and published on the internet by state and non-profit organizations during the 2010-2011 school year. To locate the teaching artists directories, systematic searches were performed searching for “teaching artist, teaching artists, artist in residency, artists in residency, art organization, alliance of arts education, arts council” in combination with the name of every state in the United States. The directories provided contact information for each of the teaching artists in the sampling frame. The teaching artists’ emails were collected in an information matrix. The matrix insured the researcher was able to disclose to teaching artists how their personal information was obtained. The matrix also ensured that teaching artists in all 50 states were contacted with the recruitment material. Based on the internet searches, the researcher also made a list of 71 teaching artist coordinators or program directors, who were asked to forward recruitment emails to the teaching artists. All teaching artists were contacted via email and requested to complete an online survey. In addition, a snowball sampling approach was applied to request that teaching artists receiving the survey forward the survey request to other teaching artists. Using methods

recommended by Dillman, Smyth, & Christian (2009) two emails requesting participation were sent to any TA who had not requested to be removed from the study. Complete responses were received from 457 teaching artists. Due to the inclusion of teacher efficacy for this study, analyses were limited to individuals who had worked in a classroom as an artist in residency or teaching artists in the last year ($n = 373$).

Results

Results for each of the six research questions are presented below.

Research Question 1. Demographics

While all teaching artists who participated in this study had been working in schools within a year of the study, 89.3% had been teaching artists within six months of receiving the survey. The respondents had been working as teaching artists for an average of 16.4 years ($SD = 10.64$). The median years as a teaching artist were 15 years. The positive skewness and considerable variability in the data was largely attributable to a number of teaching artists with over 30 years of experience. Almost all respondents (97.3%) indicated that they were still practicing their art form. Participants ranged in age from 22 to 85, with a mean age of 51. The majority of respondents (73%) were female.

Although the respondents were representative of a variety of ethnic groups, the majority of respondents were Caucasian. The ethnic composition of respondents was as follows: African American (8%), Asian/Pacific Islander (2%), Hispanic (2%), Native America (2%), and Caucasian (85%). Twelve percent ($n = 34$) of the participants had less than a bachelor's degree, 39% ($n = 116$) held a bachelor's degree, and 49% ($n = 146$) held a master's degree or higher. Eighty-five percent ($n = 258$) were affiliated with or sponsored by a teaching artist program. Responses were received from all states with the exception of Texas. New York and California

accounted for 19.4% of responses. Visual artists comprised the largest proportion of respondents (37%), while theater, music, and dance were art specialty areas that were represented by 26%, 19% and 11% of the respondents, respectively.

Research Question 2: Classroom Experiences

The majority of the participants, 55% (n = 205), worked primarily in elementary schools. The other teaching artists were approximately equally divided between working in middle schools (n = 74, 19.8%) and in high schools (n = 64, 17.2%). The remaining participants split their time across school levels. About 42% of teaching artists indicated that they spent four months or fewer in the schools during the previous year. The remaining 58% had spent five or more months in the schools. As can be seen in Table 1, approximately half of the respondents spent less than 26 hours per month in the schools, while the other half worked more than 26 hours per month. A small percentage of respondents (6.8%) indicated that they were in a full-time teaching artist position.

Table 1

Participant hours per month as a teaching artist in an elementary, middle, or high school.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
0-5	55	14.7	18.8	18.8
6-25	99	26.5	33.8	52.6
26-40	54	14.5	18.4	71.0
40-more	65	17.4	22.2	93.2
I am in a full time teaching artist position	20	5.4	6.8	100.0
Total	293	78.6	100.0	

The majority of teaching artists (n = 162, 59.3%) reported having teaching experience in rural, high-poverty, or urban schools. Eighty-four respondents (30%) reported experiences in

two of the three demographic types of systems. Over sixty percent of respondents reported working in urban schools (n = 255, 68.4%) and high poverty schools (n = 230, 61.7%). A somewhat smaller proportion reported having worked in a rural school (n = 196, 52.5%). Almost half (n = 166, 44.5%) of the respondents indicated that they had experience working in classrooms in which 25% or more of the students had disabilities.

