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Motivation among older adults in three community choirs

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MOTIVATION AMONG OLDER ADULTS IN THREE COMMUNITY CHOIRS

by

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IN THREE COMMUNITY CHOIRS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine elderly amateur musicians' motivation for participating in community choirs and their perceptions to discover the possible relationship between community music-making and potential benefits for the older adult population. Through a framework of motivation, specifically situational and individual interest, this study sought to ascertain what motivates older adults to participate voluntarily in community music and to explore their perceptions of their involvement. Eighteen adults, aged 55 or older, involved in three different community choirs participated in focus group interviews to generate primary data. Participants reported health/well-being, socialization, sense of purpose/personal growth, and identity as benefits of their musical activities. Additionally, members reported repertoire, leadership, atmosphere, performance venues, and previous experiences as having an influence on their participation. These results indicate that the participants' perceived benefits directly affect the development of motivation and the decision to continue involvement in musical activities.

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Chapter One Introduction

The older adult population is growing, creating a need for educational opportunities and activities designed for this specific populace (Administration on Aging, 2021). Adult music education is integral to the future of music education as it is forcing the field to expand beyond the formal school years. Community music activities have historically constituted a vibrant and vital aspect of the field of music, yet educational perceptions and practices often narrowly focus on concerns related to public school programs despite a long history of advocacy for a broader vision. Dabback and Smith (2012) wrote:

> Materials published by the Music Educators National Conference in the early decades of twentieth century promoted the development of community music activities and advocated appropriate scheduling and remuneration for school music teachers to support these activities. The same organization published a position paper that promoted adult and continuing music education as a pathway to self-realization, enriched human relations and family life, and better health (p. 231).

Despite this lifelong conception of music education, practitioners and policy makers often privilege the transmission of knowledge to school students as a preparation for life rather than potential for engagement throughout life (Myers, 2012). In this way, music learning becomes a "means toward short term goals that end upon secondary school graduation" rather than a valued activity with long term potential (Mantie & Tucker, 2008, p. 217).

It is important for school music educators to understand that, in teaching

elementary and secondary music, they are helping musicians develop for lifelong music making (Coffman, 2002b). As adults, those students will seek opportunities for participation that fit into busy work and personal lives (Coffman & Adamek, 1999). Mantie (2012a) has argued that music learning and musical activities should not cease after primary or secondary school but should be available to any who have interest, and at any level and in any setting. Given the prevailing narrow paradigm of music education which focuses on elementary and secondary teacher training, it appears important for music teacher educators to prepare leaders with a broad set of skills to work in school settings and as community music facilitators working with students of all ages (Myers, 2008a).

Regelski (2009, 2019) asked, "What is music good for?" Music education lacks the standardized testing and quantifiable benefits that characterize other education subjects; as a result, policy makers and society sometimes call its practice and associated values into question (Pitts, 2017). Although many in the field of education have pointed to associated non-musical benefits such as sense of accomplishment, enhanced determination, the ability to cope with anger and express emotions, discipline, relaxation, and the ability to work with others as part of the rationale for music education, others have stated that these should not be over-emphasized as the primary reasons for engagement (Pitts, 2017). Therefore, the question becomes, "what are the musical reasons for engagement"? Music education philosophers in the 20th and 21st centuries have tried to address this question through several lenses such as progressivism (Miller, 1966), liberalism (Woodford, 2004), and naturalism, (Allsup, 2016); however, the

aesthetic and praxial paradigms have largely dominated this conversation over the last half century. In aestheticism, music is taught as a way of *knowing* music to demonstrate to others (Mantie, 2009). Regelski (2019) critiqued this position, charging that it promotes classical music and fine art while holding "high culture" as superior to less cultivated entertaining arts. The praxial approach to music education suggests that music is *doing* and that people participate in a practice for meaning and joy (Mantie, 2009; Regelski, 2019). Regelski further posited that music making is a social practice and should be used for practical needs such as weddings, parties, politics, celebrations, patriotism, and contemplation. In other words, the value of music lies in actively making music and its utilitarian functions.

If educators and practitioners seek to promote lifelong music engagement and to offer opportunities for people to do so as an integral goal of the music education profession, they need to understand current practices in music education, their strengths and weaknesses, and why so many people disengage from music participation after the formal school years. In most teacher education programs, students are trained using a music conservatory model that focuses on formal music practices. When adapted to non-conservatory contexts, these practices have little transferability beyond school for some people (Dabback, 2019). Do students perceive that music is only for the talented and attribute their lack of success to their innate musical shortcomings (Dabback, 2019; Myers, 2008b)? Are school music educators seen as gatekeepers to musical opportunities as though students are not already involved in musical activities outside the music classroom (Jones, 2009)? Answers to these questions may serve to inform educational

practices to better serve and prepare students who wish to continue musical activities after their school years.

One of the purposes of music education as viewed through a lifelong paradigm is to provide students with a foundation for future music endeavors. Professionals in the field of music education support the premise that music educators should help students to develop real life skills in music such as theory, technology, the ability to play by ear, and training on instruments that are easily accessible outside the music classroom (Dabback, 2019; Jones, 2009; Regelski, 2019). Additionally, teachers who seek to make connections with students' musical lives outside of school and offering future routes for participation could positively influence students and grown adults alike (Hallam et al., 2017; Pitts, 2017; Regelski, 2019).

Adults often voluntarily participate in community music. Formal or informal music activities such as church choirs, brass bands, local orchestras, sing-alongs, ethnic celebrations, and parades are just a few of the possibilities for amateurs to participate in music and such opportunities are prevalent in many cultures and communities (Veblen & Olsson, 2002). Insight into why they choose to participate can inform how music educators and teacher educators prepare students for engagement throughout their lifetimes as well as how practitioners create opportunities and approach teaching and learning with adult students.

Music educators work in many participatory music-making settings, both individually and communally. Although the music education field has a long historical connection to adult and community music activity, the surge of scholarly interest in adult

education is a relatively recent development (Veblen & Olsson, 2002) facilitated by strong advocates for music education who have helped stimulate research on lifelong learning in music. The mission statement of The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) supports music making for all people regardless of age and has focused on adult education by creating a special research interest group. The mission of this group, Adult & Community Music Education, is to "…promote research that fosters active involvement in the making, creating, and studying of music in diverse and complex communities in which we live and across the life span through understanding of the unique learning characteristics of adults" (Adult & Community Music Education, 2014).

The International Society of Music Education (2014) also serves as a prominent proponent for community music. It promotes the idea that lived music experiences are a "vital part of all life," and one of the missions of the organization is to "enhance those experiences by promoting music education for people of all ages in all relevant situations throughout the world" (ISME, 2014, para.2). The society's Commission for Community Music Activity vision statement states: "We believe that active music–making should be encouraged and supported at all ages and all levels of society" (ISME, 2014, para. 2).

Despite a history of advocacy for adult and community music education, the field remains largely focused on PK–12 contexts. At the opposite end of the age spectrum, older adults are engaging in community music activities and reaping ostensible benefits for themselves and for their communities in larger numbers than ever (Baughman & Baumgartner, 2018; Powell, 2021). If the music education profession intends to

significantly serve more than a fraction of the population, it needs to understand the nature of that engagement for all people, including the communities in which they interact, demographic characteristics, and the nature of their motivations.

Community Music

What defines a community? Geography? Culture? Socioeconomic status? Some influences on community include kinship, ethnicity, religion, politics and patriotism (Cohen, 2013; Delanty, 2010). With increasing globalization and transnationality, influences on and the scope of community have broadened, yet to have community suggests the existence of common threads that connect people. Philosophers in this area have posited that shared experiences, solidarity, and feelings of belonging can all contribute to developing a sense of community (Amit, 2002; Delanty, 2010). Cohen (2013) asserted that community comprises a group of people who have something in common that distinguishes one group from another and that to understand a community, one must try to capture the members' experiences within it. Similarly, Amit (2002) stated that community is any form of collective cultural consciousness and ideation associated with identity.

What is community music? A community's identities, social interactions, traditions, underlying principals and philosophy, as well as the characteristics of the musicians themselves inform any definition. In Higgins's (2012) view, "Community music is an expression of cultural democracy, and musicians who work within it are focused on the concerns of making and creating opportunities for a wide range of people from many cultural groups" (p. 7). Yet, like community itself, there are many

conceptions of community music that serve various groups of people. In the United Kingdom, where Higgins located his definition, practitioners place emphasis of community music on social intervention and individual needs (Veblen, 2008). Their programs are typically government funded, and universities provide training programs. Scandinavian residents consider music as a form of self-expression and a healthy outlet for emotions. As in the UK, the government provides funding for activities and community music schools (Veblen, 2008). Australia also provides government funding for community music programs in a model directly influenced by the UK's community music model. In North America, however, community music involves all music types (e.g. religious, ethnic, traditional) that co-exist within a community and which are typically not government-supported (Veblen, 2008). There are many categories of community music within the United States: (a) community music schools; (b) community performance organizations; (c) ethnic/preservation groups; (d) religious; (e) associative organizations with school; (f) outreach initiatives of universities and colleges; (g) and informal, affinity groups (Leglar & Smith, 2010; Veblen & Olsson 2002).

Community music exists globally and its many faces serve many populations. It is shaped by specific social settings, types of music, intentions of leaders and participants, characteristic of participants, interactions, and interplays between informal and formal contexts (Veblen, 2008). Because of its many incarnations, leaders accept different names and titles. In the United Kingdom and Europe, leaders are often known as community workers. Other areas use CM facilitator, community musician, CM educator, CM trainer or tradition bearer (Veblen, 2008).

Depending on its form, community music involves formal, non-formal, and informal activities and crosses all genres of music (Schippers & Bartleet, 2013; Veblen & Olsson, 2002). Formal learning is hierarchically structured, curricula-driven, is usually linked with schools and prescribed programs, (Smith, 2002) and results in some sort of certification such as a high school diploma (Rogers, 2014). Informal education is viewed as a lifelong process with learning acquired through daily experiences, environment, and from work and play (Smith, 2002). Informal learning is influenced by such factors as family and groups, religion and sport, sharing music, and computer games (Rogers, 2014). Non-formal learning serves to bridge the gap between the two. It refers to activities that are somewhat systematic but not necessarily pre-planned (Mok, 2011) such as apprenticeships or extracurricular clubs (Rogers, 2014). It is an organized activity outside formal education systems (Smith, 2002) yet more structured in some ways than informal learning.

Individuals seeking music participation may often view community music as an alternative to formal music education; through such activities, people may continue music-making outside the classroom and beyond their school years (Veblen, 2008). Veblen (2008) stated that community music has no "…verbal statements of objectives, rubrics, concepts, evaluation criteria, 'standards', and so forth" and features "constructive feedback as the norm in community program" rather than formal (summative) evaluation (with grades, etc.) (p. 7). Moreover, emphasis is placed upon the participants' goals rather than predetermined curricula (Higgins, 2012). Its participatory nature fosters active music-making with more emphases on performing, creating, and improvising than music

history, theory, or other music-related areas. Because participation is voluntary, members must take responsibility for themselves and their learning. Furthermore, participants' roles are ever changing. At any given moment, they may serve as creator, participant, observer, or leader with equal importance placed upon their personal and social well-being as their music development (Veblen, 2008). As populations change, community music education must also change in response to the needs of participants.

Broadly, three perspectives of community music (Higgins, 2012; Veblen, 2008) include: (a) music of a community such as an immigrant community or large cultural population (e.g. mariachi, bluegrass); (b) communal music-making that provides aesthetic experiences for participants (e.g. community bands, amateur choirs); and (c) an active intervention between a music leader or facilitator and a disenfranchised or marginalized population such as prisoners, at-risk youth, or the elderly. Each has unique context-bound characteristics and features different programs to accommodate different needs of its community members. Some programs provide services to participants from childhood through older adulthood and may be intergenerational (Veblen & Olsson 2002). Often, social and personal growth are equally as important as musical growth. In addition, people often promote equity among many populations through community music practices. Through its different forms, it can serve as intervention to social injustices involving race, prisoners, religious practices, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, among many others (Silverman, 2009; Sunderland et al., 2016; Veblen, 2013). Yet, all emphasize lifelong music-making and often ensure access to all who wish to participate. It is the second perspective of community music, communal music making that provides

aesthetic experiences, in which my research lay.

Adult Development and Ability

The older population of the United States continues to grow quickly as the baby boom generation ages. In 2018, 52.4 million people were 65 years or older, which represented 16% of the U.S. population, or one in every seven Americans (Administration on Aging, 2021). The Administration for Aging (2021) projects that by 2040 there will be approximately 80.8 million older persons, or about 21.6% of the population, aged 65 and older. In addition to this significant growth in the older population, the older population itself is increasingly older. In 2018, the 65–74 age group numbered 30.5 million, the 75–84 age group reached 15.4 million, and the 85+ age group numbered 6.5 million. Life expectancy at age 65 and older has increased 6.7 years since 1900 and census estimates indicated that between 2008 and 2018, there was a growth of 18.7 million persons 65 and older. Furthermore, the centenarian population has almost tripled since 1980 with more than 93,927 people aged 100 or more in 2018 (Administration on Aging, 2021). This substantial growth in the older population presents new challenges and opportunities for future generations.

Researchers have suggested that the elderly not only desire to be involved in musical activities but that they also have abilities and potential to learn and likewise believe in their own ability to grow in their music pursuits (Bruhn et al., 2002). People encounter and interact with music in their daily lives through movies, radio, television, sporting events, and any number of other activities; however, most people do not participate in active music-making activities after their formal school years (Burch,

2016). Negative stereotypes about older adults' abilities to engage in music and other life activities have persisted over time (Bruhn et al., 2002) and those who choose to participate in music are often thought to not have the same capabilities as their younger counterparts (Bruhn et al., 2002). In an early study in this area, Gibbons (1982) found that musical aptitude does not necessarily decline with age after 65 years. Others' findings indicated that adult community musicians' own self-perceptions of music ability are high (Kruse, 2012). Although research indicates that there is some decline in older adults' physical abilities, there are no indications that continuing growth and the development of ability in music is not achievable. As adults age, their fluid intelligence (flexible, analytic reasoning not based on education and experience) declines, yet older adults' crystallized intelligence (culturally based knowledge and reasoning acquired through life experience and education) remains a strength (Coffman, 2002a). Despite inevitable declines in older adults' hearing, flexibility of voice, motor skills, and cognitive processing, Bruhn (2002) stated that there is still great interest among the elderly to participate in singing, playing, and listening to music.

Some researchers have reported that music participation offers benefits to senior adults (Coffman, 2002b; Coffman & Adamek, 1999; Creech et al., 2013a). In 2018, the Administration for Aging's survey results indicated that among the reported disabilities (hearing, visual, ambulatory) of adults 65 and older, 8% reported cognitive difficulty. Various researchers have reported that participation in leisure and creative activities is beneficial for cognitive function in later life (Colombo et al.,2018; Verghese et al. 2003). When the brain is challenged creatively in a sustained manner, it aids in retaining mental

acuity and has the potential to delay the onset of diseases such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia commonly associated with the elderly (Cohen, 2005; Cohen, 2009). In 2014, Balbag et al. examined the association between playing a musical instrument and the development of dementia or cognitive impairment in twins. Reports of playing an instrument came from 157 sets of twins through an informant-based questionnaire and the dementia diagnoses were based on a clinical workup using standard diagnostic criteria. The results indicated that playing a musical instrument was significantly associated with less likelihood of dementia and cognitive impairment.

Researchers have performed many studies within the New Horizons Band (NHB) program utilizing its older population for analyses of adult learners (Barbeau & Mantie 2019; Carucci, 2012; Coffman, 2008, 2010; Coffman & Adamek, 2001; Dabback, 2008; Glen, 2018; Kruse, 2007, 2012; Murray, 2017; Rohwer et al. 2021; Tsugawa, 2009). Roy Ernst, then a professor of music education at the Eastman School of Music, developed the program in 1991. The organization has since expanded to choral and orchestral programs as well as smaller ensembles such as jazz band and chamber music (New Horizons International Music Association, 2021). This association affords the opportunity for adults to participate in music activities as either new learners or as people returning to music after a period of respite from music making. Research findings have indicated that members involved in the NHB programs experience health and well-being benefits (Glen, 2018) as well as socialization and feelings of belonging to a larger community (Coffman, 2008; Coffman & Adamek, 2001; Dabback, 2008; Kruse, 2007). Additionally, NHB has served the teaching profession in research regarding pedagogy and andragogy, allowing

educators to examine how adults learn (Coffman, 2009; Kruse, 2007).

With the significant growth in the older adult population and the evidence that adults have not only the ability to participate in music but also have the desire to, it seems apparent that the music education profession should seek ways to facilitate greater engagement in music making across all age ranges.

Older Adults, Music, and Motivation

Many older adults describe a loss of identity upon retirement (Dabback, 2010; Eaton, 2013; Taylor, 2010). The loss of role-identity can affect one's self-image and self-worth (Dabback, 2010; Taylor, 1987). As people age, they lose loved ones, sometimes live in isolation, and struggle with diminishing physical abilities. Approximately 2 million of the 35 million U.S. residents 65 and older suffer from depression, and these incidences of depression among the elderly increase as they age (VanItallie, 2005), but some evidence exists that music can ameliorate some of these symptoms. In Myskja and Nord's (2008) study, 84 nursing home residents had regular music therapy activities twice a week until an 11-week absence by the therapist. The patients' depression levels were tested twice at the end of the 3-month absence and again two weeks after therapy sessions were resumed. Results indicated that there was a significant fall in depression ratings after the sessions were resumed.

Participating in music beyond primary and secondary school music education classes can contribute to quality of life and facilitate personal growth, especially in the elderly (Coffman, 2002b; Cohen et al., 2002). Benefits such as identity, personal well-being, attaining personal goals, and social interaction can enhance older adults' lives as

well as fulfill their creative needs (Boswell, 1992). Bugos (2014) examined adult learners' perceptions of a model music program with group piano and group percussion instruction for adult beginners ages 60–86 years. Results indicated that participants perceived classes that included music theory and musical performances, emphasis on social networks, and expertise of instructors as the most beneficial. Implications from this study included developing model music programs that meet the need of all learners and for music educators to address the needs of a growing population. The concept of lifelong learning and the differences between community music and school music education are areas that need to be examined to explore how best to encourage older adults' continued participation in music activities.

Public school music education can provide a basis for lifelong learning that can serve to enrich adults' lives and impact entire lifetimes. Myers (2008a) argued that school music programs focus too much on preparing and polishing large ensemble performances rather than developing skills needed for lifelong music-making. He further suggested that music programs should place more emphasis on facilitating partnerships between school music and community music. Strengthening connections between school music education and community music education/activities could facilitate more interest in lifelong music-making.

Some researchers have indicated that prior experiences influence adults' decisions to participate in musical activities. Experiences in church music, early music experiences, home and school influences, informal learning, and communities of practice have been reported as having an effect on lifelong interest in music-making (Darrough, 1992; Pitts,

2009; Smilde, 2008). According to Pitts (2009), childhood is crucial for developing music skills, and good teacher-pupil relationships as well as positive parental influences are essential in the development of a foundation for lifelong music making. Smilde (2008) asserted that the context in which the musical experiences take place needs consideration and that communities of practice integrate meaning (learning as experience), practice (learning as doing), community (learning as belonging), and identity (learning as belonging). Implications for new educational approaches from Smilde's (2008) research include team-teaching, reflective teaching practices, and collaboration. In light of the significant growth in the older adult population and research findings that support the premise that music-making holds many benefits for the elderly community, community music participation seems a promising path to address many issues with which the elderly contend in addition to providing affective, cognitive, and social activities to enjoy. Understanding some of the influences that impact the decision to participate in music as an adult may have direct implications for formal music educational practices.

Motivation

Writers have proposed a variety of theories of motivation over the years that fall into three categories: motivation derived from within the individual (intrinsic), motivation stimulated by environment (extrinsic), and motivation as a combination of the two (Hallam, 2002). Extrinsic behaviors are governed by incentives that provide the potential for gains or losses and include things provided by an external agent based on an individual's performance. Thus, grades, awards, promotions, recognition, health benefits,

and praise are all motivating examples of extrinsic incentives (Cerasoli et al., 2014). On the other hand, intrinsically motivated behaviors are driven by enjoyment, purpose, and provide sufficient reason to continue for their own sake. In intrinsically motivating activities, people find joy in something for its own sake. When an individual finds a task that is identifiable with self, he or she is more likely to continue participating (Cerasoli et al. 2014; Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000).

