MUSIC MASTERS:
FACILITATING COMMUNITY MUSIC PARTICIPATION BY OLDER ADULTS IN INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLES

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Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
August 2019
This thesis examined music participation and non-participation by older adults in Queensland, Australia. It explored why relatively few older adults take up or resume playing a musical instrument despite the reported benefits of participation in community music ensembles. It also sought to better understand the constraints faced by active, older-adult musicians, and how these constraints could be overcome to fulfil music motivations.

Specifically, the thesis sought to address the following research question: How can participation by older adults in community music instrumental ensembles be better facilitated in order to initiate, promote, and sustain appropriate, engaging, and dynamic music-making experiences?

Over the past two decades, increasing attention has been given to global ageing, evoking UN and government reports that address this demographic transformation. In 2010, the Queensland Government’s strategy Positively Ageless was followed in 2011 by the Brisbane City Council’s program of activities for seniors Growing Older and Living Dangerously. In this program, sporting or other non-music activities appear to take priority over music activities even though participation in music making has shown to provide cognitive, physical, and social benefits that improve the quality of life of older adults.

This mixed methods research began with an online survey that investigated the leisure choices of older adults and the perceived barriers to community music participation. Motivations for and constraints to music learning and engagement were then explored in interviews with older-adult musicians from music ensembles in South East Queensland. Following this was a focus on the intrapersonal, structural, and interpersonal constraints to music participation. The research findings led to the development of the MASTER framework, which recommends that activities are made musical, attractive, social, timely, educational, and regulated. This framework is offered as a way to better facilitate community music activities for older adults in Queensland, but it could be applied to other national and international participatory music settings.

With increasing numbers of baby boomers now entering retirement, this research has implications for promoting healthy ageing, and for creating musically vibrant communities not only in Queensland but across geographic boundaries.

Keywords: community music, older adults, music facilitation, leisure constraints
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CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify this work is original and has not previously been submitted in whole or part by me or any other person for any qualification or award in any university. I further certify that to the best of my knowledge and belief, these research papers contain no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the papers themselves.

Signed: Teresa V. Kunaeva
Date: 16 August 2019
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Professor Brydie-Leigh Bartleet: There is no better supervisor. You knew exactly what to say, and what not to say, with impeccable timing. Your expertise, not only as a PhD supervisor, but as one of world’s leading academics in music research, has guided me throughout my own humble research endeavours. I remain in awe of your knowledge, skill, and grace. How lucky I am to have been guided by you.

Professor Peter Roennfeldt: Thank you for sticking with me beyond deadlines, even as you transitioned into retirement—a very inapt term considering the workload of publishing and radio presenting you have pursued beyond this transitional life stage. I look forward to hearing about your many future adventures.

Griffith University: Thanks to all the staff, and my fellow HDR students, including all the libraries for my many ‘holds’; and GUPSA, GGRS, and the RED team for the training and workshops, and for furnishing me with skills for a future of academic research. Special thanks to editorial guru, Evie Franzidis; and to Dr Catherine Grant and Dr Gillian Howell: beautiful minds of the highest intellect.

Queensland’s older adults: Thank you for sharing personal information about your leisure activities, music activities, and the difficulties faced by older-adult musicians. Your patience and teachings, often in subjects beyond this research, continue to inspire me. I wish you a life filled with joy and music.

As evidenced in this research, increasing age parallels increasing losses; losses in health, losses in opportunities, and the loss of loved ones. During the period of this research, besides losing my own mother, several friends and colleagues were either killed in cycling accidents or died of health issues. As we age, life’s losses outnumber life’s gains, but we are blessed by each passing angel whose spirit survives in our music.

Nellie and Benson: Thank you for keeping me in the real world. Woof!
In the early 1990s when I was a violin teacher in Sydney, Australia, an elderly woman rang to ask if I taught adults. She was 63 years of age and, after a lifetime of full-time work as a nurse and raising a family of seven children, it was now time for her to reduce her working hours and do the things she loved. One of those things was to relearn to play her violin, which had been lying idle for over 50 years. This was just something she wanted to do for herself, without any great pressure or cost.

From that phone call began a friendship of shared musical and social experiences. It also spawned my curiosity about the difficulties that older adults face when wishing to embark upon a musical venture. A quarter of a century later it has led me to this research, through which, it is hoped, music facilitators may provide more opportunities for older adults to engage in music activities, government agencies and educational institutions may provide more support for such endeavours, and older adults may have the courage and motivation to actively participate in community music making.

Increasing numbers of relatively active and healthy older adults are entering retirement and seeking to participate in a variety of leisure pursuits. Some, like my former violin student mentioned above, may have enjoyed music activities during childhood but have since been distracted by work and raising a family, and thus prevented them from fulfilling any music ambitions they once may have harboured. Others may never have had opportunities to participate in music making, but perhaps a catalyst—such as seeing a music ensemble, seeing a notice at the University of the Third Age (U3A), or being influenced by a friend—has sparked their imagination about the possibilities of playing a musical instrument.
This study aims to raise awareness about the realities of music making in later adulthood by examining music participation and non-participation by older adults in Queensland, Australia. In this introductory chapter, I begin by providing context and rationale for the research under three themes: the ageing of the population, the lack of music opportunities for older adults in Queensland, Australia, and the reported benefits of community music participation. The primary question and research sub-questions are stated, followed by a brief description of the methodological approaches, and definitions of the key terminology. I then outline the contributions, implications and limitations of this research. This chapter concludes with a content outline of subsequent chapters.

RATIONALE

A decrease in fertility and mortality rates and an increase in life expectancy have led to an ageing global population (World Health Organization, 2002, 2012). Despite media fear-mongering, however, (see, for example, de Boer, 2010; Jericho, 2014; Kemp, 2013) ageing is not all doom and gloom. Ninety-four percent of older adults live independently and regularly engage in leisure activities such as walking and reading (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS], 2006b). Many older adults are visible at bowls clubs, while many more attend bingo, craft, or other club activities. Some adventurous people become travellers or grey nomads, while others enter triathlons or marathons for the first time. *Adventure before Dementia* is rapidly becoming the catch-phrase of retirees, who are healthier, more active and more financially secure than all retirement-age populations before them (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2015; Hamilton & Hamilton, 2006; Healey, 1999; Healy, 2004; Patterson & Pan, 2007; Sunshine Coast Regional Council, 2011). It may be that many of these older adults tacitly aspire to play a musical instrument but are unaware of music opportunities and are sceptical about their own capacity to access them. As Myers (2005, p. 10) asked, “How many more adults might harbor a closeted desire for music that they would act on if we took seriously the obligation to provide ready access to music learning across a lifetime?”

The rationale for this research lies in three contemporary realities: the ageing of Australia’s population, the lack of participatory music-making opportunities for older adults in Australia, and the reported benefits of music participation.
In the 50 years from 1964 to 2014, the number of people aged 65 and over increased from 8% to 15% of the Australian population, and that figure is expected to increase to 23% by 2064. This means that in the next 45 years, nearly a quarter of Australia’s residents will be aged 65 years or older (ABS, 2013, 2018b; see also, Council on the Ageing, 2018, p. 5; see Figure 1). In 2012, 88% of Australians aged 65 and over were no longer in the labour force (ABS, 2013).

With only six percent of people aged 65 and over residing in nursing homes or aged-care facilities (Queensland Government, 2016), the majority of older adults are independent community dwellers leading productive lives even though they may need to negotiate some form of age-related degeneration. They are a silent majority, still making significant contributions to their families and the community, and making up the bulk of volunteers in society (ABS, 2005, p. 109; Queensland Government, 2016). They engage in various sport, travel, leisure, and community activities; and some—although too few—actively engage in community music programs. These are the older adults of this research—the “chronologically gifted” (Coffman, 2002b; Coffman & Adamek, 1999) unsung heroes, whose needs should

Figure 1: Percentage of the Australian population aged 65 and over, 1964-2064. (Based on figures and projections from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013, 2018b)
not be ignored just because they are healthier and more independent than institutionalised people (Leitner & Leitner, 2012, p. 2).

Just as educators provide cognitive, physical, and social stimulation to school and college students to prepare them for adulthood, leisure providers could develop varied and stimulating activities for musicians and potential musicians who are at the other end of the age spectrum. This may help to ease their transition into retirement and beyond. Although most of these older adults can participate in the same recreational activities offered to everyone (Leitner & Leitner, 2012, p. 2), community orchestras and bands tend to limit their membership to people who have reached a certain skill level on their musical instruments, subsequently omitting adult beginner or novice musicians (Burley, 1987, p. 33; Kunaeva, 2016, p. 160).

THE LACK OF MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

With the increasing attention being paid to global ageing (see, for example, Geoscience Australia, 2015; Queensland Government, 2010; World Health Organization, 2012) and the large cohort of older adults now entering the ‘third age’ of retirement (Thompson, Griffin & Bowman, 2013), there is demand for government policies to advocate for programs that engage our ‘senior’ community and promote healthy ageing (see, for example, Brisbane City Council, 2011, 2012; Geoscience Australia, 2015; New South Wales Government, 2011; Queensland Government, 2010; Sunshine Coast Regional Council, 2011). Despite such advocacy, however, and despite the reported benefits of active music participation and the tacit desire of some older adults to learn a musical instrument, an exploration of music activities in Queensland between 2016 and 2019 shows no rigorous attempt to engage older adults in community music activities, or to create a cohesive program of music participation or instruction for older adults.

Building on the Queensland government’s (2010) vision for seniors (defined as 60 years and over), the Brisbane City Council developed GOLD—Growing Older and Living Dangerously—which provided free or low-cost recreation activities for people over the age of 50 (Brisbane City Council, 2012, p. 26; 2018). Despite the hundreds of activities offered, participatory music activities, including choral programs, were noticeably absent (Brisbane City Council, 2019b; Kunaeva, 2016, p. 159), although an advanced recorder group commenced with the 50 Plus Centre in mid-2018 (Brisbane City Council, 2019a). Similarly, although offering 294 courses...
in its 2019 program, 79 of which were language classes, U3A in Brisbane offered active instrumental learning and playing opportunities in just three classes—all recorders (U3A Brisbane, 2019). In the Logan region 25 kilometres south of the city, however, U3A ran five instrumental groups: two for guitar, one for ukulele, and two for handbells. U3A administrators consistently call for more tutors in all fields of learning (U3A, Brisbane, 2019), and have often asked me to start new music groups to cater for their growing demand for music activities. The lack of qualified music facilitators is just one of the constraints to music participation that emerged from this study (see Chapter 8); recommendations for overcoming this constraint are provided in the MASTER framework (Chapter 9).

_A sporting nation_

Exercise is a mandatory requirement for our longevity, if not our very survival. Government and health agencies promote physical activities because of the reported health benefits, particularly for older adults (Mayhew & Swindell, 1996, p. 18). Where leisure time and financial resources are limited, Australians have been opting for sports over the arts (Australia Council, 2014, p. 86). In the 2006 Time Use Survey, people aged 65 and over spent more time on sport and outdoor activities than any other age group (ABS, 2006b, p. 10), and more time in those activities than in activities relating in any way to the arts. Additionally, across all age groups, Queensland residents spent more time on sport and outdoor activities than residents of any other state (ABS, 2006b, p. 15). While exercise is highly recommended for all musicians to help them sustain playing an instrument without overuse injuries, it may be that _time_ and _cost_ are factors that prohibit participation in both sporting and music activities.

Ernst’s (2001) analogy of playing music with playing golf in late adulthood is worth reiterating for a sports-centric culture, and for those who still believe that learning a musical instrument is age-limited:

Most golfers don't start playing until they are well beyond their early adult years. If playing golf were limited mostly to people who began in school, the whole golf culture would be a very small part of what it now is. The substantial audience for professional golf is not a product of people taking golf appreciation classes or golf history classes—it’s a byproduct of people playing golf. Adults of any age feel that they can start golf, and beginning
instruction is easily found. Similar conditions in music would create a much larger and more vital musical culture in which support for music education of all kinds would increase. (p. 48)

However, can we adequately compare music with golf or with any other sporting or outdoor activity? What is behind the popularity of golf? Like playing music, it requires a certain skill level and financial outlay. Similarly, why have so many people taken up the Saturday morning, five-kilometre parkrun challenge? These are visible, enjoyable, and healthy outdoor activities. The same level of public visibility does not exist for community orchestras, bands, or even choirs, although the latter have been known to induce tears of happiness on reality television shows (see, for example, Fremantle Media, 2019).

In 2015 and 2016, I travelled to Goondiwindi, a typical rural and regional Queensland town lying 400 kilometres to the west of Brisbane, and with a population of 5,527 (ABS, 2018a). Within a kilometre of the town centre, prominent street signs indicated the direction to the croquet club, bowls club, sports centre, swimming pool, and fitness track. Nowhere in this town, or in any others that I have visited, were there signs to indicate a chamber music club, a community music hall, or any venue dedicated to music activities. Signs to arts centres existed in some towns (for example, Bribie Island), but these centres were mostly reserved for painting, sculpture, or similar visual arts and crafts; music activities were confined to—or secreted in—schools, community halls, churches, and private residences.

Australia has increasing numbers of skilled musicians who have played in school or university bands and orchestras. However, unlike sporting opportunities, where adults can continue to participate in teams at their own level, progress to other levels, or even drop to lower levels when age-related or other constraints limit their skill development, there are minimal opportunities for adult musicians to continue developing their music skills unless those skills are compatible with existing community ensembles. There are even fewer opportunities available for people who have had no music experience but who would like to learn to play a musical instrument. Clingman (1988) commented that “the power of music to improve the quality of life for adults is inestimable” (p. 37). That power differs for each participant in the many different contexts of music making. Lack of opportunities for older adults to actively participate in music making prohibits the majority of this age
cohort from enjoying the purported social, intellectual, and cultural benefits of community music making. Lack of opportunities and the invisibility of opportunities for music participation were reported in the survey by respondents who did not participate in music activities (see Chapter 4), and in the interviews with older-adult musicians (Chapter 7). Recommendations for overcoming these constraints are offered in the MASTER framework (Chapter 9).

**REPORTED BENEFITS OF MUSIC PARTICIPATION FOR OLDER ADULTS**

The third rationale offered for conducting this research lies in the many reported benefits of music participation, particularly where such participation enhances the quality of life of older adults. Research has shown that engaging in music activities provides intellectual and social stimulation, some physical exercise, and plenty of fun (Creech, Hallam, McQueen, & Varvarigou, 2013; Lehmberg & Fung, 2010). It can also benefit the music retail sector through the sale of instruments and sheet music, and it increases the demand for teachers and conductors. Music participation may even help to alleviate the burden on the healthcare system by slowing down the symptoms of age-related degenerative disease, or even the effects of dementia (see, for example, Doidge, 2007; Ledger & Baker, 2007).

The purported benefits of music participation are often argued in relation to health, wellbeing, and quality of life (Pitts, 2017, p. 176). Endorsing activities that contribute to the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the population was one of the strategic research priorities of the Australian Research Council’s Discovery Programme (Australian Research Council, 2016). However, music activities for older adults contribute in many other ways. At a micro level, these include:

- more choice of leisure activities;
- improvement in the quality of life of older adults;
- emotional and social support networks;
- cognitive development and lifelong learning that may impede dementia;
- filling a music void, both personally and in communities;
- provision of a creative outlet;
- growth in music retail (instruments, equipment, repairs);
- employment for professional musicians with portfolio careers; and
- constructing models of ‘successful ageing’ for future generations,
At a macro level, potential benefits to communities and society overall include:

- the provision and growth of audiences for professional and non-professional music productions;
- the demand for resources from tertiary music institutions, such as employing qualified teachers and conductors, or hiring rehearsal and performance spaces;
- potential savings to the healthcare system; and
- the building of healthy, vibrant communities.

Promoting the idea that everyone has an ability and a right to make and to enjoy their\(^1\) own music, Music Australia (2015)—the leading Australian organisation supporting music communities, music education, and the music industry—listed ten benefits of community music, which included fostering confidence, social inclusion, opportunities for lifelong learning, accessible opportunities, and flexible learning and facilitation processes.

These purported benefits, and those reported in earlier scholarly literature (see Chapter 2), establish the third rationale for promoting and facilitating music engagement for older adults.

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was two-fold: (a) to explore why relatively few older adults take up or resume playing a musical instrument despite the reported benefits of participation in community music ensembles; and (b) to better understand the constraints faced by active, older-adult musicians and how these constraints can be overcome in order to fulfil music motivations. The overarching question asked:

**How can participation by older adults in community music instrumental ensembles be better facilitated in order to initiate, promote, and sustain appropriate, engaging, and dynamic music-making experiences?**

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\(^1\) To advocate for organic language evolution, I use the gender-neutral ‘their’ in place of ‘his’ or ‘his or her’ (see Butterfield, 2015, p. 811; Elton, 2019, p. 113).
To answer this question, it was necessary to ascertain not only what motivates older adults to play music, but why a majority of older adults do not engage in music making. Does it relate to their childhood music experiences, or the lack of these? Do they lack the motivation, satisfied with the myth that “you are too old to learn a musical instrument”? Do they see learning or playing a musical instrument as too challenging, or not much fun? Do they merely lack the opportunities, a place to practice, or someone to teach them? Why do so many older adults say “I wish I had learnt to play (a certain instrument),” or, “I wish I hadn’t given up learning to play (their instrument)”?

What was the motivation behind the leisure choices they currently enjoy? Why do so many older adults take up bowls or bingo and not the bugle or banjo? Has the thought simply not occurred to them? And why aren’t more musicians, particularly the skilled yet retired older-adult musicians, spruiking the benefits of learning and playing a musical instrument and facilitating such music activities in their communities?

In order to address how best to facilitate older adult’s community music participation, I needed to understand why certain leisure activity choices were made, to what extent music activities factored in these leisure choices, what barriers or constraints older adults considered prevented or limited their music participation, and what factors they perceived could make active music participation appealing to them. Additionally, the reasons that active musicians give for continued participation would also help in ascertaining the more attractive attributes of music making.

**SECONDARY RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following secondary research questions were aimed at discovering and understanding how best to promote, facilitate, and sustain community music participation by older adults:

1. How do music-making activities factor into the leisure choices of older adults in Queensland, and what are the perceived barriers to music participation?

2. What are the characteristics and motivations of Queensland’s older-adult musicians?

3. What constraints to music participation are confronted, negotiated, and overcome by older-adult musicians in Queensland?
4. How can music facilitators in Queensland best promote music activities for older adults?

**METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH**

A mixed-methods approach was taken to answer the research questions (see Chapter 3 for philosophical and methodological details). Quantitative methodology in the form of a state-wide, online survey was used to investigate the leisure choices of Queensland residents aged 50 and over, while qualitative, open-ended questions were used to explore the barriers that the 275 respondents believed prevented their music engagement (research sub-question 1). The results of this survey are presented in Chapter 4.

Qualitative methodology in the form of participant-observation, interviews, and focus groups was used to explore the activities of music ensembles that accommodate older-adult musicians, and the subjective experiences, motivations, and constraints of older-adult music participants. I drew most informants from three core examples of music making that demonstrated a diversity of music activities by older adults in South East Queensland, the region in Queensland where the highest percentage of people aged 65 and over reside (see Figure 2, Queensland Government, 2019b), and that I could readily access for frequent observation and interviews.

Data analysis was conducted using a grounded theory approach and NVivo12 software, a computer-assisted data analysis environment. The examples of music making and the music motivations of the 44 informants are presented in Chapter 5. The constraints that limited music participation are categorised as intrapersonal (Chapter 6), structural (Chapter 7) and interpersonal (Chapter 8), adapted from Crawford, Jackson, and Godbey’s (1991) hierarchical model of leisure constraints.

A contemporary framework that was developed in the UK to promote behavioural change—the EAST framework (Behavioural Insights Team, 2014)—was adapted as an aid for promoting older adult’s music participation. This new framework, the MASTER framework, is presented in Chapter 9.
Chapter 1: Context setting

Figure 2: Estimated resident population of persons aged 65 and over as a percentage of total persons in Queensland regions.

**KEY TERMINOLOGY USED IN THIS STUDY**

**OLDER ADULTS: A DEFINING AGE**

There is no universally agreed definition of *older adult* and, like the concept of *community music* (see below, and Higgins, 2006, p. 117; Veblen, 2013, p. 1), it is often with some flexibility. For many years, means-tested age pensions were available to Australian retirees from the age of 65, a figure based on the German pension plan of the 1880s (Leitner & Leitner, 2012, p. 2). Recent Australian Federal government policy changes, however, have extended the pension age to 70 (Geoscience Australia, 2015). The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2015) defined older people as those aged 65 and over. Older adulthood was regarded by some researchers as beginning at 65, where it was “the moment of formal retirement” (as cited in Boog & Burt-Perkins, 2009, p. 2). The period from 65−75 was labelled the Third Age (Laslett, 1987, 1989), although Lawrence-Lightfoot (2009) regarded this ‘Third Chapter’ as occurring between the ages of 50 and 75, “the generative space that follows young adulthood and middle age” (p. 4). The current research looks predominantly at Third Agers, since Fourth Agers are more likely to be frailer.
Chapter 1: Context setting

(Borowski, Encel, & Ozanne, 2007, p. 330; Bowling, 2005, p. 231), to reside dependently, and thus less able to attend and participate in community music classes or rehearsals unless these are provided on site. Second Agers commonly have occupational commitments, although music programs that accommodate working adults (see, for example, Coffman & Barbosa, 2013, p. 262) would be advantageous to those sensibly planning for and transitioning to retirement.

At the younger end of the age spectrum, the European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA) broadly defined older adults as those who were older than 45 (as cited in Boog & Burt-Perkins, 2009, p. 2). Research teams at the Australian National University (ANU), undertaking “the largest ongoing study of healthy ageing in the Southern Hemisphere,” were also using the minimum age of 45 for selecting research subjects (45 and Up Study, 2015). *Your Life Choices* (2015), and similar online ‘seniors’ programs targeted adults from the age of 50. The U3A in Australia—part of a global organisation that promotes informal learning for older adults—does not set a minimum age restriction, although the organisation’s name implies that retirees, or Third Agers, would be the expected membership. Boog and Burt-Perkins (2009), who were part of the extensive and prolific collaborative music research teams at the Hanze University in the Netherlands and the University of London in England, regarded older adulthood as commencing at the age of 50, recognising that “the start of old age is dependent on occupational life, educational level, social class and so forth” (p. 2).

Fung and Lehmberg (2016) focussed their research on people aged 55 and over, arguing that 55 was the minimum age for most senior citizens’ discounts in retail establishments and for living in most senior citizens’ communities in the United States (p. 11). Keaney and Oskala (2007) also adopted 55 as the minimum age in their research but, like Boog and Burt-Perkins (2009, p. 2), they recognised that categorisation by age obscured variations in the ageing process, commenting, “People demonstrate different signs of ageing at different speeds and retire from the labour market at different ages” (Keaney & Oskala, 2007, p. 326).

Not only is the defined age of an older adult disputed, but the nominal term, older adults, has often been substituted with other terms, such as seniors, elders, the elderly, and baby boomers, the latter term applied to those born in the 20 years following the Second World War (ABS, 2009; Healey, 1999, p. 2; Kendig, Loh,
In 2016, baby boomers were aged from 50 to 70 and entering the “third age,” the age of retirement. They comprised a quarter of Australia’s population (ABS, 2009). Baby boomers were predicted to be “healthier, more active and more productive than preceding generations” (Healy, 2004, p. vii). With an “appetite for new adventures” and a “yearning for inspiration and reinvention” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2009, p. 11), baby boomers could establish and develop rich and viable programs of music engagement, and act as role models for all generations to follow. However, in the spirit of “hospitality” (Higgins, 2007), it may be best to allow individuals to decide at what age they are ready to participate in older-adult community music programs. Figures such as 45, 50, and 65 are somewhat arbitrary and make no allowance for individual capacity, or motivation.

Fung and Lehmberg (2016) have favoured the term *senior citizen* (p. 9), although they also referred to *older adults*. However, unlike the term *young adults*, there is no term equivalent to ‘junior citizens’ to balance the definitional age divide. Leitner and Leitner (2012) favoured the term *elder* for people who were aged 80 and over because of the respect the term implied. Hull (2006), however, used *elder* to pay tribute to a person’s “knowledge, maturity and wisdom” (p. 88). Hallam et al.’s (2012) research sample comprised *older people* who were aged 50 and over.

Coffman and Adamek (1999) used *seniors*, or *senior citizens*, although their literature references referred mostly to *older adults*. Coffman later referred to “chronologically gifted” *retired seniors* as his “favorite teasing term of endearment” (2002b, p. 134).

Another term to find favour in research around healthy ageing was the *well elderly*, referring to those older adults who lived independently with minimal physiological or cognitive challenges (Prickett, 2003, p. 60; Creech, 2018, p. 92). For Lehmberg and Fung (2010, p. 20) “healthy senior citizens” were those who did not have a medical condition that prevented them from living independently, and they did not need extensive medical treatment.