Teaching artists were asked to indicate the various roles they served as artists within the K-12 schools. The majority of respondents indicated that they were involved in integrating arts into the subject matter (67.8%, n = 253), teaching the art discipline (67.3%, n = 251), or demonstrating their art (50.4%, n = 188). A slightly smaller percentage of teaching artists reported exhibiting their art (43.7%, n = 163). The majority (83%) of respondents indicated that they participated in more than one of the roles with 24.9% (n = 76) participating in two roles, 18.7% participating in three roles and 39.3% participating in all four roles. Despite the high percentage of teaching artists who indicated that they were involved in arts integration, the amount of time spent in integrating was lower than that time spent demonstrating art. Teaching artists reported spending about half of their time as teaching artists demonstrating or teaching their art form (see Table 2) and the remaining time in various integrative efforts. Specifically, they reported that approximately 37% of their time was spent integrating arts into the core curriculum directly or in association with activities that also teach their art. The remaining time was reported to be spent working with teachers on how to integrate the arts into their subject matter instruction.

Table 2

Percentage of time respondents reported spending on teaching roles

	Teaching just my art form	Integrating my art form into the core curriculum	Teaching my art form and integrating my art form into the core curriculum equally	Training teachers to integrate the arts into their curriculum
Mean	51.80	16.38	20.54	11.28
N	259	259	259	259
SD	34.85	20.60	27.44	15.23

The teaching artists reported spending about 85% of their time teaching lessons individually or in collaboration with the classroom teacher. The remaining time was committed to working collaboratively with teachers prior to and following lessons (see Table 3). When the teaching artist is involved in teaching a lesson the teaching artists spends slightly more than half of their time (55%) teaching lessons collaboratively with classroom teachers. They spend about 23% of their time teaching without the involvement of the teacher when the teacher is present, and for about 22% of the time they reported being the only teacher in the room (see Table 4). As can be seen from the large standard deviations, there is considerable variability in the distributions of how the teaching artists spend their time.

Table 3

Percentage of time respondents reported spending on teaching activities

	Teaching lessons yourself	Working collaboratively with a teacher during lessons	Working collaboratively with a teacher before and after lessons
Mean	70.35	14.26	15.39
N	273	273	273
SD	29.85	19.59	22.05

Table 4

Percentage of time specific teaching-related situations occur

	I am the only teacher in the classroom	The general classroom teacher is in the room but not engaged (e.g. sits at desk)	The general classroom teacher is in the room and is somewhat involved in the lesson	The general classroom teacher is a partner in teaching the lesson
Mean	21.67	23.16	30.06	25.11
N	266	266	266	266
SD	34.58	29.41	29.37	31.23

Research Question 3. Preparedness, Training and Mentoring

Respondents were asked to judge how prepared they were for their first teaching experience versus how prepared they were for their most recent placement. Approximately 22% (n = 66) said that they felt fully prepared for their first teaching artist experience, 63% (n = 186) felt somewhat prepared, and 15% (n = 44) unprepared. When reflecting on their most recent placement, 88% (n = 255) said that they felt fully prepared while 12% (n = 36) indicated that they felt somewhat prepared or unprepared.

Of the 297 artists responding to the question, about half (47.5%) had received one day or less of training as a teaching artist during the past year, and the remaining group had received more. Sixty-six artists (20.2%) reported having received six or more days of workshop training for teaching artists during the previous year. More than half of the teaching artists reported having received training through an organization (68.4%, n = 255) and having observed a successful teaching artist (59.5%, n = 222). Somewhat fewer had taken education courses at a college (42.1%, n = 157) or had worked with a teaching mentor (43.7%, n = 163). Less than one-quarter indicated that they majored or minored in education in college (22%, n = 82) or had been a full-time teacher (20.1%, n = 75). During training or mentoring 64.9% (n = 242) of

teaching artists reported having received some type of information on how to promote student engagement, 69.7% (n = 260) had received some type of information about instructional strategies, and 64.7% had received some type of information about classroom management.

Research Question 4. Efficacy

Complete data for the OSTES (all items answered) was available for 269 teaching artists who had taught during the year prior to completing the survey. Subscales were comprised of different numbers of items. In order to promote comparability of subscales the scores are reported as the average item score within the subscale. For Engagement, the mean was 7.17 (SD = 1.15); for Instructional Strategies, the mean was 7.70 (SD = 0.91); and for Classroom Management, the mean was 7.15 (SD = 1.20). These results indicate that teaching artists expressed high levels of teacher efficacy in all three domains.