Researchers have promoted a number of theories of intrinsic motivation, including performance, achievement, and attribution. A goals-approach involves performance goals (goals that individuals seek to gain approval of their ability and avoid negative judgments) and learning goals (goals that individuals seek to increase their ability or to learn new tasks) (Elliott & Dweck, 1988; Dweck, 2017). Using a division of performance goals into approach and avoidance achievement theory, some authors have suggested avoidance participants exerted as much effort and performed as well as the achievement-approach participants but demonstrated a decrease in motivation (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996; Corwin et al., 2011). The theory of achievement-oriented performance involves success versus failure, which Nuamah (2018) believes may contribute to positive identity formation. Through this lens the individual is motivated to meet goals, receive positive feedback, and accomplish tasks but only when the individual knows the performances will be evaluated by self or others (Atkinson, 1964). Attribution theory of motivation concerns how individuals attribute their success and failures, which in turn determines future motivation. If individuals attribute failure to an uncontrollable force, their future expectations of performance are not affected whereas if they attribute

failure to a controllable force, then they expect future failures (Hallam, 2002; Weiner, 2013). Additionally, perceived control of attributes and awareness of motivational consequences of attributes contributes to a sense of autonomy and well-being (Fishman & Husman, 2017).

According to Deci and Ryan's (1987, 2008) self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation comprises three psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. The need for competence encompasses peoples' need to control outcomes and feel effective. The concept of autonomy involves the individual having input in determining actions and behavior and believing that these behaviors emanate from within oneself (Deci & Ryan, 1987, 1991, 2008). The need for relatedness involves the individual's desire to relate and care for others as well as feeling a satisfying connection with the social world (Deci & Ryan, 1991, 2008). Deci and Ryan further posit that intrinsic motivation involving these three facets is the impetus for people to undertake new challenges in pursuit of self-development. Their organismic approach refers to two basic strivings: autonomy, or behaviors motivated and initiated by self, and social, those behaviors motivated by intrapersonal or interpersonal aspects (Deci & Ryan, 1987, 2008). Roth et al., (2009) have indicated that autonomy support is consistent with the self-determination model of internalization and predicts a sense of choice. In a study that used the lens of self-determination theory, MacIntyre and Potter (2013) examined motivation in guitar and piano players outside a school environment. Findings indicated that both groups were intrinsically motivated, but while all participants felt their three psychological needs were met, piano players focused more on competence while guitar

players' motivation centered on autonomy and relatedness. Participants, each of whom played at least one instrument, reported factors such as improvement, social connection, success, and personal enjoyment as being the motivation for music involvement.

Interest Development Theory

The concept of interest as a facet of motivation refers to a predisposition to continued engagement in an activity (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). Hidi and Renninger (2000) described it as an interactive relation between an individual and events, or ideas over time. There are five ways that interest differs from other aspects of motivation: (a) interest is content or object specific; (b) interest is both affective and cognitive; (c) interest is the outcome of interaction between a person and the environment; (d) a person is not always aware of his or her interest; and (e) interest has a psychological/neurological basis (Hidi & Renninger, 2006, 2011). Educational researchers have focused on two types of interest: situational and individual (Hidi & Renninger, 2006, 2011; Krapp, 2005; Krapp & Prenzel, 2011). Interest is a psychological state that progresses from situational interest to an individual interest that can influence the decision to engage and reengage in an activity. Means through which situational interest might be triggered include environment, how materials are presented, negative or positive feeling toward the activity, and the presence of others. It is generated by conditions and may not last once the participant leaves or becomes accustomed to the context. This influences development into the individual interest phase in that activity becomes personal, meaningful, and relevant to the individual. This phase develops over time, becomes stable, and persists longer.

Hidi and Renninger (2006) found that the level of an individual's interest influences learning aspects such as attention, goals, and levels of learning. Exactly how interest development occurs is a critical question in education and many researchers have suggested theories: model domain learning (Alexander, 2004), person object theory (Krapp, 2002, 2003, 2005), psychology of constructive capriciousness (Silvia, 2001, 2005), and situational and individual interest (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000; Hidi & Renninger, 2006; Renninger & Hidi, 2011). Interests and goals are important factors in motivation in many of these studies (Hidi & Harackiewicz, 2000; Krapp, 2005; Krapp, 2003; Renninger & Hidi, 2011). Hidi and Harackiewicz (2000) asserted that academic motivation should be examined through the lenses of different types of goals (mastery and performance), situational and individual interest, as well as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Similarly, Krapp (2005) posited that a dual cognitive (goals)-emotional (interest) regulation system impacts motivation development. In 2011, Renninger and Hidi reported that previous studies suggest a correlative relationship between interest and other motivation variables such as goals, self-efficacy, and achievement value.

Model of Domain Learning

The Model of Domain Learning (MDL) is an educational model for understanding and exploring learning (Langan & Athanasou, 2005). Alexander's (2004) theory of interest development involves expertise in academic domains and is subject-specific (Langan & Athanasou, 2005). In MDL, development in a particular field of study is described as a progression through three stages: acclimation or a naïve stage of learning, competence, and proficiency or expertise. Knowledge, interest, and recall are

related factors and exist at each of the three stages. The progression from one stage to the next is understood through the level of involvement and interrelationship of subject knowledge, interest, and general processing at each stage (Alexander et al., 1995). Once a learner has gained knowledge in a particular field of study, he or she progresses into the competency stage and, potentially, to one of expertise (Alexander et al., 1995). Situational and individual interests contribute to interest development, but once a learner develops individual interest, situational interest no longer retains meaning for that learner. Furthermore, if a person is an expert in a domain, MDL theorizes that he or she must have an individual interest in that area.

Psychology of Constructive Capriciousness

Silvia's (2001) Psychology of Constructive Capriciousness distinguishes between interest and interests. He theorized that interest is a basic emotion like happiness, fear, or anger that resides in an individual and that emotions motivate participation in an activity. He further posited that this emotion is associated with curiosity, exploration, and information seeking and compels an individual to choose a single activity from a set of possibilities by deciding what is more important and more worthwhile than others, thus generating interests. He defined interests as self-sustaining motives that lead an individual to repeatedly engage in an activity. His ideas support the theory of situational interest and individual interest development but differ in that he suggests that interest and interests reside in the individual and are not affected by his or her environment.

Person-Object Theory of Interest

Krapp (2005, 2011) wrote that the Person-Object Theory of Interest (POI) is based on the premise that a person develops an interest as a result of an ongoing process of interactions and is content-specific. He (2003) posited that interest is a specific relationship between the person and the object or content of his or her interest and cannot be equated with enjoyment (Krapp & Prenzel 2011). For example, an individual may have a negative attitude toward an issue but still have a strong interest to understand it (Krapp & Prenzel, 2011). The process may produce first a longer-lasting domain-specific situational interest and later a relatively stable individual interest of high personal relevance (Krapp, 2005). Krapp theorized three stages of interest development: emerging situational, stabilized situational, and individual interest (Krapp & Prenzel, 2011). Furthermore, he connected the development of interest with Self-Determination Theory, suggesting that when psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and social relatedness are met, interest is generated (Krapp, 2002, 2005).

The Four-Phase Model of Interest Development

The Four-Phase Model of Interest Development proposed by Hidi & Renninger (2006) incorporates both situational and individual interest further detailed into four sectors. Their model builds on Krapp's three-stage theory, as well as previous theories of interest development, and they proposed it has the potential for supporting educational intervention. They offer that each stage is influenced by affect (positive or negative feelings), knowledge (content), and value (significance) and that the phases are sequential and influenced by others. The length and character of a phase is influenced by individual

experience, temperament, and genetic predisposition. Furthermore, they asserted that if there is no support, either through the efforts of others or because of challenges and opportunities, interest can become dormant, regress, or disappear.

Hidi and Renninger (2006) separated their four-phase model into two main categories (situational and individual) and four sub-categories (triggered and maintained situational; emerging and well-developed individual) (Figure 1).

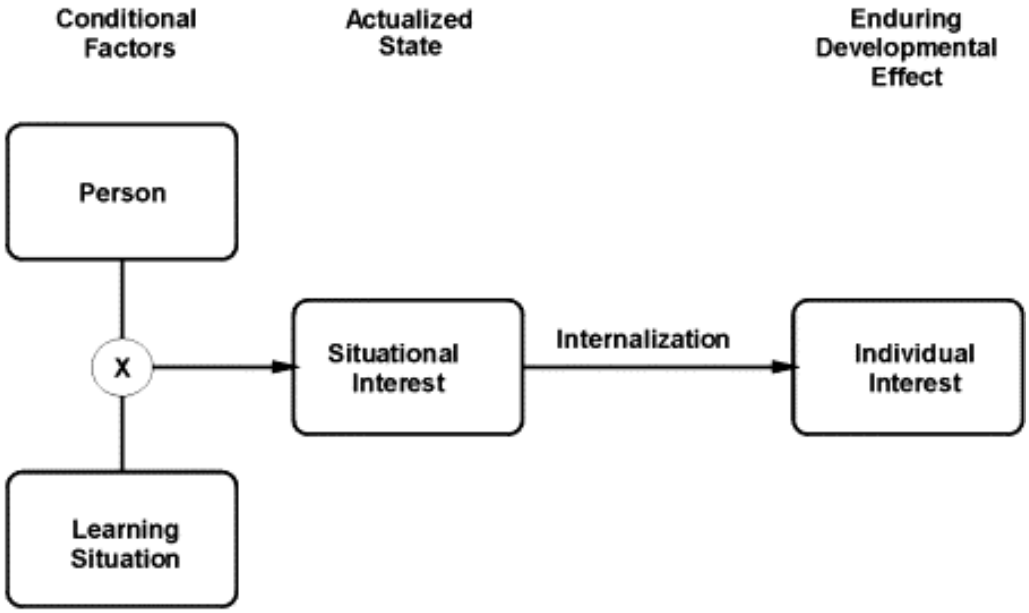

Figure 1. The ontogenetic transition from situational to individual interest (Krapp, 2002, fig. 3.5)

Situational. Triggered Situational Interest (Phase 1) results from short-term changes in affective and cognitive processing. It can be sparked by surprising information, character identification or personal relevance, and intensity. It is typically externally supported, and instructional environments that include group work, puzzles, and computers have been found to influence this phase. It may be a precursor for future

engagement.

Maintained Situational Interest (Phase 2) involves focused attention, persistence, and reoccurs over an extended episode in time. It is sustained through meaningfulness of tasks and/or personal involvement. Meaningful and personally involving activities, such as project-based learning, cooperative group work, and one-on-one tutoring, can contribute to the maintenance of situational interest.

Individual. Emerging Individual Interest (Phase 3) has the beginnings of a relatively-enduring predisposition for reengagement with particular content over time. It is characterized by positive feeling, stored value, and knowledge, and the desire to repeatedly engage in an activity voluntarily. The individual begins to generate their own questions about content and may redefine and exceed tasks demands in the activity. The interest is self-generated and the engagement feels effortless. This phase requires some external support and the learning environment has some influence. This may lead to a well-developed interest.

Well-Developed Individual Interest (Phase 4) is characterized by positive feelings and an enduring predisposition to reengage. Participation is self-generated and the individual will persevere with a task even when difficult. The individual will generate and seek answers to curiosity questions, anticipate steps in the process, and strive for deeper levels of strategies. They seek challenges and interaction that will lead to knowledge building. External support, such as models or peers, experts, and so on can contribute to a well-developed individual interest.

Individual interest development has three components that distinguish it from other motivation variables. First, interest includes both affective, typically positive feeling toward the activity, and cognitive, intellectual activity, components (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). The four-phase model of interest development serves as a construct for examining the motivation behind reengagement in activities. It is a sequential model in which a triggered interest develops over time into self-generated participation in a particular activity, yet, without continued participation or support, an interest can become dormant, regress, or disappear. Understanding the factors of interest development can inform practices that may foster lifelong learning and participation.

Rationale and Need for the Study

Many older adults have the self-assurance in their ability to learn new things and should be afforded the opportunity to do so (Bruhn, 2002; Kruse, 2012; Mantie, 2012a;). As a cultural entity, community music offers opportunities for music-making outside formal education and aligns with the concept of music as a lifelong endeavor (Balsnes, 2017; Billaud, 2014; Coffman, 2002a; Mantie, 2012a; Mantie & Tan, 2019). There has been, and continues to be, significant growth in the older population, and older adults have reported a variety of benefits from participation in musical activities (Chabot et al., 2019; Frerich, 2013: Rohwer & Coffman, 2006). Educators should understand such participants' motivations to participate as well as how to foster interest and abilities (Myers, 2008a; Smilde, 2008; Williams, 2017). Discovering the 'why' and 'what' of these participants' motivational reasons could greatly inform educational practices resulting in the possible revision of traditional and current pedagogy to better promote

lifelong music-making.

Although researchers have used various theories of motivation as lenses (Alexander, 2015; Dale, 2018; Langan, &Athanasou, 2005; MacIntyre et al., 2018), fewer have incorporated situational and individual interest, and studies in music education with regard to situational and individual motivation are quite sparse. Studies concerning the relationship between motivation and music participation exist but most involve primary and secondary education with the majority focused on instrumental music (Alexander, 2015; Dabback, 2008, 2019; Dale, 2018; Tsugawa, 2018; West, 2013; Williams, 2017). There have been relatively fewer studies regarding older adults' motivation and music participation, and none focused solely on choral activities through the lens of situational and individual interest development.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine elderly amateur musicians' motivations for participating in community choirs and to explore the possible relationships between community music-making and potential benefits for the older adult population. Using a framework of situational and individual interest motivation, I sought to ascertain what motivates older adults to voluntarily participate in community music through their perceptions of their involvement. The questions that guided this study were:

- What benefits of participation do older adult members of three stylistically different community choirs in southwest Virginia and northeast Tennessee report?
- How do participants characterize their motivations for engagement in their choirs and how do the reported motivations align with Interest Development Theory?

- What is the nature of the relationship between participants' reported benefits of participation and their motivations for engagement?

Using semi-structured open-ended questions in focus group contexts, I interviewed participants (55 years and older) from three separate amateur community choirs to generate primary data. Information from member checks and observation notes informed triangulation of those data, which were categorized and analyzed for themes and interpreted through the lens of motivation theory.

Definitions

For the purposes of this study, *motivation* will be defined as the desire to attain a goal, strive for meaning, and achieve an objective (Baumeister, 2016). *Lifelong learning* will be defined as the process of adapting skills throughout a lifetime and encompass education (formal, non-formal, and informal) from pre-school to post-retirement (Boeren, 2016). *Formal school* is the structured and systemic education system from primary school to college or university programs (Smith, 2002).

Delimitations

Although there have been previous studies regarding motivation and other music making activities such as instrumental ensembles and elementary music (Alexander, 2015; Billaud, 2014; Dale, 2018; Kruse, 2007; Liu, 2016; Roberts, 2015; Tsugawa, 2018; Williams, 2017) that suggest participation can influence lifelong learning, exploration of these factors was beyond the scope of this study. The parameters of the present study

were purposely narrowed to examine motivation and perceived benefits of participation among older adults in community choirs. In addition, the sample of participants did not include the possibility of members being involved in more than one choir. The purpose of this study was to examine the motivation for being involved in an amateur community choir and not compare one choir to another. The limited sample of the study participants (older adult, choral only, little diversity, three specific choirs) restricts the possibility of generalization to a larger population.

Positionality

As a qualitative researcher, my background influences my practices as well as my interactions with participants. I am a white, healthy, well-educated woman living in a small historic town in southwest Virginia where arts and outdoor recreation are important to its inhabitants and a draw for tourists. Although I have lived in this part of the country for 29 years, I consider myself a "transplant" citizen to the area. I grew up in a middle-class family, most of whom were educators, in central California and attended a high school that was approximately 70% Hispanic, which influenced my interest in different cultures and populations.

As a teacher of 23 years, my philosophy of music education has changed over time due to many experiences. My early involvement in high school and college music classes mainly focused on the importance of performance and less on informal practices and experiences. When I became a teacher of middle and high school choir, I was fortunate to teach in a small rural area where people valued music and the students were respectful and eager to learn. In addition to the musical facets of teaching, I witnessed

many other positive moments from students' involvement in my classes. Friendships, generosity, feelings of belonging were things that began to matter more to me than solely focusing on a "top-down" type of teaching.

The coursework and professors in my doctoral program were other key influences on the change of my philosophy. It was during this period that I was introduced to the concept of community music as an important and potential aspect of lifelong music participation. In a "Community Music" course taught by Lee Higgins, we explored the many ways of community music with a variety of populations. As part of the course work, we completed a mini-research project, and I used one of the choirs in the current research as my subject population. This led to my desire to expand upon that research for my dissertation work and include the theory of situational and individual interest as motivation. Additionally, having studied about the ways of community music and personally witnessing the influence it has on participants' lives has expanded my understanding of how music can impact people's lives. In the following chapters, I will examine relevant literature associated with adult community music education and the theoretical constructs I utilize in this research, describe the study methodology in detail, report and interpret my findings through the lens of motivation theory, and finally, discuss possible implications and share my recommendations.

Chapter Two Literature Review

If older adults have the capacity and desire to develop musical skills and the profession embraces a lifelong vision, educators might need to familiarize themselves with the characteristics of those learners to facilitate their development (Coffman, 2002a; Mantie, 2012b; Rohwer, 2005. Merriam (2001) described the adult learner as "someone who (a) has an independent self-concept and who can direct his or her own learning; (b) has accumulated a reservoir of life experiences that is a rich resource for learning; (c) has learning needs closely related to changing social roles; (d) is problem-centered and interested in immediate application of knowledge; and (e) is motivated to learn by internal rather than external factors" (p. 5). In this, Merriam describes the general older adult population and does not specifically address older adults involved in community music-making.

According to the theory of geragogy, older adults learn differently than their younger counterparts and require a different style of instruction (Gomez, 2015; Hartogh, 2016; Schoen, 2018). Researchers have suggested that older learners need a different methodological approach (Hartogh, 2016) and that the relationship between teacher and student is similar to a partnership driven by the older adults' goals with the teacher acting as a facilitator (Schoen, 2018). In a study involving teachers of adult music learners and educational practices, Bowles's (2010) participants indicated that methodologies used for adult students should be flexible, individualized, and age appropriate. Her respondents indicated that training specific to adult learning is advantageous to their pedagogy. Bowles concluded that taking older adults' learning processes, preferences, and particular

characteristics into consideration was important for music facilitators involved in community music to foster and help maintain participants' motivation for continued involvement.

Researchers have investigated various aspects of music with respect to older adults. They have identified themes pertaining to participation in community music, including health and well-being, effects on cognitive function, social interaction and benefits, sense of purpose and accomplishment, connections to identity, and questions of motivation. The purpose of this study was to examine elderly amateur musicians' motivation for participating in community choirs and to explore the possible relationship between community music-making and potential benefits for the older adult population. A review of previous studies and findings provides contextualization and comparison for the current research.

Health/Well-Being

A number of people have researched the physical, mental, and emotional benefits of participation in music, although researchers have typically investigated questions with school-aged participants (Chan et al. 1998; Gouzouasis, 2007; Hyde et al. 2009; Scott, 1992). There is less extant literature regarding the health benefits of music for the elderly. The authors who have worked with older adults state that benefits can encompass a wide range of definitions, from physical adaptation and improvement, stress relief and personal expression (Frerich, 2013) to spirituality (Rohwer & Coffman, 2006) and personal well-being and accomplishment (Coffman & Adamek, 1999). Studies involving style of music as well as physical responses have indicated that music can have a positive influence on

stress and anxiety. Researchers have explored classical music verses self-selected music and the effect on heart rate (Chennafi et al., 2018) as well as the reaction of electrical signals of the brain (Khan et al., 2020), and compared instrumental music versus vocal music and its effect on stress-relief measured through anxiety levels (Noh, 2009).

Physical Health

Often, diminishing physical abilities can impact older adults' participation in musical activities (Coffman & Levy, 1997; Rohwer, 2008). Understanding these issues and the available health resources could prove valuable when working with the elderly and potentially affect participants' motivation for continuance (Coffman, 2008; Creech et al., 2013a; Dale, 2018; Kruse, 2012; Rohwer, 2012). In 2008, Rohwer examined the perceived health challenges of a group of adult instrumental musicians and possible accommodations for these challenges. The participants were 83 adult musicians aged 47–91 who were attending a summer senior band camp. Study members reported that visual problems when reading music were the greatest challenge, followed by finger/joint pain, hearing others speak, and hand pain. Accommodations for reading music included participants placing bifocal lenses higher so they could see both the conductor and music, as well as education about physical exercises that could be performed to ease physical issues.

In 2019, Chabot et al. explored the effects of music listening on gait stability and fall risk in a hospital setting with 152 participants whose mean age was 87 years. Sixty-one participants were in a music-listening group and 91 in the non-listening group. The researchers gathered information using the Morse Fall Scale both upon admission and

discharge from the hospital. Results indicated that participating in music-listening was associated with decreased risks of falls. Zendel and Alain (2012) examined age-related auditory decline in older musicians and non-musicians. The researchers measured auditory processing abilities in lifelong musicians (N=74) and non-musicians (N=89) aged between 18 and 91 years. Results indicated that musicians demonstrated less age-related decline in gap detection and speech in noise and had advantages in mistuned harmonic detection suggesting that musicians experience less age-related decline in central auditory processing. By staying mentally and physically active in music activities, participants may prevent or delay age-related decline, thus providing motivation for continued participation.