My use of the term *older adult* reflects that of Creech (2018), Lehmberg and Fung (2010), and Prickett (2003); that is, the older adults who formed the sample population in this research were community-dwelling, non-institutionalised, independent older adults aged 50 and over. This was to negate any challenges...
associated with access and ethics that might arise where older adults had lower levels of physical or cognitive functioning.

**COMMUNITY MUSIC: PARTICIPATORY IMPLICATIONS**

As a concept, *community music* has been treated to various definitions reflecting the diverse contexts in which it is created, performed, and celebrated. Adding to contentions about what defines community music is the ennui expressed by some academic authorities who feel that attempts at definitions have been exhausted (see, for example, Higgins, 2002, p. 1), despite endeavours to present a colourful analogy—like tapestry (Veblen, 2013), kaleidoscope (Everitt, 1997; Elliot, as cited in Lagrimas, 2009, p. 6) or chameleon (Brown, Higham, & Rimmer, 2014).

Veblen (2008) saw “particular social settings” (p. 6) as defining and shaping community music. She illustrated “living examples” of community music while unashamedly making no attempt at a definition. Almost a decade later, Veblen (2013) was still struggling with attempts to define the concept through its broad “international tapestry of contextual shades, hues, tones, and colors” (p. 1), and its “wide-angle panoramic view.” She noted the tensions between “amateur and professional, formal and informal, institutional and non-institutional” and “occasional, one-time, or ongoing” contexts, and suggested that community music was “local, personal, political, multifaceted, and, above all, fluid” (p. 1). Fung and Lehmberg (2016, p. 7) extended the idea of fluidity to all definitions, depending on temporal and geographical contexts.

Brown et al. (2014, p. 54) also tried to resist the “obsessive search” for a definition, regarding community music as a “chameleonic practice” that could respond to shifting policies and funding agendas (p. 2). They argued the need to recognise “distinctive qualities” of community music (p. 19), yet noted how context-specific and “slippery concepts” like collaboration, rigour, professionalism, and excellence were claimed by practitioners in both community music and ‘formal’ music education settings (p. 42).

Koopman (2007) similarly pointed to the musical and social flexibility of *community music* (p. 155), identifying three key characteristics: collaborative music-making, community development, and personal growth (p. 153), the latter indicating the educational role that community music making can play. From a Chinese
perspective, Ruisen (2011) emphasised the educative capacity of community music activities, defining community music as “a kind of music education that is loved by the general public in the urban areas and is characterized by its accessibility, popularity and mass participation” (p. 24). This emphasis on music education is pertinent for older-adult ensembles, many of which comprise beginner musicians or musicians returning after a long lapse in music activity. Additionally, the emphasis on ‘urban areas’ leaves one to ponder the challenges of music participation in non-urban areas, a factor that resonates equally with Australian regional environments.

Lee Higgins, one of the most prolific writers on the subject of community music, suggested that the term community is “a ratification of Community Music’s participatory ethos,” and emphasised “active and creative musical doing” (2007, p. 282). Adopting the philosophical perspective of Jacques Derrida (1930-2004), Higgins regarded hospitality as inherent but conditional, with an expectation of participation from the ‘guests’, and access and equality of opportunity from the ‘hosts’ (p. 284). He later reported that community music was an intervention, suggesting that the emphasis resided “in the encouragement of active and creative music participation” (2008b, p. 236). Higgins recognised the difficulty in defining something that was forever changing, or that was regarded diversely in different contexts. He set out “to describe what community music does rather than what it is” (2012, p. 174; my emphasis). Contrary to Veblen (2008), Higgins (2012) attempted to define community music against a backdrop of models, concluding that hospitality encompassed “the central characteristics of community music practice” (p. 15).

In Community Music in Theory and Practice (2012), Higgins defined community music as “an approach to music making outside ‘formal’ music institutions” and “a collaborative arts activity that seeks to articulate, engage, and address the needs, experiences, and aspirations of the participants” (p. 4). He elaborated by adding hospitality and friendship as intrinsic agents within active music making (p. 178), elements important in fostering music participation by older adults. In a more recent summing-up, Higgins defined community music simply as “an interventionist approach between a music leader or facilitator and those participants who wish to be involved” (2015).

More recently, Bartleet and Higgins (2018, p. 1–2) offered colourful “snapshots” of music-making models across six continents and nine cultural groups, showcasing the
diversity, fluidity, maturity, and inclusivity of community music, and how it “has grown to take on different meanings in a wide variety of cultural contexts across the world (p. 2). The authors suggested several areas of critical concern for facilitators and practitioners of community music: “inclusion, community responsibility, excellence, creative opportunities, diversity,” and, of most relevance to this current research, “acknowledgement of the importance of music-making across the lifespan” (p. 3).

From an Australian perspective, Cahill (1998) emphasised the element of community ownership as distinct from a commercial music business or school education. She stated that community music comprised “music activities in a community where those activities are controlled by members of that community,” and that it incorporated many wide-ranging elements that contributed “to the development of the arts, education, cultural life, the economy, social integration and community cohesion in Australia” (p. vii).

Dillon, Atkins, Brown, and Hirche (2008) noted the multiplicity of definitions, but highlighted the importance of community music in “facilitating relationships between people in expressive ways that also define and articulate the identity of a community and the individuals within it in ways that are different to language based relationships” (p. 357).

A report from the Australia Council for the Arts (Australia Council, 2014) defined community arts as “art that has been created as part of a community group together with a professional artist who has been paid for their involvement” (p. 83). This would seem to be a problematic definition in that some community arts groups may not employ a paid professional. As this research demonstrates, community music ensembles are also led by untrained and unpaid—but highly capable—facilitators.

_Music and Communities_ is one of five focus areas at the QCRC (2015). It has embraced Indigenous communities in ethnomusicological studies while emphasising important interconnections between community music and tertiary music institutions. Entering the debate on what constitutes community music, Bartleet et al. acknowledged that it was “a group activity where people join together to actively participate in the music-making process” (Bartleet, Brunt, Tait, & Threlfall, 2013, p. 79), and they regarded community music activities as “reflective of a geographical community, a community of interest, or an imagined community.”
The recognition of shared characteristics of community music groups is arguably more revealing than striving for a universally accepted definition of community music. Bartleet (2009) outlined nine key domains that emerged from a study of six diverse community music groups across Australia (see Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts, & Schippers, 2009), and noted that “the most important characteristics of almost any community music project can be described under these headings” (Bartleet, 2009, p. 30). The domains that particularly resonate with older-adult music groups include social engagement, pedagogy, facilitation, support, and networking.

Alternative terms have been debated about the “community” in community music. Such terms include participatory (Brown et al., 2014; Everitt, 1997), collective (Lortat-Jacob, 1981, p. 89) and socialised (Dykema, 1916; Yerichuk, 2014). However, the term community music has become so embedded in academic and non-academic music circles that attempts at defining it must also include the particular context in which it is situated. Restricting community music to the confines of a definition runs counter to the fluidity and democracy of its activities. However, a description, set of characteristics, or ‘domains’ enable the term to be placed within different contexts of active participatory music activities, particularly as increasing numbers of retirees accept the invitation to share in the ‘hospitality’.

No matter what terminology is used to define community music, music activities will continue to flourish throughout geographical regions or digital environments, across all age groups. The current research situates the activities of older adults within a broad community music-making concept. Community music is regarded as the product of group music activities that attract and accommodate people of all ages, genders, nationalities, and socio-economic backgrounds, and where the quality of the output is regarded as less important than the opportunity to participate.

**PARTICIPATION: AN ACTIVE PURSUIT**

As explained above, participation is generally considered to be the essence of community music activities. Schippers and Bartleet (2013) wrote: “The fact that community music involves active participation tends to be emphasized above all” (p. 456). Active or creative participation are terms commonly used to distinguish activities from mere consumption (Higgins, 2006, p. 132), and are used to describe “actively making art or doing an arts activity oneself” (Australia Council, 2014, p. 8).
In the scholarly literature, the term *participation* receives subtle variations in meaning. *Passive* or *receptive participation*—arguably an oxymoron—has been used to describe the mere act of listening or consuming music, or attendance at live events (Australia Council, 2014, p. 8; Everitt, 1997, p. 13; Higgins, 2006, p. 132) “as audience or recipients of the end product of arts activities” (Barraket, 2005, p. 3). Keaney and Oskala (2007) differentiated between arts *attendance* (p. 326) and arts *participation*, while arts *engagement* was used “to refer to any encounters with the arts whether through attending or participating in the arts” (p. 327).

The ramifications of aural stimuli on the human senses or the efforts made to attend a concert are seldom addressed within the context of participation; however, such aspects of *passive participation* make more physical and emotional rather than musical demands. Helguera (2011), who identified four levels of engagement—nominal, directed, creative, and collaborative—argued that “all art is participatory because it requires the presence of a spectator; the basic act of being there in front of an artwork is a form of participation” (p. 14).

Researching sport as leisure, Shamir and Ruskin (1984) differentiated between participants and spectators. Researching music as leisure, Gates (1991, p. 9) added a third category, which consisted of those who did not identify with sports at all. This parallels the categorisation of music participants in this research. The first category comprises *active participants*, the producers of sound. They are the choristers, instrumentalists, conductors, composers, and even digital music creators. The second category comprises *passive participants*, the listeners and concert-goers. The third category comprises *non-participants*, those who generally have no music engagement. As with all systems of categorisation, there is potential for people to straddle categories so that even a non-participant, whose life may be sated with non-music activities, may occasionally attend a music performance or even sing in a church choir during festive seasons.

This research focusses on active older-adult music participants regardless of their standard of playing or extent of music engagement. The term *participation* is used interchangeably with *engagement* and implies that participants are involved in the doing, the action, the music-making activities, rather than only the reception or consumption of music products. Music participation is assumed to be an active and collective pursuit in which participants produce a sonic output that may have some
appeal to an audience. Fung and Lehmberg (2016, p. 7) included sound engineers and makers of musical instruments as music participants. However, the emphasis in this research is on playing or learning to play a musical instrument in groups that meet regularly.

**FACILITATION: MAKING MUSIC HAPPEN**

The *Australian Concise Oxford Dictionary* (Hughes, Michell, & Ramson, 1993) defines the verb *facilitate* as “make easy or less difficult or more easily achieved” from the Latin root *facilis*, meaning ‘easy’. From the perspective of community musicians, Higgins (2012) defined facilitation as “a process that enables participants’ creative energy to flow, develop, and grow through pathways specific to individuals and the groups in which they are working” (p. 148). Brookfield (1986) pointed to the centrality of collaboration in the facilitation of adult learning, noting that “facilitators and learners are engaged in a cooperative enterprise in which, at different times and for different purposes, leadership and facilitation roles will be assumed by different group members” (p. 10). Myers, Bowles, and Dabback (2013) accentuated the importance of peer models, pointing out that “directors and music leaders set the tone for music engagement” (p. 142). For drum circle facilitator Christine Stevens, a facilitator was “more like a coach, serving to inspire, direct, conduct, and lead a group of people” (2003, p. 29).

In this research, facilitation is the act of enabling, of creating opportunities in which others can participate with little or no difficulty. Such facilitation may be the purview of a director, conductor, music educator, organiser, group initiator, group member, or any combination of these. It is the role of facilitators to ensure that participants have suitable spaces and ample resources in which and with which they can enjoy music activities. However, the main goal of facilitation, as Brookfield (1986) instructs, is the “nurturing of self-directed, empowered adults” (p. 11).

**BARRIERS AND CONSTRAINTS TO MUSIC PARTICIPATION**

A distinction is made in this research between *barriers* and *constraints* to music participation. Definitions are complicated by the proclivity of leisure theorists to categorise themes in differing ways. For example, Jackson and Searle (1983) distinguished between blocking barriers and inhibiting barriers, and this idea was explored further by Goodale and Witt (1989):
Of particular note in this conceptualization is the distinction between two types of barriers—those which block participation and thus preclude it, and those which inhibit and thus limit, but do not preclude, participation. In much of the research on this topic, terms such as barriers, obstacles, or constraints are used interchangeably, without distinguishing between blocks and limits. (p. 436)

In research that has commented upon the constraints specific to music participation, researchers have also opted for varying, yet compatible, terminology. Coffman (2006) created the category of limitations: “These negative emotions overlapped with other comments that I categorized as Limitations” (p. 18), yet he also used the term struggles. Gembris (2008) favoured the term constraints but also referred to “age-related restrictions” (p. 103). Solé, Mercadai-Brotons, Gallego, and Riera (2010) used both terms, barriers and difficulties, though they regarded them as “not very relevant” (p. 278). Davis (2011) adopted the term challenges in her exploration of a beginner string program because the term was “frequently used in describing community and service-learning programs” (p. 208). Bugos (2014) also favoured challenges, as did Pitts, Robinson, and Goh (2015, p. 134), who referred to the drawbacks and challenges of ensemble membership. Tsugawa (2009) added the term frustrations.

The UK’s Music for Life researchers used the term barriers (Hallam et al., 2012) but qualified it at times by stipulating perceived barriers (p, 25). Later, Creech (2018) referred to “the challenges of later life” (p. 91) yet also commented on the “many barriers” and “insurmountable obstacles to accessing high-quality opportunities for musical engagement” (p. 103).

Investigating why high school students did not participate in school music activities, Hawkinson (2015) distinguished between barriers, which she defined as obstacles perceived to prevent participation, and constraints, defined as obstacles “of varying intensity perceived to momentarily restrict or permanently alter participation” (p. 23). This aligns with the usage in this thesis. Barriers are those factors, whether real or perceived, that prevent music participation; they are the reasons given by non-participants for not participating in community music ensembles. Constraints, however, do not prevent but merely impede or limit participation. Factors that are considered by some to be barriers to their participation, might be negotiated by
others who have higher levels of motivation. The term *constraints* is used where other authors may have used *obstacles, deterrents, challenges, limitations*, or comparable terms. It is my contention that both barriers and constraints are negotiable within different temporal contexts. This is supported by scholarship. Constraints, according to Jackson, Crawford, and Godbey (1993) are not insurmountable but “negotiable”; that is, while they may “shape the realization of leisure goals and benefits … they do not necessarily preclude it” (Jackson, 2000, p. 65).

**GLOSSARY OF OTHER RELATED TERMS**

**RESPONDENTS AND INFORMANTS**

Participants in the state-wide Leisure Activities Survey are referred to as respondents; participants in the interviews and focus groups are referred to as informants or interviewees. Quotations from the scholarly literature maintain the originating author’s terminology.

**THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE (U3A)**

U3A facilitates learning opportunities for older adults (see, for example, U3A Brisbane, 2019). Membership is generally for those aged 50 and above, but the minimum age limit is rarely enforced. Creech et al. (2012) commented that “the University of the Third Age (U3A) is an example of a context where older people prefer to learn alongside like-minded other older people” (p. 14). In Queensland, the main U3A headquarters are located in Brisbane. There is a large affiliated group in Logan, about 25 kilometres south of Brisbane, and smaller affiliated groups in other towns around the state (U3A Network Queensland, 2019).

**NEW HORIZONS INTERNATIONAL MUSIC ASSOCIATION (NHIMA)**

Originating in 1991 at the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, as a wind band for the ‘senior population’, the New Horizons music programs have grown to 58 affiliated music ensembles for older adults aged, ‘arbitrarily’, 50 and over (NHIMA, 2018, 2019). Although New Horizons is based mainly in North America (45 groups in the US and five in Canada), three groups in Australia are listed on the New Horizons website: one in New South Wales, one in Victoria, and one in Queensland (NHIMA, 2019); however, the contact details for the latter group are invalid.
AIMS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

The overarching aim of this research was to explore the perceived barriers that prevent older adults from music participation, and the constraints faced by older-adult musicians, so that music facilitators can initiate, sustain, and promote appropriate, engaging, and dynamic music experiences. Understanding how constraints can be successfully negotiated by older adults, or accommodated by ensembles and music facilitators, will allow increasing numbers of older-adult musicians to participate in music activities long into their retirement years.

The theoretical contributions of this research are two-fold: the adaptation of Crawford et al.’s (1991) hierarchical model of leisure constraints to reflect the constraints to music engagement by older adults; and the extension and adaptation of the EAST framework of behavioural change, first suggested by the UK government’s Behavioural Insights Team—the “nudge unit” (Behavioural Insights Team, 2014). This investigation, therefore, adds to the emerging corpus of qualitative research on music participation by older adults.

This thesis has implications for (1) people who feel they would like to, but for whatever reason cannot, participate in music activities; (2) active music participants who, for whatever reason, are restricted in their music activities or face having to cease participation; (3) musicians who are blissfully engaged in music making but who lack an understanding of the challenges faced by their musician colleagues; (4) music teachers who have not yet recognised the joys and challenges of teaching older adults; (5) ensemble directors and conductors who desire more understanding of the challenges faced by their older ensemble members; (6) academic institutions that could provide resources to help local community musicians establish and sustain vibrant music programs; (7) music education establishments and their staff and students who could collaborate with community music ensembles, thus providing teaching and conducting roles for experienced staff and developing students; and (8) government agencies tasked with addressing the isolation of older adults.

It is hoped that this and further research will provide the knowledge and foundations for fostering more music-making opportunities for older adults, as well as encourage increasing numbers of older adults to take up such opportunities as they transition into retirement. Although somewhat contextual to South East Queensland, the findings of this investigation are expected to resonate beyond geographical
boundaries, affecting international communities of older adults and retirees. The challenges and opportunities that a global ageing population creates, together with the purported benefits and joys of active music participation, provide a strong rationale for undertaking this and future research in a variety of contexts.

**LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH**

This study limits its scope to adults aged 50 and over who are residents of the state of Queensland, Australia. Survey data were collected between November 2016 and February 2017 using the online survey instrument, LimeSurvey. People without access to the internet were precluded from this research.

One interview was conducted in December 2015; all others were conducted between September 2016 and January 2018, with regular follow-up discussions and emails up to February 2019. During the data collection phase, Australia’s summers broke many heat records, and Queensland suffered several, but not abnormal, bouts of fires and flooding (Morton & Smee, 2019). There were no significant historical events that would be likely to affect the outcome of this research, although domestically, reports of abuse in aged-care homes (Australian Government, 2019) and unfair fees and contracts in retirement villages (Ferguson, 2017) have influenced older adults when making residential choices.

By selecting three core examples of music making by older adults (an orchestra in a relatively high socio-economic region, a recorder group in Brisbane, and a U3A handbell class in a region regarded as having socio-economic challenges), and interviewing older-adult musicians from other community music ensembles around Brisbane suburbs (including chamber music groups and wind bands), research participants represented the socio-economic and music diversity of South East Queensland. However, as is commonly found during investigations into the music practices of older adults (see, for example, Creech et al., 2014, p. 135), older-adult musician informants tend to be well educated, financially secure, and having had music opportunities during their school years. Descriptions of the informants and geographical areas (Chapter 5) may provide context for transferring the findings to comparable national and international settings where ageing populations are supported in their leisure pursuits.
Every effort was made to acquire the opinions of those who did not participate in music activities. However, the nature of the research, and the need for ethical, up-front disclosure, are likely to have resulted in more positive responses than would have been the case with those who chose not to participate. As the outcome of the research is unlikely to have either advantages or disadvantages for the research participants, assumptions were generally made that answers would be honest and accurate to the best of participants’ knowledge and recall (see also, Tsugawa, 2009, p. 48).

Another limitation related to the categorisation of themes and the instances of overlapping between categories (see Chapter 3; and also discussed by Jansen, 2005). Where subjective decisions were made in such instances, these have been explained throughout the text.

While results of this study may inform future researchers and practitioners of music-making activities, the motivations and constraints recognised by this volunteer research sample may manifest differently across other age cohorts and geographical locations.

**RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY**

My position as a participant, or informant (Creswell, 2003), in this research is explicit in four aspects: first, I am an older adult, a “Third Ager,” born in 1956 at the midpoint of the baby-boom era; second, I commenced formal music training at the age of 13, and recommenced at 50, having been preoccupied with a range of careers and sporting activities; third, I have been engaged in a variety of community music activities throughout most of my adult life; and fourth, the reported benefits of, and constraints to, music participation are exemplified in my own music endeavours, particularly now, as age-related challenges thwart my quality of life.

Before moving to Queensland in 2010, I had had extensive experience with music groups throughout the state of New South Wales (NSW), the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) and even as distant as Western Australia (WA) as a string teacher and performer, music arranger and conductor. This has shaped much of my knowledge about community music in Australia in general. More particularly, I have been able to learn about the realities of older-adult musicians as I move further into my 60s.
In Chapter 1: Music Participation by Older Adults, I have established the context and rationale for this research, introduced the research questions and key terminology, and outlined the aims, contributions, and limitations of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review acknowledges the work of research scholars and their investigations into music participation by older adults. It presents an overview of research into the leisure choices of older Australian adults and how active music making factors into those choices. The perceived benefits of, motivations for, and constraints to music making by older adults are outlined, demonstrating the knowledge gap of research into barriers and constraints to music participation.

In Chapter 3: Methodology, Approaches and Theoretical Models, I present the philosophical and methodological foundations and practical, grounded, approaches that guided data collection and analysis, and I describe two theoretical models that were adapted to this research: the popular leisure constraints model of Crawford et al. (1991), and the lesser known EAST framework of the UK government’s Behavioural Insights Team (2014).

Chapter 4: Leisure Activities in Older Adulthood addresses the first research sub-question by reporting on the leisure activities of older adults and the extent to which active music participation features in those activities. The perceived barriers to music participation and reasons for non-participation as reported by survey respondents across Queensland are presented here.

In Chapter 5: Examples of Active Older Musicians, I introduce and describe the activities of three core ensembles that serve as examples of music participation by older adults. Older-adult musicians, mostly from these ensembles, were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews or focus groups, and talk about their music activities and experiences, including their motivations for participation and any constraints to their participation.

The constraints to music participation that were shared by the informants are presented in Chapters 6, 7, and 8: Intrapersonal, Structural, and Interpersonal Constraints. Intrapersonal constraints are divided into physiological and psychological constraints; structural constraints represent organisational or
environmental obstacles to music making; and the interpersonal constraints chapter reports and discusses challenges of a social nature that emerged from the interviews and that may arise in any arena relying on human interaction.

In Chapter 9: Facilitating Music Participation with the MASTER Framework, I offer a new framework that provides guidelines to prospective music facilitators and other stakeholders for breaking down perceived barriers and overcoming constraints to participation by older adults in community music ensembles.

**Chapter 10: Summary, Implications and Future Research**, concludes the thesis with a summary of the key findings of this research and offers a way forward for researchers and music facilitators who have an interest in furthering music opportunities for ageing, but able and active musicians.

**POSTSCRIPT**

*As for my first elderly violin student: she passed her Grade 3 violin exam at the age of 69 and continued playing in her church orchestra until the age of 80. Her vivaciousness and optimism, despite the many hardships that confronted her throughout her life—including arthritic fingers and the loss of loved ones—made her an exemplar of positive ageing through music participation. Ten years after her death, she still continues to be an inspiration to all those who were gifted with her friendship, joy, and spirit.*

~o~
Old dogs can learn new tricks. Not only that, but can perhaps learn them even better than young dogs—once they get over the notion that they can’t learn them.

(John Holt, Never too late, 1978, p. 180)

The aim of this literature review was to investigate prior scholarship that addressed older adults’ engagement in music activities, and thus provide a foundation upon which to position the findings of my own research of the realities of older adults’ music activities in Queensland, Australia. This review commences with an overview of research into the leisure choices of older Australian adults and how active music making may factor into those choices. Determinants of community music activities, as they are represented in the literature, are then considered in light of the perceived benefits of music participation; the motivations for participation; and the perceived obstacles, constraints, or challenges that deter older adults from participating in music pursuits.

**LEISURE ACTIVITIES OF OLDER ADULTS**

As the population ages and older adults have more leisure time following retirement from full-time work or family commitments, leisure activities become increasingly important in providing a sense of purpose and a mode of enjoyment—crucial elements for the maintenance of personal and, by extension, societal health and wellbeing (see, for example, Dupuis & Alzheimer, 2008; Fullager, 2013; Payne, Mowen, & Montoro-Rodriguez, 2006). The first research sub-question related to the extent to which music activities factor into the lives of older adults. It aimed to uncover the reasons for non-participation in music activities.

The objective of much of the scholarly literature on leisure activities and older adults has been to inform occupational therapists and other clinical professions. For example, Bevil, O’Conner, and Mattoon (1994) investigated the relationship between leisure activities and the life satisfaction and perceived health status of retired adults over the age of 65. They found that those with greater life satisfaction participated in
more activities, while no relationship was found between leisure activity participation and perceived health status. Of the 32 older-adult participants tested, none reported active participation in music activities, although 27 of them (84%) regularly listened to the radio. Watching television was the most popular activity, reported by 91% of participants (p. 12).

Seeking to establish the role that occupational therapists could have in encouraging older adults to participate in leisure activities that would enhance their quality of life, Ball, Corr, Knight, and Lowis (2007) conducted structured interviews with 70 adults over the age of 60 who considered themselves to be healthy. They explored their leisure choices and reported key motivations as “enjoyment, pleasure and relaxation” (p. 393). Reported leisure activities included walking, sailing, listening to music, emailing, and volunteering. Again, there were no reports of active engagement in music activities—choral or instrumental.