A majority of teaching artists reported that they had adequate access to and control over art supplies (70.9%, n = 218) and that they had access to and control over teaching space (76.8%, n = 209). Of the 278 teaching artists who answered the question, 17.6% agreed or strongly agreed that they would be very uncomfortable if left alone in the classroom with students, while 66.2% of the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Teaching artists agreed that they had received significant encouragement about their teaching abilities from principals or classroom teachers (96.1% n = 268) and other teaching artists (93.5%, n = 257). Almost all of the teaching artists also felt that school administrators (84.8%, n = 34), teachers (83.8%, n = 234), and their teaching artist organization (95.7%, n = 267) agreed or strongly agreed that they were capable as teaching artists.

Research Question 5. Supervision and Feedback

Of the 278 artists who responded to the question, almost all ($n = 252$, 90.3%) reported having been observed by a school administrator. While 34.9% ($n = 98$) had never or rarely received feedback concerning their teaching from an administrators or teachers, 38.1% ($n = 107$) of participants frequently received feedback and 27.0% ($n = 76$) regularly received feedback from an administrators or teachers. Chi-square analyses indicated that the perceived frequency of feedback was independent of gender, $\chi^2 (2, n = 277) = 3.288, p=.193$; independent of whether the teaching artist was White or of a minority ethnic group, $\chi^2 (2, n = 281) = 1.994, p=.369$; independent of whether they have worked with a mentor $\chi^2 (2, n = 281) = 2.031, p=.362$; and independent of the average number of days per month that the teaching artist worked in schools during the past year (0-5 days, 6-15, more than 15 or full-time), $\chi^2 (4, n = 272) = 3.431, p = .488$. The perceived frequency of feedback was related to whether the teaching artist felt fully prepared for their most recent placement, $\chi^2 (2, n = 275) = 8.468, p = .014$. Of the 34 teaching artists who reported feeling less than fully prepared for their most recent placement, more than half reported that they rarely or never received feedback about their teaching from school personnel. (Table 5).

Table 5

		Fully prepared	Somewhat prepared or unprepared
Frequency of perceived feedback about teaching from teacher or administrator	Never, rarely	77 (-2.7)	19 (2.7)
	Frequently	95 (.8)	11 (-.8)
	Regularly	69 (2.1)	4 (-2.1)

$\chi^2 (2, n=275) = 8.468, p=.014$

Adjusted standardized residuals appear in parentheses below group frequencies

Discussion

This article has summarized the characteristics of a diverse, unique, and important group of educators working in complex school environments who use their artistic talents to achieve varied goals. This section will highlight findings regarding the modal characteristics of respondents, place the results in the context of prior studies, address limitations of the research, and provide recommendations for subsequent research.

The typical responding teaching artist in this study was a middle-aged, Caucasian female between 45 and 50 years old with at least one college degree and an affiliation with a teaching artist program. While there was diversity in the sample, the diversity was somewhat less than is evident in the population and somewhat less than was seen in the Rabkin et al. (2011) study. This study had nine percent more Caucasian respondents than did the Rabkin et al. study. Furthermore, the sample is slightly older and slightly better educated than the NORC sample (Rabkin et al., 2011). The educational attainment statistics were almost exactly matched in the studies. Rabkin et al. (2011) indicated that minority participation may have been underestimated in the NORC survey respondents. If that is true, then this study even further underestimates minority participation as teaching artists.

The typical survey respondent in this study had worked for approximately 15 years as a teaching artist, worked primarily in elementary schools, worked for more than five months as a teaching artist during the prior year, and had experience in urban and high poverty schools, While most teaching artists reported being involved in integrating arts into the core curriculum, they reported spending an equal portion of their time teaching or demonstrating art and on a range of efforts associated with integrative instruction. Respondents in this study had slightly more experience as teaching artists than did the Rabkin et al. (2011) sample. If teaching artists are

continuing with their roles, then the increased experience could be attributable to this study being conducted several years later.

Most respondents reported having had training provided through an organization, had observed a successful teaching artist, and had received training or mentoring related to facilitating student engagement, implementing effective instructional strategies, and managing classrooms. The typical respondent entered their first teaching artist experience feeling somewhat prepared for the experience but felt well prepared for their most recent experience.