There is evidence that involvement in musical activities can enhance the physical or emotional quality of life for older people and generate personal growth (Coffman, 2002b; Cohen et al., 2002). Chen et al. (2009) reported that group music therapy among elderly residents of a Taiwan nursing home greatly enhanced their perceived quality of life. They held three focus groups with seventeen wheelchair-bound elderly residents. The participants reported an increased sense of energy, distraction from suffering, confirmation as a person, variety added to lifestyle, motivation to exercise, and greater life satisfaction. These findings align with those found by Coffman (2008) in a study using musicians involved in New Horizons International Music Association (NHIMA) to examine older adults' experience making music. The purpose was to ascertain the musicians' backgrounds and current involvement in music making, determine the participants' perceived benefits, and establish a need for a longitudinal study involving

music making and health benefits. Coffman gathered data through a survey sent to 1652 NHIMA musicians in the United States and Canada with 95% of the participants being fifty years or older. The researcher reported the following benefits: personal development, cognitive stimulation, emotional and physical well-being, and socialization.

Mental Health

There is growing evidence that participation in the creative arts holds benefits not only for overall well-being and health but specifically for mental health (Clift, 2012; Poulos, et al. 2019). Coulton et al. (2015) investigated the effectiveness of community singing on mental health-related quality of life of older people. Using an individual randomized controlled trial, they recruited 258 participants, aged 60 years or older, to compare group singing with other usual activities. The aims of their study were to (a) assess the effectiveness of active engagement in community singing on measures of mental and physical health-related quality of life, depression and anxiety for older people and (b) evaluate the cost-effectiveness of active engagement in community singing for older people. After 6 months post-randomization, they assessed mental health-related quality of life through the York SF12 19, a tool with 12 items addressing both mental and physical health components of quality of life. They measured anxiety and depression using the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale, a scale that provides a score ranging from 1 to 21, with higher scores indicating greater severity. The researchers found that group singing had a significant positive effect on mental health-related quality of life, anxiety, and depression, and they suggested the activity may be a useful intervention in maintaining mental health of the elderly. These findings were similar to Clift and

Morrison's (2011) study examining an innovative community singing initiative with mental health services users. Out of a network of seven singing groups, 42 individuals provided complete data on the CORE (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation) questionnaire, a clinical measure of mental distress, that the researchers administered at the beginning of the research and again after eight months. The authors observed significant improvements on the CORE questionnaire, and participants reported group singing as beneficial in aiding the recovery of people with a history of serious and enduring mental health problems.

Saarikallio (2010) wrote of music as an important tool in emotional self-regulation at all ages, and other researchers have indicated that music can have a direct effect on mood enhancement or repair (Annemieke et al., 2013; Lei et al., 2007; Saarikallio, 2010). Clift, Manship, and Stephens (2017) researched if singing fostered mental health and well-being. Twenty-six participants with mental health issues from four community singing groups completed a CORE-10 questionnaire, which measures mental distress, and the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS), an instrument designed to measure positive wellbeing, over a six-month period. During the interviews, investigators identified a wide range of current or previous mental health issues including depression, anxiety, agoraphobia, bereavement, obsessive compulsive disorder, bipolar disorder, dissociative personality disorder, previous psychotic episodes, previous mental/emotional breakdowns, insomnia, and experiencing isolation. The authors found that the CORE-10 scores were significantly reduced and that the WEMWBS scores were significantly increased suggesting that singing had a positive

impact on mental health and well-being.

Other researchers have investigated correlations between choral participation and mental health and well-being. Two such studies involved people with dementia and their family members. In 2018, Green-Harris et al. did a study with "The Amazing Grace Chorus," a choir that was specifically created to meet the needs of African American elders and their families. Participants completed quality of life and self-esteem measures at the beginning of the 14 week rehearsal schedule and again at the end. At the end of the 14-week period, participants reported increased self-esteem and decreased feelings of failure. Family members reported reduced stress and improved communication at home. In another study, Mittelman and Epstein (2013) began a chorus for older adults with dementia and their family members and conducted a pilot study of its benefits. They sought to examine whether singing and rehearsing together for a performance would improve the well-being and quality of life for all participants. Dyads consisted of one person with dementia living at home and one family member or friend. Over a 13-week period, researchers gathered quantitative data at the beginning, mid-point, and after the final concert. Additionally, participants completed take-home questionnaires after the final concert. In their findings, caregivers felt that being intellectually challenged was important in improving health-related quality of life and that they had grown from the experience. Members with dementia enjoyed the opportunity to stretch their abilities and discover they could still learn something new.

Researchers have done a significant amount of work in the area of music and mental health. In their findings, they have indicated that music can enhance individuals'

mental health and well-being (Pavlicevic & Ansdell, 2004; Perkins et al., 2016; Richard & Mcferrran, 2011). Shakespeare and Whieldon (2018) evaluated a Norfolk-based network of community singing workshops for people with mental health conditions. The researchers used interviews, two focus group interviews, and observations over a 6-month period. Interviewees reported improvement in or maintenance of their mental health and well-being. Participants also reported that the lack of pressure to discuss their condition and the absence of therapy was an important and welcome aspect of their feelings of success. Additionally, Livesey et al. (2012) explored the benefits of choral singing for mental well-being and health. Participants were amateur choral singers drawn from a dataset who reported high and low levels of emotional well-being on the WHOQOL-BREF questionnaire, a questionnaire developed by the World Health Organization to assess individuals' perceptions of quality of life. Data consisted of written responses to open-ended questions. In the results, participants reported perceived benefits in social, emotional, physical and cognitive domains.

The literature regarding the health and well-being benefits of music engagement demonstrates a correlation between music activities and positive physical and mental outcomes. Participants' reports of physical ailments such as joint pain, diminished visual and audio abilities, and gait instability being alleviated by music activities suggests participation can improve the quality of life for older adults. In addition to physical improvements, research findings involving mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, bipolar, and a myriad of others demonstrate that music has the potential of improving mental health and promoting the maintenance of emotional stability.

Cognition

Researchers have suggested that early-life and sustained musical participation may provide benefits such as engaging and enhancing general cognitive control (Amer, et al., 2013; Gooding, et al. 2015). In 2015, Gooding et al. investigated the effects of early- to midlife musical training on cognition in older adults. They distributed a survey to a convenience sample of 237 older adults in an Alzheimer's Disease Center at the University of Kentucky to ascertain their musical experience and objective knowledge. The responses were classified into low-, medium-, and high-knowledge groups and the participants were then tested on the Animal Naming Test (semantic verbal fluency) and the Logical Memory Story A Immediate Recall (episodic memory) test. Results indicated that the high-knowledge participants scored significantly higher on episodic memory and the ability to read music was associated with a higher mean score on both tests. These findings align with those found by Hanna-Paddy and MacKay (2011) in their study to evaluate the association between musical instrumental participation and cognitive aging. Seventy older adults (ages 60–83) were placed into two groups and completed a comprehensive neuropsychological battery. The two groups, non-musician and musician, were matched on age, education, history of physical exercise, while the musician group was also matched on age of instrumental acquisition and years of formal training. Musicians were classified in the low (1–9 year) or high (10+ years) group based on years of musical experience. Results revealed that participants with 10 or more years of musical experience had better performance in nonverbal memory, naming, and executive processes than non-musicians. Regression analyses evaluated how years of musical

activity, age of acquisition, and type of musical training predicted cognitive performance. These results suggested high musical activity throughout the life span is predictive on cognitive functioning in advanced age. In another, similar study, Hanna-Paddy and Gajewski (2012) evaluated cognition between musicians and non-musicians as well as the time of engagement among the musicians. Seventy older musicians (10+ years) and non-musicians (ages 59–80) were evaluated on neuropsychological tests and general lifestyle activities. The investigators reported that musicians scored higher on tests of phonemic fluency, verbal working memory, verbal immediate recall, visuospatial judgement, and motor dexterity. Additionally, early age of musical acquisition predicted enhanced verbal working memory, which suggests that early age acquisition, sustained and maintained during advanced age, may enhance cognitive functions.

Scholars have written that early-life music participation provides benefits in cognitive function for older adults, but there is also increasing evidence that learning music late in life provides many similar benefits. In 2007, Bugos et al. examined the transfer from domain-specific, sensorimotor training to cognitive abilities. Using Individualized Piano Instruction (IPI) as a possible intervention of age-related cognitive decline, the researchers recruited thirty-one non-musical older adults (ages 60–85) and assigned them to an experimental group or a control group. Neuropsychological assessments were administered at three points in time: Pre-training, after six months of intervention, and following three months after. Results indicated that the piano student group significantly improved on the Trail Making Test and Digit Symbol measures as compared to the control group thus suggesting that IPI may serve as an effective

cognitive intervention for older adults. In a similar study, Seinfeld et al. (2013) studied the specific effects of musical training vs. the effects of other leisure activities. The researchers evaluated the impact of piano training on cognitive function, mood, and quality of life in older adults. Two groups were randomly selected with one receiving piano lessons for 4 months and the other participating in other types of leisure activities (physical exercise, computer lessons, and painting lessons). Participants were given neuropsychological tests as well as mood and Quality of Life questionnaires before starting the program and immediately after the program ended. Results indicated that the piano training group significantly improved on the Stroop test which measures executive function, inhibitory control and divided attention, and a visual scanning and motor ability test (Trail Making Test part A). The researchers concluded that playing piano and learning to read music can be a useful intervention in cognitive decline.

In a 2019 study, Schneider et al. reviewed the current evidence related to instrument playing serving as potential protection against cognitive decline in older adults. They searched four databases (PsycINFO, Web of Science, PubMed, and Cochran) for the terms “music, music therapy, cognitive impairment, cognition, cognitive protect, and cognitive disorders,” and paired reviewers analyzed the eleven studies that met the study’s criteria (peer-reviewed research studies, human subjects, and participant population of older adult ages 50 years or older) for inclusion. All studies indicated that music playing correlated with positive outcomes on cognitive ability. Amer et al. (2013) investigated whether music can enhance cognitive control and contribute to general cognitive functioning in older adults. Their participants were 42 late middle-aged to older

adults from Toronto, 18 of whom were musicians and 24 non-musicians. The musicians included instrumentalists and vocalists who had extensive formal training begun at an early age. The non-musicians had minimal or no musical education outside of school. Participants completed a background questionnaire and then five tasks: Auditory Stroop, Simon, Visuospatial, Go/No-Go, and Reading with Distraction. The Auditory Stroop test provides a measure of pitch and word identification speed as well as measures of auditory conflict resolution while the Simon test measures visual conflict resolution. The Visuospatial span task is a computerized test that measures the span of visual working memory while the Go/No-Go tests the reaction time to visual stimuli. Finally, the Reading with Distraction task was used to test control over concurrent distraction in both low- and high-interference conditions. The findings suggested that high levels of music experience and sustained participation in music-making are associated with the preservation of domain-general, cognitive control abilities in older adults.

Mansans et al. (2017) found similar results in their study to explore music making and its potential association with better cognitive functioning in older adults. They gathered data from 1101 participants aged 64 and older from the Longitudinal Aging Study Amsterdam. They differentiated between participants who made no music, only sang, only played an instrument, or both sang and played an instrument in terms of cognitive functioning. Results indicated that music making was significantly associated with letter fluency, learning and attention/short-term memory. Additionally, ANCOVA analyses showed higher scores for those who played an instrument compared to those who made no music on learning, working memory, and processing speed. For processing

speed, the instrument only group had a higher score than participants who only sang.

In a study seeking the perspectives of instructors of older adult musicians, Coffman (2009) asked band and orchestra directors to describe their perceptions of adult learners and the differences, when compared to young learners, in teaching style, instructional content, learner attitudes, and adult physical limits. According to the participants, older adults displayed less flexibility in learning that was compensated by life experience and high levels of commitment. The directors also indicated that rehearsals were more relaxed, which had implications for social interaction.

Research findings involving musical activities and cognitive function suggest that participating in music may hold many benefits for the maintenance or potential improvement in cognitive performance. Older adults who were exposed to music at an early age and participated throughout their life span demonstrated better verbal memory, nonverbal memory, and recall, even when contending with debilitating diseases such as Alzheimer's. In addition, findings suggest that learning music later in life may offer more cognitive benefits than other leisure activities and may provide some intervention in cognitive decline.

Social Benefits

Quality of Life

According to the World Health Organization (2018), "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." Older people who participate in group musical activities have reportedly gained social benefits from interactions with other participants. Various researchers have

explored the role those supportive relationships and connections affect perceptions of quality of life. In 2012, Baernholdt et al. examined the associations between the three dimensions of quality of life (physical and mental health, emotional well-being, and social functioning) and the needs and health behaviors in adults 65 years or older. The researchers used secondary data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) from 2005 to 2006. The NHANES is a national (USA) survey designed to assess the prevalence of major diseases and risk factors for disease. Its aim is to assess nutritional status and its association with health promotion and disease prevention. Approximately 5,000 individuals contribute data each year through both personal interviews and physical examinations. For this study, the researchers used data from the personal interviews of 16 individuals 65 years or older. They assessed frequencies and distribution patterns, followed by bivariate and multiple regression patterns. The analysis showed that these older adults reported high levels of quality of life but the associations between needs and health behaviors and quality of life varied across the dimensions of quality of life. Activities of daily living were associated with all three dimensions. Depression was associated with two dimensions (health and social functioning) and memory problems with one (social functioning). Additionally, physical activity was linked to social functioning, and health-care utilization was linked to emotional well-being.

Ferreira et al. (2017) performed a qualitative, exploratory, and descriptive study to identify the social representations of older adults regarding quality of life, and to analyze the practices of care adopted to promote it. They gathered data from 30 older

people from the *Academia Carioca de Saúde* at the Family Health Strategy Clinic located in Rio de Janeiro. The choice to use this facility was made because it is a place of socialization among the elderly. The researchers used a random sampling using the criteria being that the participants be 60 years or older, their verbal communication and cognition preserved, and had been participants in the program for at least 30 days. Researchers gathered data in three phases. First, they engaged in exploratory observations and familiarization with the environment for two months before the selection of participants. Second, they used an instrument to collect the social and demographic data of the elderly. Lastly, they held in-depth interviews with open questions about the daily life and activities of participants. Results indicated that social representations of quality of life are based on social determinants of health. Practices promoting this are comprised of healthy eating habits, physical exercise, social participation, interaction and socialization, and support and family contact.

In other research regarding benefits of socialization, Garcia et al. (2005) examined the association between social network and health-related quality of life in older adults and compared this to health-related quality of life and a disabling disease such as osteoarthritis. Using a cross-sectional survey, the researchers gathered data from 3,600 non-institutionalized participants aged 60 or older. Through home-based personal interviews and physical examinations, they measured health-related quality of life with the SF-36 health questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of 36 items that assess 8 health-related quality of life components: physical functioning, role-physical, bodily pain, general health, vitality, social functioning, role-emotional, and mental health.

Physical functioning, role-physical, and body reflect physical health; social functioning, role-emotional, and mental health cover the psycho-social aspects; and vitality and general health are associated with both the physical and mental aspects. Of all the participants, 38.6% were unmarried, 17.6% were living alone, 4.7% saw their family seldom or never, and 2.9% saw their friends seldom or never. Unmarried status and living alone were associated with lower scores in the social and mental quality of life components. Seeing family members seldom was associated with worse scores in role-physical, body pain, general health and mental health, and those who saw friends seldom or never was associated with lower scores in vitality and social functioning. The researchers concluded that low frequency of relationships with friends is associated with a decline in quality of life similar to that associated with a disabling disease.

In 2008, Dabback explored how social interactions and networks formed and related to social capital within the Rochester New Horizons community band, which provided older adults the opportunity to participate in communal music making. The researcher recruited participants through quota sampling techniques, a method that involves choosing a sample of people who represent a population. He gathered data through five focus group interviews with researcher-participant dialogue journals and participant-observer notes serving as secondary data sources for triangulation. Findings indicated that band members felt the social aspects of participation, such as the sense of community and personal connections with others, were of the utmost importance. Band members demonstrated social reciprocity in their willingness to engage with others and trust in the return of something of equal value at some point in the future from

community.

Social Support and Relationships

Social benefits can include building supportive relationships and developing connections with others (UCDavis). Recent research findings have indicated that peer interactions, trust and rapport, musical and moral support, and encouragement from others all have an impact on participating in musical activities (Bonshor, 2016; Lee et al., 2016). Creech et al. (2013a) enlisted 11 elderly participants to examine the different ways in which they experienced creative music sessions. The researchers sought to (a) discover if music-making activities enhance the lives of the elderly, (b) explore how participation may impact on social, emotional, and cognitive well-being, and (c) examine the processes through which the impact occurs. They collected data from two senior groups that were involved in the same music program over the course of a year. Researchers collected data through face-to-face interviews, one focus group interview, questionnaires, and email correspondence with the primary facilitator. Results revealed five categories of experiencing music: (a) interaction with others, (b) interaction with others and reminiscing, (c) interaction with others and for developing a new skill, (d) returning to music-making after several years, and (e) as a means for self-expression.

Coffman and Adamek (2001) reported similar results in a study in which they examined the perceived level and types of "social support" members of the New Horizon band felt they received from other band members. Thirty-three participants completed a questionnaire asking them to identify significant people who provided support for them. The majority of respondents identified bonding relationships and instrumental support

within the ensemble. Additional responses indicated that the program's use of homogenous groupings for instructional contributed to the establishment of social groupings. In 2015, Lo examined the connection between music participation and the maintenance of interpersonal relationships involving older adults in Cantonese operatic singing lessons. The researcher collected data from 31 participants through semi-structured interviews and through observations. Findings indicated that participants reported emotional closeness, a sense of achievement and relaxation as being beneficial. Barbeau and Mantie (2019) examined music performance anxiety and self-reported reasons for participation among older adults in community bands. The researchers interviewed 35 New Horizons Band members aged 65 or older and administered two questionnaires: the Performance Anxiety Inventory for Musicians and the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory. The researchers indicated that participants' anxiety was connected to novelty, unpredictability, and lack of control as well as threats to their ego. Participants reported the perceived benefits, such as well-being and socialization outweighed the negative aspects.

In other research, Creech et al. (2013b) conducted a study with 338 participants at three different community facilities that offered various music activities to older adults, such as choirs, instrumental groups, music appreciation classes, and keyboard classes. The investigators used one control group that participated in non-musical activities such as language classes, art/craft classes, yoga, social support, book club, and social club. They sought to explore the ways in which music-making activities could enhance the lives of older adults, consider the extent to which music-making activities influenced

social, emotional, and cognitive well-being, and to explore the specific process through which this impact may occur. Using questionnaires, interviews, and observations as the primary methods of gathering data, they reported that there were more positive responses from the music-making groups regarding outlook on life, autonomy/control, and social affirmation. These findings align with those found by Coffman & Adamek (1999) who surveyed 52 members of a volunteer wind band for senior citizens in a small Midwestern city. Participants reported that social interactions and enriching recreational activities were the dominant factors in defining quality of life.

Carucci (2012) had similar results in a study to examine social support as perceived and experienced by participants in adult recreational music ensembles. Members of the New Horizon bands from 63 cities participated through a web-based questionnaire that identified participant perception of support within their ensembles. She reported that the majority or members perceive instrumental/tangible support (offering good advice or time), companionship support (someone to do enjoyable activities with), and emotional/informational (caring, empathy, or esteem) support to be available 'most' or 'all the time'. These results suggest that in addition to being a musical outlet for adult learners, group music-making organizations may be a viable way to increase and maintain social relationships.

Building social relationships can be associated with many aspects of life such as health and loneliness. Research findings have indicated that group activities provide opportunities for older adults to mitigate the effects of solitude and health issues. In 2018, Meek et al. investigated social engagement restrictions among middle-aged and older

adults with chronic conditions and factors associated with those restrictions. Chronic conditions included heart disease, cancer, stroke, diabetes, arthritis, asthma, hypertension or high blood pressure, emphysema, chronic bronchitis, depression, anxiety, and others. The participants were 793 middle-aged (44–64) and older adults (age 65+) with one or more chronic conditions. The researchers gathered data from the National Council on Aging (NCOA) Chronic Care Survey, a national-representative probability survey of Americans 44 years of older with chronic conditions. The survey used telephone-based interviewing techniques to collect data in English and Spanish. The response was approximately 86.6%. Cross-sectional data were examined for relationships between social engagement restrictions and chronic conditions, health status, support, quality of life implications, self-care barriers, caregiving, and demographics. Findings indicated that 60% of participants reported having no social engagement restrictions but 18% reported having restrictions in social activities, helping family and friends, and helping community/volunteering. In addition, individuals living with both disease and disability reported more social engagement restrictions than those living with disease only.

Pauly et al. (2018), examined the importance of social relationships for associations between affective experiences and solitude. They wanted to explore whether adults of varying age experienced solitude in a positive or negative way and whether having high quality social relationship mitigated negative experiences associated with everyday solitude. The researchers recruited groups of young, middle-aged, and older adults from Atlanta, Georgia (Study 1, N = 183; Mean age = 49 years) and another group of older adults from Vancouver, BC, Canada (Study 2, N = 97; Mean age = 67 years). In

both studies, participants were recruited through databases, advertisements, and participant referrals. Daily life assessments such as, momentary solitude, momentary positive and negative affect, and social relationship quality were gathered from the participants using electronic devises to complete daily questionnaires. Researchers analyzed data using multilevel models controlling for gender, age, time in solitude, retirement status, marital status, education, and current work activity. In both studies, participants reported lower levels of positive affect during solitude and lower levels of negative affect for individuals with higher-quality relationships. These findings indicate that solitude is experienced less negatively for people embedded in a context of higher quality social relationships.