In a discussion of disengagement and activity theories, Griffin and McKenna (1999) listed the factors that influence leisure behaviour as age, gender, socio-economic factors, perceived health status, and accessibility. They concluded that “while the amount and variety of leisure activities undertaken might decrease in people with specific characteristics, leisure satisfaction remains high due to continued participation in a more limited but still valued number of activities” (p. 1). An important component of this thesis explored the inclination of active, older-adult musicians to make modifications that assist in adapting to increasing physical or cognitive disability brought about through ageing.

Adaptation was also addressed by Payne et al. (2006), who surveyed the perceived physical and mental health of 464 older adults (aged 50 and over) with self-reported arthritis. They concluded that “the broader the leisure repertoire, the higher the reported health,” and that “frequency of social interaction with friends was positively related to perceived mental health” (p. 20).

Fearing that older adults risked becoming a burden and ‘prisoners’ of their later years, McGuire (1984) conducted a factor analysis of leisure constraints reported by adults aged 45 to 93, noting five categories: “external resource; time; approval; ability/social; and physical well-being” (p. 313). External resource was defined by six constraints: “lack of equipment, lack of facilities, lack of information, not having anyone to teach the activity, the amount of planning required, and lack of money”
Respondents also reported work commitments and having more important things to do with their time. Some were affected by potential “ridicule or embarrassment,” “fear of making a mistake,” and “fear of disapproval” (p. 318). Negative perceptions of personal skill levels and physical issues around health or the weather were also offered as constraints to participation in leisure activities (p. 319).

A report from the ABS (2006a) highlighted the increasing leisure time enjoyed by Australian adults, particularly from the age of 50. It also exposed the amount of time spent on audio and/or visual media—including video games, listening to the radio and, more excessively, watching television (Bevil et al., 1994, p. 12; Leitner & Leitner, 2012, p. 19; Strain, Grabusic, Searle, & Dunn, 2002, p. 219)—which overwhelmingly surpassed the time engaged in any other activity across all age-groups (see Figure 3). Twenty-six percent of all video-gamers were reported to be over the age of 50 (Your Life Choices, 2015), and 39% of people aged 65 and over were reported to play video games (Brand & Todhunter, 2015, p. 5).

In the *Time Use Survey* conducted by the ABS (2006b, p. 14) Queenslanders, compared with residents of other Australian states, reported having the most available free time. Consequently, they spent more time on recreation and leisure

![Figure 3: Average time spent on selected recreation and leisure activities, by labour force status—2006. (ABS, 2006b, http://www.abs.gov.au; public domain).](image)
activities, and they also spent the most time engaged in sporting and outdoor activities. However, it is not evident why people choose to engage in some activities over others, nor whether they also participate in other less visible activities, such as music making.

Instead of being viewed as a life sentence (McGuire, 1984, p. 314) older adulthood could be embraced as a time for continued activities involving learning; personal and social development; and, above all, fun. Suto (as cited in Ball et al., 2007, p. 399) remarked, “Participating in leisure neither cures nor removes the effects of ageing or chronic health problems, but it does have the potential to change the quality of life for many individuals.” To offset the imbalance of leisure research in the areas of sport, outdoor activities, and travel, this thesis fills a research gap by investigating music participation as a viable leisure pursuit for older adults.

**REPORTED BENEFITS OF MUSIC PARTICIPATION**

The reported benefits of music participation and the contribution they have on a person’s quality of life have been addressed in the academic literature through research mostly into singing and choral activities for older adults (see, for example, Clift & Morrison, 2011; Livesey, Morrison, Clift, & Camic, 2012; Riley & Gridley, 2010; Southcott & Li, 2017; Stacy, Brittain, & Kerr, 2002); however, some music researchers have explored the perceived benefits of music participation through their investigations of instrumental groups.

In 2007, Coffman carried out an expansive survey that explored the perceptions of 1,652 older-adult New Horizons’ musicians about the benefits of their music participation (Coffman, 2008; Coffman & Barbosa, 2013). Categorised under four headings—emotional wellbeing, physical wellbeing, mental stimulation, or socialisation—98% of the comments reported by Coffman were positive, with just two percent commenting on the “discomfort in playing or carrying instruments” or the inability to perform as well as they would like (Coffman & Barbosa, 2013, p. 265). Reported physical benefits included improvements to the lungs and cardiovascular system, posture, muscle tone, flexibility, dexterity, and coordination. Cognitive gains were reported in concentration, alertness, focus, memory, imagination, and hand-eye coordination. Emotional wellbeing included a sense of purpose and happiness, while comments regarding socialisation included a sense of
belonging, new friends, opportunity to improve social skills, and social support mechanisms during difficult times (p. 266).

A body of literature dealing with improvements in cognitive functioning confined research to older adults who acquired music skills very early in life and continued music activities throughout most of their life course (examples include Craik & Bialystok, 2006; Hanna-Pladdy & Gajewski, 2012; Hanna-Pladdy & MacKay, 2011; Wan & Schlaug, 2010; White-Schwoch, Carr, & Anderson, 2013). However, Professor of Neuropsychology, Hervé Platel, and his team in France undertook neuro-imaging of healthy, ageing “nonmusicians” who were just starting to learn to play a musical instrument (Cole, 2014). They sought to establish whether older adults’ music expertise protected them from “the deleterious neurocognitive effects of normal ageing” (Platel & Groussard, n.d.). In an earlier investigation, which sought to explain how the neural implementation of music expertise transferred from music learning to non-music cognitive functions, the team concluded that “musical practice could be a good environmental enrichment to promote cerebral and cognitive reserves, thereby reducing the deleterious effect of aging on cognitive functions” (Fauvel, Groussard, Eustache, Desgranges, & Platel, 2013, p. 1).

Other important research on the health and wellbeing benefits of music participation was conducted by the Music for Life team based at the University of London (see, for example, New Dynamics of Ageing, 2012; Creech, Hallam, Varvarigou, McQueen, & Gaunt, 2013), and the Lifelong Learning in Music and the Arts research group in The Netherlands (Lifelong learning in music, 2015; Completed research 2012–2016, n.d). The Music for Life research reported physical, intellectual, creative, and social benefits from music participation (Hallam et al., 2014, p. 115); and older-adult orchestral participants reported “enjoyment, happiness, relief from loneliness, opportunities for progression, added meaning in life and community belongingness” (Creech, Hallam, & Varvarigou, 2012, p. 8). Participants in the Music for Life research who had faced major life changes, such as retirement or loss of loved ones, reported that the music activities had provided them with “a regular commitment, purpose, social support, challenge, and enjoyment” (Creech, Hallam, Varvarigou, & McQueen, 2014, p. 136).

As part of the team in the Netherlands, Boog and Burt-Perkins (2009) researched healthy ageing in music and the arts, focussing most pertinently on “learning music
in older adulthood.” Through an extensive literature review, they exposed the lack of research into the effects that learning a musical instrument could have on wellbeing or cognition, and offered a conceptual framework that could act as a foundation for future study. Perkins and Williamon (2013) expanded on these foundations in a mixed methods study that argued for the role of learning music in older adulthood as a means of enhancing subjective wellbeing. Offering advice for better facilitation of music programs for older adults (p. 565) they concluded that learning music could enhance subjective wellbeing through mechanisms that encompassed aspects of social, musical, and emotional fulfilment (p. 550).

Research emanating from the Music Health and Wellbeing research stream at the Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre (QCRC) in Brisbane included Sunderland et al.’s (2015) expansion on Schulz and Northridge’s (2004) framework of social determinants of health and wellbeing to “map health and wellbeing outcomes of music participation” (p. 1) for people from culturally diverse groups. Three elements that were not included in the original framework—“cultural expression, music-making, and consolidation of personal and social identity” (p. 1)—establish an intersection with the current research as critical elements for enhancing the health and wellbeing of older adults.

More recently, Fung and Lehmberg (2016) reviewed prior research on the physical and psychological impacts (pp. 30−48) and the social impacts (pp. 49−57) of music participation on the quality of life of older adults. They found that the most revealing aspect of the review was that impacts of music participation on the quality of life of older adults were “overwhelmingly positive” (p. 43).

In Dyer’s (2016) ethnographic study of older-adult community music participants, reported benefits included cherished social connections, confidence building, memory building, joy and self-satisfaction. Adult participants in Chiodo’s (1997) investigation of music participation reported benefits such as self-expression, fun, and personal enrichment (pp. 205-206). These benefits were confirmed by Gembris’s (2008) study participants, who attributed enjoyment, happiness, and community connectedness to their music activities, along with “relaxation, the expression of feelings and giving a sense to life” (p. 103).

Private music teachers, university music graduates and, by extension, tertiary music institutions, could also benefit from the growing market of older-adult learners
through the provision of instruction, music facilitation, and rehearsal venues. Additionally, music participation may lead to potential savings for medical services as it is more cost-effective to improve health and wellbeing through music activities than through the healthcare system or other interventions (see, for example, Babikian et al., 2013).

Although the reported benefits of music participation strengthen the rationale for research funding and support from government, music education providers, and other stakeholders, they are not necessarily the factors that motivate older adults to start, resume, or persevere with music-making activities. This was corroborated by Pitts (2014), who remarked that the benefits of music participation “tend not to be the primary motivations of those people who belong to amateur orchestras, bands, and choirs, who join instead for the pleasures of rediscovering and developing skills, being among like-minded people, and making music together (as cited in Pitts, 2017, p. 176). The purported benefits of music making may be nothing more than a small subset of the intrinsic or extrinsic motivations for music making (see, for example, Crooke, 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2000). To promote music participation by older adults, the motivations that inspire participation need to offset the constraints that limit participation, or as Douglas (2011) suggested, “Participation is sustained when the benefits exceed the costs of participating” (p. 27). Such a balancing act (see Figure 4), and the art of constraint negotiation, is the focus of this thesis.

![Figure 4: Motivations vs barriers & constraints—a balancing act.](image-url)
Coffman (2007) reported that the primary motives for joining a community music ensemble are social and musical in nature (p. 1). Fung and Lehmberg (2016, pp. 27–28) categorised motivations as personal, musical, psychological, social, spiritual, or a combination of any of these. Concurring with this, Tsugawa’s (2009) New Horizons informants were motivated by the camaraderie associated with group music making, and by the purported benefits, including a sense of wellbeing (p. iii), which are perceived to be an outcome of music participation. They were also motivated by the fun and personal enrichment (p. 72) of group music making. Douglas (2011) added a further category of personal motivations, which concerns the psychological benefits gained through “enjoyment, satisfaction, self-expression, pride, or distractions from routine or daily concerns” (p. 25). For Douglas, music motivations related to the love of playing or learning about music, while social motivations relate to the opportunities for interpersonal interactions.

Myers et al. (2013) acknowledged that “not all musicians and potential musicians had the same motivations for musical engagement” (p. 140). While Pitts (2005) reported the strongest motivation as “the sheer pleasure of musical participation” (p. 118), Dabback (2007) stressed the communal calling: “Older adults enter the New Horizons program to learn to play a musical instrument, but more importantly, to join with others who have the same interest” (p. 109). Reasons offered for joining an ensemble in Pitts and Robinson’s (2016) research included the level of playing, the choice of repertoire, the chance to meet new friends, the challenge, and the chance to acquire new skills (p. 330).

Social interaction has been reported as a prominent motivation in much contemporary literature. In an exploration of how and why older adults spent their leisure time participating in a community band, Goodrich (2019) found that motivations centred on the performance level and repertoire of their ensemble, as well as on the opportunities for social interactions that occurred even beyond immediate ensemble settings. Roulston, Jutras, and Kim (2015) explored the music experiences, motivations, goals and learning strategies of 15 adults in the south-east United States, most of whom had prior music learning and experiences. The primary motivations for learning a musical instrument or joining an ensemble were “to develop technical mastery of a specific instrument or to learn particular repertoire”
Continued participation was influenced by group immersion, emotional connections with the music, and benefits in “dealing with health issues and improving cognitive abilities” (p. 329). Thus, initial motivations may be ones of musicality and accessibility, while ongoing participation may be influenced more by the perceived social and emotional benefits of group participation.

Social interactions provide an opportunity to have fun, which cannot be discounted as a strong motivational force. The Music for Life team explored the characteristics of older-adult music participants and found that the “predominant reason for participating in musical activities was enjoyment” (Hallam et al., 2012, p. 21). This, of course, raises definitional arguments about fun and enjoyment (see Chapter 9).

The above studies provide a solid foundation for understanding older-adult motivations for music participation, and the findings from the current investigation were largely consistent with earlier research.

**Music Participation by Older Adults**

In a preliminary review of the literature, my goal was to gain an overview of the scholarship that addressed participation in music activities by older adults, with a particular focus on the positive aspects—the reported benefits of and motivations for—music participation. The benefits derived from active music making that were suggested by my informants confirmed what was already substantiated in earlier research. However, these perceived benefits appear to make up only a small subset of the motivational factors that prompt older adults to participate in active music making. Late into the data collection and analytical process, I scrutinised the motivations for music participation and the barriers and constraints to participation as reported in earlier research. This procedure conforms with the grounded theory approach of delaying the literature review until late into the analysis (see, for example, Charmaz, 2014; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Jones & Alony, 2011; Suddaby, 2006; Thornberg, 2011).

A foundation for exploring the factors that promote community music participation is offered in earlier research and includes: an outline of the top five “critical success factors in Australian community music” (Bartleet, 2010, p. 34); the “nine key domains” of community music (Bartleet, 2009, p. 30; Bartleet et al., 2009); the common factors which were “present in significant projects” (Cahill, 1998, p. 147);
notions of artistry and excellence addressed by Harrison (2010, p. 340); the role of
fun over learning as highlighted by Koopman (2007, p. 156); and the social
determinants of health (Sunderland et al., 2015). Cavitt (2005), Leitner and Leitner
(2012), and Onishi (2014) also listed factors affecting music participation.

Much of the research into music participation by older adults in instrumental
ensembles has been conducted by scholars associated with the New Horizons Wind
Band movement in North America (see, for example, Coffman, 2002b, 2006, 2007,
2008; Dabback, 2007, 2008a, 2008b; Ernst, 2001; Kruse, 2007, 2009, 2012; and
Rohwer, 2009, 2013) most of whom were members of the Adult and Community
Music Education, Special Research Interest Group (ACME SRIG) of the National
Association for Music Education (NAfME, 2015).

With New Horizons members as his sample, Coffman investigated the effects on the
quality of life of older adults through their participation in wind bands (Coffman,
2002a; Coffman & Adamek, 1999) and how the personality traits of older-adult
musicians influenced their decision to join a music ensemble (2007). In Tasmania,
Coffman researched the motivations, hopes, and frustrations of adults in a
community band (2006) and looked at how pedagogical methods contributed to the
attraction and retention of adult learners. More recently, Coffman, with Wehr (2018),
honed in on the challenges that musicians faced with vision impairment and how
these were negotiated in their music activities.

Dabback, another New Horizons wind band facilitator, investigated how theories of
andragogy were reflected in the music education and practices of older adults (2005),
the role that social interaction and social networks played in adult music education
(2007, 2008a), and the formation of identities and healthy self-images of older adults
through music participation (2010). Also researching music learning in later life,
Kruse followed his application of the tenets of andragogy to adult music learning
(2007) with investigations into adult motivations for instrumental music participation
(2009) and the self-esteem of adult community musicians relative to age, gender, and
type of ensemble (2012). Rohwer (2005b) similarly focussed on adult education in
music from the perspective of music educators and how music is taught, and the
different pedagogical needs of older and younger students (2009). In other research
(2008a, 2008b), she discussed issues of health and wellbeing, and how ailments were
accommodated by older musicians. Her research into the perceptions of the spouses
of wind band members (2013) provide a rare perspective on adult music participation (see Chapter 8, Spousal support).

Reporting on music programs in residential homes for the aged, where public transport and venue availability presented no challenges, Davidson (1980) offered several “keys to success.” These included adequate equipment and materials; regular scheduling; a progressive course of study; recognising and tapping into the talents of participants; and, above all “dedicated, enthusiastic leadership” (pp. 28-9). For non-institutionalised older adults, Cavitt (2005) investigated factors influencing participation in community bands, reporting that the most enjoyable aspects for her 401 adult respondents were the music played, personal satisfaction, social interaction, enjoyment, and fun (p. 42).

Such “keys to success” (Davidson, 1980) or “critical success factors” (Bartleet, 2010) were also the focus of a three-year ethnographic study, *Sound Links*, conducted by the QCRC in locations across Australia. This study investigated the success factors of six contexts for informal music learning and teaching (Bartleet et al., 2009). Although the goal of the research was to examine models of community music making that could inform music educators of “young learners” (Dunbar-Hall & Bartleet, 2009, p. 34), at least six of the reported “nine domains of community music” (Schippers & Bartleet, 2013, p. 470) form junctures with the community music activities of older adults: infrastructure, organisation, visibility, social engagement, dynamic music making, and engaging pedagogy and facilitation (Schippers & Bartleet, 2013, p. 459). Each domain was examined for its positive and negative aspects (Bartleet et al., 2009, p. 140). The positive aspects (advantages) were found to intersect with the motivations of informants in this research for music participation (as covered in Chapter 5), while the negative aspects (disadvantages) intersected with their reported constraints to music participation (as covered in Chapters 6, 7, and 8).

Bartleet later proposed five “critical success factors in Australian community music,” which included aspects of leadership, organisation, structural resources, music choices, and community support (2010, p. 34). These aligned with Cahill’s earlier common factors “present in significant projects” (1998, p. 147), and which also placed the notion of strong leadership as a priority. These themes intersect with some
of the findings in this research and contribute to the MASTER theoretical framework in Chapter 9.

Factors that influence music participation were embedded in the motivations for participation—the reasons older adults give for choosing to play in music ensembles. These motivations are explored further in Chapter 5 and do not always reflect the reported benefits of music participation. Despite the purported benefits of music participation and the motivations of older adults to play in music ensembles, many factors arise that act as barriers or constraints to participation—a research area that attracts less research focus and support, possibly because music researchers do not wish to highlight the difficulties associated with fostering music education and music practices. However, it is precisely the barriers and constraints—or, to use Stebbins’s (1992) terminology, the ‘costs’ of participation—that need to be given fuller attention if music programs are to attract and retain participants.

**CONSTRAINTS TO MUSIC PARTICIPATION**

In its 2014 report, the Australia Council for the Arts stated that non-creators in general arts activities give *lack of time* as the main access obstacle, preferring to participate in sporting activities during their limited leisure time (p. 86). Other reported obstacles to participation included lack of opportunity, distance to travel, health problems, lack of someone to do it with, and issues of identity (Australia Council, 2014, p. 21). To date, it would seem there has been little investigation into the reasons that non-participants give for discounting active music participation, although the Australia Council for the Art’s more recent National Arts Participation Survey results (Australia Council, 2017) reported lack of interest as the main barrier to involvement for those who were disengaged. For those who were classified as supportive but disengaged, time and money were the main barriers to involvement; they were “more likely to nominate relaxing at home or going out for dinner and drinks as the best option for their spare time and cash” (p. 37). Establishing common factors for non-participation in music activities could provide the knowledge required to make music participation more appealing and accessible.

Far more of the scholarly literature into music education and participation has focussed on the benefits of playing music, particularly for school-age students (see Bledsoe, 2015; Collins, 2014; Creech, Saunders, & Welch, 2016; Kenny, 2015; Myers, 2005), than on the deterrents or constraints, despite the human tendency to be
distracted by “the squeaky wheel” (Martin, 2011, p. 2). Davis (2011) commented on this neglect in relation to interpersonal constraints: “Realistically, any program that endures for decades, and that involves people from multiple situations and perspectives will experience its share of tensions and tribulations. The existing literature makes no mention of and offers no insight into such issues” (p. 14). In their review of the literature addressing the benefits of music participation for healthy older adults, Lehmberg and Fung (2010) also commented on this scholarly neglect: “Detriments of music participation are hardly mentioned in the literature” (p. 20). In a later work, however, the same authors drew attention to the decline in an array of age-related physical abilities and cognitive processes (Fung & Lehmberg, 2016, pp. 24–26) that impede music participation and cause older adults to lose confidence in their learning capacity. Physiological and psychological constraints to music making, as they were reported by the musicians in this research, are presented and discussed in Chapter 6.

In Solé et al.’s (2010) investigation into the contributions that music has on the quality of life of older adults, participants were asked to recount the difficulties they had in accessing the music program. Barriers and difficulties were reported by the authors as having little relevance in their study, although “not having enough music knowledge” was an aspect that intimidated some participants. The music programs consisted of choir, music appreciation, and music therapy, which may account for the minimal difficulties that were reported. Compared to the extensive selections offered for motivations, little clarity was provided in the questionnaire about potential barriers.

One of eight questions that Tsugawa (2009) investigated in his doctoral dissertation concerned the challenges that New Horizons members, who were aged 65 and over (p. 31), experienced when playing a musical instrument (p. 6). Reported challenges included matters of technique such as difficulties with quick tonguing, the lack of rhythmical drive, and hitting notes at the extremes of the instrument’s register (p. 56). Nine of Tsugawa’s 16 participants referred to physical challenges, such as fatigue and arthritis, and problems with their vision and hearing when playing their instruments; four mentioned that performance anxiety was a challenge (p. 71; p. 122); and one informant told of his frustration when he realised that he would never be able to play the violin “with an acceptable degree of proficiency” (p. 101). Such intrapersonal challenges are corroborated by musicians in this research and
presented in Chapter 6. Some of Tsugawa’s informants mentioned being frustrated with the closure of rehearsal venues during the holiday period (p. 2), or the “less than fulfilling repertoire” (p. 127). Such structural constraints are the topic of Chapter 7. Some of Tsugawa’s informants were also frustrated with players who lacked the required skills to keep up with the group, or with conductors they considered “too intense” (p. 109). These and similar challenges referred to by participants in this research are of an interpersonal nature and are discussed in Chapter 8.

Researching the health benefits of singing, Riley and Gridley’s (2010) thematic analysis of interviews with 44 adult choristers evoked only one out of 21 initial themes that related to barriers or constraints. Categorised as ‘Challenges to be met’ (p. 6), the ‘downsides’ of singing in a choir were not readily forthcoming: “Overall the focus groups struggled to name any negative associations with their singing experiences” (p. 11). Further prompting elicited remarks about group size, gender imbalance, repertoire choice, and personality differences (p. 14). Several of these challenges intersect with the challenges of playing in instrumental groups, as confirmed by participants in this research and reported in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

The Music for Life team in London is one research hub that has investigated some of the more negative aspects of music making. They sought to identify the traits of those who currently do not participate and suggested ways in which participation could be widened, addressing issues such as location, cost, publicity, and mentoring (Hallam et al., 2012, p. 41). In Chapter 9 of their book, *Active Ageing with Music* (2014), Creech et al. presented probably the most thorough report to date of the potential barriers to participation. They categorised these barriers as structural, informational, social, and intrapersonal; the latter was also referred to as personal or dispositional (p. 2; p. 135). This classification approximates Crawford et al.’s (1991) hierarchical model of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints to leisure participation. In a later report, Creech (2018, p. 103) categorised the barriers to music participation as visible barriers (such as transport, finance, and access) and invisible barriers (such as prior experience, confidence, and cultural stereotypes).

The Music for Life researchers also explored the realities of participation for those who facilitate music activities for older adults (Hallam et al., 2016). From questionnaires and interviews with 14 music facilitators in the United Kingdom, they
reported many rewards, but “considerable challenges” (p. 19) in terms of resources and training when working with older people.

Gembris’s (2008) interview questions of older-adult orchestral members (aged 40 to 97 with a mean age of 71) included questions about age-related constraints to music participation and how these were negotiated (p. 104). 52% of his respondents reported age-related constraints, and the constraints increased with age (p. 105). In Pitts and Robinson’s (2016) investigation into the “difficulties and dissatisfactions of sustaining musical participation in adulthood” (p. 328), 18 participants, 13 of whom were aged 45 and over, selected 33 reasons for ceasing music participation. The most significant selections were ‘family and work commitments’ (ten participants), and ‘moving to a new area’ (seven participants). Three participants each selected ‘medical circumstances’, ‘doubts about own musical abilities’, ‘time commitment’, and ‘no access to an instrument’ (p. 331). Lack of ability and time were themes that also emerged in Shansky’s (2010) pilot study of the motivations of adults in a community orchestra. Shansky’s participants were motivated by a desire to remain musically active, and by the opportunities for learning (p. 7). However, these motivations were offset by frustrations with a lack of ability, a lack of time to practice, egos, and a “lack of a musically satisfying experience playing with this level of performer” (p. 8).

Several factors that contributed to premature cessation of musical instrument instruction by adults are also offered by Locke (n.d.), who suggested that adults had little understanding of the commitment that was necessary, their expectations were far too high, they were “far too self-conscious about making mistakes,” they lost sight of their initial motivations, and they lacked awareness of physiological issues like fatigue and stamina. Such physiological and psychological constraints constitute intrapersonal constraints that are discussed in Chapter 6.