Most teaching artists reported having been observed by school administrators, receiving some feedback about their teaching from administrators or teachers, and feeling that the school administrators, teachers, and their teaching artist organization considered them to be competent teaching artists. Teaching artists reported high self-perceptions of teacher efficacy (mean scores of over 7 on a 9 point scale) relating to promoting student engagement, applying appropriate instructional strategies, and effectively managing a classroom. Teaching artists were particularly confident in their ability to apply instructional strategies as evidenced by a median score of 7.89 and a 25th percentile equivalent of 7.00. The level of efficacy related to instructional practices was higher than found in studies of practicing teachers based on this scale (e.g., Fives & Buehl, 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007).

We sought to expand on the work by Rabkin et al. (2011) by describing in a broader context, the demographics, training, classroom experiences, and efficacy of teaching artists across the United States. Characteristics of the teaching artists in this study are quite consistent with prior studies regarding the gender, ethnicities, ages, educational backgrounds, and the low sense of preparedness for the first teaching artist experience (Rabkin et al., 2011). While the Rabkin study provided significantly greater insight about teaching artist income, employment,

and retirement plans, this study has provided more insight regarding the nature of the classroom experiences of teaching artists, including their teaching duties and supervision. The study expands what is known about the amount and type of training that teaching artists have received. Finally, the study gives us the first insight about the levels of teacher efficacy expressed by teaching artists.

Limitation

A key weakness in this study was the sample size relative to the population. While efforts were made to secure a complete list of teaching artists, the sampling plan was less comprehensive than desired. Rabkin et al. (2011) reported to have surveyed 3000 teaching artists in a much more limited geographic area than this study and the Association of Teaching Artist reports serving 9,000 teaching artists and related personnel nationally and internationally. Therefore, while the study sought to be comprehensive, it surveyed only a sample of the population. Furthermore, the state of Texas is not represented in the sample of teaching artists who had worked in schools during the year prior to the survey. While we believe that the study is representative, the precision of the sample proportions is compromised by the sample size and its impacts on the resulting confidence intervals. Depending on the actual size of the population of teaching artists within the United States, standard errors around the proportions may be as large as plus or minus 5%. The standard error for the Rabkin et al. (2011) study, while not presented in the report, would be approximately plus or minus 1.5%. The difference in these standard errors is due to the Rabkin study having 2871 survey respondents as compared to the approximately 300 in this survey. In most areas in which common variables were studied (e.g., age, experience, ethnicity), the confidence bands of the Rabkin study and this study overlap, providing some evidence of replicability within the population. However, on those items that are

the unique focus of this study and are not duplicated in the larger Rabkin study (supervision, classroom teaching experiences), the reader is cautioned to interpret the reported percentages as an estimate within error bands extending almost five percentage points above and below the estimate. This caution should extend to all survey-based studies of teaching artists. In general, such studies are interested in making estimates of the population rather than a limited sample, and therefore some discussion of sampling error around percentage estimates is justified as a key component of such studies. Of the survey studies of teaching artists that have been published, only the Rabkin et al. (2011) study would have confidence interval bands of less than plus or minus five percentage points associated with estimates.

Research Recommendations

Six findings of this study provide the basis for subsequent research. First, a small percentage of the respondents to this study were of minority ethnic groups. Much of the work of teaching artists is done in school settings where the majority of the students are Hispanic or African American. Understanding the experiences, motivators, efficacy beliefs, and work status indicators of the minority teaching artists would be beneficial to recruitment and placement of teaching artists.

Second, teaching artists reported having considerable experience alone in classrooms with students. It is likely that such autonomy comes after demonstrations of competence in classroom management, student engagement, and instruction. Nevertheless, it raises questions related to the contractual conditions with which teaching artists work and the liabilities that may be associated with having non-certified personnel in charge of classrooms. With almost 25% of teaching artists reporting some discomfort with being left alone in a room with students and with

the typical policy being to only allow certified teaching artists to be alone in the classroom with students, the self-reported finding of time alone with students warrants investigation.

Third, the high levels of teacher efficacy expressed by the teaching artists, particularly in the area of instructional strategies, are interesting in that they tend to be higher than found in studies of practicing teachers (e.g., Fives & Buehl, 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Wolters & Daugherty, 2007). Research targeted at examining the relationship between teacher efficacy, teaching practices, and feedback that teaching artists receive based on teaching behaviors would be valuable in understanding the construct. We have presented on factors that are related to teacher efficacy with this sample (Fisk & Snyder, 2015). Longitudinal research on the development of teacher efficacy of teaching artists from their initial experiences through their second year of experience may provide some insight about the factors that mediate teacher efficacy. Furthermore, qualitative studies including observations, interviews, and focus groups may provide additional insight about teacher efficacy with this group.