Church Activities

Veblen and Olsson (2002) categorized religious musical activities as part of the tapestry of community music in the United States. Like other forms of community music, such activities provide opportunities for social engagement and musical enjoyment. Their organizational structure are typically informal, and recruitment is often carried out the similarly through bulletins, ads, or word of mouth. Most membership is voluntary and because the skill set is oftentimes diverse, the leaders need to be highly effective to meet the needs of all involved. Further, church activities offer avenues by which older adults can socialize, form relationships, and improve upon their quality of life (Rohwer, 2010).

In 2000, Titcomb examined the choir culture and the process used to learn and create music within a church choir. The question that led the study was: how do group process and culture interact and influence informal adult learning in groups. The

researcher gathered data through observations of 35 rehearsals, 43 choral presentations, 27 interviews, and two group interviews. After transcribing the video and audio recordings, the researcher tagged the comments, observations, and events that reflected the choir's culture or process. Regarding the group process, formal instruction was only one aspect of learning. Choir members with musical training also served as choir coaches to members of their voice sections. Findings regarding the choir's culture indicated that participants perceived the weekly sharing time and the ritual opening and closing hymns as important factors of their involvement. Shansky (2012) surveyed adult choir and band members at a synagogue in Teaneck, New Jersey to explore connections between performance, educational experiences, and spirituality. Through qualitative, open-ended interviews, the researcher collected the thoughts and reflections of the participants as well as the clergy and choir director. The results indicated that participants found that participating in a synagogue music ensemble, in addition to the music education facets, lent itself to a spiritual connection. In addition, the music was reported as providing the congregation with enhancement of and education within the worship service.

Research findings have suggested that involvement in church activities can provide older adults with opportunities for socialization and support. In 2011, Krause and Bastida explored how church-based emotional support influences the health of older Mexican-Americans. The premises that were evaluated as the core connections were:

1. older Mexican-Americans who go to church more often will be more likely to receive emotional support from church members;

2. older Mexican-Americans who receive more support from their fellow church members will be more likely to feel they belong in their congregation;
3. older Mexican- Americans who feel they belong in their congregation are likely to have a stronger sense of personal control; and
4. older Mexican-Americans who have a stronger sense of personal control are likely enjoy better health.

The participants were all retired Mexican-Americans aged 66, who spoke either English or Spanish, and who were not institutionalized. The sample was recruited from Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. A total of 1,500 interviews were conducted by Harris Interactive (a full-service, digital consultative custom market research agency) face-to-face in the homes of the study participants. The findings were based on 663 (52% response rate) older adult Mexican-Americans who attend church more than twice a year. Participants were asked questions regarding church attendance, church-based emotional support, sense of belonging in the congregation, feelings of personal control, and self-rated health. Results indicated that more support from church members promotes a better sense of belonging and this sense of belonging is associated with better health. Additionally, the data suggest that the health benefits are bolstered by the feeling of personal control.

The purpose of Yamasaki's (2015) research project was to explore the impact that collective faith-based stories of service, socialization, and support have on older adults aging in a small town. The researcher combined qualitative methods of research with narrative theorizing to understand how stories told through church foster participants'

perceptions of community, nurture a sense of responsibility, and enable them to age with meaningful connection, purpose and support. Yamasaki gathered data from 34 older adults (aged 72–96, average age 84 years) living in a small rural town in southeast Minnesota. She collected data from three sources: a) in-depth interviews with older adults and community informants, b) participant observation in public and private space throughout the town, and c) community documents produced within the town, including materials from an assisted living facility, older adults living in town, the weekly community newspaper, and the health and social service available to older adults within the county. The data revealed that through the stories told by participants, older adults found service (connections and engagement through stewardship), socialization (connections and engagement through fellowship), and support (connections and engagement through altruism) all contributed to a sense of community engagement for older adults and provides a starting point for further research in this area.

The research literature regarding socialization suggests that group participation in an activity plays an important role in alleviating loneliness and may provide the opportunity to form relationships with others. Forming relationships can provide emotional closeness which has the potential to affect the quality of life for older adults who may live in isolation or lack family support. Participation in musical or church activities can also provide a sense of belonging and interaction with others.

Sense of Purpose

Researchers have indicated that there is a direct correlation between sense of purpose, and health and well-being (Windsor, et al., 2015). Sense of purpose involves

goals, intentions, and sense of direction, and are often reexamined and reorganized later in life (Ryff, 1989). Findings from one study indicated that maintaining a sense of purpose can affect one's health in many ways, such as participating in vigorous and moderate activities, vegetable intake, flossing, and sleep quality (Hill, et al., 2017).

Older adults face significant life changes as they age. Retirement, children leaving home, deaths of loved ones, and other age-related changes and challenges can all affect one's sense of purpose. Participation in community music can provide older adult members with the opportunity to positively engage within a society again and enhance feelings of contribution and usefulness. According to Taylor (1987), participation in the arts provides social and personal benefits, can fulfill the loss of work-role status, and provide leisurely time for the elderly. Southcott (2009) used a single case study research design with a small choir formed by a group of older people to explore the benefits of participating in the group. The researcher gathered data using semi-structured focus group interviews in which the discussion facilitated recall and reflection of the members. Three themes emerged through analysis: gaining a sense of purpose and fulfillment, maintaining relationships, and personal growth. These results align with findings from a study by Creech, Hallam, Varvarigou et al. (2013) in which they explored the relationship between active music-making and well-being in older peoples' lives. This study involved three case studies of a total of 500 people participating in a variety of activities both musical and non-musical. Findings indicated that participants involved in music related activities reported stronger feeling of purpose, autonomy/control, and social affirmation. In 2018, Matsunobu examined the role of musical engagement in spiritual development

and aging in *shakuhachi* (Japanese flute) practitioners. Over a period of two years, the researcher interviewed 40 participants and narrowed this group down to 8 who spoke about music in relation to aging and spirituality. Participants indicated that music helps to develop a sense of purpose and instill the feeling that they are still able to develop musically and spiritually.

Balsnes (2017) reported similar findings in an examination of an amateur community choir for older adults to answer the following questions: what is going on in the choir; why and how is the activity organized; and what is the meaning of the participation of the singers? The researcher collected data using participant observation, semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Participants reported the following benefits of participation: a sense of belonging and having something regular to attend, health and general enrichment of life, engaging both body and emotions, learning and experiences of mastery. Pérez-Aldeguer and Leganés (2014) also wrote of similar results in a study in which they investigated the differences in psychological well-being between older adults involved in amateur choir and those not involved. They divided the study population of 496 male and female participants ranging in age from 64 years to 78 years into two groups (choristers and non-choristers) and asked them to complete a Spanish adaptation of the Ryff well-being psychological scales using a six-point Likert scale. The model covered six domains: self-acceptance, positive relationships, autonomy, environment management, personal growth, and purpose in life. Findings suggested that the choristers felt a greater sense of personal well-being, with women reporting greater improvements than men.

There is growing evidence that older adults benefit from participating in activities that influence personal growth by physically and mentally challenging them (Balsnes, 2017; Southcott, 2009). Older adults often report that learning something new and challenging activities enable personal growth and achievement (Ellis, 2018; Poulos et al., 2019). In 2016 , White examined the role of musical activity for older adults, explored what musicians value about their musical activities and how they believe their involvement in music contributes to their quality of life. The investigator distributed a survey to 192 individuals involved in a community choir, orchestra, or band, with a total of 64 being completed. Respondents expressed belief that participation contributed to their overall health, providing joy, stress-relief and a sense of purpose. In 2016, Rickard McCoy investigated what adult singers find meaningful about their participation in a volunteer community chorus. Using semi-structured interviews and participants' journals, the researcher collected data from four adult singers, their family members, and two conductors. Connectedness and achievement emerged as two themes, and participants indicated that connections with other people and achieving surmountable challenges were highly valued.

Research findings suggest that music participation has the potential to ease issues with which older adults contend such as retirement, children leaving home, or deaths of friends and relatives. Music activities can provide new challenges that may provide members the opportunity for personal growth and achievement. Further, this research suggests that music participation can promote personal fulfillment and autonomy.

Identity

As people age, they inevitably experience life changes and crises, which can significantly affect their perception of their identities. According to the social identity perspective in social psychology, an individual's overall sense of identity is attributed to social interactions within social groups and individual qualities (Hogg et al. 2004). Hogg and Abrams (1988) wrote that maintaining one's identity is a social process that occurs throughout a lifetime with different identities formed for different life events. One's personal identity is formed and rooted in one's experiences and adopted convictions that shape the individual (Drummond, 2020).

As with a loss of a sense of purpose, retirement, loss of loved ones, widowhood, and decreased physical ability can all affect the identities of older adults, and music can play an important role in the development and redevelopment of those identities. Through music, people may define who they are and discover their sense of self. Lamont (2011) stated, "For many middle-aged adults, involvement in music provides a way of exercising the need for generativity and care, ensuring that they have a lasting legacy that goes further than just their own personal involvement" (pg. 381). According to Dabback (2010), many older adults experience sadness and depression after retirement with the loss of roles that defined them; he discussed the importance of redeveloping new identities and the possibilities of doing so through music engagement. Taylor (1987) wrote of the significance of art to the elderly and stated, "The loss of work-role status frequently leads to an identity crisis…" and that older adults often find identity through art (p. 9). Some identities are shaped by contributing to an ensemble and the social

interactions within the group (Dabback, 2008). Not only has research shown that performance influences the construct of identity, but other influential factors include composition, control over musical materials, and the acquisition of musical skills (Dabback, 2008; Harborn et al., 2013).

Personal and Social Identity

Recent research findings indicate that older adults' identities are affected by participating in community activities. Taylor (2010) investigated the self-reported music experiences of 21 older amateur piano and keyboard players. Using music learning, musical motivation, and musical identity as a lens, the author examined the reasons for the participants' decisions to participate in music and their perceptions of the benefits. The researcher found that significant life changes, such as retirement, divorce, and death of spouse or loved ones, facilitated the desire to become involved in musical activities. Participants were also able to sustain personal and social identities through music participation. These findings support those found by Hays and Minichiello (2005) in a qualitative study to explore the meaning, importance, and function of music in older people's lives. They collected data through in-depth interviews of 52 older Australians ages 60 and older. Participants reported that music helped in understanding and developing self-identity, socialization, general well-being, and experiencing and expressing spirituality. Kruse (2012) also found similar results in a study with 366 adult band and chorus musicians. The purpose of his research was to identify the participants' levels of self-esteem regarding self-perception of abilities, support and recognition from others, and personal interest. He indicated that self-esteem was high among all

respondents with personal interest and desire ranking highest, followed by self-perception of musical abilities, and support and recognition from others ranking lowest.

In other research, Eaton (2013) investigated the music making of six adult string-players involved in community music as well as four significant others. The researcher sought to understand music's impact on the development and maintenance of the participants' identity, self-efficacy, and well-being. Based on observations and in-depth interviews, Eaton indicated the participants' personal identity, perceived self-efficacy, and overall sense of well-being were refined through family support, performance opportunities, and goals in music making. The results from this study support those reported by Murray (2017), who examined six older adult participants' choices for participating in a New England New Horizons ensemble and the extent to which participation satisfied their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. He collected data through interviews and field observations and found that members fulfilled their need for relatedness through peers, conductors, community members, and family. Fulfillment of autonomy was evident in intrinsically motivated behavior as well as autonomous forms of extrinsic motivation. He concluded that music contributes to competence, self-esteem, and independence, all of which are facets in the formation of identity. In 2014, Creechet al. studied the relationship between musical identity and well-being later in life. They enlisted 398 participants aged 50 years or older, active in three musical UK case study sites. The researchers used a questionnaire with open-ended questions and measures of well-being, individual interviews, and focus group interviews and reported that through music, many older adults found a means by which they were

able to form a future musical identity.

Identity Construction and Reconstruction

People develop and redevelop identities throughout their lives. These identities can often be built upon or be combined to create a new identity. In 2009, Norrick analyzed elderly adults' stories and reports of multiple identities across a lifespan. The impetus behind the project was the author's realization during interviews with people 80 years or older that the related stories often revealed multiple past identities. He asserted that storytellers old enough to have had the time to reevaluate life events will engage in retrospective reassessment of identities. The investigator drew data from two main sources: a) the *Indianapolis Interviews* which comprise conversations in family home and conversational interviews with residents in a retirement community in Indianapolis, Indiana; and b) transcribed archives of the *Center for the Study of History and Memory* at Indiana University in Bloomberg. All participants were 70 years or older. Transcript analysis revealed that elderly storytellers create impressions that the teller's present identity is not representative of all facets of the narrator's projected identity, that some identities may be incompatible, as when a rebellious teen-ager becomes a homemaker or successful businesswoman. Further, elderly tellers often convey multiple identities and their listeners form opinions of them based on what they reveal about their pasts and how they currently reflect on them.

In other research regarding the formation and re-formation of identity. Woody et al. (2019) examined the role of perceived self-efficacy in participatory music-making. The researchers sought to explore whether a single music-making activity could make

non-musician older adults more open to seeing themselves as musical. The researchers asserted that people who have had multiple years of school music do not exit adolescence with being musical as a part of their identity. Furthermore, they posited that recipients of musical training don't possess independent musicianship that would facilitate making music throughout a lifespan. The participants in this study were on the campus of one of the author's institutions attending a week-long church-based retreat program. The researchers invited 35–40 older adults, almost all retirees and over the age of 60 years, to participate in an informal music-making experience designed to be participatory and enjoyable. Out of the music-making event, only 31 consented to participate in the study with 17 (54.8%) of them female, and 14 (45.2%) of them male. The median age of the sample was 71 years old. The hour-long music-making activity involved ukuleles, Orff-style instruments, and hand-held unpitched percussion instruments. The instruction was delivered in an informal manner with focus placed on everyone's involvement and social interaction. The investigators distributed a questionnaire both before and after the musical activity to measure participants' musical beliefs and self-perceptions. The posttest included questions pertaining to their self-efficacy. The researchers analyzed the data using a Likert ratings scale to explore the likelihood that participants would engage in future musical activities. Findings revealed that across the sample, the rating of how musical participants considered themselves did not change significantly but there was an increase in the likelihood that they would engage in future music activities. Additionally, those with higher self-efficacy reports believed themselves to be more musical than they had previously thought.

In other research regarding identity construction, Amine et al. (2017) focused their research on the role of healthcare givers with authority to provide health services in building, preserving, and altering patients' identities. They revealed the existence of guardian conception of elderly patients' identities in healthcare. This concept relates to two different visions: deficient elderly patients dependent on others and elderly patients as autonomous individuals with remaining resources. The research was conducted in a geriatric ward of a French hospital admitting older patients aged 70 and over in the suburbs of Paris. Using exploratory qualitative methods, the researchers collected data from June to October, 2016. Findings indicated that there are two types of guardian conceptions of identity. The first, relates to a dependent and stigmatized vision of the elderly and requires healthcare providers to adapt their professional norms to patients' specific needs. The second, conveys the image of an old person capable of doing, and favoring the expression of the patient's power to act. This requires care givers to follow patients' healthcare paths to preserve and respect their autonomy. Further, the researchers asserted that this intervention in someone else's identity represents a theoretical contribution to the area of *self*-concept.

In 2013, rather than focusing on how old age affects the ways in which people consume, Baernhart and Peñaloza explored how consumption fosters understanding of what it means to be old and identity construction during old age. The researchers investigated the nature of consumption for older adults no longer able to consume independently and the process of identity construction. The questions that led the study were: a) what does it mean to older consumers and one other person who assists that

consumer to be old; b) how do assistants position someone as an old subject in their consumption practice; c) how do older consumers exercise agency to identify or reject this position; and d) how might their agency to enact identity be limited to their interactions? Data collection consisted of in-depth interviews with both older consumers and assistants totaling 20 participants from California, Colorado, Texas, New York, and Connecticut. Recruitment specifically targeted "older people who receive assistance with everyday activities" or "someone who regularly assists an elderly person" (p. 1137). Researchers analyzed the interviews and found ten emergent categories: a) personal care such as bathing, toileting, and dressing; b) driving; c) doctor visits; d) shopping; e) managing medications including organizing pills, taking medications as prescribed, and determining appropriate dosages of medications as needed; f) preparing meals; g) housekeeping; h) home and yard maintenance; i) personal business such as responding to mail, paying bills, and managing subscriptions; and j) travel. Results highlighted ways in which consumer agency is constrained in interpersonal interaction and demonstrated old identity in relation to and distinct from physical ability.

Researchers have sought to examine personal and social identity as well as the development and redevelopment of identity with older adults. Findings suggest that there are individual identities as well as musical identities and that significant life changes can affect identity. Further, there are many facets of an identity such as self-perception, personal interest, self-efficacy, competence, and independence.

Previous literature and study findings indicate that music participation provides many benefits for older adults. The purpose of the current research was to determine

whether study participants perceived similar benefits and the influence they may have on the maintenance and development of interest and motivation for continued participation within their unique choir contexts.

Motivation

Research regarding musical activities and associated reported benefits suggests that involvement can influence older people's desire to participate in music. Dorman and Gaudino (1994) defined motivation as an internal force that produces actions and is usually goal-oriented. Humans exhibit motivation when they feel their biological, psychological, and social needs are fulfilled (Pitts, 2017). Health and well-being factors, both physical and mental, have an influence on the decision to participate and continue (Coffman, 2008; Rohwer, 2012). Music can serve as an intervention to offer cognitive benefits to offset declines due to aging, such as those involving Alzheimer's, memory, verbal and aural ability (Gooding et al., 2015; Hanna-Paddy & Gajewski, 2012; Hann-Paddy & Mackay, 2011). Later in life, social interaction and support become important (Baernholdt et al., 2012; Creech et al., 2013a; Krause & Bastida, 2011) along with a sense of purpose in knowing that personal growth and achievement is still possible (Balsnes, 2017; Southcott, 2009). Discovering one's identity, personal, social, and musical, can affect one's self-esteem and feelings of competence (Kruse, 2012; Taylor, 2010). Many findings indicate that health and social benefits, as well as sense of purpose and identity development/redevelopment serve as motivational factors for participating in community music.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic

Researchers using the lens of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic, have indicated varying factors for individuals' decisions to participate in music. In 2018, Dale's study profiled Kentucky community band participants to understand their motivations for continuing to participate, the extent of their activity, and their perspectives regarding current and past experiences in band. Examined through the lenses of serious leisure perspective (SLP) and self-determination theory (SDT), 218 members completed a survey that employed standardized measures as well as open-ended questions. Results indicated that participants were primarily motivated in intrinsic ways with personal enjoyment, having a creative outlet, maintaining musical skills, and social aspects as the most valuable factors in band participation. Alexander (2015) also used SDT in a study of a 14-week, secondary music instrument class for pre-service music education students. Participants were 16 music students enrolled in two semester-long, secondary music instrument trumpet classes. The participants in this study learned to play the trumpet as well as improvise, compose, and teach in a classroom environment designed to support intrinsic motivation. The researcher concluded that study members experienced satisfaction of psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Participants also reported confidence in their abilities to teach the trumpet skills learned in this course.

In 2014, Billaud used structuration theory and self-determination theory to examine participation in a community band. Thirty-two participants reported on how the band's structure either controlled or promoted involvement. Interviews, observations, and

document collection served as the primary means of data collection. Findings indicated that the band's rules and resources as well as its structure supported the needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence and promoted higher levels of motivation. In another study using self-determination theory, Liu (2016) examined (a) the association between fulfillment of psychological needs (autonomy, competence, relatedness) and (b) the connection between different qualities of self-determination and students' intentions to engage in music in the future. The researcher distributed a survey to 706 high school orchestra students in the Midwest with a response rate of 99.7%. Results indicated that autonomy, competence, and relatedness positively predicted music students' overall outlook on their autonomy-supportive learning and thus supported that self-determination theory is a viable approach to understanding motivation in music education. In addition, identified and intrinsic regulation positively predicted students' long-term intentions of music engagement, demonstrating a connection between autonomous regulation and future engagement intentions.

In other research regarding motivation, Sole et al. (2010) sought to (a) evaluate and compare the impact of three music programs (choir, music appreciation, and preventive music therapy sessions) on the quality of life of older healthy adults, and (b) to identify the motivations and the difficulties that seniors encounter when participating in activities. They disseminated three questionnaires regarding the construct of quality of life, motivation, and satisfaction about the program to 83 people over the age of 65 enrolled in one of three music activities in Barcelona, Spain. Participants perceived some improvement in aspects of their quality of life; the main reasons that motivated

participation were socialization and acquiring new knowledge. In 2016, Lee and Davidson examined the motivations of older people participating in community singing groups in Australia. They conducted four focus group interviews with 64 participants involved in three community singing groups. The researchers identified eight themes as motivating factors: (a) importance of singing in my life; (b) pleasure of singing with little pressure; (c) spiritual and uplifting emotions; (d) challenge and achievement; (e) strength in overcoming my age, disease and hardship; (f) good leadership; (g) fellowship with others; and (h) purpose and meaning of group singing. Further results indicated that participants experienced different motivational factors at different stages of their engagement in the groups.