A 2004 study by Crombie et al. sought to identify strategies to encourage older adults to participate in increased physical activity. The authors identified 11 factors that deterred older adults from physical activities. Research into the deterrents for active music participation by older adults may have some instructive overlap. Such overlapping deterrents are likely to be: lack of interest, lack of convenient transport, dislike of going out alone or in the evening, perceived lack of ability, lack of energy, chronic pain, and doubting that meeting new people is beneficial. Crombie et al.
concluded that certain beliefs and fears needed to be changed and facilities needed to be more accessible (p. 292).

Bugos (2014) reported programmatic, musical, and logistical difficulties resulting from cognitive training programs, which required more intense practice and learning (p. 33). Programmatic difficulties included the fast pace of instruction, the class duration, and the lack of individual attention; musical difficulties included bimanual coordination, grasping rhythms, and learning music theory; and logistical difficulties included venue lighting, and arranging suitable meeting days and times. Time wasting in class was regarded as an “environmental limitation” (pp. 31–32). It is categorised in the current research as an interpersonal constraint, based on the source of the time wasting—both the musicians who instigate it and the facilitators who do not maintain control over it.

Consistent with earlier research, de Vries (2010) commented that the themes emerging in research about music engagement were “overwhelmingly positive” (p. 253). However, the extent to which music research has explored the more positive factors—the perceived benefits of and motivations for music participation—combined with the music-centric bias of researchers, has created an imbalance. Past research has rarely asked informants to reflect upon the negative aspects—the difficulties faced by older adults—during their music activities. Even in this research, barriers and constraints to music participation were not intended as the original research focus; only through data analysis of interview transcripts, and a subsequent review of music scholarship (see Chapter 2), did the need to fill this research gap become evident.

Bowles (2010) recommended that the music education profession advocate for “more research that will provide further insight into and solutions for challenges that are specific to adult music teaching and learning” (p. 58). This research sets out these challenges (see Chapters 6, 7, and 8) within the framework of leisure constraints theory (see Chapter 3), while providing a MASTER framework (Chapter 9) that has the potential to guide music-making activities for older adults.

One of the earliest studies to address the constraints to music participation was carried out in 1989 by Robert Stebbins. After interviewing 32 barbershop singers in Calgary, Stebbins compared the ‘rewards and thrills’ with the ‘costs’, which he categorised as ‘disappointments, dislikes, and tensions’ (1992). The disappointments
that emerged in his grounded theory research included: low placements in contests, the formation of splinter groups by better singers, and low levels of commitment by some members. The latter was also classified as a dislike, which Stebbins regarded as more profound than the disappointments, or ‘pet peeves’. Dislikes also included lack of leadership and power politics. For Stebbins, dislikes were problems that required “significant adjustments by the individual, including possibly even leaving the art” (p. 129). Tensions included stage fright or nervousness, as well as concerns about inclusivity and whether a group should be composed strictly of those ‘who know their art well’ (p. 131). Stebbins cautioned:

So poignant are the costs of serious leisure that many participants ask themselves from time to time why they do it. This means that researchers must always consider such costs in any analysis of the 'durable benefits' of serious leisure. (1992, p. 123)

Although Ellis’s (2018) research focussed on the benefits of music participation for older adults, questions regarding challenges were also posed. Reported challenges include: learning the chords, distinguishing differences in sound, finger dexterity, fast rhythms, arthritis, and singing in tune and with volume (p. 118). Some of the participants in the ukulele group discontinued participation for a variety of reasons: some moved away from Whyalla, and two passed away (p. 119).

A study that focusses on negative aspects of music participation risks “presenting a more negative portrayal of musical participation than is representative of participants’ overall experience” (Pitts et al., 2015, p. 10). Bartleet expressed similar concerns about depicting music participation with an imbalanced focus on negative factors (personal communication, 13 December 2018). However, it is through failure that we often learn best (see Rohwer, 2005b, p. 44). An understanding of the barriers and constraints to music participation is “grounded in the desire to do something about them” (Goodale & Witt, 1989, p 443; and see Jansen, 2005, p. 50; Myers et al., 2013, p. 137). I, therefore, make no apology for the emphasis in this research on the barriers and constraints to music participation. My resilient, erudite informants shared not only the constraints they faced in their music making, but also their strategies for “negotiating” (Jackson et al., 1993) those constraints. Such strategies enable them to lead long, active, and evolving musical lives. Their statements (see
Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9) can assist future generations of retirees to relish the many ways of community music participation.
Prior research into the music activities of older adults has focussed on the purported benefits of participation and the motivations that older adults offer for their music participation (see Chapter 2). Very few studies, however, have addressed the perceived barriers and constraints that prevent or limit older adults from taking up a musical instrument, or from continuing to play in community music ensembles. The aim of this research was to develop understanding and theory from the perceived realities and experiences of older-adults, both participant musicians and non-participants, particularly as these realities are affected by perceived barriers and constraints to music participation.

This chapter begins with an outline of philosophical and methodological influences on my selection and application of the various research methods used in this mixed-methods study. I then describe the research design and elaborate on the methods used for data collection and analysis, justifying my use of a grounded theory approach and explaining its implications for intersecting data collection with data analysis, and for developing theory. This chapter ends with an introduction to two theoretical frameworks that were adapted for use as tools of thematic synthesis and structure.

**PHILOSOPHICAL INFLUENCES AND CONSTRUCTIVISM**

Early reflections about the appropriate research methods and tools for this study were guided by pragmatism, prior research experience, and the wisdom of music mentors and research scholars. As a pragmatist, the methods of data collection and analysis were those that I believed would best serve in answering the research question (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 27; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006, p. 199) based on ontological and epistemological assumptions.
Neuman (2014) distinguished between five diverse yet often interrelated approaches—positivist, interpretive, critical, feminist and postmodernist—summarising each paradigm according to ontological and epistemological assumptions, and to the theoretical and practical goals of the research. The philosophical differences of the research paradigms have consequences for conducting the research, interpreting the findings, and making policy recommendations (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 112; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006).

Neuman’s table of research approaches (2014, p. 121; see Appendix A) served as a convenient tool through which I could understand the positioning of my own research and validate my methodological choices. I concluded that interpretivism—also referred to as naturalistic inquiry and, more commonly, (social) constructivism (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008, p. 8; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 12; Lincoln & Guba, 1985)—was my overarching philosophical research paradigm.

Constructivism has its roots in the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006, p. 196). Constructivist ontology acknowledges the constructed, multi-faceted, nature of reality, which is founded in people’s perceptions and “exists as people experience it and assign meaning to it” (Neuman, 2014, p. 104; and see Stake, 1995; Young & Collin, 2004). Thus, multiple realities are contextually reconstructed and reflect temporal situations and audiences. The epistemological stance of this research acknowledges this subjectivity of evidence, and accepts that realities are “co-constructed between the researcher and the researched and shaped by individual experiences” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 37; see also Stratton, 1997, p. 119). As is the case in this study, findings derived from research within the constructivist paradigm are commonly analysed and presented using a grounded theory methodology or pattern analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 13; and see, for example, Bishop, 2015; Howell, 2017a; St George, 2010).

**METHODOLOGICAL INFLUENCES AND GROUNDED THEORY**

Supported by a constructivist philosophy, the choice of a suitable research methodology is only minimally simplified. In order to construct knowledge from the rich resources of informants’ narratives, I was challenged with deciding which, if any, of the methodological traditions or their contemporary genres would be most suited to my research. Accessing informants from one or more music-making exemplars did not necessitate a complete case study approach. It was not the music
ensembles that needed to be fully investigated, although sufficient knowledge of them would enhance contextual understanding of the narratives. For this purpose, I investigated three core examples of music making by older-adult musicians. The inductive probing of informants’ narratives was served best by a phenomenological or grounded theory approach.

Grounded theory was introduced by Glaser and Strauss (1967) as a strategy for social scientists to generate theory in qualitative research. It offers a detailed, systematic, yet flexible approach for managing and analysing unstructured or semi-structured qualitative data (Jones & Alony, 2011, p. 95; Pidgeon & Henwood, 1997, p. 245). In both phenomenology and grounded theory, interview transcripts, the usual source of explorative data pertaining to research questions, are examined for emerging themes. Both approaches are inductive and “their initial steps are almost identical” (Reiter, Stewart, & Bruce, 2011, p. 39). As Charmaz (2017) summarises, “Grounded theory aims to construct theory; phenomenology aims to describe” (p. 299). In phenomenology, qualitative data provide a rich source of lived experiences within the phenomenon for its own worth. In grounded theory, the same data are exploited, but the aim is to discover theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Reiter et al., 2011). In the absence of any attempt by grounded theorists to define the word discovery, the extent to which theory is discovered—or merely developed or adapted—creates confusion when attempting to nominate a methodological approach.

Grounded theorists use the terms discovering theory and generating theory interchangeably (see, for example, Creswell & Poth, 2018; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), yet in true lexical terms, discovering implies exploring and finding what is already out there. The Oxford Dictionary defines discover as “find out or become aware of, whether by research or searching or by chance” (Discover, 1992), while generate, “bring into existence; produce, evolve” (Generate, 1992), offers an element of creativity, or craft, advocated by subsequent grounded theorists. Turner (1981, p. 225) noted how researchers are encouraged to use their “creative intelligence” when using a grounded theory approach. Richards and Morse (2013) alluded to the creative quality of grounded theory while supporting the distinction between theory emergence and theory construction: “Theory emergence is often an event of discovery; theory construction is a craft” (p. 177). The “craft” aspect of grounded theory was given further credence by Charmaz (2014), who wrote, “The discovery process in grounded theory extends into the writing and rewriting stages” (p. 289).
Looking at Reiter et al.’s (2011, p. 40) table of comparison between grounded theory and phenomenology, it was evident that my research methodology overlapped the two approaches in aspects of data generation, researcher background, and representation of findings. For data generation, a grounded theory approach informed my selection of participants, observation of social interactions, conduct of interviews, and my attentiveness to “what informants say about themselves and others” (Reiter et al., 2011, p. 40). Phenomenologically, however, interviews tended towards being in-depth, unstructured, and lengthy conversations, occasionally bordering on collaboration, especially with music facilitators. In three significant aspects, however—data analysis, the positioning of scholarly literature, and the generation or adaptation of theory—my methodological approach weighted heavily towards grounded theory. This is consistent with Creswell and Poth (2018), who commented:

While narrative research focuses on individual stories told by participants, and phenomenology emphasizes the common experiences for a number of individuals, the intent of a grounded theory study is to move beyond description and to *generate or discover a theory*. (p. 82)

Theory generation in this research may be viewed more as an adaptation, or modification, of existing theory, leaving me to justify calling the methodological approach grounded theory. In a footnote, Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 2) maintained that *modifying* theory was not *generating* theory. However, it is my contention that, by modifying a theory, a researcher contributes to the development of that theory—although the degree of development may still remain contentious. Charmaz (2017) noted how grounded theorising could “generate fresh theoretical principles” (p. 299). When the original theory is not fully suited to the new data, or fully suited in new geographical or temporal contexts—or conversely, when new data do not fully conform to the older theory in the given form—rather than “forcing” the categories (Kelle, 2007; Seidman, 2006; Suddaby, 2006), it seems wholly preferable to adapt them in a more meaningful way. In so doing, we can be directed to a better understanding of the data and the phenomenon they represent through the lens of a known, albeit evolving, theory. Theory generation and adaptation are further discussed below.
A grounded theory approach not only provided a systematic method of identifying themes, categories, and their interrelationships (Reiter et al., 2011, p. 40); it also supported a flexible and continual interweaving of data collection, data analysis, and theory (re)construction. Representation of the findings was both phenomenological and theoretical: phenomenologically, it reflected the music experiences of older adults; theoretically, it codified those experiences within two existing, yet modified, theoretical frameworks.

These philosophical and methodological principles culminated in a constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2017). According to Langridge (as cited in Sloan & Bowe, 2014) methodology refers to “the general way to research a topic” (p. 4), whereas research methods are the specific techniques employed in obtaining and analysing the data. Constructivist researchers rely either on qualitative data collection methods, or on a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, where the quantitative data are used in a way that “supports or expands upon qualitative data and effectively deepens the description” (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006, p. 196). To capture the subjective and complex realities of older-adult musicians, a constructivist research paradigm provided the basis for selecting research methodology, methods, research design, and relevant literature.

**MIXED METHODS RESEARCH**

Each research methodology can incorporate either or both quantitative and qualitative methods (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 105). Within a constructivist paradigm, qualitative methods such as interviews and observation tend to predominate, but quantitative methods may also be used (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006, p. 199). Applying aspects of both streams has developed into the accepted and common practice of mixed methods research (in music research see, for example, Coffman, 2002b; Lewis, 2018; Lonie, 2018). Mackenzie and Knipe (2006, p. 199) noted that when using an interpretive paradigm, qualitative methods predominate over quantitative methods. In the current research, while quantitative research methods served to present data in statistical and graphical formats, qualitative research methods established the crux of the research design. Although mixed methods research is time consuming and requires knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative methodology, it enables a deeper understanding and validation of data, a priority in any research.
RESEARCH DESIGN

This research investigated the dynamics of music-making activities by older adults, and perceptions about their participation, or non-participation, in music activities. Four research sub-questions guided the strategies for data collection. The first question sought to discover the leisure activities of older adults, the motivations for their leisure choices, the extent to which active music participation factored into the lives of older adults, and the perceived barriers to their music participation. An online survey was designed and distributed to gain statistical information (quantitative data) and to gauge the attitudes (qualitative data) of older adults in South East Queensland towards active music participation.

The second and third research sub-questions relied on observations of music ensembles and interviews with ensemble participants to gain qualitative, and constructed, knowledge about the characteristics, motivations, and constraints of older-adult musicians. Three core music ensembles in South East Queensland supplied the main population sample for this investigation.

Although reference to prior research on older adults and music participation occurred before data collection activities, it was only after some early analysis of the interview data that a more focussed exploration of scholarship could be undertaken. Quantitative and qualitative approaches, in combination with earlier scholarship, provided data validation through triangulation.

TRIANGULATION

The term triangulation has been appropriated—or perhaps, more correctly, misappropriated—by researchers from its surveying and navigation origins (see Sandelowski, 1995, p. 569). Also referred to as “convergent validation” (Sandelowski, 2000, p. 248), as a research tool, triangulation serves “to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings within a single study” (Creswell, 2003, p. 217). Triangulation involves the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods in order to “offset the weaknesses inherent within one method with the strengths of the other method” (Creswell, 2003, p. 217).

A variety of research methods and tools were used in this research to facilitate data collection and triangulation, as represented in Figure 5.
Quantitative methods used in this research included an online survey and questionnaires from the interview participants.

**ONLINE SURVEY**

Statistics tell us that the most popular leisure activities regularly undertaken by older adults are watching television, walking, and gardening (Ball et al., 2007, p. 396; Bevil et al., 1994, p. 12). However, the statistics do not tell us why, or under what circumstances (if any) people take up a new activity, such as learning to play a musical instrument.

An online survey targeting older-adults who participated in non-music activities was conducted to gauge their reasons for not participating in music activities and whether, and to what extent, they harboured a desire to do so. The main aim of the survey was to better understand if, and how, music facilitators could design programs that might be more attractive to a broader cohort of active, older adults. The survey included questions of a qualitative nature, such as open-ended questions seeking respondents’ reasons for non-participation in music making. These constitute the perceived barriers to music participation. Where music research has generally focussed on music participants (see Chapter 2), this thesis serves to fill the current gap.
gap in knowledge about barriers that are perceived by non-participants, an aspect that is harder to explore due to recruitment challenges (see below, Recruitment Strategies). Details and results of the survey, including the motivations and influences behind leisure choices, the past music experiences of respondents, and their potential interest in learning to play a musical instrument, are discussed in Chapter 4.

**Survey Design**

The design of the survey instrument was guided by pragmatism as well as by research texts on survey design (see, for example, Buchanan & Hvizdak, 2009; Harrison, 2007). Some assistance in terminology and the inclusion of leisure themes was gained from reports by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) on leisure activities and demographic classifications (see, for example, ABS, 2006b). Prior leisure and music research, as listed earlier, also influenced the themes and design of questions. Guidance was particularly provided by Cavitt’s (2005) survey of factors influencing adult participation in community bands (M. Cavitt, personal communication, 5 October 2016), and Kreutz and Brünger’s (2012) survey exploring the negative experiences of longstanding members of choral societies (G. Kreutz, personal communication, 7 April 2016). Questions were reviewed by my supervisors, and piloted by two older-adult musician colleagues. Their recommendations were included in the final version of the survey (see Appendix F for the final list of survey questions).

The online Leisure Activities Survey consisted of eight sections and 61 questions (see Table 1), 14 of which were open-ended, allowing respondents to answer freely and thus to contribute richer, qualitative data.

The postcode entry on page 1 of the survey provided respondents with manageable entry to and familiarisation with the survey instrument. It also facilitated the elimination of responses from non-Queensland residents; that is, those respondents who did not enter a postcode in the 4000s. Even though the survey invitation specified residential criteria (see Appendix J), six of the 295 respondents indicated they were from states other than Queensland. Leeway was given to Queensland residents who lived on or near the Gold Coast, some suburbs of which have postcodes in the 3000s.
Table 1: Section headings and questions types in the Leisure Activities Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Number &amp; type of questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Postcode</td>
<td>PC01</td>
<td>1 closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>General Leisure Activities Part 1</td>
<td>GLA01–02</td>
<td>2 closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>General Leisure Activities Part 2</td>
<td>GLA03–09</td>
<td>4 closed, 3 open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Retirement Activities</td>
<td>RA01–05</td>
<td>4 closed, 1 open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Musical Activities Part 1</td>
<td>MA01–04b</td>
<td>4 closed, 1 open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Musical Activities Part 2</td>
<td>MA05–17</td>
<td>13 closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Musical Activities Part 3</td>
<td>MA18–33</td>
<td>7 closed, 9 open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Demographic Information</td>
<td>DI01–12</td>
<td>12 closed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pages 2, 3, and 4 explored the leisure activities in which respondents mostly engaged. Page 2 investigated their participation in specific activities over the previous two months; page 3 sought the motivations and the perceived barriers to the respondents’ participation in leisure activities; and page 4 investigated continuity or changes in activities following their retirement from the workforce.

The questions concerning music activities were divided into three sections: pages 5, 6, and 7. Page 5 explored choral participation from childhood to the present; page 6 investigated any musical instrument experiences from childhood to the present; and page 7 sought opinions on abilities, benefits, barriers, and motivations in relation to learning or playing a musical instrument in older adulthood.

The final section, page 8, requested demographic information, including age group, gender, socio-economic and family status, educational background, ethnicity, and religious affiliation. The age variable also served to eliminate one entry from a respondent under the age of 50.

My decision to place the demographic questions at the end of the survey was based on the suggestion that respondents may be more readily prepared to enter personal details—for example, about their socio-economic status—after they had a better understanding of the contents of the survey (Harrison, 2007). However, the exit of 15 respondents before the final music questions also meant that they did not enter
demographic information. This suggests that placing demographic questions at the beginning of a survey may be preferable in some research contexts.

**Sample Selection and Solicitation**

The Leisure Activities Survey was designed to investigate the activities of older adults who do not necessarily participate in music but who engage in other leisure pursuits. It was only through those other activities and their associated organisations that I was able to provide potential respondents with a link to the survey. This obviously omits an undetermined number of older adults who are not involved in group activities, but who might be good candidates for engaging in social pursuits such as music making.

Unlike research in which population samples are found in schools, community bands, and orchestras, or in other bounded organisations and institutions, research targeting older adults who are dispersed within the wider community requires more creative solicitation (see, for example, Prickett, 2003, p. 66). To gain a sufficient number of respondents and to add validity to the survey, I needed to connect with organisations and activity groups that were known to attract this age cohort. A total of 295 emails were sent to 17 different organisations or groups, including Lions, Rotary, bowls, and bushwalking clubs (see Table 2). Appendix J presents a sample of the email invitation. Several organisations (see, for example, Australian Mensa, 2017; U3A Brisbane, 2016, p. 4; University of Queensland [UQ], 2016, p. 12) placed articles in their emailed or online newsletters. Appendix K presents a sample newsletter entry from the UQ’s Ageing Mind Initiative (AMI).

On the advice of a university colleague, I sent the first emails to two Brisbane lapidary groups that had an online presence. The response was positive, with the administrator informing me that “lapidary is a hands-on, manual and creative hobby, and that’s probably one of the reasons why it is attractive to older people” (E. Emmenegger, personal communication, 8 November 2016).

Although younger age groups use the internet considerably more than those aged 55 and over, 81.3% of Australians aged 55 to 64, and 51% of those aged 65 and over “accessed the internet for personal use in a typical week” (ABS, 2016b). The popularity of the internet, together with its speed, convenience, and cost (Buchanan
& Hvizdak, 2009, pp. 42-43), particularly when compared with printed and posted surveys, strengthens the validity for using an online survey as a research tool.

Table 2: Organisations solicited for potential survey respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Contacts</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Nov</td>
<td>Lapidary clubs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4–17 Nov</td>
<td>Bowls clubs</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Nov</td>
<td>Your Life Choices</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Nov</td>
<td>Bowling club</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Council on the Ageing (Qld)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Griffith University Alumni e-news</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Queensland University: Ageing Mind Initiative (AMI)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Nov</td>
<td>Bushwalking clubs</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Nov</td>
<td>Returned &amp; Services League branches</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Nov</td>
<td>U3A Queensland network; U3A Brisbane</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult Learning Australia (ALA)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Dec</td>
<td>Bridge clubs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rotary clubs</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Dec</td>
<td>Lions clubs</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Jan</td>
<td>Lions clubs</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Probus South Pacific</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mensa Queensland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Feb</td>
<td>Personal friends for on-sending</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total emails sent</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>295</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recruitment Strategies

Like research interviews, online surveys are now a popular mode of systematic inquiry (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 1). Yet, as Fontana and Frey (2005) reported, “response rates continue to decline, indicating that fewer people are willing to disclose their “selves” or that they are so burdened by requests for interviews that they are much more selective in their choices of which interviews to grant” (p. 699). It may well be that other administrators or newsletter editors did not pass on the survey information for similar reasons.

Apart from survey fatigue, a deterrent to filling out surveys is the propensity of people to ignore areas of research in which they have little or no interest (Myers et al., 2013; Rohwer, 2010). Cross (1981) commented on this in her research into adult learning: “Unfortunately, it is usually even harder to find out why people do not do
something than why they do” (p. 97). In contemporary music research, Pitts and Robinson (2016) were similarly tested: “Consistent with Lamont’s (2011) experience, finding participants willing to reflect on something they no longer do proved challenging” (p. 330).

Apathy to music research posed a difficulty in ascertaining why non-participants do not engage in music making, and whether there are certain factors that could encourage their participation. Understanding why they engage in their chosen areas of interest (the first area of exploration in the survey) did not specifically provide answers as to why they do not participate in music activities (the latter area of exploration in the survey). To overcome this difficulty, the Leisure Activities Survey was designed to appeal to Queensland older adults who would welcome talking about their leisure activities generally. Once they were immersed in the survey, it was also hoped that they would continue to answer questions about their music experiences and attitudes. Persistence was by no means mandatory; respondents could leave the survey at any time.

Response Rate

Initial responses to the survey seemed to be fairly slow (see Figure 6). The first survey response was received on 4 November 2016 and the final response on 26 March 2017. The Christmas and New Year period meant that clubs were in recess and newsletters would not be going out until late January or February. Additionally, Queenslanders suffered one of the worst heatwaves in recorded history (Steffen, Stock, Alexander, & Rice, 2017), which may have added a sense of lethargy to all activities.

A total of 295 ID numbers were recorded in the survey. Four ID numbers, however, did not appear in the ID column (numbers 20, 133, 204, 214), resulting in 291 records. Of these, 12 records showed no input and were deleted. Six interstate responses and one response from a person under the minimum age limit of 50 were also removed from the statistics. The resulting total was 272 valid responses.

Fifteen respondents exited the survey before completion. The exit location in the survey was fairly evenly spread across the survey pages until page 6 (Musical Activities Part 3) when five respondents exited. It is possible that these 15, along
with others who persisted to the end, may have been frustrated by the music emphasis in a survey that claimed to be about leisure activities.

Data analysis of the Leisure Activities Survey preceded my training and experience in computer assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) such as Leximancer and NVivo. However, as a former data analyst (with QANTAS, 1988–1989) and having subsequently gained tertiary qualifications in all Microsoft Office applications, I felt adequately skilled in using Excel or Word tables for analysing the survey data.

**QUESTIONNAIRES**

Interview and focus group participants filled out questionnaires with anonymous demographic data—including age-group, highest education level, music training if any, instruments played and for how long (see Appendix B). This information, combined with information revealed during the interviews, provided quantitative data on the characteristics of older-adult, active musicians, and allowed for deeper analysis of the potential success factors of community music ensembles. The results of the questionnaires are included in Chapter 5.