Fourth, given the investment of hundreds of millions of dollars by the U.S. Department of Education for integrating the arts into K-12 instruction as a mechanism to improve student performance, there is a need for refereed review of the impact studies from these projects in order to better understand the characteristics of teaching artists and associated school programs that produce significant and differential gains on student learning.

Fifth, this study has highlighted the challenges of designing a national study of teaching artists. Rabkin and his colleagues (2011) undertook extensive efforts to identify the population of teaching artists in their select cities and counties. That study had significant financial support and a team of researchers to conduct the study. Currently, there is not a clearinghouse for information about teaching artists. Researchers and policy makers cannot be sure how many

teaching artists are working in schools across the country. Given the role that teaching artists play in the demonstration of arts, the teaching of arts, and the integration of arts into instruction about core subjects, it is important to have a better grasp on the characteristics of this population.

Finally, as many teaching artists are non-certified and lack training in educational pedagogy (e.g, Rabkin et al., 2011; Saraniero, 2009; Sinsabaugh et al., 2009), understanding the nature of their prior experiences and assuring appropriate levels of mentoring, supervision, and systematic feedback is critical. Future research targeted at understanding the growth of teaching artists, mentoring and related experiences that facilitate successful integration of arts into the curriculum, and the attributes of successful teaching artists is needed.

Practical Implications

Teaching artists are frequently used to provide a range of art instruction and art education services within schools. The inclusion of arts in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act recognizes the importance of arts in the schools without requiring highly qualified status such as certification in art education. Several features of the results of this study appear to have practical implications for the field. First, while many of these artists are teaching in urban or rural scores that have high percentages of minority students, the majority of teaching artists were White females. These results mirror findings by Saraniero (2009) and by Rabkin et al. (2011). Rabkin and his colleagues have suggested that the population estimates generated through survey techniques may underestimate the actual percentage of teaching artists who are of a minority ethnic status. Nevertheless, given that: (a) school exposure to art may be the best predictor of involvement in art (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011), (b) minority students already report less exposure to arts in the schools (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011), and (c) 80% of artists in the United States are White (National Endowment of the Arts, 2008), there may be a risk that

predominant exposure to White teaching artists in schools with large minority populations may promote, through the effects of modeling, the under-representation of minorities as artists and teaching artists in the future.

Another finding of practical implications is that the sense of preparedness that teaching artists report appears to be related to the frequency with which they receive feedback from teachers or administrators. Relatively few teaching artists reported that they did not feel well prepared for their most recent teaching experience. But over half of that small group reported rarely or never receiving feedback from teachers or principals. Given the complex nature of the tasks that teaching artists may be asked to engage in within a school, it is important that they are provided with concrete and regular feedback about their practice.

Teaching artists report that they have participated in a range of professional development experiences. While approximately 20% of teaching artists received six or more days of training during the year prior to the survey, approximately half received one day or less of professional development. Despite the differences in time involved in workshops or mentoring, over half of the participants indicated that they had received training in classroom management, instructional practices, and promoting student engagement. This suggests that some training provides a great deal of information in a limited time frame. Most of the training appears to be provided through an agency for teaching artists. As teaching artists are given a significant amount of responsibility and autonomy within schools, states and school systems would benefit from collaborative relationships with such agencies in training current and future teaching artists.

Conclusion

Teaching artists work in many schools to teach arts and to integrate arts into the curriculum. The Every Student Succeeds Act is likely to provide a context for the continuing

involvement of teaching artists within schools in the United States. While previous studies have been conducted regarding TAs (e.g., Rabkin et al., 2011), these studies did not provide substantial insight into the classroom experiences of TAs, the sense of preparedness of the TAs, the supervision and feedback received by TAs, and their sense of efficacy as teachers. The current study, a national survey of teaching artists, addressed those areas. Results of the study revealed that TAs are employed in diverse teaching contexts, report receiving positive feedback from other TAs and school personnel, and that they tend to feel confident in their ability to perform as teachers. As with the Rabkin, et al. (2011) study, responding teaching artists were primarily Caucasian females. As teaching artists work in diverse school settings, it appears that increasing the diversity of the teaching artist workforce is desirable. More research is needed to understand the roles, attitudes and impacts of teaching artists.

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