Many authors have written that intrinsic motivation is an important aspect of participation in musical activities (Alexander, 2015; Billaud, 2014; Lee & Davidson, 2016). Delgado (2017) sought to identify if music teachers and teachers from other areas are intrinsically motivated or extrinsically motivated, to identify the dimensions of the flow state, and to identify if there is a relationship between intrinsic motivation and flow state. The study population comprised 738 teachers (ages 18–68) from the northeast region of Mexico. Data related to motivation were collected using the Academic Motivation Scale High School Version and, to assess flow, and adaptation of the Flow State Scale. Delgado (2017) reported that intrinsic motivation was higher than extrinsic motivation and revealed a high correlation between intrinsic motivation and flow state.

In 2007, Schmidt investigated intrinsic-mastery and cooperative orientations, commitment to band, self-efficacy, group efficacy, and entity-incremental theory in

relation to a higher-order factor of investigation. Self-efficacy involves an individual's self-perceptions regarding competence or ability to perform in a specific domain while group-efficacy is an extension of the self- efficacy construct. Finally, entity-incremental theory focuses on whether individuals see their abilities or others' as fixed or flexible. The author distributed a survey that examined both individual achievement and achievement in a group setting to 456 students in 6–12 grades. Participants had high means for self-efficacy, group-efficacy, commitment to band, intrinsic-mastery, and cooperative orientation. Further, these findings may be useful in predicting the continued participation at the college level and beyond.

In another study involving intrinsic motivation, Wang et al. (2018) researched domain specificity of achievement goals in music, visual art, and sports. They examined 103 volunteer student teachers from a teacher training institute in Singapore specializing in music, visual arts, and physical education based on their self-report levels of achievement goals, implicit beliefs of intelligence, and intrinsic motivation. They wrote that (a) achievement goals were domain-specific and were highest in participants' specialty areas and, (b) enjoyment was highest for those who specialized in their particular area. These findings indicate that students were more motivated toward their specializations than their nonspecializations.

In other research, Redman and Bugos (2018) conducted a study involving older adult participants in an auditioned community choir. Their purpose was to a) identify motivational factors that led members to join and maintain membership in the group; b) examine the relationships between music achievement, music aptitude, and motivational

factors; and c) examine the roles of stress and anxiety. They collected data from 135 adults in four, auditioned community choirs using measures of musical aptitude, achievement, and a questionnaire and reported that aesthetic motivation was the primary contributing factor to enrollment and retention in the adult choirs.

In other motivation research, Williams (2017) sought to explore the motivations, musical goals, and preferences of adults learning orchestral string instruments at two separate community music school programs in the Midwest. Using interview data from six participants, four motivational themes emerged through analysis: (a) a general desire to be involved in music-making, (b) music learning for personal fulfillment and/or keeping their brains active, (c) a love of a string instrument since childhood, and (d) involvement of family members in music.

Tsugawa's (2012) purpose was to investigate music learning, motivations, and meaning construction among members of two senior adult music ensembles. Participants were members of a New Horizons band and orchestra located in two different cities. The researcher gathered data through interviews and observations over a period of several months. He reported that members from both ensembles were motivated to play an instrument in a New Horizons ensemble by the camaraderie of group music making and the perceived benefits of music making that enhance an improved sense of well-being. In another study by the same author (Tsugawa 2018), the researcher investigated music teaching and learning among members of two other senior adult music ensembles. Video recordings and interviews of 16 participants and personal journal entries of two members served as primary data sources. Findings indicated that participants preferred effective

conductor-teachers and opportunities for music learning and participation.

In 2019, Barbeau and Mantie performed a combined qualitative and quantitative study to examine music performance anxiety (MPA) and self-reported reasons for participating in community bands. The participants (N=35) were aged 65 years and older involved in two New Horizons bands. The researchers first held individual interviews for 30–60 minutes and then had participants complete a questionnaire to measure both trait anxiety and performance anxiety. Results indicated that although participation may trigger MPA in older adults performing music in a concert, the participants reported that the perceived benefits outweighed the stressful aspects and provided motivation for continued involvement. In another study involving members of a New Horizons band, Glen (2018) sought to determine what members do to remain active players within the group and what social benefits members receive through participation. The researcher developed a document to solicit both qualitative and quantitative data from 60 members of the Northern Colorado New Horizons Band with the average age of participants being 71.8 years. The participants' responses indicated that they attended rehearsal regularly and that participation was a high enough priority in their lives that they were willing to reschedule activities to ensure their regular attendance at rehearsals and performances.

Situational and Individual

Researchers have used the theory of situational and individual interest development as a lens through which to investigate academic areas other than music. Ainley et al. (2002) examined interest in literary texts among senior secondary students and explored how individual and situational factors contributed to topic interest. They

monitored reactions to texts using interactive computer techniques with 86 tenth grade students (39 males, 47 females) from a parochial co-education high school in an Australian provincial city. The main experiment consisted of passages taken from four English novels on the senior secondary curriculum. The first 900 words of the first chapter were used as the reading passages. Prior to the reading task, the investigators measured individual interest (an object or activity the person knows about and values) in literature using the aforementioned motivation theorist K.A. Renninger's criteria for individual interests rated on a 5-point Likert scale. The authors also used a 5-point Likert scale to measure how interesting students expected to find each of the texts. Recorded measures included the order students chose to read the four texts, the amount of time spent with each section of text, measures of affect, decisions about continuing with each task, the number of sections of each text accessed, and the scores on a short test of comprehension and recall. The factor most closely related to topic interest was gender. Text titles served as important situational triggers and individual interest made a relatively small contribution to topic interest.

Others have used the lenses of situational and individual interest with studies involving secondary and collegiate students. Knogler et al. (2015) investigated the theory that environmental factors are important facets in the development of situational interest. Measurements of situational interest were collected from 327 high school students involved in a problem-based learning activity and analyzed using Latent-State Trait theory. Results revealed that situation-specific effects had a strong influence on self-reported situational interest. Palmer et al. (2017) sought to ascertain whether regular

experiences of situational interest in science classes can enhance individual interest and whether there is an increase in science-related activities. Data from primary teacher education students enrolled in a semester-long science class were collected through surveys, an interest inventory, and open-ended questionnaires and interviews. Results indicated that situational interest during the course was associated with positive changes in individual interest in science and increased participation in science-related activities.

In 2019, Hong et al. proposed an interest development model that involved situational interest and individual interest mentally developed during students' preparation for and participation in annual "Power Tech" STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) contests in Taiwan. The Taiwan Creativity Development Association and the National Taiwan Normal University, seeking to strengthen participants' STEAM learning and problem-solving skills, hosts the "Power Tech" contests. Students from all of Taiwan take part and are required to make three miniature models in the morning without any help from parents or teachers, and then use them to compete in the afternoon. The skills they are meant to demonstrate include practical skills, innovativeness, imagination for artistic and mechanical design, and problem-solving strategies. Hong et al. collected on-site data to first examine students' maintained interest. During the contest, they collected data on-site to examine students' emerging individual interest. Lastly, they used the same measurement tool for the contest winning students by sending them the questionnaire 2 months later. Results indicated that triggered situational interest was positively related to a maintained interest and maintained interest is positively related to an emerging individual interest. Emerging

interest was positively related to a well-developed interest. The researchers concluded that a well-designed competition may raise a student's situational interest so the emerging and well-developed interest can mature.

In 2018, Lin and Hsieh performed a study to examine the relationship among teacher psychological support, situational interest, individual interest, and the academic engagement of vocational high school students in Taiwan. Using a self-report inventory, the researchers measured 1,367 tenth-grade students' perceptions of teachers' psychological support, situational interest, and individual interest. Results indicated that teacher psychological support had direct effects on situational interest, personal interest, and academic engagement. Roberts (2015) explored situational interest with 24 children from one fourth grade music class in the Pacific Northwest. He gathered data through interviews, free-write experiences, surveys, video observations, and examination of material culture. Four themes emerged: (a) the students' situational interest was enhanced when they were involved in novel activities or experiences, as well as those that included elements of surprise or humor; (b) students' interest increased when they experienced feelings of self-efficacy toward certain activities, as well as those that offered challenging but attainable goals; (c) situational interest was higher for opportunities that employed kinesthetic or visual facets; and (d) interest was heightened through experiences that incorporated aspects of creativity.

In other research, Rotgans and Schmidt (2018) explored how external stimuli in the learning environment and preexisting internal dispositions influence situational interest during a new task engagement. Participants were students from two state schools

in Singapore. The researchers collected two data sets from primary school science students (N = 186) and secondary history students (N = 71). They measured individual interest by means of the Individual Interest Questionnaire which consists of seven items, all of which were scored on a 5-point Likert scale. The researchers used their own situational interest questionnaire, which consisted of six items scored on a 5-point Likert scale. They used a microanalytical measurement approach (Rotgans & Schmidt, 2011a), which involves repeated administration of short self-report measures of situational interest *during* the learning event to examine the influence of individual interest on seven situational interest measurement and knowledge acquisition. In their analysis, they indicated that individual interest only has a significant influence on situational interest at the beginning of a new task. In addition, only situational interest predicts knowledge acquisition.

Rotgans and Schmidt (2017b) conducted two additional studies using situational interest as their theoretical framework. In the first, they sought to observe how situational interest fluctuates with instructional intervention. The researchers distributed a questionnaire during a one-day problem-based economics learning session both before and after initial discussion of the problem. Results indicated that situational interest first increased when a problem was introduced and students engaged in discussion. However, situational interest decreased as the students gained more knowledge about the problem. Their second study involved primary school mathematics students divided into two groups with one group receiving a problem and the other not receiving a problem. Findings indicated that the situational interest of the group receiving the problem

increased after the presentation and initial discussion whereas the other groups' interest had no significant change.

In 2017, Rodriguez-Aflecht et al. performed a study to explore the development of situational interest while playing a game called Number Navigation and to investigate the relationship between situational interest and individual math interest. Research questions were as follows:

1. how does situational interest develop in an intervention with a digital mathematics game;
2. can different situational interest trajectories among students be identified and how these are related to the game performance;
3. does previous individual math interest predict situational interest during the game play; and
4. do different situational interest trajectories predict individual math interest after the gaming period?

The participants were 212 fifth-grade students (n=91 girls, 121 boys) from three cities in Southern Finland. Students' individual interest was measured using a 5-point Likert scale survey that included values of interest utility, attainment value, self-efficacy, and cost subscales. They measured situational interest by asking students, after the completion of a game task, to self-report on their level of agreement with the statement "I like this game." Growth mixture model analyses showed that in the whole sample, situational interest was stable within sessions but decreased across sessions. Results indicated that situational interest had an effect on post-test individual interest yet the individual interest of students

whose situational interest was triggered but not maintained.

The review of literature regarding participation in musical activities indicate that perceived benefits include health/well-being, socialization, sense of purpose, and identity, can contribute to the development of intrinsic motivation. In research regarding health/well-being, aspects such as physical and mental health, stress relief, and spirituality were evidenced as being beneficial. Evidence from research also indicates that cognitive issues such as Alzheimer's and memory loss due to aging may be improved through musical interventions. In addition, research suggests that social interaction and companionship provide support for the elderly. Feelings of personal growth and achievement provide a sense of purpose and help in the formation or re-formation of a personal or musical identity. Additional factors such as personal enjoyment, having a creative outlet, and gaining new knowledge and skills help satisfy the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, thus supporting participants' desire for lifelong learning in music.

Researchers have examined music and motivation through the lenses of self-determination theory, serious leisure perspective, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and situational and individual interest (Alexander, 2015; Billaud, 2014; Dale, 2018; Roberts, 2015). Concluding factors such as socialization, self-efficacy, achievement, and spirituality were reported as having an influence on participants' continuation in music activities. In addition, findings from research suggests that there are many facets involved in generating and maintaining an interest, and its effect on motivation.

Interest Development Theory, as a facet of motivation, has been described as a

psychological state that progresses from a situational interest to an individual interest in which the activity becomes personal and meaningful to the individual. Findings from research regarding situational and individual interest suggest relationships between activities and situational and individual interest. The majority of studies involve academic areas other than music (literature, science, math, technology, economics), and very few of those researchers investigated questions with older adults. In addition, extant research with older populations involved in music-making activities has largely related to instrumental groups and not amateur, non-auditioned, community choir members. My research serves to fill this gap in music-related research within a community choir context concerning situational and individual interest and its influence on motivation with older adults. Understanding the motivation behind an individual's decision to participate in musical activities throughout a lifetime can inform music practices both within school settings and within community music activities.

Chapter Three Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine elderly amateur musicians' motivation for participating in community choirs and to explore the possible relationships between community music-making and potential benefits for the older adult population. The questions that guided this study were:

1. What benefits of participation do older adult members of three stylistically different community choirs in southwest Virginia and northeast Tennessee report?
2. How do participants characterize their motivation for engagement in their choirs and how do the reported motivations align with Interest Development Theory?
3. What is the nature of the relationship between participants' reported benefits of participation and their motivations for engagement?

In considering the nature of my research questions, I utilized a qualitative approach. Researchers have widely used qualitative methods in the social sciences, such as education, regional planning, health sciences, social work, and community development (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Data collection typically occurs in natural settings, and the research process comprises methods that respect the participants in the study, focuses on content, is emergent and evolving, and is fundamentally interpretive (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Qualitative research is humanistic, and inquiry involves the researcher interacting with participants to collect data, which is usually textual. Qualitative researchers are typically interested in social interactions and the meanings

that participants attribute to those interactions (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

This study utilized exploratory and descriptive research processes to ascertain and interpret adult musicians' perceptions of their musical activities in three community choirs. Studies that focus on society and culture in a group, program, or organization typically involve a form of case study strategy (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Yin (2014) defined case study research as the exploration of a particular case or example within its natural, contemporary context. The case itself is bounded; certain parameters describe or define it (Creswell & Poth, 2018). According to Yin (2009), a case study is best used to seek answers to exploratory "how" and "what" questions about a contemporary set of events over which the primary investigator has little or no control. He defined a case study as a comprehensive research strategy that is all-encompassing and can include both single- and multiple-case studies. A multiple-case design is a study that contains more than one case within a single study (Yin, 2009). Case studies can be generalized to theoretical propositions (Yin, 2009) and should represent a larger population (Seawright & Gerring, 2008). Generalization in this context involves the use of a previously developed theory as a template or model with which to compare the findings from a study. If two or more cases support the same theory, replication has occurred and may be generalized to a similar population (Yin, 2009). Case studies are often guided by an existing theory that leads researchers to a starting point for new studies.

Case selection plays an important role in a case study and requires careful consideration involving many aspects. According to experts in the field of case study research, the case should be (a) a complex functioning unit, (b) studied in a natural

context, and (c) contemporary (Gaikwad, 2017). Ethical aspects such as informed consent, confidentiality, and creating rapport with participants must be taken into account as well as the validity aspects of reflexivity, transferability, and analysis (Gaikwad, 2017). This type of research method dates back to the middle of the 19th century and is one of the oldest and most used forms in qualitative research (Gaikwad, 2017).

Critics have sometimes negatively portrayed qualitative research for a lack of rigor, poor generalizability, and for taking too long (Gaikwad, 2017; Yin, 2009). However, providing sufficient details of the study design and method can support the rigor and generalization of qualitative research. Additionally, gathering data through interviews can speed the process significantly (Gaikwad, 2017). As a multiple case study, this research examined individuals' experiences and their interpretations of those experiences within the three community choir contexts in which the experiences occurred (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). In this paradigm, the social and physical settings as well as norms, traditions, and roles are important facets of an environment.

I based my decision to utilize a case study strategy on the nature of my research questions and participants. Case studies are best suited when the focus pertains to society and culture within a group (Marshall & Rossman, 2011) and a multiple-case design is best suited when the study involves more than one case within a study (Yin, 2009). Because I included members from three different choirs with different membership, repertoire, and directors, the multiple-case design was the most appropriate method of research for this study.

Participants

Although sparsely populated, southwest Virginia and northeast Tennessee are rife with cultural arts. There are several amateur and one professional theater, which is the official state theater of Virginia and the nation's longest running professional theater. There are many live music events that occur throughout the year including the 3-day Rhythm and Roots Festival, a celebratory event in honor of Bristol Tennessee/Virginia, a city that straddles the state line and is lauded as the Birthplace of Country Music. In addition to this yearly event, there are many other music events throughout the year, including weekly performances of traditional and folk music at the Carter Family Fold, the family credited with the birth of the commercial country music industry. Tradition and traditional music play an important role in the lives of the people of this area and impromptu "jam" sessions often pop up in places where people gather. A number of other activities and institutions dedicated to the arts include museums, arts and crafts festivals, a plays and playwrights competition, and a busker festival. There are also many musical opportunities for amateur musicians of all ages to participate in group activities such as, orchestra, wind, and jazz instrumental ensembles and a number (6) of varying choral groups such as the ones selected for this study. In addition to these musical opportunities, there are local senior centers that offer older adults activities such as dance lessons, fitness classes, games and socials, meals, and hobby classes such as photography and arts and crafts.

Participants in this study were members of one of three community choirs in Virginia (n=1) and Tennessee (n=2). I was familiar with the choirs and their directors and

had worked with them before in some capacity or had observed one or more of their performances. The choirs are distinct from each other and offer a variety of performances styles and repertoire. Choir #1 was a senior show choir founded in 1990. The choir began as an initiative by the city to develop a senior program for the surrounding community and has grown from 12 members to 68 today. Their motto was "Fun, Fellowship, and Fitness," and the members ranged in age from their mid-50s to 90 years old, with the average age being 71–72. The group prepared popular and oldies music sung in unison for two programs a year and performed each roughly 10–15 times. Performance venues included nursing homes, mental health facilities, assisted living facilities, parks and recreation conferences, and two final concerts at a local performance hall.

Choir #2 was an all-male barbershop group. Founded in 1968, this choir provided an opportunity for men to perform barbershop music in a variety of venues. This particular choir consisted of 30–40 non-auditioned members ranging in age from mid-20s to 65, with approximately 50% over the age of 55. Rehearsals occurred once a week and they gave several performances, both formal and informal within the community, throughout the year. They are a part of the Barbershop Harmony Society and they entertained through annual shows, participation in FUNFEST (a local week-long festival), and performances for other civic groups and churches.

Choir #3 was an amateur, community concert choir affiliated with a local professional symphony. This choir was founded in 2003 and is the result of two struggling community choirs merging to form one choir that provides musical

opportunity to members within a 60-mile radius. Its membership comprises 50–70 participants ranging in age from early-20s to 89 years, with an average of 60. The group rehearsed two hours a week and performed approximately four time a year—three with the symphony and one without. Audiences paid admission for all performances, which occurred in large concert venues capable of accommodating 500 or more people.

In selecting participants for a study, researchers must keep in mind the purpose of the study and how best to recruit participants (Krueger & Casey, 2015). All participants in this investigation were 55 years or older and were selected by the directors of the three community choirs in the study as part of a purposeful/convenience sampling approach (Krueger & Casey, 2015; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). I instructed the choir directors to recruit whoever was willing to participate with the only criterion being the required age of members, 55 years. Five participants, who had participated with the show choir (choir #1) for times ranging from 6 months to 9 years, volunteered to participate in the study. The other volunteers were five participants from the barbershop choir (choir #2) whose participation times ranged from 3 years to 39 years and eight participants from the concert choir (choir #3) whose involvement ranged from 3 years to 25 years. The participants numbered 12 men and 6 women. I attribute the greater number of male participants to the fact that an all-male barbershop choir was included in the study. The only choir that required an audition to participate was Choir #3, the concert choir, with the auditionees asked to sing “America the Beautiful.” Participants’ varying lengths of participation time in a diversity of community music groups contributed to the richness of data and trustworthiness of this study. I was able to examine motivation for community

music-making through a variety of member experience levels and contextual differences that provided multiple perspectives to compare across cases.

Researchers must follow ethical practices in order to protect their study participants (The Belmont Report, 1978). According to Marshall and Rossman (2011), "For any inquiry project, ethical research practice is grounded in the moral principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice" (p. 47). Respect for persons entails not using the participants as a means to an end and protecting their anonymity, privacy, and their prerogative to participate or not. With regard to respect, I ensured the participants' anonymity and privacy by using pseudonyms and I made every effort to maintain confidentiality throughout the process, including data security. Additionally, participants were informed that they had the prerogative to leave the study at any time with no penalty. Because focus group interviews were the primary method of data collection, participants involved in the study were in no danger of physical harm, and I foresaw little potential for psychological distress (beneficence), although members again had the ability to withdraw if they experienced discomfort. Lastly, justice refers to the researcher determining who benefits from the study and who does not with particular consideration of past social injustices (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). I took each of these ethical practices into consideration when designing the informed consent form to ensure just treatment of the study participants.