The qualitative data contained in both the open-ended survey questions and the interviews were supplemented by quantitative analysis in the form of coding counts.
thus adding “objective credence” (Hanson, 2018, p. 3) to the research results. Although positivist approaches like quantitative surveys and questionnaires allow data to be gathered from a large number of people in a time- and cost-effective manner, they play a supportive role to the interpretive and post-modern qualitative approaches of this research.

**QUALITATIVE METHODS**

An interpretive researcher seeks to learn “what is meaningful or relevant to the people he or she is studying and … works to see the setting from the viewpoint of the people” (Neuman, 2014, p. 104). To capture the perceptions of older-adult musicians and music facilitators about the constraints that limit their music-making activities, and to better understand their motivations for playing a musical instrument in a community music ensemble, I used qualitative research methods in the form of participant-observation, interviews, focus groups, journaling, and memos. I sought out examples of music making that could provide a cache of older-adult informants.

**MUSIC-MAKING EXAMPLES**

The epistemological assumption that knowledge is known through the subjective experiences of research participants demands that qualitative researchers “get as close as possible to the participants being studied” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 21). This, in turn, requires qualitative researchers to seek out participants who can best inform the research questions. Although people of all ages perform in many of the community music groups around South East Queensland, examples of music making that attract members who were mostly over the age of 50 offered bounded research environments and a rich source of research informants.

Veblen (2008) suggested examining five key issues when considering community music activities:

a) The kinds of music and music making involved;

b) The intentions of the leaders or participants;

c) The characteristics of the participants;

d) The interactions among teaching-learning aims, knowledge, and strategies; and

e) Interplays between informal and formal social-educational-cultural contexts.
These issues provided a launching pad for investigating examples of music making by older adults in South East Queensland.

**Ensemble selection and sampling**

In the planning stages of this research, the Bribie Island Orchestra (BIO) was identified as an ideal, “bounded” model (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 2005) of older adults’ music participation. This community orchestra rehearses in the region of Queensland that comprises the highest percentage of older adults (ABS, 2013). Stake (1995) advised picking cases that were “easy to get to and hospitable to our inquiry, perhaps for which a prospective informant can be identified and with actors (the people studied) willing to comment on certain draft materials” (p. 4). Bribie Island, and particularly BIO, met these criteria. As a participant in the Bribie Triathlon Series, I regularly visited Bribie Island and had musician colleagues on the island who were keen to contribute to this research as both informants and critics.

BIO provided a homogenous sample of older adults who were mostly of European heritage and of middle to high socio-economic status. My desire to provide a more balanced representation of music activities in South East Queensland was rationalised by the analytical demands of grounded theory: “In a grounded theory study, the individuals may not be located at a single site; in fact, if they are dispersed, they can provide important contextual information useful in developing categories in the axial coding phase of research” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 153).

Miles et al. (2014) remarked on the conceptual and sequential nature of purposeful sampling:

> Qualitative samples tend to be **purposive** rather than random. Samples in qualitative studies are usually not wholly prespecified but can evolve once fieldwork begins. The initial choices of participants lead you to similar and different ones; observing one class of events invites comparison with another; and understanding one key relationship in the setting reveals facets to be studied in others. This is conceptually driven sequential sampling. (p. 31)

The selection of informants from the music groups was representative of *purposive* sampling, also referred to as *theoretical* sampling in grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 102). In qualitative research,
purposeful sampling enables the selection of sites that are information rich and can meet the criteria for the sample population (Goodrich, 2019, p. 3). In this research, the required sample comprised active musicians aged 50 and over.

Instances of snowball sampling (Howell, 2017a, p. 26; Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 159) also featured in this research as informants recommended other older-adult musicians who could share relevant music experiences. Consistent with a grounded theory approach, analysis of early data helped me to refine the research questions (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1997, p. 258; and see Corbin & Strauss, 2008b). Theoretical sampling consequently resulted in a more focussed and time-efficient interview process, with discussions tailored more to the emerging theory (Reiter et al., 2011, p. 41). Interviews were augmented with succinct, follow-up email responses. A precedent for using purposeful, snowballing, and theoretical sampling within the one research project can be found in Lamont, Kennelly, and Moyle’s (2014) investigation of the costs and perseverance in serious leisure activities, in which the final sample size was determined by theoretical sampling “commensurate with the grounded theory method” (p. 148).

Although BIO had initially been treated as a “prespecified” case study for this research, during the analysis of interview transcripts from the first sample of informants, I became aware of the formation of a new recorder ensemble in the Brisbane central business district (CBD), which was named the Duhig Advanced Recorder Ensemble (DARE) to reflect the purpose of their foundation—performing for the residents of the Duhig Village aged-care facility. Still predominantly of European heritage, the members of this group reflected a more realistic socio-economic status, with some struggling financially on the pension. Upon further data analysis, and with the formation of the U3A handbell group in the Logan region—a comparatively low socio-economic area south of Brisbane—a third ensemble was included in this investigation with the expectation that it would add further balance to this research.

As it was the issue (music participation by older adults) that remained dominant throughout the research, the ensembles were positioned as instrumental rather than intrinsic (Stake, 1995, p. 16) music exemplars, and the theory that emerged could be applied to “similar situations, questions, and problems, regardless of the comparability of the demographic composition of the groups” (Morse, 1999, p. 5).
Therefore, studying older-adults’ music activities in South East Queensland could be instrumental in understanding the factors that promote participation in community music activities in varying demographic contexts. Observations of the music ensembles were conducted throughout the data collection phase of the research. In all cases, I was warmly welcomed not only as an observer of the music activities, but also as a player, performer, conductor, or music arranger.

**PARTICIPANT-OBSERVATION**

The purpose of observational data is to better understand the environment, the activities, and the participants, and to describe “what was observed from the perspectives of those observed” (Patton, 2002, p. 262; and see Racanelli, 2019). Observations of the selected ensembles enabled me to explore issues concerning the size of the group; the lack or abundance of certain instruments; the suitability and location of rehearsal and performance venues; and the potential for growth and thus future venue use. Other related aspects included transport, parking, and access, especially where participants had mobility challenges; noise; equipment storage; administration, funding, and membership costs; teaching strategies, if any; and interactions between participants and with conductors or facilitators.

As musician-researchers, it is hard not to participate in the music activities of those we are researching, particularly when we have music skills that are in demand, such as conducting or music arranging. Like Coffman (2006), who observed six wind bands over 11 weeks, “leading them from time to time as a conductor” (p. 9), I participated in all the ensemble activities as a participant-observer. My inclusion in activities as an “insider” (see Lamont, Kennelly, & Moyle, 2014, p. 149) enabled me to establish credibility as a knowledgeable and experienced musician, and to strengthen bonds of musical understanding. I also expected that the trust and friendships I had developed during rehearsals and performances would influence how much informants were willing to share (see Charmaz, 2014, p. 29).

**INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS**

Qualitative interviewing was described by Rubin and Rubin (1995, p. 2) as “an intentional way of learning about people’s feelings, thoughts, and experiences.” It is the most common way for grounded theorists to collect data (Charmaz, 2014, p. xviii). A semi-structured format, where pre-determined questions guide but do not restrict the discussion, allowed the content and flow of the interviews to change “to
match what the individual interviewee knows and feels” (p. 6). Semi-structured
interviews were conducted with 25 older-adult musicians and with 19 music
facilitators (teachers, conductors, and ensemble organisers) whose music activities
attracted mainly older adults. On six occasions, these interviews were conducted in
focus groups of two or three people who were colleagues within their ensembles.
Each informant was invited to respond to each question in turn, with subsequent
spontaneous discussions prompting richer reflections (see Cyr, 2015; Robson, 2002).

All informants were invited to state their preferences for where the interviews would
be conducted. Miles et al. (2014) recommended that interviews be conducted “off-
site in a congenial social environment (cafè, restaurant, participant’s home), by way
of reducing both your threat quotient and your exoticism” (p. 298). The Queensland
Conservatorium Griffith University presented no “threat” to research participants
who indicated that they looked forward to the opportunity to visit the
Conservatorium, where they could attend a free lunchtime concert, and South Bank,
a tourist mecca adjacent to the Brisbane CBD. Nevertheless, for most of the
informants, it was more convenient for them if I went to their homes, saving them
time and travel difficulties.

The semi-structured interviews were guided by a core set of questions that I referred
to mainly as a memory check towards the end of each session. Questions probed
their music backgrounds and influences, their current motivations for participation,
the benefits they gained from participation, the challenges that music participation
may present, their views on ensemble leadership, and any changes they would like to
make to their music practices (see Appendix C). In the interviews with music
facilitators I investigated their music experience and training, the challenges of
working with older-adult musicians, and their motivations for facilitating groups that
consisted mainly of older adults, particularly where the musicians were at novice
music levels (see Appendix D).

One challenge of these interviews was to get people to talk about what they believed
to be the more negative aspects of music making. Such disclosures would assist in
the development of theory about the constraints to music participation. To this end,
constant reassurance of anonymity served to allay any fears (see Ethics, below). Four
music facilitators preferred to answer interview questions via email—in two cases
this was due to medical conditions. Each was provided with an email version of the facilitators’ interview questions.

A grounded theory approach often demands an iterative process where researchers return to informants for more focussed responses (Charmaz, 2014, p. 103). Follow-up discussions with many participants continued throughout the data collection phase of the research. With their approval, data from these email interactions were incorporated into the research. In addition, several survey respondents chose to email me directly regarding various aspects of this research. With their permission, any relevant remarks were also included as research data.

In all, 316 older adults participated in this research. The online Leisure Activities Survey recorded 295 initial responses, but analysis was limited to 272 bona fide responses from older-adult Queensland residents (see Chapter 4). Interviews or focus groups were conducted with 15 facilitators and 29 older-adult musicians (see Chapter 5).

JOURNALS AND MEMOS

Throughout the research process I maintained a personal journal in which I reflected on all aspects of the research (see Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Smith-Sullivan, 2008). For every relevant document that I read (such as journal articles, books, and other dissertations) I created a Word document containing important references, quotations, and my own reflections. During analysis within the NVivo environment, I created memos to document my reflections and thinking processes about the development of themes, categories, and their conceptual connections (Corbin & Strauss, 2008a; Glaser, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994). These provided a way “to compare data, to explore ideas about the codes, and to direct further data-gathering” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 19). As I engaged in successive stages of analysis, the categories became more theoretical (p. 4). Consequently, my memos represented “the core stage in the process of generating theory, the bedrock of theory generation” (Glaser, 1978, p. 83).

Reflections from the journal and memos were incorporated into the relevant sections of the final thesis, thus helping to “triangulate and saturate emerging themes and categories” (Dabback, 2007, p. vii) while providing transparency throughout the research process (Bringer, Johnston, & Brackenridge, 2004). Information,
reflections, and developing ideas about the study environments, activities, research participants, and other music or research actors were documented using “thick description” (Geertz, 1975), allowing for subsequent reflexive examination and theory generation.

Pilot Testing

Survey and interview questions were examined by my supervisors. In addition, three members of the U3A recorder groups in Brisbane assisted in piloting the relevant research tools. Beyond minor lexical adjustments for clarity, the only addition was the question of religion as a potential constraint to music making when it is generally regarded as a context for music making. The early exclusion of this theme reflected my naïveté about religious influences in Australian music circles. The conversational nature of interviews within my iterative grounded theory approach meant that interview questions were organic and constantly evolving.

Theoretical Sampling and Saturation

Following analysis of the early interview transcripts, data collection was redirected through the process of theoretical sampling, a grounded theory strategy for collecting data pertinent to the emerging categories (Charmaz, 2014, p. 192).

Several interviews were conducted even when theoretical saturation seemed to have been reached and new properties of the theoretical category were no longer emerging (Charmaz, 2014, p. 20). This served to ensure that any potentially diverse experiences were not excluded from the research.

Ethical Considerations

Full ethics approval was granted by Griffith University’s Human Research Ethics and Integrity Committee on 11 December 2015, GU Ref No: 2015/874 (see Appendix E).

Consent was incorporated into the survey (see Appendix F). All research participants were provided with an emailed or printed copy of the Information Sheet (see Appendix G). Written informed consent was obtained from all informants and correspondents (see Appendix H). Data were de-identified in all research instruments beyond the original interview transcripts, which were viewed only by the informant, for member checking, and by me as the sole transcriber and data analyst. All
participants were given the option to alter their contributions in any way or to withdraw at any time.

Chapters 6, 7, and 8 report the constraints to music participation as experienced by the 29 older-adult musicians and 15 music facilitators (including music teachers, ensemble conductors, and music group organisers) who participated in this research. On occasions, I received emails from other musicians who made comments relevant to this research. Where such comments have been included, I gained their consent to name and cite them, and have referenced them as a personal communication.

Research participants were advised of the lack of direct, personal benefits for their participation. Recognising, however, “the ethic of reciprocity and sharing the fruits of the research” (Howell, 2017a, p. 46), all older-adult musicians were invited to take advantage of a free music lesson or a duet session with me following our interviews. Indirect benefits of their participation included the opportunity to talk as much, or as little, as they liked about a subject that held great interest to them (Howell, 2017a, p. 38). As a qualified and experienced musician, I offered my music services to each of the participating ensembles. This has led to continuing, fulfilling music relationships.

Photos, video footage, and other artefacts were often supplied by informants, who gave their permission for me to include these in the thesis.

**Member checking**

Member checking is one of six strategies recommended by Creswell (2003, p. 204) to ensure internal validity in qualitative research. Drafts of completed chapters were sent to informants to verify that they had been represented accurately (Creswell, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Informants gave no indication that they were dissatisfied with the reporting; several even engaged further with the research by offering additional comments that were integrated in the final report.

**Data storage and security**

As the primary researcher, I conducted all the interviews and transcribed all the audio recordings. Online survey tools were stored in the Griffith Research Storage Service. All other working materials, such as audio recordings, transcriptions, memos, and my personal journal were kept on an internet-disabled laptop or on a
back-up USB, both kept in a secure location at all times. As recommended by Bazeley and Jackson (2013, p. 33; see also Neuman, 2014, p. 456; Ogden, 2008a, 2008b), to protect the anonymity of informants, pseudonyms were substituted for identifying names prior to importing the interview transcripts to NVivo. They are used throughout the thesis.

DATA ANALYSIS METHODS

I had conducted and analysed data from the online Leisure Activities Survey before I had access to and training in qualitative data analysis software (QDAS). Therefore, quantitative and qualitative data from the survey were analysed using Excel— the qualitative, open-ended survey questions were both thematically coded and quantified (see Chapter 4). The smaller dataset from the questionnaires suited analysis using a Word table (see Chapter 5).

The much larger qualitative dataset obtained from the interviews, focus groups, and follow-up emails was analysed using a grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The aim of this analysis was to explore the motivations, perceived benefits, and constraints associated with the music activities of older adults, and to provide a thematically linked coding system that could generate theory. The inductive (bottom-up), comparative, emergent, and iterative approach of grounded theory was best suited to analysis of the subjective interview data within the constructivist paradigm (Charmaz, 2014, p. 12). Interview transcripts and follow-up emails were coded using NVivo12. This software supports an iterative, grounded theory approach, facilitating the emergence of themes and the generation of theory from the data (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013, p. 8).

Data analysis, and its intersection with data collection in the grounded theory approach, developed as represented in Figure 7.
In this research, transcription was never viewed as a “mechanical chore” (Tilley & Powick, 2002, p. 294; see also, Agar, 1996; Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999) but as an important function of the analytical process. As a fully qualified transcription typist, having transcribed and edited for federal and state parliaments, defence organisations, law courts, and academic institutions, I transcribed my own interviews. This not only helped me to maintain the confidentiality expected by my informants, but also facilitated my getting closer to the data to consider whether questions needed to be included, deleted, or restated, and my contemplation of potential concepts and themes as they emerged from the data.

Contrary to Campbell and Yang’s (2011, p. 328) view about the veracity of transcriptions, verbatim transcription leaves negligible room for researcher subjectivity. Because I had conducted the interviews, and had transcribed the audio files immediately following each interview, I had no doubt as to my informants’ viewpoints, and thus felt amply equipped to avoid “the complexities of transcription”
(Tilley & Powick, 2002, p. 292). Recognising that the transcripts served as “spoken accounts of personal experience” (Sloan & Bowe, 2014, p. 3), I integrated the process of transcription with early analytical reflections and memoing.

**NVivo**

Strauss and Corbin (1994) foresaw that grounded theory methodology would be combined with other methodologies, such as phenomenology. They also foresaw that computer programs would become sophisticated enough to incorporate grounded theory (p. 283). Computer software applications such as NVivo are invaluable tools for managing and analysing large amounts of data, both quantitative and qualitative, although their value is particularly pertinent for qualitative data analysis. They also enable researchers to demonstrate integrity, robustness, and thus, trustworthiness in their investigations (Smyth, 2008, p. 563). Access to and advanced training in the latest NVivo technology (NVivo 11 in 2016; NVivo 12 in 2018; see QSR, 2019) enabled me to create themes (codes), identify and define categories, map relationships, annotate texts, write memos, and present results in visual and lexical formats (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013; Smyth, 2008; and see Julien, 2008, p. 122).

**CODING AND CATEGORISATION**

Following Charmaz (2014), analysis of the interview transcripts began with inductive, line-by-line coding, during which data fragments were coded within themes that emerged from the interviews, using *in vivo* terminology; that is, “the language of the participant” (Harmon & Kyle, 2016, p. 69). Subsequent fragments were compared with earlier fragments and were either included within an existing theme, or led to the creation of a new theme. This method of constant comparison helped to establish analytic distinctions at every stage of the analytic process (Charmaz, 2014, p. 132; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

During the second stage, focussed coding, large amounts of data resulting from the first stage were sorted, synthesised, and distributed among broader categories. Charmaz (2014) defined categorising as “the analytic step in grounded theory of selecting certain codes as having overriding significance or abstracting common themes and patterns in several codes into an analytic concept” (p. 341). For example, six of my informants had mentioned how their arthritis caused difficulties when playing their musical instruments. These segments were initially coded *in vivo* under arthritis. As the data grew, focussed coding gave rise to broader categories, which
Chapter 3: Methodology

represented links between the initial codes. For example, any mention of a limitation brought about by some physical incapacity, such as arthritis, vision, or fatigue, was categorised as a physiological constraint. This further led to the broadest categories of constraints, motivations, benefits, and people attributes (see Appendix I for the NVivo categories and codes/themes).

The final stage of theoretical coding introduced themes and categories from the extant literature to “integrate and solidify the analysis in a theoretical structure” (Charmaz, 2014, p. 19). Leisure constraints theory originating in the work of Crawford et al. (1991) informed the categorisation of constraints as intrapersonal, structural, and interpersonal, the results of which are presented in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

Bishop (2015) used narrative and thematic analysis to explore intrinsic and extrinsic factors that influenced the decisions of college students to discontinue playing in an orchestra on leaving high school. Reasons given were categorised as persistence; self-concept of music ability; motivation for music; parental musicianship and support; director influence; and socio-economic status (p. v). These are either intrapersonal or interpersonal constraints according to Crawford et al.’s (1991) framework. Structural constraints are almost non-existent in a school environment where an orchestra or band is in situ. However, the socio-economic status of a school could be considered a structural constraint when the school does not provide instruments or affordable tuition. Where parental support is categorised as an interpersonal constraint for younger students, at the older-adult level it is best categorised as an intrapersonal constraint in that lack of childhood opportunities often stem from lack of parental support.

At the open-coding stage, during which I favoured the use of *in vivo* wording to create codes, it was evident that *location* and *parking* made good thematic companions, as did *location* and *transport*. At the focussed coding stage, both were determined to be structural constraints, rather than intrapersonal constraints, because they resulted from forces external to the musician. However, where informants spoke specifically about issues concerning the venue facilities (size, seating, lighting), I used the theme *venue and parking*; where informants spoke about the geographic location and the difficulties of getting to and from the venue, I used the theme *location and transport*. 

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*Chapter 3: Methodology*
Constant comparison was made more difficult because of the frequent interconnection between the themes, which reflected the attitudes and personal capacities of each musician. For example, the cost of participation may be offered as a barrier to participation by someone who is simply less interested in playing music. Would that same person participate if the activity were free of charge and musical instruments were provided? This line of questioning had been pursued in the Leisure Activities Survey (see Chapter 4). Thus, the perceived barrier or constraint of cost might be more accurately coded as a lack of interest or motivation. Furthermore, the theme cost of music participation could be subcategorised into membership fees (set by the organisation), cost of travel (dependent on individual considerations), cost of materials including instruments, and cost of private tuition. Additionally, ensembles were subjected to financial constraints. Such costs may be categorised more broadly as structural costs, but where individual socio-economic factors are taken into consideration, there may exist more restrictive, intrapersonal constraints, especially when one considers pensioner incomes or diminishing life savings. Therefore, where cost was a constraint for a musician in a low socio-economic cohort, I determined it to be a personal, individual factor (and thus, an intrapersonal constraint); where it limited the functioning of an entire ensemble, I determined it to be a structural constraint to music participation (see Constraints Theory below, and Chapters 6, 7, and 8).

In a discussion about the propensity of adults to engage in learning, Cross (1981) remarked on the difficulty of categorisation:

Some items can, of course, be included in more than one category. Lack of information, for example, could be an institutional barrier if one assumes that institutions should assume the responsibility for making their offerings known; it could be a situational barrier if one assumes that residents of a low-cost housing development rarely receive information about adult education courses, or a dispositional barrier under the assumption that adults who are not favourably disposed toward learning will make little effort to inform themselves about opportunities. In such cases, assignments of items to categories may be rather arbitrary, but I have tried to place the item in the category that seems most direct and straight-forward. (pp. 99−100)
Like Cross, I have applied codes and categories in what seems to be the most “direct and straightforward” manner, opting for \textit{in vivo} coding where this was most pertinent. The largest category to emerge was the constraints category—1655 of 2832 coded segments (58.4\%, see Table 3); although the coding process may be a subconscious reflection of my developing awareness of the research gap.

Table 3: Coded segments per category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attributes people</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivations</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constraints</td>
<td>1655</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2832</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fearing that these themes had perhaps been categorised in earlier research, I turned to the literature to explore how best to discuss and categorise the constraints to music participation.

\textit{Delaying the literature}

In research that adopts grounded theory, phenomenology, and case study methodologies, the literature serves less to set the context of the research and more to act as “an aide once patterns or categories have been identified” (Creswell, 2003, pp. 30–31). The goal of a grounded theory approach is to avoid imposing preconceived ideas on emergent themes, which, as Charmaz (2014) points out, is fine in principle but “can result in rehashing old empirical problems and dismissing the literature” (p. 306). Although time may be wasted by addressing the wrong literature in the pre-analysis stages (Thornberg, 2011, p. 244), more time could be wasted by ‘re-inventing the wheel’ during analysis.

The aim of this research was to allow knowledge and its interpretation to emerge from participants’ narratives. For this reason, any literature specifically addressing barriers and constraints to music participation was examined only after sufficient interview data were analysed, categorised, and had provided the foundations of theory generation. The value of any relevant extant theory could inform my research, while its limitations could foster theory adaptation. A review of the literature made it apparent that the constraints to music participation closely matched the constraints to leisure participation in general.
Since researchers seek accurate information and appropriate terminology, using pre-existing concepts may not distort, but reinforce, the final analysis. The result would still be “emergent theory providing new insights” (Heath, 2006, p. 520) but rather than constructed theory or theory generation, it could perhaps be labelled reconstructed, elaborated, modified or adapted theory. Strauss, with Corbin (1994), supported both the emergence of theory from the data and the adaptation of earlier theories, stating that “theory may be generated initially from the data, or, if existing (grounded) theories seem appropriate to the area of investigation, then these may be elaborated and modified as incoming data are meticulously played against them” (p. 273). Thornberg (2011) referred to the use of pre-existing theories as informed grounded theory, and recommended its use “in a sensitive, creative and flexible way” (p. 249). He noted that, while it conflicted with the classic Glaserian (1992) tradition of grounded theory, it accorded with a Straussian (Corbin & Strauss, 2008a) and constructivist grounded theory approach.

Developing a useful taxonomy from the emergent themes in this research led me to question whether a precedence for constraint categorisation had been established. At this point I turned to literature that specifically addressed barriers and constraints to participation in music or other leisure activities by older adults. This intensive and iterative process of data analysis within the constructivist grounded theory paradigm, combined with the delayed attention to the relevant literature, gave rise to the generation of theory within two pre-existing theoretical models: the adaptation of the leisure constraints theory of Crawford et al. (1991), and the expansion of the behavioural change theory of the EAST framework (Behavioural Insights Team, 2014).