I collected no data from research participants prior to gaining approval for this study from the Boston University Internal Review Board (IRB), and I strictly adhered to all IRB protocols and considered the participants' ethical treatment at all times. I

provided information to the ensemble directors regarding the purpose of the study and the parameters for participant selection, including an introduction and volunteer form (Appendix A). Once I received names from the directors of the three choirs, I sent participants an informed consent form. The main risk to participants was the potential loss of privacy. As the principal investigator, I was the only person to see full transcripts, which were coded and kept on a password protected computer. Additionally, names of participants and their associated pseudonyms were kept in a private electronic file on the investigator's private home computer.

Data Collection

Marshall and Rossman (2011) identified four primary methods for collecting data in qualitative research: (a) participating in the setting, (b) observations, (c) in-depth interviews, and (d) artifact collection and analysis. These methods are commonly utilized in research concerning community music whether it involves adults learning new instruments (Kruse, 2012; Roulston et al., 2015), returning to a prior instrument (Frerich, 2013; Goodrich, 2013) or membership in an amateur choir (Southcott & Joseph, 2013). Many qualitative researchers rely on interviews as the primary source of data collection (Coffman, 2008; Krause & Bastida, 2011; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Seawright & Gerring, 2008). In-depth interviews, either conversational, topical (in which the researcher has prepared questions or topics), or open-ended can be used alone or in conjunction with other methods of data collection in qualitative research (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Interviews

Interviewing is commonly used as the main form of data collection in educational research and is often the only source of data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Interviewing is also the best technique when conducting case studies and it allows for in-depth exploration of people's experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge (Kendall et al., 2007; Merriam, & Tisdell, 2016). Both person-to-person and group interviews can create a dialogue between the researcher and participants with the main purpose being to obtain specific information about the research question.

I utilized semi-structured focus group interviews as the primary forms of data collection for the current study to gather opinions and better understand how people felt or thought about their choir participation (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Researchers use such interviews to uncover factors that influence opinions, behavior, or motivation. A focus group interview is one that includes a group of people who have knowledge of a certain topic. What distinguishes it from a one-on-one interview is the capacity to capture the dynamics of group interaction (Hyde et al., 2005). In comparison to individual interviews, focus groups allow participants to reflect and listen to others' experiences and opinions, which may influence their own recollection. Therefore, rather than responding to a researcher's questions one-on-one, group interviews provide the opportunity for participants to interact with each other, which may offer deeper insights into the topic under investigation (Hyde et al., 2005). A researcher using focus group methodology seeks to gather a collective understanding of participants' experiences, concerns, and opinions about something like an issues, practice, or program (Höglund & Larsson, 2019;

Krueger & Casey, 2015). Furthermore, the researcher should attempt to understand the differences in perspectives among a variety of groups of people.

According to Patton (2015), there are six potential types of questions in interviews. An interviewer may use:

1. *Experience and behavior questions* to explore a person's behaviors, actions, and activities.
2. *Opinion and values question* to find out about what the participant thinks about something.
3. *Feeling questions* to elicit adjective responses such as happy, anxious, confident.
4. *Knowledge questions* to search for factual knowledge about a situation.
5. *Sensory questions*, similar to experience or behavior questions, to elicit specific data about what was seen, heard or touched.
6. *Background/demographic questions* to refer to particular demographics of the participants (age, income, education).

A moderator's guide is a list of questions a researcher plans to ask in the interview. The guide can contain very specific questions (highly structured) or a few topical areas in no particular order (unstructured) or something in between (semi-structured). Most qualitative research interviews are semi-structured and contain some specific questions and some more open-ended questions that allow moderators to ask follow up questions or prods (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Typically, there are five categories of questions for a focus-group semi-structured interview: opening,

introductory, transition, key, and ending (Krueger & Casey, 2015). In my role as interviewer, I approached each group with a warm welcome, an overview of the topic, and an explanation of the process before beginning the discussion.

I formulated open-ended questions to encourage discussion and engaged study members in follow-up questions according to accepted guidelines for semi-structured interviews. I asked the opening questions to individuals, but as the interview progressed, I allowed for more conversation among the members to facilitate reflection and consideration of others' opinions. The Opening questions were important in that they allowed participants to introduce themselves and provide some general music background information. In the Introduction, I asked participants to provide their reasons for joining their particular choir and any influences involved in their decision making. The Transition section provided an opportunity for participants to provide information regarding past experiences and to possibly provide some insight into what may have led to interest development. Finally, I used questions in the Key section to allow participants to share their feelings on their musical progression and any benefits they perceived from their participation. Additionally, it offered an opportunity to explore any potential influences on the development of an individual interest. The complete moderator's guide can be found in Appendix B. A summary of these questions includes:

Opening

1. *Tell us your name, how long you've been involved with this group, and your favorite part of singing with this choir.*
2. *Is this group your first choir?*

Introduction

1. *Why did you first become involved with this group?*

Transition

1. *Reflect on the most positive or negative memories of choral singing in your life.*
2. *Reflect on the most positive or negative memories of singing with this particular group?*

Key

1. *How important was previous musical knowledge to your decision in joining the group?*
2. *Compare yourself from when you first began participating to now.*
3. *How has participation affected your life? Self- concept?*
4. *What is the most intense physical response you've had to singing in a choir?*
5. *What is the most intense emotional response you've had to singing in a choir?*
6. *Can you recall a time in this particular choir that you experienced those responses?*
7. *Why do you continue to participate?*

For this study, I needed to address various details to facilitate the focus group interviews. Ideally, such groups should comprise 5–8 participants from at least three different groups with a common thread (Krueger & Casey, 2015). Although two of the groups had the recommended minimum number of people, I determined there were enough participants to provide a variety of perspectives and contributions for these

groups. Because the groups were held in separate venues, the environments were diverse in nature. For all three interviews, the participants' directors gathered them in a side room away from the rehearsal space. All three interviews occurred in a casual atmosphere with choirs #1 (1 male, 4 female) and #2 (5 male) seated around a table and choir #3 (6 male, 2 female) in a circle of chairs.

Choir #3 began the actual rehearsal with announcements and dates before the interview while I was able begin the other two choirs' interviews immediately. I recorded using a hand-held Tascam recorder with playback speed control placed near me facing the participants in order to catch all members' statements. I subsequently transcribed the interviews.

Triangulation

A case study approach facilitates the gathering of information that contributes to the researcher's knowledge of individuals, organizational and social phenomena (Yin, 2009). Using more than one source of data collection contributes to the trustworthiness of findings in qualitative research (Krueger & Casey, 2015; Yin, 2009). Using many different sources of data collection in research dependent upon context, behavior, and interaction is an explicit strength of case study research as compared to other types of research strategies such as experiments, surveys, or histories (Yin, 2009). Experiments are limited to the measurement and recording of outcomes in a laboratory and usually do not include verbal information. Surveys may help researchers collect verbal information but do not offer the measurement of environmental or behavioral factors. Finally,

histories are limited to events in the past and seldom have any contemporary sources, observations or interviews.

Methodological triangulation refers to using more than one method of gathering data to help increase the validity of the results (Flick, 2002). Any findings or conclusions in a case study are strengthened when they are based on several different sources (Yin, 2009). Data collection from different sources can be used to collaborate or support the research in question (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). While the primary sources of data for this study were semi-structured focus group interviews, member checks, observations, and field notes served to expand upon, confirm, and check accuracy of focus group data.

Member Checks

In the process of member checks, the researcher shares data with participants to provide them the opportunity to confirm or clarify its accuracy. It grants participants the opportunity to correct any misrepresentations of their words or behavior. The purpose of this process is to ensure an accurate and objective representation of the interviewees. It is also an opportunity for participants to provide any further insights they may want to share.

I utilized member checks to ensure the accuracy and reliability of transcriptions. Through member checks, the participants were able to correct any mistakes or misrepresentations of their words. I returned the transcriptions to each choir director to distribute to the participants to check for accuracy and beyond a few spelling errors, participants approved the transcriptions.

Observations and Field Notes

Researchers can engage in formal (using a checklist of pre-established actions) or informal (hanging around and getting to know the routine) observations (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Observation entails the methodical noting and recording of events and behaviors in a social setting. They do not need to be strictly visual but can incorporate other senses as well.In order to witness the members in a social setting, my observations were performed informally and occurred just prior to the start of rehearsal for each choir. Prior to the interview with choir #2, I socialized with some participants discussing mutual acquaintances and a performance in which we all participated.

Field notes refer to the recording of these observations, either written or voice recorded (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Often, the assistant moderator takes field notes during focus groups (Krueger & Casey, 2015). As I was the sole researcher on this project and had no assistant, I recorded my own observations by hand. My observations yielded two pages of field notes regarding the socialization among members, room set-up, lighting, and background noises such as heating/air systems or traffic. As in my transcriptions and according to the approved IRB protocols, I utilized pseudonyms to protect the identities of my participants.

Data Analysis

According to Yin (2009), qualitative data analysis consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating, or rearranging data to address the original purpose of the study. He further posited that researchers should look for patterns and correspondence between two or more categories. Creswell (2007) added that a detailed description of the case

should also be included in the analysis. Marshall and Rossman (2011) theorized that there are seven analytic procedures: (a) organizing the data, (b) immersion in the data, (c) generating categories and themes, (d) coding the data, (e) offering interpretations, (f) searching for alternative understandings, and (g) writing the report, and that each phase entails data reduction and interpretation.

Following Marshall and Rossman's process, case study analysis began with organizing the data into transcripts before immersion into the data. Although there are transcription aids available, I did not use any type of program or outside agencies to aid in transcribing the interviews. Audio-to-text converters are most useful with one person talking at a regular cadence and consistent volume, but because there were multiple people speaking at once in our sessions, I manually hand typed the interviews immediately into transcriptions. I listened to the audio recordings using headphones at a slower speed. In total, the interviews yielded 27 pages of transcripts with 6 for choir #1, 8 for choir #2, and 13 for choir #3.

In qualitative data analysis, investigators search for general statements about underlying themes and discover classes of things, persons, and events (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Through immersion in the data, I was able to identify terms and concepts found in previous studies discussed in the literature review and others that were not. Prevalent and recurring terms that I found in all interviews and informed the generation of codes were as follows: camaraderie (14), challenge (11), retirement (8), growth (13), depression (3), health (6), director (9), music (16), and giving to others (8). These terms were grouped into the categories of social benefits, sense of

purpose/personal growth, identity, music, motivation, health/well-being, and leadership. I then coded these categories by number and applied them to the data. I compared these categories to those reported in the literature review and searched for any new and unexpected findings.

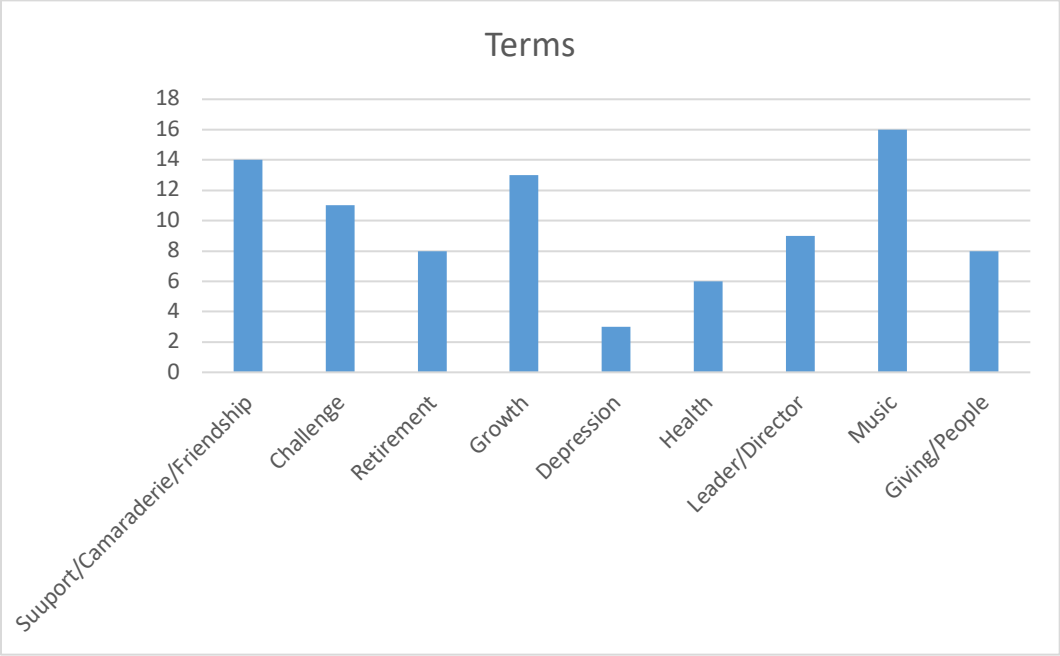

Figure 2. Terms from interviews that informed analysis themes.

New data have no meaning until examined through an inductive interpretive process. Interpretation emerges as concepts fall into categories and themes, and through a process of analytical thinking on the part of the researcher (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Identifying themes can be the most challenging stage of qualitative research. They bring meaning and coherence to the categories, with many being derived from the researcher's literature review and from the theoretical framework of the study. The themes that I found in the present study were grouped into four classes: Situational Interest-Triggered and Maintained, and Individual Interest-Emerging and Well-

Developed, which I will discuss in the following chapter.

Qualitative research methods include the study proposal, selection of participants, data collection, analysis of the collected data, and writing a report of those findings. It is descriptive in nature, and in this study involved focus group interviews across multiple community choir cases. The participants were a group of people with some shared knowledge about their choir engagements from which I sought to examine a range of opinions, perceptions, ideas, or feelings. In the following chapter I will discuss my interpretations of data and findings.

Chapter Four Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine elderly amateur musicians' motivation for participating in community choirs and to explore the possible relationship between community music-making and potential benefits for the older adult population. I asked participants to describe why they were involved in their particular community choir and their perceived benefits from their involvement. With the exception of cognitive benefits, which were not reported by participants (which I will discuss in the following chapter), the collected data aligned with benefits from previous studies in the literature review: health/well-being, social benefits, sense of purpose/personal growth, and identity. Other categories that emerged were the effectiveness of the director and the importance of various musical aspects, including style of music, performance venues, and voicing. I then utilized the lens of situational and individual interest motivation theory to further interpret the findings.

Benefits

Health/Well-Being

Participants in two of the three choirs reported health and well-being benefits; members of choir #2 reported other perceived benefits but did not mention health or well-being in response to this question. Members of choirs #1 and #3 described positive emotional as well as physical effects of participation. Reported emotional benefits ranged from mood enhancement, mental health, and stress relief.

When asked to reflect on positive or negative feelings of choral singing, participants from choir #1 discussed the significance that attending choir rehearsals had

on their disposition. Betty reported that her singing engagement elevated her mood and outlook by stating, "…it's very difficult to sing these very happy songs and be down and out. It's hard to sing and be unhappy." Peter agreed by saying, "It definitely makes life better!"

Reports from choir #3 support the premise that music can enhance individuals' mental health and well-being. Drake compared his involvement in choir to receiving mental care and emotional support. He stated, "It's a hell of a lot cheaper than going to a psychiatrist! When I come to a rehearsal, I can be upset or whatever and when I come out, it's fine." Another member addressed the effect rehearsals had on him by saying, "When I come home at night, I feel better because I've done something."

Participants reported another emotional benefit regarding stress relief and mental rejuvenation. Susan, a participant for 24 years in choir #3 stated, "I know with all the stress and things like that, this gives me a mental break and it's just a really good way to refresh yourself." Luke added to this, "It's rejuvenating in a way!" Andy, another member of choir #3, found that he was able to provide emotional support for others through his experience. He reported:

> I work with people with PTSD and I have encouraged them to listen to that kind of music when they are going through tough times. And those that have done that, have found something that keeps them grounded when they are in a very bad place.

Other health benefits members reported in this study support those found in previous studies in which participants cited physical well-being as beneficial (Chen et al.,

2009; Coffman, 2008). Among the physical benefits, one participant in choir #3 stated, "I'm always tired when I arrive here, much less so when I leave." Another member of choir #3, Dolly, reported that after having to take a year off from participating, she has not felt as good physically because she missed the breathing exercises in the rehearsals. She further stated that "…not only is music therapeutic, it's also healthier for you, I think." Statements such as these regarding perceived health and well-being benefits support the premise that there might be a direct correlation between music engagement and emotional health and physical health.

Social Benefits

Researchers have explored the influence social relationships can have on music participants' perceptions of quality of life (Baernholdt et al., 2012; Ferreira et al., 2017). Supporting this premise, participants reported the socialization aspects of being involved in community music as beneficial. Members in all three choirs described gaining friendships and camaraderie through their involvement. Some members described the welcoming atmosphere of their particular choir and how accepted they felt. Priscilla, a member of choir #1 for 6 months, stated that "…the choir themselves are so receiving of everyone that comes in here." Similarly, one participant from choir #2 described the acceptance of differences among the members by saying, "There's not any politics in the room. We don't fuss about the other guy's sports team; we just sing together." Other participants reported the expansion of their friendships among their fellow musicians. A member of choir #2, Bob, stated, "You meet a great bunch of people" and reported that it had expanded his group of friends.

Members from all three choirs expressed the joy they felt in spending time with each other. A member of choir #3, in describing the benefit of the diversity among members, stated, "…you get to socialize with them, get to know them." Two members from choir #2 both reported that they enjoyed socializing with the other members of their choir by stating, "I love hanging out with these guys" and "I just love being around the guys." Members from choirs #1 and #2 specifically mentioned the fellowship and camaraderie facets as benefits. Betty, a member of choir #1, also mentioned the camaraderie she felt from her involvement by saying she liked "…just meeting and singing together." Some participants included music in their reports of socialization. There have been studies in which participants reported musicianship and friendship as influential factors for lifelong participation in musical activities (Goodrich, 2016). A member of choir #2 reported that he enjoyed the fellowship and the singing. Furthermore, Dennis, a member of choir #2, stated, "I'm in my 39th year with this group and two things keep me coming back: the music and the men, camaraderie."

In alignment with previous research findings that peer interactions, trust, and rapport all have an impact on the decision to participate in music activities, participants from all three choirs reported the close friendships they had made within their respective groups. Betty reported that she had made many friends and when discussing the resuming of rehearsals after the post-concert break, she stated, "And it's like we haven't seen each other in years. We're so excited come February!" In addition to the caring and support aspects within their choirs, members expressed deeper levels of relationships that felt more familial. One member of choir #1 described her choir as a great support group.

Andy, a member of choir #3, stated, “It’s not a place of people trying to one-up anybody. It’s about people helping each other to do better. It really is this huge team of people who want everyone to succeed.”

Findings from studies involving socialization within group activities have indicated that participants perceived emotional support is an important factor in continued participation (Carucci, 2012; Creech et al., 2013a, 2013b). When discussing how deep and close the relationships are within the choirs, a member of choir #3 described her choir as being a “family within a family.” Members of choir #2 expressed how close they grow and the familial bond they have developed by relating two touching stories involving their members. When asked about possible or negative memories with the group, they told of a member who had cancer and passed away a week after his last show. Will said, “He came up and he sang one of the songs with us and the whole chorus was crying. It was very tough.” Bob, another member of choir #2, conveyed:

> We were here practicing and got a call that one of the guys was on the way to rehearsal with his father and they had an accident driving here. They were hit head on by a driver and the father, Barry, was killed. And Brian was not badly injured but he didn’t come back for several months but he knew that he loved being here, his dad loved being here, and we loved him. And it was hard for him to come back. As a matter of fact, his mother came with him for 3 months, I guess. She came to every rehearsal just to stay with him. But he got back into the chorus and was glad he did. And he sings with us now and he isan outstanding young man and it’s good to see him grow up.

In relaying this story, the room grew quiet and the mood somber. They seemed to tacitly know a "moment of silence" was in order. After this brief interval, the gravity of the moment lifted and they were back to their brotherly interactions. This incident provided a glimpse into how deep their bonds have developed. Despite the hardship of losing his father in an accident that occurred on the way to rehearsal, the son felt enough kinship within the group to return and share his grief with the others. He overcame the potentially painful associations with the choir and rather sought to reconnect with people who meant so much to his father and himself. He received the communal support and care from people who also knew his father and understood the pain he was experiencing.

Sense of Purpose/Personal Growth

Having a sense of purpose can support positive emotions and a feeling of personal competence (Matsunobu, 2018). In this study, some participants reported the personal gratification they felt from their service to community. A member of choir #1, Betty, reported that performing for people in assisted living facilities, rest homes, and hospitals "…turned out to be the thing that satisfies that desire to give back and yet is so personally gratifying." Jim, a member of choir #3, reported similar sentiments by stating that he enjoyed "…performing for the groups we perform for, the nursing homes, the schools, and the retirement homes, people that don't get an opportunity to hear any kind of live music."

Feelings of benevolence from observing the impact their performances have on others was another theme that emerged. Members reported that having the opportunity to inspire and uplift others was personally fulfilling. Bob, a member of choir #2, stated, "I

just love the reaction of the people when we make that (barbershop) sound. People don't hear it very often and I love seeing that and doing it for people." Lydia, a member of choir #1 for two years, reported that she "…enjoyed singing and going out and meeting the other people…" that they perform for. Additionally, another member of choir #1 stated, "Just seeing the people and how they react to our performances…we make a lot of people happy."

One participant expanded on the feelings of compassion and self-purpose she gained from her participation in her choir. She reported that not only did performing make her feel better but also kept her problems in perspective as compared to others. She stated, "And if we feel yucky, we go to a nursing home or assisted living and we feel better because, you know, there's so many people have problems worse than we do."

Findings from my study support the premise that older adults benefit from participating in activities that influence personal growth by being challenged both physically and mentally. Some participants reported personal growth by being challenged to try something unfamiliar or by learning something new. Participants from all three choirs described how their involvement has pressed them out of an environment in which they felt safe and certain and broadened their limits. One participant from choir #1 stated, "It's really opened us up to a whole broad spectrum of things that we didn't think we could do." Betty, also a member of choir #1, supported this sentiment by saying, "Well, I've learned that I can do a lot of things and so I'm more willing to try."

Other participants described more specific instances in which they were faced with tasks unfamiliar to them. Dolly stated that she had been challenged by learning

foreign languages and that it had "put her outside her comfort zone but sometimes it's nice to be outside the box and push yourself to see how much you can grow." Bob, a member of choir #2, described a unique challenge for him. He said:

> They elected me president a year and a half ago and I didn't feel comfortable about it but they assured me that with the support from the board we could do it. And so, I'm in my 2nd year as president and I've learned a lot there too. Sometimes I do a good job and sometimes some things slip by that I should have known but it's still a learning experience.

Bob's position as president presented him with a non-musical challenge that enabled personal growth and achievement. He relayed this story with a sense of pride in his voice and demeanor supporting the premise that challenging activities can provide opportunities for success and feelings of competence.

Another area of personal growth that participants described included gaining knowledge and learning new material from their involvement in community music (Pérez-Aldeguer & Leganés, 2014; White, 2016). Drake, a member of choir #3, stated, "It seems hardly a rehearsal goes by that I don't learn something new and usually two or three things." Another member of choir #3 echoed these sentiments with, "Every experience I come away with a new insight, approach related technique, a new idea. That's part of the stimulation. Keep growing."

Others compared their growth in the community choir to church choirs in which they had participated. Three members of choir #3 reported that they were challenged in their choir more so than in church choir. Luke stated, "It's fun in part because it's

challenging. I'm a church musician also but this gives me the opportunity to do classical repertoire and more difficult music." Another member, Jim, also reported that he found the choir to require more effort than in his church choir. Roger found that the difficulty of the music in the choir was an advantage, by stating, "I sang in church choir but they do more difficult music here, all kinds of pieces, all kinds of languages." Andy seemed to sum up the conversation of personal growth well with, "But here, you have to grow and it's that growth that keeps bringing people back."

Identity

Members of all three choirs reported personal and musical loss of identities at some point in their lives. Participating in musical activities can play an important role in the formation of a musical identity or the recovery of a prior identity (Dabback, 2010). Many participants' comments related to a musical identity that they either maintained throughout their lifetime or one that has been rejuvenated through their participation in community music. Three members addressed the need to find a musical outlet and recover their musical identity after having moved into the area. Louise stated, "I just needed some sort of music program in my life because I'd been really involved where I went to church before." Drake, who moved into the area from Illinois, said, "I was looking for an outlet to join. I've always sung in choruses, in choirs and groups"

Some participants discussed their involvement in other groups throughout their lives as well as the need to maintain their musical identities. Luke, a member of choir #3, similarly stated, "I've been singing in organized choir through high school, college, graduate school, and church choirs of varying degrees of competency. So, at a point in

my life, I move to this community and the choir was here and it was the next step." Will talked about his lifelong involvement in church choir. Donald listed all of the choirs he'd been in by reporting, "I've been in university choirs and groups, high school choruses, church choirs, just community men's choruses, community choir, all different kinds."

For some, participation in music-making was truncated at some point in their lives for varying reasons. Oftentimes, older adults will willingly return after a hiatus from musical activities (Dabback, 2010; Taylor, 2001) and seek an avenue in which they might recover their musical identities. Many members' statements included the fact that they missed music-making and sought to revive their interest. A member of choir #2, Bob, reported that the choir was the first one he'd been in since high school. Donald, also a member of choir #2, stated, "I was in the group for about two years but I dropped out for a bunch of years and I started missing it. So, a couple of years ago, I came back." One participant from choir #3 reported something similar by saying, "Being a part of this group has shown me how much I missed being a part of a singing group." Another member reported a different influence on his decision to participate. Roger discovered that by participating in choir #3, he would have the opportunity to travel for performances. He stated, "In high school, I made a commitment to sing at Carnegie Hall so I got involved." Dolly discussed her reason for her break from choral singing and how she missed it. "I grew up with talent shows, even in school, I've been in choirs, state choirs. As you get out of school and you're raising your children, you miss that outlet."

Some research findings indicate that music participation can have an impact on identity after retirement (Dabback, 2009; Taylor, 2009) and that identity development

takes place across the lifespan and is often influenced by life events such as retirement (Dabback, 2010; Taylor, 2011). For many, retirement can be a challenging time in adjusting to a new identity. In exiting primary jobs, there are often losses such as social and recreational activities, shared history with co-workers, and pride and respect in one's work. Often, transitioning from one identity to a another can be difficult and many seek new opportunities to explore this new role (Osborne, 2009).

Retirement was ascribed most often as being an impetus to seeking an activity to occupy newly found free time. Lydia, a member of choir #1 and a retired schoolteacher, stated, "I always said when I was teaching that once you were in school, whatever else was going on in your life, you didn't have time to think about it. And if you're sitting at home after you retire, you're going to think about all those things so you need more activities." Peter, another member of choir #1, said that he and his wife had enjoyed watching the choir before he retired. They joined the choir after retirement and found that it "…takes up some of your time now that you're retired and have time on your hands." Betty, a member of choir #1 for three years, stated, "I knew when I retired I would want to get involved in things and I had no idea what. You know, for years I thought, 'Well, what am I going to do?'" She further stated that being involved in the choir helped meaningfully fill her free time.

Poor psychological health is a prevalent issue among older adults (Alpass & Neville, 2003; Taube et al., 2018). Depression and loneliness can stem from declining health, functional impairment, and social isolation (Alpass & Neville, 2003; Goll et al., 2015) and many older adults often don't seek professional care (Taube et al., 2018). For

this study, some participants reported that being involved in community music helped ward off depression and loneliness either from retirement or widowhood. Most addressed the active and social facets as being beneficial in this area. Louise stated, "I really think it's kept me from being depressed because I'd worked for a lot of years and then all of a sudden, you're retired…but I needed to be busy. And this keeps you busy." Another participant reported that being in a choir "…gets you out of your rut and that's been good." Two members of choir #3 both described how it allowed them the opportunity to get out and be active. Dolly stated, "It sure beats sitting at home and being lonely." Susan agreed, "You don't have to stay home. If you're retired and can get out, you can still sing."

Widowhood is a difficult and distressing life event (Carr, 2004). Spouses grow dependent on one another and must cope with the end of an emotional relationship as well as physical separation which can play a role in developing depression and loneliness (Carr, 2004)). Will, a member of choir #2 for three years, was the only participant to mention widowhood as being a factor in his participation. He stated, "My wife passed away four years ago and we'd been married 43 years." He further reported that "Dennis and his wife kinda adopted me" and got him involved in his choir.

Researchers have indicated that when participating in music, older adults take their learning very seriously and it can contribute to identity construction and self-fulfillment (Taylor, 2010). Still others have indicated that music learning satisfies a need for achievement, self-confidence, and empowerment (Taylor, 2010). For this study, a few participants made comments about the pride and confidence they gained from their

participation. Jack, a member of choir #2 for thirty-three years, stated, “I take pride in learning my music and making sure I’ve got it the way it should be sang.” Two other participants, both from choir #3, addressed the acquisition of self-esteem through learning and their involvement in the choir. Dolly said, “It kind of helps some of your self-esteem.” Dan agreed, “There are some songs that just take you to a place you didn’t think you could do that and it has to build up your self-esteem just because, ‘We actually did that!’”

Motivation

The participants’ perceived benefits (health/well-being, socialization, sense of purpose, and identity) from their musical activities may have been influential in their decision to continue these activities. In addition, early or initial experiences that involve these benefits may have had an effect on continued participation thus providing incentive and motivation for members. Interest development, as a facet of motivation, emerges from a combination of external stimuli and internal needs and can contribute to continued engagement in an activity. I identified certain ideas that existed within an interactive, social context whereas others related to people’s individual actions and beliefs. I arranged the categories from the data into the two classes of group and self, which I subsequently aligned with Hidi and Renninger’s (2006, 2011) conceptions of situational and individual interest as the themes of this research.

Situational Interest

The categories of social benefits, discussed in the previous literature, and leadership and music genre, which were emergent ideas not addressed in the literature, were distinctive to group participation and align with the characteristics of situational interest. Participants identified social benefits such as friendship, spending time with one another, and familial feelings as dependent on involvement in a group activity. They also stated the importance of current and past leadership in creating contexts in which participants feel they can contribute and thrive. Leaders are important to both triggered and maintained situational interest due to the importance of the environment and the manner in which an activity is presented. As Hidi and Renninger (2006, 2011) found, participants in this study rely on others to develop and maintain an interest in their choir activities.

Situational Interest – Triggered. Situational interest, the initial stage of interest development, is triggered by some external stimuli (Rotgans & Schmidt, 2018) and can be transient if not nurtured (Palmer et al., 2017). The spark of interest depends on how the material is presented, negative or positive feeling toward the activity or subject, and the presence of others (Hidi & Renninger, 2006, 2011). Without continued participation or support, an interest can become dormant, regress, or disappear. Lin and Hsieh (2018) indicated that teacher psychological support had direct effects on situational interest, personal interest, and academic engagement which align with the findings of the present study. Most of the participants reported that they had had exposure to music-making at an early age that resulted in positive feelings toward musical activities. They cited school

participation the most, with 8 members reporting that school music was influential on their interest in music. Roger, a member of choir #3, shared, “I got interested in music in 3rd grade through high school and did All-State.” Drake, also from choir #3, similarly reported, “I think I first ran into music in the 3rd grade and I didn’t think much of it then but I sang in high school choirs and then when I got to college, I sang in the college choir. That experience really got me interested in music.”

Other experiences members reported as triggering an interest in music included church choirs (7 members), early private lessons or family influences (4 members), and recent participation (3 members). Besides the members who began participating more recently, every other experience occurred at a young age with some intermingling between activities. Louise stated, “Well, I was in chorus in school but we sang at church, you know, as little kids.” Another member reported, “I grew up in a family that was all about music. Everybody played instruments and were in choirs.” These statements demonstrate the importance of early positive experiences in music activities and the impact they can have for future involvement.

When asked how they initially became involved in their particular present choir in this study, participants identified two types of catalysts: by invitation from another member or from exposure to a performance or rehearsal. From choir #1, Lydia stated, “Betty introduced me to the group. She said, ‘I just joined this group and I think you might enjoy it too’ because she knew I liked music.” Another member reported that she had gotten involved because a woman who attends her church participated in the choir and that she had talked about it. A member of choir #3, Andy, reported, “I got involved in

the choir because the woman I was dating (Susan) was involved in the choir and it seemed like a good thing to do at the time." (This comment elicited much laughter from the group as Susan was also a study participant). Susan stated that she had gotten involved because she "…went to church with several people who were in the chorus and because of friends, I got interested." Jim, a member of choir #3 for 24 years, reported that "…a couple of guys that were involved said something to me. 'Choir #3 is going to start up rehearsal next week. You should come.' And I did and I haven't gone away since."

Many members of all three choirs pointed to the performances or rehearsals as what piqued their interest in participating in the group. From choir #1, Peter stated that he and his wife had "…enjoyed watching the choir years before I retired and then after I retired, we joined the choir." Another member of choir #1 shared that attending the final summer performance caught her attention. From choir #2, Jack reported, "I'd been to shows for several years but my uncle wanted me to come one night to Visitors Night. After that, I was hooked." Another participant of choir #2 stated that a choir member "…took me to several of their concerts and I just fell in love with it and the guys." Bob echoed these sentiments by stating, "I heard them singing and I just got so excited. I have to get up there, I have to learn this music!" A member of choir #3, Drake, reported that he was at a Christmas concert and thought, "Gee whiz, maybe I can be in a choir like that!" Alluding to the importance of choir leaders, Andy, a member of choir #3, discussed the influence the choral director had on his joining the choir by saying, "…seeing what kind of person he was and his knowledge and dedication to the music, that was a draw for me."

Most participants in this study reported that early music activities in school, church, and in the home resulted in positive feelings toward music making Additionally, participation in their respective current choirs was stimulated by individual invitations or exposure to a performance. These findings support the premise that situational interest is triggered by external stimuli that individuals find appealing and interesting.

Situational Interest – Maintained. Through their participation and cooperative group work, participants' triggered interest evolved into a maintained interest in music-making with others. The maintained situational interest phase is characterized by focused attention and persistence in an activity; participants find the activities meaningful and experience a more personal involvement. Leaders have a significant role in the retention of singers, and music genre emerged as an additional factor that members state furthered their interest. In addition, the support of others and personal challenges influence the transition from situational interest to individual, which is the progression of a sequential psychological state from one phase to the next. At this stage, interest is developing beyond the initial spark of surprising information into a more stable cognizance.

Many participants cited previous or present leadership as having a direct impact on their decision to continue to participate in musical activities. Leadership involves many characteristics such as the ability to maintain intra- and interpersonal relationships and social interactions that allow participants to feel comfortable and valued and motivated (Grahn & Ofverström, 2009); Tsugawa, 2018). Leaders who foster positive and welcoming environments typically retain membership in community music groups.

Members of two groups discussed the effect the choir directors had on their

participation. One member from choir #1 stated that the conductor is "calm and encouraging and never makes you feel like you're pressured to do anything." Two other participants reported that he makes accommodations for members and that "he just accepts you the way you are." Members from choir #3 discussed both the choral and orchestral leadership and how it influenced their participation. One member stated that she enjoyed that the choir director "…talks to us about the background of the song" and the orchestral director "…comes in and give us the whole color behind it and the history." As choir #2 features a more democratically-led and co-created structure, participants did not tend to identify one particular leader who oversaw the organizational environment.

Music teachers and directors, both past and current, affected members' positive and negative perceptions of music engagement. Research about people's preferences regarding leadership have indicated participants depend on the skills and effectiveness of conductors to provide meaningful experiences (Kruse, 2007; Rohwer, 2005). Members in the present study reported the effect previous directors had on their participation. Luke, a member of choir #3 for 20 years, stated, "Well, I'm here singing in the choir tonight because of the high school teacher I had. And the lady had a nurturing personality and encouraged me." Another member also reported that his high school director had influenced his interest by saying, "She taught me and others that we could produce beautiful sounds together and build a kind of camaraderie." Two members from choir #3 discussed the negative effect the previous orchestra conductor had on members. Susan stated, "He did not make the choral members feel appreciated." Prior to joining choir #3, Andy related that he was visiting during a rehearsal and watching the conductor "was a

turn-off and a great reason for NOT joining the group." Further, he compared the conductor to his high school director who he described as rigid and said, "You never really get your best work from that."

Many members mentioned the repertoire they performed as having an influence on their decisions to continue participating. Some participants identified how the style of music they sang aligned with the characteristics of their particular choir, which furthered their interest. Choir #1 primarily performs at facilities for elderly and sick, or at schools. Their repertoire involves simplified music, learned only with lyric sheets, staging/acting, and costumes, and participants have a notably relaxed attitude toward their music activity. Most members reported that being involved in the choir was beneficial in providing music in their lives without challenging them musically. Peter stated, "Well, with the choir, you don't need to read music because all you get is words anyway. I don't read music; I just make a noise." Betty also addressed the relaxed approach to learning music by adding, "Sometimes I realize I'm just not going to get it and I don't worry about it. Fifty other people are going to get it and it's fine."

Members from choirs #2 and #3 specifically mentioned the style of music their respective choirs performed. Participants from choir #2 reported their enjoyment in singing barbershop music and the sound of an all-male choir. Donald stated, "I like the sound, the musical sound that men's voices make, especially the barbershop setting. There's a sound that only a men's choir can produce." Bob also referred to the musical style by saying, "It's the men and the music. But we all agree on one thing and that's what the sound is." Furthermore, their answers to interview questions almost solely

revolved around the sense of brotherhood or kinship they felt with each other and how their involvement in their choir brought them closer. For them, their fraternal bonding was integral to their musical experiences. As reported above, Dennis said, "…two things keep me coming back: the music and the men, camaraderie."

Members of choir #3 reported the style of music they perform was a factor in keeping them involved. This choir performs with a symphony and sings classical repertoire. One member reported that he really enjoyed participating in the group because he enjoyed the type of music they do while another stated, "…this gives me the opportunity to do classical repertoire. That's why I keep coming back." Dan echoed these sentiments with, "It's an outlet for singing more difficult music than we typically get in a standard church choir and some of the works by Mozart, Brahms that your average church choir is not going to even attempt." Additionally, Roger stated, "I enjoy the types of music we do, all kinds of varieties of pieces, all kinds of different languages." Participants in this choir also reported the demanding level of music they performed as being important. Andy stated, "For a long time, when I was in college, I used to love listening to Beethoven's 9th Symphony. It never dawned on me that I would have the opportunity to sing that." Susan added to this, "We've done so many good pieces." Another member reported that performing with the symphony was significant. "When we're up there on stage and we're not singing, we get a front row seat to a very nice orchestra. Plus, we get to sing with them!" These comments indicate that members from this choir consider the music of the Western classical style they perform and their association with a symphony orchestra of more value than other styles of music. In

addition, by participating in this particular choir, they seem to perceive themselves as fairly accomplished musicians.

Members from choir #3 conversely also reported instances of attrition that reflect a lack of maintained interest on the part of a few people. Participants perceived the style of music they perform and the monocratic structure of the organization as contributing factors (i.e., the aspects that drew some people to the choir resulted in attrition for others). Susan addressed the issue of voice-part assignments, saying, "Some people come in and think, 'Oh, I'm a first soprano' and no, you're really not." She added, "I think some people get offended by that." In contrast to the participants reported positive feelings about the style of music they perform, they conveyed that some new members did not agree. In regard to losing members because of the music style, Andy said, "…a piece was presented and they quit because they didn't like it or there was some part of it that offended them so they abandon everything." Dan added that some members did not continue participating because the music was "different, it's not mainstream."

Individual Interest

Participants who found their interest triggered and maintained through social and musical interactions often developed a more personal and individual interest. Unlike situational interest, individual interest is the result of a relatively long-term personal preference for an activity (Palmer et al., 2017) and relies on individual internal dispositions (Rotgans, & Schmidt, 2018). Participants in each choir expressed a personal preference for not only the specific style of music performed in each choir, but also the unique characteristic of each choir and the opportunities for individual achievement over

time offered through participation. These preferences emerge from interactions within the group, but those interactions also allowed each member to focus on themselves as individuals and form ideas of self. Furthermore, these conceptions of self become apparent in the participants' reports of developing independence regarding music learning.

Members of all three choirs identified aspects of health/well-being, identity, and sense of purpose/personal growth as biological and psychological benefits that aid with self-esteem, emotional and physical well-being, and achievement. These findings align with the idea of the development of an individual interest in which participants felt compelled to continue their musical activities and reluctant to cease participation.

Individual Interest – Emerging. During the individual interest phase, prolonged participation in an activity with positive outcomes will become personal, meaningful, and relevant to the individual and they will seek ways to continue participation voluntarily. Individuals will begin to generate their own questions and exceed tasks demands. Two members from choir #3 discussed their continual participation and its evolution to an individual interest. Luke stated, "So it's been a continuous progression in increasing my skill level and building interest and expanding my knowledge and what is possible." Drake discussed how after college he went without participating for 6 or 7 years and missed it. "We moved to an area near Chicago and I got involved in a men's group, then I got involved in barbershop singing, then I got involved in an a cappella group, then I got involved….and it just seemed I got involved more and more."

As evidence of a burgeoning transition from social interaction to individual

growth and benefits, some members reported acts of independence regarding their music learning. Rather than having a true monocratic leader, choir #2 had section leaders who casually auditioned new members by singing next to them and providing "learning CDs" with which the singers learned their choral parts on their own. Dennis reported that he had learned 8 songs in two days from CDs as a last-minute substitution for a member that couldn't perform. Bob also discussed his self-directed learning by sharing that he carried his cd's with him everywhere he went and listened to them in the car. He further stated, "I even restrict it so I don't learn anything that isn't going to be in the show." A member of choir #3, Andy, reported that he takes much more initiative in learning his music on his own through YouTube. He also stated, "I've found that every year that I'm here, I get more involved in studying the music and practicing at home."