**Leisure Constraints Theory**

Leisure constraints were defined by Jackson (2000) as “factors that are assumed by researchers and/or perceived or experienced by individuals to limit the formation of leisure preferences and/or to inhibit or prohibit participation and enjoyment in lifestyle” (p. 62). A substantial body of research has investigated constraints to participation in leisure and recreation activities. Some of these have categorised constraints two-dimensionally—as antecedent and intervening constraints (Henderson, Stalnaker, & Taylor, 1988). In earlier leisure constraints research,
Goldman (1971) categorised limiting factors as either internal, or cultural and environmental (p. 160). Internal factors were subcategorised as physiological, psychological and emotional. Physiological limitations comprised diminishing energy, speed, and endurance; while psychological limitations included diminishing attention span, memory, and vigour. Goldman categorised diminished self-confidence and fear of a health disaster as emotional factors.

The two-dimensional categorisation of motivations as *intrinsic* (for their own enjoyment) or *extrinsic* (for some other reason; Evans & Liu, 2019; and see, for example, Juniu, Tedrick, & Boyd, 1996; Schatt, 2018) seems to have been neglected when categorising constraints. Antecedent/intervening, internal/external, or intrinsic/extrinsic dichotomies do not amply account for the realities of interlinking constraints. Limiting a study to two broad categories would simplify the process of categorisation and aid the presentation of data within a pre-existing theory; however, it would not do justice to the complex maze of themes and categories that emerged in this research. These, I believed, demanded a more elaborate and representative theoretical model. Although subject to some criticism (see, for example, Arab-Moghaddam, Henderson, & Sheikholeslami, 2007; Samdahl, 2005; Samdahl & Jekubovich, 1997), the leisure constraints theory of Crawford et al. (1991), with minor modification, provides a useful foundation for categorising the multitude of themes that arise when examining data emerging from constraints to music participation by older adults.

The three-dimensional leisure constraints theory originating in the work of Crawford and Godbey (1987; and see Crawford et al., 1991) resonated significantly with the constraints that emerged in interviews with my informants. They also intersected with van Manen’s (1990, 1997) “existential themes” (see Table 4), which served as guides for reflection during research. Adams and van Manen (2008) suggested that any experience could be examined by asking questions that corresponded to “lifeworld existentials,” and that “spatiality, corporeality, temporality, relationality, and alterity are productive categories for the process of phenomenological questioning, reflecting, and writing” (p. 619).
Table 4: Intersections between existential themes and constraints categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existential themes</th>
<th>Constraints categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corporeality: lived body</td>
<td>Intrapersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationality or Communality: lived</td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>human relation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatiality: lived space</td>
<td>Structural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporality: lived time</td>
<td>(All categories)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints

Crawford and Godbey (1987) acknowledged three types of constraints to participation in leisure activities, presented hierarchically as intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints. Following analysis of the interview data, it was evident that older adults, less constrained by interpersonal relationships, meet these constraint categories in a different chronological ordering (see Figure 8).

Crawford and Godbey defined *intrapersonal* constraints as “individual psychological states and attributes which interact with leisure preferences” (p. 122). All of their examples—which included stress, depression, preference for other leisure activities, and perceived self-skill—could, at varying times and relative to one’s level of motivation, act as antecedent constraints (blocking factors, or barriers) or as intervening constraints (limiting factors). As barriers, they emerged in the responses to the Leisure Activities Survey as prohibiting factors to music participation (see Figure 8).
Chapter 3: Methodology

As constraints, they emerged during the interviews with active musicians as limiting factors to music participation (see Chapter 6). Themes that were identified as intrapersonal constraints to music making were subcategorised as psychological or physiological (see Figure 9).

*Structural* barriers in Crawford and Godbey’s (1987) model were conceptualised as all the factors that intervene between leisure preference and leisure participation. These included environmental factors such as the season or the climate; and organisational factors such as available opportunities, and awareness of those opportunities. However, Crawford and Godbey also included factors that were regarded in this research as intrapersonal, such as a person’s life stage, financial resources, and time restrictions; and others that were regarded as interpersonal factors, such as “reference group attitudes concerning the appropriateness of certain activities” (p. 124). Structural constraints identified in this research were subcategorised as organisational, musical, or environmental (see Figure 10).

![Figure 9: Intrapersonal constraints and subcategories.](image)
Interpersonal constraints refer to the impact of influential relationships on non-participation. Although Crawford and Godbey (1987) limited their study to spousal or parent-child relationships, research involving older adults is more likely to address the support or lack of support of spouses, friends, other ensemble members, music teachers, conductors, and other leadership or organisational figures. In Australian contexts at least, interpersonal constraints become less of a determining factor of leisure choices in late adulthood compared with those made in childhood or early adulthood. Older adults, for example, are unlikely to factor in their parents’ opinions or prejudices when making leisure choices. Whereas many parents may prevent their young children from going out at night, or certain religions may forbid participation in music activities, such constraints are generally not confronted by older adults in their endeavours to participate in leisure—at least in ‘Western’ cultures.

Interpersonal constraints that emerged from this research involved relationships with leadership roles or with peer group musicians (see Figure 11).

In Crawford et al.’s (1991) model, intrapersonal constraints acted as antecedent barriers to leisure preferences, while interpersonal and structural constraints—in that order—determined participation or non-participation in leisure activities (see p. 313, Figure 2). If, therefore, any intrapersonal constraint were to suppress the preference or motivation for participation, then, according to Crawford et al., a person would not directly confront the latter two categories. However, this model does not fully reflect the realities of non-participation in music activities by older adults. In the current research, constraints categories were deemed to be interlinking rather than...
hierarchical. The placement of intrapersonal constraints as antecedent to participation accords with Crawford et al.’s model, although it should be noted that intrapersonal constraints—and indeed, structural, or interpersonal constraints—could arise at any stage of participation. This is given credence by Auster (2001, p. 276), who noted that there were many ways in which the three types of barriers overlapped and interacted.

The hierarchical structure of Crawford et al.’s (1991) leisure constraints model adopted the hierarchical ordering of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural (IIS) constraints. In research specifically reflecting the leisure choices of older adults, however, the chronological positioning of interpersonal constraints seems more appropriate after structural constraints have been negotiated and connections are made with other members of the participatory group. Once musicians, or potential musicians, have navigated their way through structural constraints, such as available opportunities, location, transport, and availability of instruments, they may later decide that they do not like the conductor or the people; or conversely, they may form social bonds that influence their desire to continue. I subsequently altered Crawford et al.’s model of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural constraints (IIS) to reflect the more likely (ISI) ordering, while emphasising the potential overlap and interconnectedness of these categories (see Figure 12).

![Figure 11: Interpersonal constraints and subcategories.](image-url)
Although seemingly dated, leisure constraints theory continues to have relevance in constraint categorisation. Beyond its use in music research (see below), Gregory (2019) investigated constraints to scuba diving for older women, classifying those constraints according to Crawford et al.’s (1991) hierarchical model; and Stodolska, Shinew, and Camarillo (2019) adapted the theory for their investigation into constraints on recreation for people of colour.

In adapting IIS to ISI, I straddled the extremes of induction and deduction to incorporate what Peirce (1958) termed *abduction*, as explained by Thornberg (2011):

The concept of abduction [is] a selective and creative process in which the researcher carefully investigates how far empirical “facts” (or data) agree with theory or hypothesis and how far they call for modifications of it … It is an innovative process because every new insight is a result of modifying and elaborating prior knowledge or putting old ideas together in new ways as the researcher explores and tries to explain the new data. (p. 247)
Thus, constant comparison involved comparison not just against the emergent themes in this research, but also against themes that emerged in earlier, thematically-related studies.

**Constraints theories in music research**

As mentioned in Chapter 1, precedence for the use of an adapted leisure constraints theory when investigating music participation by older adults exists in the work of the Music for Life team in the UK. Hallam et al. (2012, p. 23) cited the work of Darkenwald and Merriam (1982), who defined four categories of constraints to adult education: situational, institutional, informational, and psychosocial (p. 136). Following research with three older-adult ensembles, Hallam et al. (2012; and see also Creech et al., 2014) identified four themes emerging from their data: structural, informational, social, and dispositional barriers. Creech later reported on visible and invisible barriers to music participation (2018, p. 103); however, in research investigating the “oldest old,” she referred to psychological, physiological, and structural barriers (p. 102).

The emphasis in Ho’s (2012) doctoral thesis was on barriers faced by people in lower socio-economic brackets to participate in “highbrow” music, which included attending concerts. Ho divided barriers into personal and structural barriers. The category of personal barriers referred to “personal difficulties specific to individuals themselves” (p. 6) and included financial, time, health, and work constraints, and the psychological discomfort of attending such ‘highbrow’ events. In my research, these are categorised as intrapersonal constraints (see Chapter 6) according to Crawford et al.’s (1991) classification of leisure constraints. Structural barriers in Ho’s research were those “presented by the concert itself” and included location, venue safety, ticket availability, and level of artistry (p. 6). These factors received the same classification in Crawford et al.’s research, as well as in this research.

In a study of older-adult musicians in care homes, Deane (2015) elaborated on the benefits of music participation, creating thematic categories such as **cognitive**, **social**, **physiological**, and **emotional** (pp. 5–6). Constraints were also recognised in her study and included financial, time, and space restrictions (p. 9). However, unlike the benefits, these constraints to music participation received no attention to compartmentalisation despite their apparent relevance beyond care homes.
At the opposite end of the age spectrum, Hawkinson’s (2015) study of secondary school music programs identified and categorised intrapersonal, interpersonal, and structural barriers to non-participation. The intrapersonal category looked at the attributes of the students, comparing the differences between those who participated and those who did not. The structural category included aspects of the music programs, including repertoire and instructional pedagogies, while interpersonal barriers referred to the influence of families, teachers, and peers (p. 19). However, in the current research I contend that certain interpersonal relationships that have a negative influence on participation may be classified, particularly for an autonomous adult, more as an intrapersonal, psychological constraint; it is the attitude towards the relationship and not the relationship itself that limits participation. Confusingly, this may be argued for many of the constraints, justifying the interlinking rather than hierarchical structure of the leisure constraints model.

Studies such as these influenced my decisions on how to best classify the barriers and constraints to music participation that emerged from my interview data. Only when writing up the results did I gain a clearer understanding of participants’ meanings and thus, how they could be interpreted within the categories of leisure constraints theory. This intertwining of data analysis with the writing up of results exemplified the reflective aspect of constructed grounded theory (Charmaz, 2014).

In a very basic scenario, the stages of music participation may be regarded as starting with intrapersonal constraints (such as a person’s level of interest, skill, experience, physical capacity, and personal attitudes towards music practice), and progressing through structural constraints (such as the availability and accessibility of music opportunities). Only when these constraints are successfully negotiated will interpersonal constraints (such as satisfaction with conductors or teachers, and developing friendships with fellow musicians) be encountered. I have, therefore, addressed the IIS hierarchy of Crawford et al.’s (1991) leisure constraints model to reflect this scenario, with the understanding that exceptions are many and complex, as demonstrated in Chapters 6, 7, and 8, which present the intrapersonal, structural, and interpersonal (ISI) constraints to music participation as reported by the 44 informants in this research.

Depending on the degree of disability, discomfort, or displeasure that playing a musical instrument may evoke, constraints may be negotiated in a way that enables
meaningful music participation. How informants overcome, or “negotiate” (Crawford et al., 1991, p. 313), their constraints to music participation is also addressed in each of the constraints chapters (6, 7, and 8).

Because leisure constraints theory lacks a more purposeful and pragmatic framework that would enable music educators and facilitators to create long-term participatory music programs and ensembles for older adults, I sought to develop a theoretical framework that could synthesise the motivations of older adults to participate in music activities with the constraints to music participation and how these are negotiated by older-adult musicians.

**THE EAST FRAMEWORK**

Every Saturday morning in more than 200,000 locations across 17 countries2, nearly three million runners pound the pavements, promenades, and parkways for their weekly five-kilometre parkrun3 fix (Parkrun, 2018). Parkrun was established in England in 2004. It is free, inclusive, easy to join, and can be as challenging or as relaxed as each participant prefers. The emphasis is on fun, fitness, and friendship.

A weekly parkrun email (Parkrun Australia news, personal communication, 31 January, 2018) drew attention to an online article by John Robins and Miriam Tan: *Why is parkrun so successful?* The authors credited Professor Theodore Turocy, from the School of Economics at the University of East Anglia (UEA), with linking the success of parkrun to the EAST framework of behavioural change (Robins & Tan, 2018). Developed by the UEA Behavioural Insights Team, the acronym EAST stands for *easy*, *attractive*, *social*, and *timely* (Turocy, 2016). These are themes that emerged in the survey and interviews during my investigation of the factors that promote music participation by older adults. I probed the EAST conceptual framework to determine whether the successful promotional strategies of the UK government, which were later adopted by other governments and marketing agencies

2 Parkrun statistics as at 3 March 2018. The number of events increases weekly.

3 According to the parkrun Facebook page, parkrun is always spelt as one word with lower case (Parkrun, 2014). The APA6 Style Guide (American Psychological Association, 2010) advocates otherwise.
Robins and Tan (2018) acknowledged that the EAST framework for behavioural change—*easy, attractive, social, and timely*—offered “insightful and valuable reasons for the success of parkrun locally and globally.” But to explain what they called the ‘world domination’ of parkrun, they proposed two additional concepts, *enjoyable* and *regulated*, thus creating the acronym EASTER. This framework resonated significantly with the findings of research into leisure activities generally, and music participation specifically, but with minor exceptions. For the purpose of establishing a conceptual framework that could assist facilitators to establish community music activities for older adults, several adaptations to the EAST and EASTER frameworks needed to be applied.

In community music activities, creating or producing music is the attraction for musicians of any age—it is the *raison d’être* for music participation. Additionally, it is by definition a social activity. Although accessing the activities should be *easy*, the music content needs, at times, to be challenging to lead to growth. The adapted framework, therefore, becomes the MASTER framework (see Figure 13), and serves as a guide that should be applied discerningly according to the differing and complex contexts of community music making. By making programs and activities *musical, attractive, social, timely, educational*, and *regulated*, many ideas and suggestions within these dimensions, which emerged from the interviews and from earlier
research (see Chapter 9), are applicable not only for older-adult ensembles, but can be employed by facilitators of community music activities across all age cohorts.

Figure 13: The MASTER Framework.

**SUMMARY**

The research methods used in this investigation rose out of a constructivist philosophy and grounded, phenomenological methodology, and entailed concurrent data collection, data analysis, and final reporting.

Adapting and extending the work of two earlier theoretical frameworks—the leisure constraints theory of Crawford et al. (1991) and the Behavioural Insights Team’s (2018) EAST framework—this research not only contributes to knowledge about music participation as a leisure pursuit for older adults, but also offers a framework for facilitating improved participatory practices for older age cohorts. In short, it contributes to both research and practice.

The next chapter presents the findings of the Leisure Activities Survey, which was designed and administered to determine why older-adults in Queensland do not participate in community music activities.


You cannot be tone deaf; nobody is tone deaf.
You can tell who’s on the phone, and even what mood they are in!
Or if someone is from Rome, or Washington.
You have a fantastic ear.                     (Zander, 2008)

Between December 2016 and March 2017, 295 respondents filled out the Leisure Activities Survey, which was designed to explore how music participation factored into the lives of older adults in Queensland. Benjamin Zander’s quote from his 2008 TED talk (see above) refutes what 23.7% of the survey respondents who have never played a musical instrument believe: that they lack music ability or are “tone deaf.” Lack of ability, lack of interest, lack of time, and having other priorities stand out as significant barriers to leisure participation in general (see, for example, Auster, 2001; Goodale & Witt, 1989; Jansen, 2005; McGuire, 1984; Scott, 2011) and to participation in the arts more specifically, as found in this study and in earlier arts research (see, for example, Australia Council, 2014; Coffman, 2002b; Creech et al., 2014; Fung & Lehmberg, 2016; Gembris, 2008; Pitts & Robinson, 2016; Tsugawa, 2009). Other reported barriers included cost, opportunity, location, transport, and health restrictions.

Although prior music research has investigated factors that may prevent participation in music activities, the research participants in those studies were active music participants (see, for example, Bowles, 1991; Chiodo, 1997; Coffman, 2002b; Kruse, 2007; Spencer, 1996; Wong, 2013). In such research, the so-called barriers to music participation may relate more closely to the constraints to music participation that are reported by active, older-adult musicians in this research and detailed in Chapters 6, 7, and 8. As Douglas (2011) pointed out, “Research regarding the barriers to music participation may be served best by selecting subjects from a population of individuals who stopped participating [in] music at some time in their lives” (p. 184). Hallam et al. (2012, p. 23) also point to the lack of research addressing barriers that prevent music participation by older people who have not previously engaged with music making but who wish to participate.
Perhaps the only study that has sought knowledge from non-participants of music activities is Flowers and Murphy’s (2001) examination of the effects of music education on music behaviour in adulthood. In their research, a sample of 45 adults aged 65 and over were recruited from senior recreation centres or were acquainted with the researchers (p. 27). Reasons cited for not having a strong music background included “poverty, rural lifestyle, no available teacher, lack of interest, or lack of ability” (p. 31).

Rohwer (2010, p. 205) commented on the difficulty of garnering answers concerning lack of involvement from those who are not involved. Myers et al. (2013) similarly observed that “it is relatively straightforward to study the lives, interests, choices, and pursuits of those who actively engage with music” (p. 133). To discover reasons for non-music participation required delving into the leisure choices of those who do not actively engage in music activities. The knowledge gap lies in understanding why so many older adults do not engage musically. However, as Rohwer (2010, p. 205) noted, if people are not interested in music, they may be less obliging to fill out a survey related to music. I attempted to overcome this difficulty by researching leisure activities generally, before probing music activities more specifically.

The aim of this research was to investigate how best to promote, facilitate, and sustain participation by older adults in community music instrumental ensembles. A starting point for the research was to understand the factors that influence the leisure choices of older adults: in essence, why they do the things they do and why they do not participate in music activities. Therefore, the first research sub-question asked:

*How do music-making activities factor into the leisure choices of older adults in Queensland, and what are the perceived barriers to music participation?*

Using an online survey that targeted older adults who engaged in non-music activities—for example, bowls and bushwalking clubs, bingo and craft groups, and general “seniors” groups—I explored the reasons for their leisure choices and for their non-participation in music activities. I anticipated that this information would help in understanding if and how music facilitators could design programs that are more attractive to a broader cohort of active, older-adult participants. Furthermore, I thought that the propensity of increasing numbers of older adults interacting through the internet (see, for example, Brand & Todhunter, 2015; Your Life Choices, 2015)
might render the chore of filling out a survey less of an impediment. With this in mind, I devised the Leisure Activities Survey to explore not only the leisure choices of older adults but also their music backgrounds, if any, and their attitudes to music participation.

**SURVEY RESULTS**

Of the 295 submitted surveys, 23 ID numbers were removed from the data as they contained no information, or the respondents did not meet the criteria for age or location—Queensland residents aged 50 years or older (see Chapter 3). Of the remaining 272 submissions, not all respondents answered all questions. Response rates for each question are indicated below.

The presentation of the survey results begins with the demographic data, which offers a general description of the respondents, followed by their reported leisure and music activities.

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

*Age-group representation*

Respondents to the survey represented nearly all age groups from the age of 50 to 94 (Table 5). Only the 85–89 age group was unrepresented. Those aged 60 to 74 made up 65.5% of the total number of respondents. The low representation in the 50–59 age group may be due to their continued presence in the labour force and thus their absence in the targeted leisure activities and organisations, which were likely to have comprised retirees.
Table 5: Age-group representation of survey respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50 – 54</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 – 59</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 – 64</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 – 69</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 – 74</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 – 79</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 – 84</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85 – 89</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90 – 94</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>272</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Gender**

Of the 257 respondents to the question of gender, 62% were female and 38% male. This contrasts with Queensland population figures: of the 4.7 million Queensland residents in 2016, 50.6% were female and 49.4% were male (ABS, 2018a). However, the gender distribution for people aged 65 and over may account for some of the discrepancy. Because women tend to live longer than men, the difference in life expectancy for the older age groups increases. In 2017, females made up 51% of the 65–74 age group in Queensland, 54% of the 75–84 age group, and 63% of people aged 85 and over (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2018). Another factor influencing the gender disparity may be the lower target age of 50, with more men of any age still in the workforce (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2007) and less likely to spend leisure time on surveys. Other studies investigating online survey participation have also reported that females contribute disproportionately to respondent data sets (see Saleh & Bista, 2017; Smith, 2008), and there is some conjecture that females “are more likely to possess or value characteristics more consistent with connective selves, such as empathy or emotional closeness” (Smith, 2008, p. 12).

**Living situation**

Of the 272 survey respondents, 78.3% resided in urban or suburban areas of Queensland, and 11.8% resided in rural areas; 23.5% lived alone; 81.6% reported that they either had no children (15.8%) or their children had left home (65.8%).
Cultural identity

One quarter of respondents were born overseas, while 52.6% claimed to be of Australian heritage. The second largest cultural identity was English (16.5%). Given that this research was conducted entirely in English, non-English speaking communities were most likely excluded from participation, a factor that may also reflect the nature of community music activities in Australia.

Religion

29.8% of respondents reported having no religious affiliation and 18.7% and 15% claimed Anglican and Catholic affiliation. This compares with the 2016 census, in which 29.2% of Queensland residents claimed no religion, while the next common responses were Catholic (21.7%) and Anglican (15.3%, ABS, 2018a).

Education and occupation

55.9% of respondents reported having graduate or postgraduate qualifications, and 16.5% held diplomas or certificates. This contrasts with the 2016 census, which reported that 18.3% of Queensland residents had a bachelor’s degree or above, and 26.9% had attained a diploma or certificate (ABS, 2018a).

83.4% of respondents classified their occupations or former occupations as professional or white collar. The nature of the targeting—through organisations such as U3A or university contacts—may have influenced the education and occupation data.

Socio-economic status

In 2016, none of Queensland’s Local Government Areas (LGA) was ranked in Australia’s top ten most advantaged areas; however, seven of Australia’s ten most disadvantaged areas were located in remote areas of Queensland. Of the eight states and territories, only South Australia and Tasmania ranked lower socio-economically (ABS, 2016a). When asked which category best described their family income, 75% of the 229 respondents who answered this question regarded themselves as middle class (including lower- or upper-middle); 4.4% selected upper class, while 21% selected lower class (see Table 6).
Table 6: Reported socio-economic status of survey respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>17.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower middle</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper middle</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>272</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These classifications could have been interpreted in a number of ways. In accordance with the ontological philosophy of this research (see Chapter 3), the socio-economic status perceived by respondents was considered more likely to influence their readiness to spend money on what they may regard as elitist and expensive hobbies.

CONTINUITY OF LEISURE ACTIVITIES IN RETIREMENT

Of the 272 survey respondents 76.1% indicated that they did not work full time (defined as more than 30 hours per week). Since ceasing full-time work, 66.4% of respondents continued with their former leisure activities, and 52.2% reported taking up a new leisure activity. Respondents were invited to comment on their activities since retiring (question RA05). Major themes that emerged from these comments are collated in Table 7.

Respondents acknowledged the increased time available in which to engage in leisure activities following retirement:

- More free time has allowed me to participate in a greater number of activities. [ID 245]

- Never had time for sport or hobbies whilst working; life greatly improved. [ID 255]

- Now that I have time, I enjoy undertaking projects that require a larger commitment. [ID 158]
Table 7: Themes mentioned regarding post-retirement activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>new activity</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more time</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community service</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continuity</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>declining health</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cease activity</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>travel</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>care</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cost</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>night</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>isolation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunity</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safety</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Favoured leisure activities nominated by many respondents were community volunteering and travelling (including cruising and ‘grey nomading’). Beyond the targeted activities of bridge and lapidary, other new activities included aqua aerobics, floral design, cooking, tai chi, going to the gym, gardening, photography, pistol shooting, dancing, learning a language, golf, swimming, woodworking, Pilates, yoga, and attending lectures, concerts, galleries, and museums. Music activities were mentioned by just two respondents, one who took up singing, and another who took up singing and playing the recorder.

Relocation following retirement, although not preferred (Pope & Kang, 2010) is not uncommon. Queensland attracts many people from the cooler southern states, particularly when they no longer need to be in the larger employment centres of Sydney and Melbourne (Tilley, 2017), as reflected in the following comment:

> The choice of new activities is due to several factors: relocation to Brisbane (a very different environment from Canberra), more leisure time and the limitations of aging. [ID 42]

This also highlights the impact that environmental changes can have on leisure activities. Another respondent, aged 80–84, commented that she could only go out walking when the heat passed.
For at least four survey respondents, increased leisure time meant increased carer responsibilities:

Retirement has meant more time helping care for grandchildren while their parents are at work. [ID 186]

It was unclear whether such caring responsibilities were regarded as a pleasurable occupation or as a chore that inhibited preferred leisure activities, an aspect that was considered in Campbell and Yang’s (2011, p. 334) research into participation in U3A activities in China.

Following retirement, 23.9% of the respondents discontinued sporting or physical activities such as bushwalking, netball, table tennis, ten pin bowling, riding a motorbike, scuba diving, and sailing. One respondent commented on moving to a small town in far North Queensland where, without a gym, she was unable to continue aerobic classes. Another respondent had given up both golf and playing the piano due to chronic back problems. Eleven respondents reported declining health impacting their post-retirement activities:

Activities tend to be more passive due to osteoarthritis everywhere!
[ID 151]

Ceased netball as a bit too hectic and injuries possible. [ID 208]

Medical treatment limits my spare time. [ID 68]

Bushwalking no longer possible due to age and amateur theatre activities no longer possible as do not drive at night. [ID 195]

The latter comment raises several issues: the propensity to regard physical degeneration as an inevitable outcome of ageing; the propensity to regard physical degeneration as a barrier, rather than a constraint, to participation; and the impact of vision impairment on driving, particularly at night. Such intrapersonal constraints are also encountered, and negotiated, by active musicians, (see Chapter 6).

Even though some respondents blamed ageing for physical degeneration, health issues were also shown to be not necessarily related to age:
Chronic health issues have prevented me from working full-time for most of my adult life, and curtailed my leisure activities frequently. [ID 283]

Three respondents reported challenges with night-time activities. A widow in her late 70s [ID 179] reported that she had gone out frequently with her partner, but now that she was alone, financial constraints and safety issues deterred her from going out at night. Two of the respondents specifically addressed isolation in retirement years:

I was made forcibly redundant and this caused a year-long relapse into depression. I have an adult son who was homeless so to help him I have moved to a semi-rural area. I feel very lonely here and struggle to join in activities although there are some around. [ID 243]

Lack of money and the inability to pay for leisure activities was also regarded as a cause for isolation:

The biggest obstacle is money, as that prevents me from taking up new activities, and lack of money causes social isolation. [ID 11]

In contrast to these gloomy scenarios, one respondent commented on the discounts available on movies and live shows, and another summed up a sentiment that is expressed by many active retirees:

I do so much; I wouldn't have time to go to work. [ID 230]

**GENERAL LEISURE ACTIVITIES PART 1**

The questions in Part 1 of the General Leisure Activities section explored the activities in which the respondents participated during the two months prior to submitting the survey. Respondents were asked to select the frequency (Never, Rarely, Occasionally, Frequently, or Not sure) in which they engaged in 32 pre-selected activities. This question helped to gauge the popularity of music activities among older adults compared with other common leisure choices (see Table 8).
Table 8: Percentage of respondents who engaged, either frequently or occasionally, in 32 pre-specified leisure activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watching television</td>
<td>93.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading books for pleasure</td>
<td>89.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working on the computer</td>
<td>88.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing the Web</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening to music (other than at a public concert)</td>
<td>84.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking for pleasure</td>
<td>78.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going out for the evening for drinks and entertainment</td>
<td>73.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going on a family outing</td>
<td>73.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling nationally</td>
<td>70.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doing puzzles (for example, crosswords, Sudoku, Pixel Puzzles)</td>
<td>66.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td>65.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to the movies</td>
<td>55.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling internationally</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting or making something (for example, hobbies, knitting, woodwork)</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing games at a table (such as cards, mah-jong, bingo, chess, etc.)</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting art galleries and museums</td>
<td>45.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to the library to read or borrow books/DVDs</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending musicals or classical music concerts</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studying for pleasure (includes U3A courses)</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending sports events as a spectator</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending opera, ballet or dance performances</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending other concerts (for example, popular, rock, jazz)</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to church</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in other individual sports (for example, tennis, ping pong, triathlon)</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycling</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Playing a musical instrument** 10.6

Running 8.5

Studying towards a degree or other formal qualification 7.7

Playing bowls 6.3

**Singing in a choir** 6.2

Playing other team sports (for example, soccer, baseball, basketball) 4.8

Watching television was overwhelmingly the most popular leisure activity for survey respondents with 93.1% watching either frequently \((n = 187)\) or occasionally \((n = 66)\). Just eight respondents rarely \((n = 6)\) or never \((n = 2)\) watched television in the preceding two months. Reading books for pleasure was the next most popular activity with 89% reading frequently \((n = 182)\) or occasionally \((n = 60)\). Walking for
pleasure, ranking sixth overall, was the highest ranked physical or outdoor activity, with 78.7% walking frequently \((n = 137)\) or occasionally \((n = 77)\).

Interestingly, the five highest-ranked activities—watching television, reading books for pleasure, working on the computer, surfing the web, and listening to music—are generally effortless and individual activities. If we also consider that the piano was nominated as the most popular instrument (question MA27), we may be inclined to question the apparent social inclination of humans.

Two activities relating to music participation were specified in Part 1 of the general leisure activities. Singing in a choir received the second-lowest ranking with just 6.3% of respondents stating that in the previous two months they had participated frequently \((n = 13)\) or occasionally \((n = 4)\). Playing a musical instrument ranked a little higher with 10.7% of respondents playing frequently \((n = 16)\) or occasionally \((n = 13)\).

Question GLA02 allowed respondents to specify other activities. Respondents noted 120 activities that were not included in the original question (GLA01), one-third of which were sporting or physical activities (see Appendix L). Only one of these ‘other’ activities related to music, namely, “singing alone.”

**GENERAL LEISURE ACTIVITIES PART 2**

Part 2 of the questions about general leisure activities delved deeper into the motivations and influences behind activity choices. Additionally, it was designed to explore the perceived barriers to participation in activities in which respondents would like to engage but were unable.

**Motivations for leisure choices**

Knowledge of respondents’ motivations to participate in particular leisure activities could assist music facilitators to tailor the promotion of the music activities they provide. Following question GLA04 (What club or group activity do you mostly participate in?) question GLA05 asked: Why did you get involved in that activity in the beginning? Fourteen themes emerged from answers provided by 212 respondents (see Table 9). Motivations pertaining to social connectedness were nominated by 66 respondents, amounting to 24.6% of reasons given for starting an activity. Enjoyment and volunteering were ranked almost equally at 19.8% and 19.1% respectively.
Reasons pertaining to cognitive maintenance or improvement ranked fourth (11.9%), closely followed by physical health (10.1%).

Table 9: Motivations for leisure choices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical health</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boredom</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habit</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep active</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>268</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the answers provided to question GLA05, several catalysts to participation pertaining specifically to interpersonal relationships emerged from 29 of the responses; such interpersonal catalysts included encouragement from friends and family members, or recommendations by doctors (Table 10).

Table 10: Reported interpersonal catalysts for participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>friend</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>invitation</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doctor</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spouse</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>letterbox drop</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neighbour</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>newspaper article</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The reasons for continuing with chosen leisure activities (Question GLA06) correlated with the initial motivations. For 27 respondents, the reason for continuing their activity was the same as their initial motivation.

**Perceived barriers to participation**

In an effort to discover perceived barriers to participation in leisure activities in general, survey question GLA07 asked respondents if they had a desired activity in which they would like to participate but were unable to for any reason. Responses were fairly balanced from the 235 respondents to this question, with 52% answering ‘yes’ and 122 respondents mentioning 127 activities (GLA08) that were categorised against 17 themes (see Table 11).

Table 11: Desired leisure activities reported to be inaccessible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Theme</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>exercise</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>travel</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dance</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instrument</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sing</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entertainment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social activity</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>craft</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flying</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>many</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>calligraphy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community service</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gardening</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mah-jong</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parachuting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>study</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>126</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Physical exercise was by far the most desired activity in which 66 respondents (52%) were unable to engage. Travelling was ranked second (15%) and dance third (7.1%); however, such categories may relate more to health and physical restrictions, as became apparent in the following question. Playing an instrument and singing were nominated as desirable but unattainable activities by 5.5% of respondents. Three of the seven respondents who would have liked to have played a musical instrument specified that instrument: the cello, guitar, and ukulele.
Question GLA09 explored what respondents believed prevented their participation in their desired yet unachievable activities. These are the perceived barriers to participation that may also have consequences for the non-uptake of music activities. 40.3% of respondents indicated that their health and physical ailments were barriers to participation; this theme far exceeded all others (Table 12). Cost was considered a barrier by 15.4%, while several other themes, such as location, time, opportunity, and confidence, were reported by 7% of respondents.

Table 12: Reported barriers to participation in leisure activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Some examples</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>health</td>
<td>includes fitness, disabilities, injuries, eyesight</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>40.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cost</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confidence</td>
<td>includes riding on roads, fear of heights, safety, travelling alone</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunity</td>
<td>includes finding a group</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carer</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>work</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>solitude</td>
<td>includes loss of partner</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>access</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heat</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>priorities</td>
<td>includes laziness</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transport</td>
<td>includes parking</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>partner</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gender balance</td>
<td>includes for dancing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no garden</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>technology</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>149</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MUSIC ACTIVITIES PART I**

**Choral Participation**

The first of the three sections on music activities explored experiences in choral or church singing from school age to the present. Results from questions MA01 to MA04 (Table 13) showed a decline in choral participation by respondents from 33.8% in primary school to 3.3% at the time of the survey.
Table 13: School or church choir participation across the lifespan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life stage</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>33.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-school</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently (2016)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The propensity of respondents to avoid participation in music activities in later life may reflect the fact that fewer than 34% of respondents had—or took—the opportunity to sing in a choir during their primary school years. This may also give rise to a perceived lack of singing ability, which was by far the most common reason for not singing in a community or church choir (Table 14).

Table 14: Reasons for not singing in a choir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ability</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>51.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interest</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other priorities</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunity</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enjoyment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awareness</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confidence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hearing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>night</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transport</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>too serious</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>258</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More than half of the 258 respondents to this question indicated, often humorously, that they could not sing:

- Couldn’t carry a tune in a carrier bag. [ID 295]
- I have the world’s worst voice. When I sang a lullaby to my baby he clamped his little baby hand over my mouth. [ID 30]
- I love music and appreciate music too much to murder it. [ID 290]
- I need running water to sound good. [ID 196]
My singing would crack the plaster in the walls. [ID 271]

When I was young, and singing in an Eisteddfod, the choirmaster pointed at me and said “That boy there—stop singing.” [ID 89]

Lamont (2011) noted how similar negative childhood experiences affected music participation in later life:

Many of these non-singers also report negative experiences at some point in their childhood music education, such as being told not to sing out loud in primary school choirs. … Even many of the still-active older musicians in my sample reported negative experiences of music at school where their skills were criticised. (p. 372)

Because primary school music activities tend to focus on singing, it may be that children who believe they cannot sing may also assume that they are not musical generally. In addition, older adults who say that they are not interested in music participation may actually be harbouring a lack of music self-efficacy as a result of negative childhood experiences. These suggestions are corroborated by Demorest, Kelley, and Pfordresher (2017):

Many students who opt out of elective music may do so not because they lack interest but because of some self-perceived inadequacy as a musician. It is possible that negative self-perceptions about singing ability or “talent” are a significant factor in the documented low participation levels in elective music classes. (p. 406)

Beyond the perceived inability to sing, other barriers reported by survey respondents were awareness, location, and timing of activities, as suggested in these comments:

Finding information about local leisure activities is a general problem. [ID 42]

The choir I would like to join is a long distance away and practices in the evenings when I don’t like to drive. [ID 50]

However, there were some positive responses, with one respondent (age 65–69) commenting that she was taking singing lessons and that her next challenge was to sing in a choir.
**MUSIC ACTIVITIES PART 2**

Survey questions MA05, MA07, MA09, and MA11 asked respondents whether they had played a musical instrument at various periods of their life for more than eight weeks. Questions MA06, MA08, MA10, and MA12 asked respondents to specify which instruments, if any, they played.

Playing a musical instrument was more popular during primary school years than at other times of the lifespan, with 37.5% of respondents ($n = 102$) having played (Table 15). Numbers gradually decreased to 10.3% (28 respondents) playing at least one musical instrument at the time of the survey (2016).

Table 15: Playing a musical instrument at different life stages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life stage</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-school to age 50</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 50 to present</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently (2016)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures are consistent with findings in the *Taking Part* survey conducted by Arts Council England, which estimated that fewer than 10% of adults (over the age of 18) “rank playing a musical instrument as their main leisure activity, compared to the 79 percent who rank listening to music most highly” (as cited in Pitts, 2017, p. 178).

**Piano**

The piano remained the most popular instrument throughout the lifespan (Table 16). 25.7% of respondents played the piano during their primary school years. This figure dropped to 18% during high school then nearly halved after leaving school. Fewer than 5% of respondents played the piano in later adulthood.
Table 16: Piano playing across the lifespan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life stage</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-school to age 50</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 50 to present</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently (2016)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recorder and Fife

Of the 272 respondents, 33 indicated that they played the recorder at primary school (Table 17). This figure dropped to below 2% during high school and from the age of 50. Nine respondents reported playing the recorder after their school years and before the age of 50.

Table 17: Recorder playing across the lifespan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life stage</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-school to age 50</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 50 to present</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently (2016)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As was later revealed in interviews with older-adult musicians in Queensland, the fife was offered in some Queensland primary schools (see, for example, Stevens, 2002; Sutherland & Lane, 1929). Six survey respondents indicated that they had played the fife but did not continue playing beyond primary school.

Orchestral String Instruments

With the availability of half, quarter, and even smaller instrument sizes, orchestral string instruments allow for development throughout the lifespan. Very few respondents to the Leisure Activities Survey had played the violin; the percentage of those who had played it peaked at 6.5% during the high school years (Table 18), and none of the respondents had played it since turning 50.
Table 18: Violin playing across the lifespan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life stage</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-school to age 50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 50 to present</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently (2016)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One survey respondent had played the cello during her primary school years (Table 19) and two others during high school.

Table 19: Cello playing across the lifespan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life stage</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-school to age 50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 50 to present</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently (2016)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One respondent played the viola during high school and continued after leaving school. Another respondent played the double bass during high school. However, no string instruments were played after the age of 50 by any respondents to the Leisure Activities Survey.

*Guitar and Ukulele*

High school was the peak stage of life for playing the guitar ($n = 18$), an activity that appeared to continue after leaving school ($n = 16$). Six respondents indicated that they currently (2016) played the guitar (Table 20).

Table 20: Guitar playing across the lifespan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life stage</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-school to age 50</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 50 to present</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently (2016)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The ukulele has been going through a revival in Australia in the past decade. Nine respondents had played from the age of 50 and seven were still playing at the time of the survey (Table 21).

Table 21: Ukulele playing across the lifespan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Life stage</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-school to age 50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 50 to present</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently (2016)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a listing of all nominated instruments and their popularity during the different life stages, see Appendix M.

Of the 34 respondents who played a musical instrument at the time of the survey (2016), just three played in a community group (question MA16) while five played with small, private groups (question MA17).

**MUSIC ACTIVITIES PART 3**

Part 3 of the Music activities questions sought to discover reasons for not participating and whether respondents would, under certain conditions, consider learning an instrument or playing in a music ensemble.

In Cavitt’s (2005) research of factors influencing participation in community bands, respondents \( n = 401 \) were active adult musicians, 58.6% of whom were aged 36 and over (p. 48). However, Cavitt asked about the times they did not participate, a question that was relevant to 78.8% of her sample. The main reason given by 41% of respondents was that they were “too busy with other activities (school, church, family)” (p. 51). With a mean age of 40.15 years for this sample, this is unsurprising and would not be expected to relate to a sample of older adults who have mostly retired from the workforce. More significantly, 29.2% of Cavitt’s sample reported that there were “no community bands in their area,” and 25% gave ‘other’ reasons, which included being “unaware of opportunities for participation in a community band during this period” or being “burned-out from high school band” (p. 51). Although it is comforting to know that these musicians found their way back to the
music fraternity, we can only speculate about the number of former musicians who have not.

Of the 272 respondents to the Leisure Activities Survey, 37.5% ($n = 102$) reported playing a musical instrument during their primary school years. This figure had diminished to 12% ($n = 34$) at the time of the survey (see Figure 14 and Appendix M).

Figure 14: Total number of respondents who played a musical instrument at different life stages, and the trend of selected instruments (see Appendix M).

**Reasons for no longer playing a musical instrument**

Respondents who had discontinued playing a musical instrument were asked to provide a reason (question MA18). Although survey fatigue, particularly with regard to the number of music questions, may have inhibited continued input by those respondents to whom this question was applicable, 103 responses were provided, from which 14 general themes emerged (see Table 22). One respondent (male, age 50–54), who played the clarinet at primary and high school, was unsure why he discontinued playing once he had left school. He did, however, have the desire to learn the piano or guitar, even though he was not prepared to attend lessons or an ensemble no matter how affordable and accessible they were.
Lack of interest, ability, time, and enjoyment were the most prominent reasons to emerge for ceasing to play a musical instrument. Having other priorities, or not having the time, may also be indicative of a lack of interest, enjoyment, opportunity, financial capacity, or some other theme.

Table 22: Reasons for discontinuing playing an instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interest</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other priorities</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enjoyment</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instrument</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunity</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cost</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disability</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>criticism</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>introversion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>noise</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>141</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some comments related to specific instruments, such as finding the recorder annoying, or having no room for a drum kit. Having to return school instruments and having no ensembles in which to continue after leaving school were also reported as barriers to continued participation, as was the cost of lessons and instruments. Vision and driving at night were reported as physical constraints to music participation.

Comments indicative of challenges to continued engagement in music making included:

The instrument is old and a new one costs too much. There are no small orchestras for harmonica. I could perhaps teach it. [ID 136]

Frustration with vision. [ID 3]
Work commitments took up a lot of time. Then when I moved interstate, I lost contact with musicians and have not tried to re-engage with other musicians. [ID 197]

Didn't find the teacher was pleasant. [ID 230]

Concern about noise levels in an apartment complex. [ID 279]

After grade 1 my teacher told me that my talents lay elsewhere! [ID 133]

When I was a relief teacher of a primary class for 3 months, I taught myself to play the recorder so that I could teach the children in the class to play. … When I left that job, I stopped playing the recorder, although I did keep it up for a while for my own enjoyment. Like singing, I really wasn't very good! [ID 143]

I turned 16, discovered parties, pop music, and boys. [ID 284]

Reasons for never playing a musical instrument

Survey question MA19 sought respondents’ reasons for never playing a musical instrument. Comments were submitted by 118 respondents, with 13 general themes emerging from the data (see Table 23).

Table 23: Reasons for never playing a musical instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ability</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interest</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunity</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cost</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other priorities</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encouragement</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patience</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>commitment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confidence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enjoyment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unpopular activity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As with reasons given for not singing in a choir, lack of ability topped the rankings with 23.7% of the 118 respondents believing they lacked music talent or were tone deaf. Comments included:

I just can't get the hang of it. I tried at school but couldn't do it. [ID 276]

I tried to learn the guitar when I was younger and after I retired. It does not come easy; I am too clumsy. [ID 99]

I love listening to music but, as with dancing, I don't have a musical bone in my body. [ID 199]

Other highly ranked themes to emerge also reflected earlier responses pertaining to perceived barriers to participation; namely, a lack of interest, opportunity, time, and financial capacity; and having other priorities. One comment from a respondent aged 65–69 depicted attitudes and events of an earlier era, raising a number of socio-cultural constraints beyond just personal circumstances:

Girls born in England just after the war, from poor families, did not have the opportunity to play musical instruments. By the time I could decide for myself I was married, had kids, and full-time work. I would love to play an instrument. I love to dance. [ID 30]

Older adults’ ability to learn a musical instrument

The responses regarding lack of ability as a reason for not playing a musical instrument seemed to conflict with the general response to question MA20, which related to beliefs about the capacity of adults to learn a musical instrument.

In a 1997 survey of 1,740 Americans, 57% of the respondents aged 65 and over believed that they were too old to learn to play an instrument (Jellison, 2000, p. 6). In the Leisure Activities Survey for this research, 97% of 135 respondents (aged 50 years and over) believed that older adults were able to learn to play. However, many answers were conditional on aspects such as access, opportunity, cost, motivation, and learning an instrument when young:

My mother learned to play a clarinet when she was over 50, she became quite good too. [ID 11]
My wife took up the shakuhachi at 60 and had no previous musical experience. [ID 100]

Older adults may have more time and a stronger commitment to learning an instrument. It may well serve as a prompt to get them out into the community. [ID 158]

Perfection and exams aren’t everything: anyone can play anything for pure enjoyment at any level; just don’t join the Philharmonic Orchestra. [ID 149]

Future prospects for music making

In order to discover the likelihood that older adults who had limited or no music experience would take up a music opportunity, survey question MA22 asked how likely respondents were to join a two-hour musical instrument session for beginners. 39.7% of respondents indicated that they were very likely ($n = 53$) or likely ($n = 55$) to attend, while 52.2% gave negative responses (see Table 24).

Table 24: Likelihood of playing in a 2-hour music workshop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very likely</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>36.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No chance at all!</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>272</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of the positive comments also exposed the challenges facing older age cohorts:

I really would love to attend as long as the days were not on my medical treatment days. That sounds so exciting. [ID 68]

I would love to learn something new; music is great if I don’t have to sing! [ID 179]

I’d feel less embarrassed in a group class. But I’d only attend if the instrument/s didn’t require a high level of manual dexterity (I have an amputated finger RH). [ID 42]
It would depend on accessibility and also if appropriate seating was provided and if the location was not too far (say no more than a 40-minute drive). [ID 243]

Negative comments reflected the usual perceived barriers of lack of interest and time, but also reinforced the image of retirement as a time of activity and vibrancy:

I am so busy now. I run croquet group, computer group, attend table tennis, do gardening in my three-quarter acre block, help friends and family, webmaster for U3A web site, attend committee meetings. I don’t need any more. [ID 131]

I am stuck at home most of the time. I am also slightly disabled in my right hand. [ID 28]

I have absolutely no interest in this activity and I have many other activities which take up my time and I greatly enjoy them. [ID 66]

Similar statistics resulted from survey question MA24, which explored the respondents’ proclivity to attend music lessons if such lessons were accessible and affordable (Table 25). 37.8% were very likely \((n = 39)\) or likely \((n = 64)\) to attend, while 62.2% responded negatively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likelihood</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very likely</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No chance at all!</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No answer</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>272</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were asked outright if they would like to play a musical instrument (question MA26). Responses were comparable with the previous two questions, with 40% \((n = 109)\) answering ‘yes’. The piano was by far the most popular instrument choice, receiving 36.7% \((n = 66)\) of responses (see Table 26). The guitar ranked a
distant second, receiving half the number of responses ($n = 34$) compared with the piano.

Table 26: Instrument preferences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>36.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guitar</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukulele</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percussion</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cello</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarinet</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saxophone</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trumpet</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandolin</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viola</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagpipes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banjo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harp</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drums</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trombone</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keyboard</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouth organ</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piano accordion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tin whistle</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organ</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>180</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When asked about the reasons for their particular instrument choices (question MA28), 112 responses were given around 20 emerging themes (see Table 27). Broader categorisation suggested that *music* reasons (such as the sound of the instrument and past music experience) were the strongest motivations for their choice of instrument. Themes such as fun, pleasure, and the ease of playing a particular instrument were categorised as *enjoyment*, which ranked second as a motivational category. Physiological motivations, which included concerns about physical and mental health, and social motivations ranked closely. These were followed by cognitive, practical, and financial motivations. Practical motivations
included already owning an instrument, and noise concerns: a keyboard was
considered preferable for its capacity to plug in headphones.

Table 27: Reasons for instrument choices, including the number (N) and percentage (%)
of respondents who specified each theme and the sum for each category
(Cn, C%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Cn</th>
<th>C%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sound</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past experience</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accompaniment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baroque music</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ease</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pleasure</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bucket list</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>free spirit</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fun</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>size</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>Physiological</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dexterity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mental health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cognitive</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>challenge</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>useful</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>own</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>volume</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cost</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments from the respondents included:

I like the sound of an acoustic guitar. [ID 28]

Cello = the loveliest instrument of all. [ID 42]

Love the deep resonance of cello. [ID 223]

Not too heavy and heavenly sound. [Flute, ID 104]

Portable and storable and like the sound. [Guitar and flute, ID 88]

Small and easy to hold. [Harmonica, ID 10]

Transportable; cost; basic; simple to learn. [Recorder and ukulele, ID 48]
Deterrents to playing a musical instrument

Survey question MA29 was designed to explore potential deterrents to playing a musical instrument. Just 22.5% of the 275 survey respondents ($n = 62$) provided answers to this question, again probably due to survey fatigue or the sense that they had already answered similar questions. The stand-out deterrents to playing a musical instrument—lack of interest, time, ability, and having other priorities (see Table 28)—correlated with previous research on constraints to learning and leisure participation (see, for example, Cross, 1981; Jackson & Searle, 1983; Jansen, 2005) and on music participation (see, for example, Coffman, 2002b; Creech et al., 2014).