According to Hidi and Renninger (2006), during this phase of interest development, outcomes become more personally meaningful and have stored value or knowledge. Members from choir #2 and choir #3 discussed their individual progress and personal contribution to the group. Dan, a member of choir #3, shared that he depends on other members and, in turn, they depend on him. In regard to personal progress and goals, one member expressed that she feels like she gets a personal voice lesson in rehearsal and "that's really special." A member of choir #2 stated, "I'd like to think I've gotten better, a better singer than I was when I started." In discussing how he felt after performing a solo, Andy said, "In many ways, that's changed my outlook about my own music and my own ability." He further added that "…it's that growth that keeps bringing people back." Dan, a member of choir #3, discussed the pride he felt in performing

difficult music and the joy he receives from singing repertoire that "…challenge you vocally and spiritually."

Because so many participants reported that involvement in music began early and had been a continuous facet throughout their lives, many could trace their general individual interest in music to experiences beyond their current choirs. Pricilla, a member of choir #2, shared how her interest has extended to her family. In relating how vital she felt music participation was in her children's lives she said, "I made sure my boys were (involved) and my boys are making sure their children are."

Louise stated, "As far back as I can remember, like in grade school, we had a couple of teachers that would have programs and we'd have to sing. So, it's been kind of a lifetime thing." A member of choir #2 stated, "I was in high school choir and church choir. I've been in church choir my whole life." A participant from choir #3 expressed, "I've always had an interest in music."

Individual Interest – Well-Developed. In developing their theory of situational and individual interest, Hidi and Renninger (2006) posited that interest is a psychological state that has the potential to affect continued reengagement. Previous to their theory, research studies examined established interest, not whether, how, or why it develops and remains. Hidi and Renninger suggested that the potential for interest is inherent but that the content and environment define the direction in which it will develop. For example, a person may have a predisposition for a particular content area, such as music, but without being exposed to or having some knowledge of the subject, the interest would be unable to develop or broaden. They further proposed that without support and opportunities to

pursue interest-related activities, regression to a previous stage can occur.

Well-developed, individual interest is characterized by an enduring predisposition to reengage in an activity. Participation is self-generated and individuals seek additional challenges, knowledge, and anticipate steps in the process (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). Another characteristic of this phase is the predisposition to reengage in an activity and persevere with a task even when difficult or requiring significant effort (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). As an example of this willingness to undertake atypical tasks, members of choir #1 discussed, with laughter, the different roles they had been asked to fulfill in past performances such as a dinosaur, wicked witch, and Big Bird. Amid laughter within the group, Peter described a show in which he played "Bubba the Ballerina". A member of choir #3 described a similar situation when he was asked to play the part of "Oedipus Tex" in the satirical oratorio of the same name by P.D.Q. Bach. He stated that he was unsure at first but the part grew on him. Another member of choir #3 discussed the challenge of learning foreign languages such as German, French, and Russian but "…when you get it in the end, when you sing it and get it right, it is great pleasure." Louise, a member of choir #1, spoke of a challenging task beyond music when she was asked to make a costume. She spoke of the challenge but also the reward of accomplishing the task by saying, "I didn't know I could sew enough to make a Mickey Mouse outfit but I did it!"

Throughout the interviews, participants often reported why they had continued with music and the disinclination to allow anything to interfere with their participation. Two members of choir #1 discussed their schedules and how they plan ordinary life

events around the choir rehearsals. Louise stated, “Tuesday afternoon is taken up. I mean, when I go to the doctor’s office, they know there are certain times I can’t come.” Betty echoed this statement with, “That’s right! You schedule my hair appointments around choir!” Will, a member of choir #2, discussed his refusal to cease participation. He stated:

> My wife passed away four years ago and I remarried last July and I told my wife before we married, because I was in a lot of things before we met, I told her, ‘I’ll quit everything I’m doing except my barbershop. I’m not quitting my barbershop.’ She said that’d be alright.

Another member of choir #2 for 33 years, Jack, also reported, “…I’m still here and I wouldn’t quit for nothing.”

Many members spoke of their level of dedication and commitment to the group, as well as their reluctance to miss rehearsals or performances. A member of choir #3, Roy, shared that he arrived at “2:15 a.m. from out of the country and I wouldn’t miss it.” Jim, another member of choir #3, shared that he almost missed a performance because of an out-of-town business trip but that he had planned ahead. He said, “I changed into my tuxedo in the car as I was driving myself.” Jack from choir #2 reported that he had missed three weeks of rehearsal once. He said, “I had knee replacement and I couldn’t wait to get back. I don’t like to miss. I just don’t like to miss at all.”

Another aspect of a well-developed interest is the desire to further the organization for continual opportunities for reengagement. Members reported instances of assuming leadership roles and engaging in recruitment to ensure the continuation of their choirs. Dennis, from choir #2, discussed his changing role from being the director to

more of an advisor. He stated, “I have a chance to get out in front of the chorus more and just listen, just try to be a positive influence in music. This is the kind of thing I went to school for.” In regard to recruitment, Dolly suggested performing more outreach to public schools. Two members of choir #1 reported their own personal efforts. Peter said, “I’ve brought two new members this year, two men from the bowling league.” Priscilla chimed in with, “Yeah, I talked a friend into coming!”

Participants in this study reported many perceived benefits from their involvement in community music. Benefits that depend upon group activities such as socialization emerged into greater independence and a sense of self. The beginnings of situational interest evolved into individual interest through continual participation leading to self-generated involvement. In the next chapter, I will discuss these findings and the possible implications for music education.

Chapter Five Conclusion and Implications

In this study, I sought to investigate the contributing factors behind older adults' motivation to participate in three community choirs, including perceived benefits of participation. I examined the emergent categories (health/well-being, socialization, sense of purpose/personal growth, identity, leadership, and musical genre) through the lens of situational and individual motivation theory. In order to explore older adults' motivation behind their musical participation, I sought to find answers to the research questions that led this study.

1. What benefits of participation do older adult members of three stylistically different community choirs in southwest Virginia and northeast Tennessee report?

The participants' reported benefits align with findings from previous research. Specific benefits related to each of the emergent themes. For health and well-being, participants reported benefits such as stress relief, mental and physical support, and mood enhancement. Social benefits included feelings of belonging, camaraderie, and forming familial relationships with other members. They communicated that service to community, being challenged, and gaining knowledge all contributed to a sense of purpose and personal growth. Participating after retirement or widowhood was important to some participants' identity formation, either personal or musical. Regarding leadership, participants expressed that an environment in which they felt valued and that fostered mutual trust between members and their director contributed to their desire to continue their musical activities. Participants also reported that literature and style of

music, performance venues, and the make-up of their groups influenced their decisions to participate. In addition, members specifically mentioned emotional and physical benefits, friendships, warding off depression, and being intellectually challenged.

2. How do participants characterize their motivations for engagement in their choirs and how do the reported motivations align with Interest Development Theory?

Study members reported positive feelings toward music-making stemming from early exposure or later in life. This finding aligns with Hidi and Renninger's (2000) theory that each stage in the Four-Stage Model of Interest Development is influenced by affect (positive or negative feelings) and that each phase is influenced by individual experience. The participants in this study also reported that leadership influenced their decision to participate. They relayed that directors, both past and present, influenced their continued involvement in music. Early positive experiences led to decisions to pursue musical activities. Alternately, negative early experiences acted as a deterrent in continuing music participation for some, causing them to cease activity for many years. Many members reported the directors of their current choirs as having a positive effect on their continued participation. They described those as calming, welcoming, warm, and knowledgeable, and shared that these qualities enriched their experience of being a part of the ensemble. This finding supports Hidi and Renninger's theory that positive feelings, content, and value have influence on each phase of interest development.

In addition, the participants in this study reported that music style had an effect on their decision to participate and members from each choir described musical benefits that

matched the characteristic of their particular choir. Participants from choir #1 reported that not being challenged musically was beneficial. Their answers revolved more around the sense of giving they felt in performing for certain facilities (rest homes, hospitals, schools). Their remarks were more about service and outreach and providing inspiration and joy to others less fortunate. The members of choir #2 primarily reported on the importance of camaraderie and brotherhood within the group and the sound they make singing barbershop. They spoke of the deep and close connection they felt with each other and the closeness within the group. Even when prompted with the same questions asked of choirs #1 and #3 regarding benefits (social, personal, mental and physical health), the discussion remained around friendships and camaraderie. Choir #3 participants' answers almost all involved the challenge of their repertoire and the satisfaction they felt in singing with a professional orchestra. Their remarks reflected pride when speaking about the nature and accomplishments of their choir. According to Hidi and Renninger, if there is no support, either through the efforts of others or because of challenges and opportunities, interest can become dormant, regress, or disappear.

3. What is the nature of the relationship between participants' reported benefits of participation and their motivations for engagement?

The benefits the participants reported relate with previous research and suggest that situational and individual interest development is affected by previous and current participation in musical activities. The perceived benefits that the participants reported support the evolution of interest motivation. Reasons for their continued participation were closely aligned with their perceived benefits. Additionally, interviewees expressed

that participating in musical activities was an essential aspect of their lives that they were unwilling to give up. This finding supports the premise that the perceived benefits from participating in community music helps situational interest develop into individual interest.

Implications for Practice

There has been, and continues to be, substantial growth in the older population and this growth poses new challenges for future generations. Despite some decline that accompanies aging, older adults still retain the abilities to participate and succeed in music activities, and they have the desire and motivation to do so (Bruhn, et al., 2002; Kruse, 2012). Participants in this and other studies have provided evidence that music participation can offer many physical and mental benefits for older adults, and in light of the demographic increase in the older population, it may be important for music leaders and educators to ensure that there are ample opportunities for them. Starting with the education of the youngest students and continuing through with the oldest community music participants, music educators can facilitate music participation through the lifespan and connect people with music opportunities beyond formal school participation. In addition, allowing access points throughout life could encourage people to freely participate when the time is convenient without pressuring them to continue participation or deter them from choosing to do so later in life.

Because of age-related issues such as loss of loved ones, retirement, and diminishing physical abilities, many older adults experience loss of identity, loneliness, and, oftentimes, suffer from depression. Research findings have indicated that

involvement in musical activities holds many benefits regarding personal and social well-being for the elderly. Findings in this study support this premise and demonstrate that study members fulfill biological, psychological, and social needs by participating in community music thus generating motivation for continued involvement.

The results of this study highlight some important issues in encouraging lifelong learning and participation in music. Findings indicate that the style of leadership, either past or present, had a direct impact on the members' decisions to participate or continue to participate. Offering an organization that fits its members' needs, as well as fostering an environment in which participants feel valued and perceive benefits from their involvement, can help motivate future participation in musical activities. In addition, allowing room for participants to have some input in group decisions can satisfy the need for autonomy and support individual interest. This contribution could generate a set of community values in which the members feel a sense of personal involvement and unity within the group as well as shared principles and respect.

Findings from this study suggest that early exposure to school musical activities can influence continued participation through life. This becomes a matter for the educators of future music teachers. Understanding this issue could inform music education training programs. Strategies for encouraging lifelong music-making might consist of music educators providing positive experiences at an early age and, informing and educating participants about future opportunities available throughout the life span. Additionally, music teacher education programs might offer courses that include geragogical strategies which are specifically intended for working with older adult

populations and provide information for continuing education opportunities regarding older adults and community music (Gomez, 2016; Hartogh, 2016, Schoen, 2015).

Other findings in this study indicate that musical styles and church choir involvement had an influence on members' inclination to participate. Community music practitioners could tap into outside resources such as church choirs to bolster participation in community music. Other means of encouraging participation could involve music educators and facilitators recruiting through performances, collaboration with other musical ensembles, and hosting special social events allowing non-members to join. These events could prove to be cross-generational, provide opportunities to engage with differing populations, or simply generate a new experience for participants both musically and socially.

The correlation between formal music practices and community music could also inform music teacher education programs regarding motivational facets for lifelong music-making. By understanding the motivation behind older adults' participation, music educators and facilitators can better employ teaching strategies that can help develop a lifelong interest in musical activities. The utilization of pedagogies that help individuals become independent musicians can foster a lifelong interest in musical activities beyond the formal school years. In addition, encouraging social interaction and providing an environment in which participants feel a sense of community can also support lifelong music-making and engagement. These social interactions could be scheduled before, after, or within the rehearsals and occur within a casual atmosphere in which members feel comfortable.

Support, camaraderie, and forming friendships were the second highest benefits reported. Participants spoke of the closeness and fellowship they felt within their choirs. This socialization can help in maintaining continued participation and encourage lifelong engagement in musical activities. Considering the growth in the older population, this has implications for the elderly's welfare and societal consideration. By ensuring the elderly are engaged in activities they find beneficial, there is more likelihood that they will maintain an active lifestyle and remain independent, thus needing less assistance from specialized facilities, family members, and the population in general.

The results from this study and previous studies support the premise that music participation holds many benefits for older adults. The question then becomes one of responsibility to ensure there are opportunities for musical activities. How can we, as music educators and facilitators, support and advocate for the elderly population? In this study, only one choir was developed through an initiative by its host city for the sheer benefit of its members. Should not all communities and community leaders follow suit and provide similar opportunities for the elderly population? The results of this study and extant research suggest the answer is "yes." Is it the responsibility of the elderly to ask for this even though they may not be aware of the benefits music-making holds for them? Fundamentally, it is the music and music education profession that should be educating the broader public and its leaders about the benefits of musical activities and advocating for programs that meet the needs of all populations, including those of marginalized populaces, across the age range. Working in tandem with local leaders and stakeholders could allow music educators the opportunity to inform the practice of community music

at an initial level. Disseminating this information could provide insight and encourage the development of programs that are beneficial for older adults.

Recommendations for Research

This study utilized open-ended questions in focus group interviews. Focus groups allow participants to listen to each other's stories and can help encourage in-depth conversation in a casual environment. Such interaction can aid in recall and reflection. However, another method of data collection such as a survey, questionnaire, or one-on-one interviews may have yielded deeper or more personal information, perhaps something the individual would not want to share in front of others. Another potential limitation to this study was the demographic make-up of the choirs. The choirs used in this study are all within a 30-mile driving radius in an area that features little economic, ethnic, or religious diversity, and study results may not be generalizable to a larger population. Examination of more diverse populations for comparison might yield more information for the future of music education. Also, examination of comparable ensembles with very similar styles of repertoire may yield different results. Further, the participants in this study, although elderly, would not be considered a disenfranchised population. Performing a similar study with a marginalized group of participants (prisoners, immigrants, homeless) or other specific populations might reveal different perceived benefits and motivations.

Study members' perceived benefits regarding health, socialization, identity, and personal growth reflect those reported in previous studies. However, the unexpected theme of leadership emerged, including the direct effect, either positive or negative,

leaders had on people's decisions to participate in musical activities. Understanding the characteristics and teaching approaches of past leaders in comparison to current leaders could provide insight into participants' decisions to continue music activities. There have been many studies regarding the effect of leadership on motivation in the workplace and in schools (Khan et al., 2020; Paais & Pattiruhu, 2020;) but very few that focus solely on older adults involved in musical activities. Therefore, future studies might narrow the lens of examination to the effectiveness of leaders/facilitators, and how they influence music participation.

Despite evidence from previous research that suggests music participation has positive effects on cognitive abilities, no members mentioned it in the present study as either a benefit or an influence on motivation. Previous research results discussed in the literature review utilized cognition tests and questionnaires. Perhaps the method of data collection (focus group interviews) was not the ideal method to elicit this information from participants as it may feel more personal and not lend itself to group discussion. It is also possible interview questions and planned prompts were not specific enough to steer the conversation in this direction. This has implications for future research, as focus group moderators may want to take into consideration the nature of this method and modify the direction of questioning to uncover perceptions of cognitive benefits from music participation.

Another area of interest was the participants' reports regarding the nature of their particular choirs. The members discussed the characteristics of their groups and their perceived benefits as an important and deciding factor when it came to their participation.

It seems apparent that, when it comes to music-making, one size does not fit all, and music leaders should take into account their particular population and their needs. The field of music education should ensure that future teachers and facilitators are trained in various musical styles and are providing experiences at an early age in public school. There have been numerous studies conducted regarding preference and motivation (Hong et al., 2000; Krout, 2007) but none involving older adults and their preference for the style and characteristics of a particular music group. Examination in this direction could provide music educators insight into how best to attract a more diverse membership and retain them.

Summary

Community music has many forms, methods, and uses, and serves a wide variety of peoples worldwide. It usually occurs outside of formal training and contexts, and, in the case of the current study, offers entry, re-entry, or continuation opportunities for older adults seeking musical activities. Its non-formal practices encourage a democratic culture in which social and personal growth are as important as musical growth. It is shaped by social interactions, types of music, leaders/facilitators, and interactions of participants, all of which have been found to influence reported benefits in research findings and, in turn, has an impact on motivation (Alexander, 2015; Billaud, 2014; Dale, 2018; Higgins, 2012; Lee & Davidson, 2016; Leglar & Smith, 2010; Veblen, 2008; Veblen & Olsson, 2002). Community music can also serve to provide opportunities for people to build or re-build social capital (Putnam, 2000). The importance of organizations in helping to repair the disconnect between family, friends, neighbors, and communities cannot be undervalued

(Putnam, 2000). Music participation can provide opportunities for community building focusing on social relationships rather than individualism (Norton, 2000).

Based on the writings of Veblen (2008), I defined community music as a cultural practice that provides opportunities for a population to continue musical activities outside formal school music education with focus on the perspective of communal music providing aesthetic experiences. Prior research and findings demonstrate that community music has the potential to provide numerous benefits for participants. Reported benefits such as health/well-being, socialization, sense of purpose/personal growth, and identity can aid with issues with which the elderly contend (depression, loneliness) and enrich lives, thus, providing motivation for lifelong music-making.

Despite the evidence that community music holds great benefits for its participants and often serves as an intervention with certain populations, there is still a shortage of initiatives by community officials and policy makers. As mentioned in the first chapter, community music in the U.S. is typically not government-supported and most organizations depend on grants and donations. Those involved in community music understand the benefits and meaningfulness of their participation, but perhaps these outcomes need to be better communicated to those who have the power and the means with which to instigate programs within their communities. Disseminating information regarding the rewards of community music should go beyond the music community and educational institutes to the broader public, especially to those who can support the formation of activities.

Understanding motivation and what generates interest and what maintains it is

crucial for the field of music education. Members' perceived benefits from musical activities support a continuation of participation. Other factors such as leadership and the nature of an ensemble and its repertoire also influence the decision to continue in music. Therefore, all these aspects have influence on motivation. Additionally, early and positive experiences in music can have a direct effect on future and lifelong involvement in musical activities. As one participant said, "Future leaders need to understand that what they say will make a difference."

In speaking with the participants in our interviews, it was obvious how much enjoyment they derived from their musical activities and their relationships with each other. They were willing and eager to share their stories and oftentimes, the conversations turned to laughter when recalling a past event or experience. It was a pleasure to witness this joy and see how much happiness they received from their participation in their respective groups. It is a demonstration of the power of music and the influence it can have on one's life. It was much deeper and profound beyond the other reported benefits and will have a lasting impact on me. As one participant said in one of my favorite representative quotes from the interviews, "It's hard to sing and be unhappy!"

Appendix A: Introduction and Volunteer Participation Form

(Sent to all the choir directors)

Dear ,

As a graduate student in the College of Fine Arts at Boston University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctorate of Musical Arts degree. The title of my research is "Motivation among Older Adults in Community Music" and the purpose of my research is to examine older adults' perceptions of community music involvement and potential benefits reported from their participation.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research at your rehearsal site, utilize your membership list to recruit participants, and contact members of your choir to invite them to participate in my research study.

Participants will be asked to participate in focus group interviews as well as schedule 1–2 individual interviews. The data will be used to examine the motivation behind lifelong music participation and prospective benefits of community music for the older adult population.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please provide a signed statement on approved letterhead indicating your approval.

Sincerely,

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Appendix B: Moderator's Guide

Opening-

1. Tell us your name, how long you've been involved with this group, and your favorite part of singing with this choir.
2. Is this group your first choir? (Beginner, continuous, or resuming)
   Prompt: What other choirs have you been in and when?

Introduction

1. Why did you first become involved with this group?
   Prompt: Musical aspects?
   Social?
   Personal endeavor?

Transition

1. Reflect on the most positive or negative memories of choral singing in your life.
2. Reflect on the most positive or negative memories of singing with this particular group?

Key

1. How important was previous musical knowledge to your decision in joining the group?
   Prompt: Past singing experience?
   Read music?
2. Compare yourself from when you first began participating to now.
   Prompt: Musical skills? Social aspects? Personal accomplishments?
3. How has participation affected your life? Self- concept?
   Prompt: Benefits? (Social, personal, mental and physical health)
4. What is the most intense physical response you've had to singing in a choir?
5. What is the most intense emotional response you've had to singing in a choir?
6. Can you recall a time in this particular choir that you experienced those responses?
7. Why do you continue to participate?
   Prompt: Social, personal, health, service to others

Ending

1. If someone was interested in participating in a community choir and asked you what it was like, what would you say?

Final

1. This is generally what I heard you say today: _____
2. Is there anything we should have talked about but didn't?

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