Table 28: Deterrents to playing a musical instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>interest</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other priorities</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confidence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>patience</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disability</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>62</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Motivations to play a musical instrument

Question MA29 asked about the potential motivations for music making, but was asked only of those respondents who neither played a musical instrument (MA13) nor wished to play an instrument (MA26). As this question was dealing with a somewhat ‘hostile audience’ (Conquergood, 1985, p. 4), it was not surprising that 81.8% of the 44 respondents to this question indicated that there was nothing that would motivate them to actively participate in music making (Table 29).
Table 29: Possible motivations as indicated by those with no desire to play an instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivations</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nothing</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>81.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>friends</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improved health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>talent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments from those with no intention of playing included:

If I were in a cave with nothing but food, water and a musical instrument, I would have a bash at playing the musical instrument. [ID 290]

When I’m dead I might take up the harp, if I go up NOT down. [ID 199]

Those who indicated that a friend could be a motivator commented:

If a friend took it up. [ID 71]

If friends pursued it and wanted another person. [ID 208]

If I had nothing else better to do or if a very close and dear friend begged me to join with them. [ID 66]

The influence of musical friends stands out as perhaps the only motivator for people who claim to have no interest in music participation.

*Perceived Benefits of Playing in Music Groups*

Respondents were asked what they believed were the benefits of playing a musical instrument in music groups (question MA31). Of the 272 survey respondents, 63.2% (n = 172) answered this question. Responses were categorised according to implications for social, mental, cognitive, musical, physical, and spiritual benefits, with social connectedness and mental health receiving 68% of the comments (Table 30).
Table 30: Perceived benefits of music participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musical</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>309</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although 15 respondents indicated that there were no benefits to music participation, and one respondent each said they were unsure, did not know, or did not care, respondents’ comments suggested that they were generally knowledgeable about the benefits of music participation. Responses included:

Benefits brain function: concentration, memory, new learning. Benefits mental health through social connection and relaxation. Spiritual benefit through beauty and mystic of music. [ID 107, 65–69, female, rural, postgraduate, no religion]

Benefits could include: stave off loneliness, help with mental health issues, help put off decline into dementia, provide a purpose, benefit one’s sense of self as an intelligent, achieving individual. [ID 243, 65–69, female, rural, postgraduate, no religion]

Brain training; making new friends; benefit of having an arranged time to meet; a sense of belonging to a group. [ID 205, 65–69, female, suburban, graduate]

Music in a group is motivating, very exciting, and the harmonies are exhilarating. Often the social side is not as strong as the musical buzz. [ID 41, 65–69, female, suburban, postgraduate, no religion]

Music is food for the soul, whether listening or playing well. I believe that a musical skill is a gift and partly genetic. However, a lot of people get great enjoyment out of playing without a great skill level for their own enjoyment. [ID 246, 70–74, male, urban, middle school, no religion]
Sounds are a beautiful noise that inspire and link a group together, especially important in old age, a time when loneliness is the enemy. New friendships are created with a common bond, the love of music. [ID 179, 75–79, female, suburban, diploma, no religion]

The brain activities are different when you play or learn to play an instrument. At our age that is a significant part of keeping dementia at an arm’s length. The social interaction cannot be ignored either. [ID 136, 65–69, male, suburban, diploma, no religion]

Preferred genres and age groups

Two final music questions asked respondents the age composition of groups they would prefer to play with (MA33), and what types of music they would most like to play (MA32). Of the 119 respondents who answered the first question, 48.7% indicated that they would prefer to play with groups consisting of older adults (see Table 31).

Table 31: Preferred age group of music ensemble

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All ages</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults over 18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults over 50</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>119</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the 189 respondents who answered the second question, 24.4% selected classical music (see Table 32). Easy listening, blues, and country music were the next most popular genres.
Table 32: Preferred music genre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classical Music</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy Listening</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blues</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Music</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rock</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance Music</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop (Popular music)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jazz</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singer / Songwriter (inc. Folk)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Music</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R&amp;B / Soul</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Music (Folk / Pop)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hip Hop / Rap</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indie Pop</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspirational (incl. Gospel)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin Music</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Age</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>189</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REPORTED BARRIERS TO MUSIC PARTICIPATION**

The Leisure Activities Survey explored the leisure activities of older adults, including if and how active music participation factored into the leisure choices of older adults. The survey particularly sought to determine the barriers to music participation as perceived by active, older-adults who were not engaged in music-making activities.

Questions GLA07–09 explored leisure activities that were desired but not achievable. Because a significant majority of respondents (52%) would like to do more physical exercise, it is not surprising that health and physical ailments were the most reported barriers to leisure activities overall.

Thirteen respondents said they would like to sing or play a musical instrument but reported that their barriers were time and having other priorities (five respondents), cost or location (two respondents each), and age, ability, confidence, the genre of music, health restrictions, and the preference not to perform (one each).
Reasons offered for no longer playing a musical instrument (MA18) emphasised a lack of interest, ability, time, enjoyment, opportunity, and financial resources. Physical constraints included poor vision, particularly when driving at night.

Lack of ability was the main reason given for never playing a musical instrument (MA19), and this was followed by a lack of interest and opportunity. Cost and time were also reported as barriers to playing a musical instrument.

Respondents who were likely to attend a music workshop (MA23) were motivated by particular instruments (piano, saxophone, and guitar were specified). Other motivations were to have fun, and the perceived social and cognitive benefits; however, their attendance was dependent on location, time of day, and access requirements. Respondents who were unlikely to attend reported having other priorities. Other reported barriers included lack of interest, time, instrument, and ability. Health, location, and confidence were also reported as barriers.

Respondents who were likely to attend affordable and conveniently located musical instrument tuition (MA25) were motivated firstly by the perceived cognitive benefits, and secondly by specific musical instruments (piano, cello, and violin were specified). Other motivations were the perceived social benefits; skill development, learning and memory; enjoyment and fun; and mental health. Restrictions included time, cost, age, confidence, and interest. Respondents who were unlikely to attend music lessons emphasised having other interests and priorities. Other reported barriers were lack of time, cost, ability, instrument, and confidence. Location, health, and work commitments were also reported as barriers to learning a musical instrument, although the latter may be better categorised as having other priorities.

Respondents were asked specifically what deterred them from playing or learning to play a musical instrument (MA29). Lack of interest, lack of time, and having other priorities were the most reported reasons; these arguably amount to the same concept of having no interest in playing music. Other reasons included a lack of ability, confidence, and patience; and having a disability.

Table 33 summarises the reported reasons for not playing or intending to play a musical instrument. These are the perceived barriers to music participation as reported by older-adults who live in Queensland, and who generally do not engage in music activities (2016).
**Lack of Interest**

The intrapersonal constraints of lack of time, lack of interest, and having other priorities may be grouped generally as a lack of interest in playing music. This is perhaps the only real barrier to music participation, also referred to in leisure constraints theory as an antecedent constraint (Auster, 2001; Henderson et al., 1988; Jackson et al., 1993). However, scholars have questioned whether even a lack of interest is a barrier.

In McGuire’s (1984) factor analysis of leisure constraints reported by 125 adults aged 45 to 93, the category of time included “having more important things to do, not having enough time, being too busy with other activities, being too busy with work, and not wanting to interrupt a daily schedule” (p. 318). Lack of time, therefore, was also regarded as a matter of prioritising leisure choices.

Table 33: Reported barriers to music participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Want to but cannot</th>
<th>No longer play</th>
<th>Never played</th>
<th>Will not attend workshop</th>
<th>Will not have lesson</th>
<th>Deterrent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lack of ability</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of time</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>health restrictions</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cost</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of confidence</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of interest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other priorities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of instrument</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of opportunity</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accessibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genre of music</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of patience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time of day</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goodale and Witt (1989) commented that “lack of interest is seen not as an antecedent but a consequence for which researchers seek antecedents to that lack” (p. 440); and Cross (1981) pondered about how interesting it would be “to know what
factors contributed to their lack of interest” (p. 107). Such factors could perhaps be discovered in adverse music experiences during formative years, or are perhaps due to the absence of music experiences while favouring other activities.

Interest in playing music is the obvious defining factor between music participants and non-participants. Whether this interest is by nature or nurture—inherited or environmental—seems to be of little consequence once a person has reached later life and is immersed in other leisure activities. Attempts to overcome a lack of interest in music participation may be impractical when weighing the time, cost, and resources of music facilitators against the chances of success. If older adults are already enjoying their leisure activities, then success has already been achieved without the need of encouraging—or pressuring—them to participate in music making.

**Lack of Ability**

Other intrapersonal constraints, as defined in this research (see Chapter 3), include a perceived lack of ability, confidence, and physical capacity (health restrictions). Beliefs that one is too old or too impatient to learn a musical instrument are also categorised as intrapersonal (attitudinal) constraints.

Survey respondents offered *lack of ability* as a deterrent to participating in music activities. Lack of ability was the reason given for not singing in a choir by 51.2% of survey respondents (Table 14), while 41.4% of respondents gave it as the reason for never playing or for ceasing to play a musical instrument (Table 22 and Table 23). Such a blocking attitude would render *lack of ability* a barrier to participation—an antecedent constraint (Henderson et al., 1988)—rather than as a negotiable challenge that could be overcome by tuition and skill development.

**Cost**

In the Council on the Ageing’s (2018) *State of the (Older) Nation* report, 20% of Australians aged over 50 responded that they did not have enough money for leisure or social activities (p. 8). However, the perceived barrier of *cost*, like the perceived barrier of *lack of time*, may suggest that music participation is prioritised much lower than other leisure choices (Cross, 1981, pp. 146–147). Cross commented that cost was “an exceptionally difficult barrier to study via the survey method” because respondents could not state what the cost was, nor how much they would be willing
to pay. She noted that “willingness to pay is not the same thing as ability to pay” (p. 101). Offering cost as a reason for non-participation, therefore, may more accurately reflect a lack of interest.

The cost of an activity and the availability of instruments are factors that seem to cross intrapersonal and structural constraint boundaries. On the one hand, socio-economic status (an intrapersonal constraint) may determine the extent to which people are prepared to pay to participate in activities and buy musical instruments. On the other hand, the resources of an ensemble (a structural constraint) will determine the participation fees required and whether musical instruments can be made available for loan.

**Lack of Time and Cost**

Burch (2016, p. 88) argued for combining the barriers *lack of time* and *cost* into a single category because they really alluded to a *lack of interest*, and signified that participants have other priorities in their lives. The implication that time and cost are “not so much barriers but reasons, and perhaps only excuses, for non-participation” (Goodale & Witt, 1989, p. 440) was further asserted by Deane (2015, p. 8), who wrote that having no time or money “is an excuse rather than a reason,” and it simply meant that music participation was not a priority. Furthermore, Mantie (2018) pointed out that “no matter how busy we are, we all have *some* discretionary time, even if it isn’t always as much as we wish.”

Using the excuse of lacking the time or money for active music making may merely be another way of expressing a preference for other activities. People will make time and pay for activities in which they have an interest; it was through those interests that all of the respondents to the Leisure Activities Survey were able to be contacted in the first place. Thus, if constraints around time and cost can be negotiated, then perhaps constraints around having other priorities can also be reversed through exposure and provision of fun and affordable music-making opportunities. Only by determining and understanding the perceived barriers to participation can music facilitators make any attempt to provide appropriate music activities that attract older adults to participate in community music making.

All of the constraints mentioned in the Leisure Activities Survey also emerged during the analysis of interviews with active musicians (see Chapters 6, 7, and 8).
However, whereas non-participants of music activities consider these factors to be barriers to music participation, music participants consider them as constraints that can be negotiated in a way that allows them to continue making music and playing in music ensembles.

**SUMMARY**

The results of the Leisure Activities Survey showed that watching television remained the most popular leisure activity for older adults in Queensland, closely followed by working on the computer, reading books for pleasure, surfing the web, listening to music (other than at a public concert), and walking for pleasure. The least popular activities were playing team sports, singing in a choir, studying towards a degree or qualification, running, and playing a musical instrument. Health issues and the cost of participation were cited as the main reasons for not participating in preferred activities.

The piano was overwhelmingly the most popular musical instrument played by survey respondents during their school years and beyond. Of the 10% of respondents who played a musical instrument at the time of doing the survey (2016), only 1% played in a community music group. As one participant explained, “There seem to be few opportunities available in Brisbane; or perhaps they aren’t widely advertised.” Overall, the findings of the Leisure Activities Survey suggest that more retirees would take up active music making if there were affordable and accessible opportunities available.

Playing in community music ensembles is an activity that competes for the time and resources of many non-music activities. It is likely that older adults make their leisure choices long before retirement; those activities that were not available to them earlier in life are unlikely to be of consideration in their later years unless some external impetus or influence acts to peak their interest.

Knowledge about the potential barriers to music making, as provided in this chapter, can assist music facilitators to devise attractive and accessible music activities for older adults who may have an interest but are unaware of the opportunities or perhaps even the purported benefits of participatory music making. Combining this knowledge with information from active older-adult musicians about the constraints to music participation, as provided in Chapters 6, 7, and 8, can further assist music
facilitators to promote attractive and accessible music endeavours. For this purpose, 44 musicians, music teachers, and music ensemble organisers participated in discussions about the constraints that confront them when engaging in or organising music activities for older adults. These informants were drawn from older-adult music ensembles in South East Queensland, which are described in the next chapter.
This chapter provides background information on music ensembles that represent examples of music making by older adults in South East Queensland. Three ensembles—the Bribie Island Orchestra (BIO), the Duhig Advanced Recorder Ensemble (DARE), and the U3A Logan handbell class—served as descriptive and comparative examples of older-adult music making. Interview participants (informants) were drawn from these ensembles, as well as from other Brisbane-based music groups, including the Queensland Amateur Chamber Music Society (QACMS) and Bardon Strings. Informants discussed their motivations for community music participation, and the constraints negotiated to participate in music activities. Data presented in this chapter emerged from participant-observation notes and from semi-structured interviews with 44 informants, 25 older-adult musicians and 15 music facilitators.

The second research sub-question asked:

*What are the characteristics and motivations of Queensland’s older-adult musicians?*

Having described the qualitative research approaches in Chapter 3, I begin this chapter by presenting contextual information about the three core music ensembles and other music sources in Brisbane from which informants were recruited for face-to-face recorded interviews and follow-up questions. In this chapter, I discuss the findings, with particular reference to informants’ motivations for music activities. The interviews also provided a rich source of data on the perceived constraints to music participation (research sub-question 3). I provide an extensive analysis of these constraints according to adapted leisure constraints theory (Crawford et al.,
Pseudonyms of interview participants are used throughout this thesis (see Chapter 3, Ethical considerations).

The selected music examples in this study provided opportunities for me to observe older-adult musicians in practice and performance, to participate in their music activities, and thus to gain personal experience of each group so that I could better understand the challenges that confront both participants and facilitators in their music activities.

SELECTION OF MUSIC ENSEMBLES

Queensland, Australia’s “Sunshine State,” is situated in the north east of the Australian continent. In size, it is the second largest of Australia’s eight states and territories, having an area of 1,730,648 square kilometres, which is 22.5% of the Australian land mass (ABS, 2018c). With a population of just under 5 million people, Queensland has a population density of 2.8 people per square kilometre, ranking fifth of the states and territories. Understandably, most people choose to live along the more hospitable, fertile coastal regions (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Population density, Australia, June 2016 (Source: https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats, public domain).
Bribie Island, situated about an hour’s drive (75 kilometres) north of Brisbane, has the state’s highest proportion of people aged over 65, with a figure of 40.5% (ABS, 2017). While the median age of Queensland in the 2016 census was 37, Bribie Island had the highest median age across Australia at 59 (ABS, 2018a). Furthermore, suburbs along the Sunshine Coast, another hour’s drive north of Bribie Island, had a median age ranging from 53 to 58, indicating the popularity of the coastal strip north of Brisbane as a favoured location for Australia’s retirees (Tilley, 2017).

Due to its aged population, its proximity to the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University in Brisbane, and the existence of various music activities on or adjacent to the island, Bribie presented an appropriate site in which I could conduct research while immersed within the realities of a community of non-homebound, older adults. The island, together with its surrounding area, could be perceived as a microcosm of global ageing. BIO, established on the island in 1993, afforded me an opportunity to explore the music motivations, activities, and challenges of older adults who had retired to this picturesque and climatically inviting coastal haven.

During my early observations of the Bribie region, it became apparent that the area’s higher socio-economic status rendered BIO a less than ideal representative sample if any attempt was to be made to generalise the findings with other geographically and socio-economically contrasting environments. Bribie Island typifies a model of a middle- to upper-class, ageing community; it could not realistically exemplify the music practices of older adults from lower socio-economic areas. During the latter stages of data collection, two significantly diverse groups of music making by older adults came to my attention: DARE in the urban area of Brisbane’s central business district (CBD), with a predominantly middle-class socio-economic constituency; and the U3A handbell class, established in the lower socio-economic suburbs of Logan (Robertson, 2016), 25 kilometres to the south of the city (see Table 34).

This trio of music ensembles in South East Queensland presented both comparable and contrasting examples of music activities that attract a majority of older adults. They provided evidence of the different—and often changing—motivations of older adult musicians, as well as of the challenges that confront the formation and continuation of music ensembles. Informants from these ensembles, together with informants from miscellaneous music ensembles in South East Queensland, such as
QACMS and Bardon Strings, assisted in discovering the factors that promote ongoing music participation by older adults in community music ensembles.

Table 34: Examples of older-adult music activities in South East Queensland from which informants were recruited.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ensemble</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Socio-economic status</th>
<th>% of the population over 65 (1)</th>
<th>Interview participants</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bribie Island Orchestra (BIO)</td>
<td>Coastal region, north of Brisbane</td>
<td>Higher income</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>facilitator musicians</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duhig Advanced Recorder Ensemble (DARE)</td>
<td>Urban, Brisbane CBD</td>
<td>Middle income</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>facilitator musicians</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U3A Beginners’ Handbell Class</td>
<td>Suburban, south of Brisbane</td>
<td>Lower income</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>facilitator musicians</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>South East Queensland</td>
<td>Mixed income</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>facilitators musicians</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Through participant-observation and interviews, I examined each of these groups according to Veblen’s (2008) five key issues (see Chapter 3): music activities, intentions, participant characteristics, knowledge development, and contextual interplays.

**EXAMPLE 1: BRIBIE ISLAND ORCHESTRA**

Although Bribie Island is the oldest area in Queensland by age, it is hardly a sleepy little hollow. During a 5.30 am stroll along the foreshore in October 2016, I observed many people, mostly older adults, walking, jogging, cycling, fishing, walking dogs, and using exercise equipment in the parks. Later in the day, the bowls greens bustled with groups of older adults who sported colourful club jerseys, and the local U3A conducted a variety of activities around the island, including guitar, keyboard and ukulele (Bribie Island U3A, 2019). This is a vibrant community of active agers who also participate in community music groups that include a country music group, a...
wind band, a male choir (the Gleemen), female singing groups, a Celtic fiddle group, and a community orchestra (see Figure 16).

Formed in 1993, BIO has its origins in the local school ensembles, an initiative of a school music teacher who had moved to the island in 1989. Rehearsals were initially held in the local primary school, with just two adults in attendance. Over the years, rehearsals have taken place in several venues, including the Arts Centre and the local Catholic church, before settling in the orchestra director’s home, where they have taken place on Sunday evenings for the past 20 years (as of 2019). This home was not situated on the island, but in an adjacent suburb on the mainland side of the Bribie Island bridge. Thus, the rehearsal location may have been a deterrent for those who did not drive, although strolling across the 835-metre bridge (Department of Transport and Main Roads, 2014, p. 1) would not be too onerous for people without a disability, and there was always someone in this friendly community to offer a lift. At least two other orchestral members lived on the mainland side, and several others drove from suburbs closer to Brisbane. Over the years, the orchestra evolved more as an adult orchestra, which in the Bribie region means an older-adult orchestra; as Fred

Figure 16: Bribie Island Orchestra (BIO) at their 25th anniversary concert in 2018 (Source: Mary Grant, 29 July 2018).
noted: “Young people move away in their teens and twenties, then return in their mid-60s.”

At the time of observations and interviews (December 2016–March 2017), three members of the orchestra were aged in their 80s, while most were in their 70s and 60s. Three school-age musicians also played with the orchestra, although one trumpet player was due to move to the city to continue his studies. Other wind instruments included flutes, saxophone, and a bass recorder filling in bassoon parts. On average, the string section comprised five first violins, three seconds, four developing third violinists who were provided with adapted viola parts, and three cellos. Edith described how everyone was catered for: “I think that our orchestra’s really unique, isn’t it? Felix [the orchestra director] caters for everybody, so if he has ten cellos, he’ll fit ten cellos in.”

The orchestra provided an outlet for experienced musicians to continue playing their instruments; for novice musicians to learn and progress on their instruments; and for the orchestra director, who led from the keyboard, to continue playing the piano while sharing his music knowledge, something he also did in musicology classes at the local U3A. With over 500 works in the BIO library, the orchestra’s repertoire comprised mainly light classical pieces or show tunes. Interactions with other music groups have been sporadic, with past opportunities including collaborations with choral groups to present musicals. The Gleemen also featured at the orchestra’s 2016 end-of-year concert; however, they used just keyboard accompaniment. Several of the musicians with an interest in playing folk music had also formed the Bribie Island Celtic Fiddles.

To augment my observational research, in December 2016 I was invited to participate in the orchestra’s end-of-year concert as a first violinist. I attended the final rehearsal a week before the concert and, on both occasions, was able to recruit 15 interested older-adult musicians to act as informants for this research. Interviews with 11 informants took place in the Bribie region during the week following the concert. I conducted four later interviews in the homes of those informants who lived closer to Brisbane.

Gender and age distribution of the informants were fairly even, with eight female and six male participants. Two informants were aged in their 50s, four in their 60s, six in their 70s, and three in their 80s. Eight violinists readily signed up; this may have
been influenced by my developing friendship during the rehearsal and concert. Three cellists took part in a focus group (see Table 35).

Table 35: Bribie Island Orchestra (BIO) research participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name (Pseudonym)</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>BIO Instrument</th>
<th>Years Played</th>
<th>2nd Instrument</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aiden</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>75−79</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>60−64</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>70−74</td>
<td>Saxophone</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>70−74</td>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bella</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>70−74</td>
<td>Cello</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bianca</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>75−79</td>
<td>Cello</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brody</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>70−74</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celia</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>60−64</td>
<td>Cello</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clara</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>55−59</td>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daphne</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>50−54</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Mandolin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>65−69</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dylan</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>80−84</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edith</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>80−84</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felix</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>80−84</td>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>65−69</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Guitar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All informants had learned to play a musical instrument during childhood, nine had musical parents, and at least six informants had taken music exams above Grade 5. Seven of the informants were born overseas, nine had studied at university, and two still had work commitments (see Appendix N).

**EXAMPLE 2: THE DUHIG ADVANCED RECORDER ENSEMBLE**

DARE started out in 2017 as a collaboration between a diversional therapist in a high-care Alzheimer’s unit and one of the recorder players in the advanced class of the Brisbane U3A (Ivy). The Alzheimer’s unit took up one floor of the Duhig Village aged-care facility just south of Brisbane, and staff reported that they were always seeking things to do with the high-care residents. Ivy sought other U3A players to form a performance recorder ensemble and reported receiving a good response: “From there we have formed a group of people who are quite committed to being part of this and enjoy being able to give something back to the community.” Five to ten recorder players performed at Duhig Village every two to three months (see Figure 17), subsequently giving two performances on separate floors of the facility.
Each performance lasted for about 30 minutes after which the musicians spent some time to chat with the residents before socialising over morning tea.

The ensemble invited me to observe and participate with them as part of this research. From May 2017 to May 2018, I shared in the activities with the group, assisting them with music arrangements and recorder technique. Rehearsals were initially conducted fortnightly at the U3A premises in Brisbane. Following a holiday rehearsal in a private city residence, the group agreed to continue rehearsals at that location.

Music genres favoured by the ensemble were baroque and light classical. To appeal to the residents, group members arranged and performed popular songs from earlier eras. The more able residents joined in singing these pieces, which included “Bye bye, blackbird,” “Yesterday,” “Somewhere over the rainbow,” “A bicycle built for two” and “Always.” One male resident in the high-care facility joined a staff member in a waltz to “After the ball is over.”

![Figure 17: Duhig Advanced Recorder Ensemble (DARE) in performance at Duhig Village aged-care dementia unit, 20 September 2017 (Source: Sue Robertson, with permission).](image)

Six players from DARE agreed to be interviewed for this research. Gender and age distribution were quite uneven with one male and five female informants taking part.
No informants were aged in their 50s or 80s; two were in their 60s, and four were in their 70s (see Table 36).

Table 36: Duhig Advanced Recorder Ensemble research participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Recorder Years Played</th>
<th>Second Instrument</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eric</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>75−79</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Drums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>70−74</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivy</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>60−64</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Piano, Flute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>70−74</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruby</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>60−64</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Clarinet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophie</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>75−79</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Flute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five DARE informants had learned to play a musical instrument during childhood, four reported having musical parents, and five had taken music exams above Grade 2. Two informants were born overseas, five had studied at university or teacher’s college, and one still had work or caring commitments (see Appendix N).

**EXAMPLE 3: THE U3A HANDBELL CLASS FOR BEGINNERS**

Before observing and participating in the U3A (Logan) handbell class, I had had no experience with the instrument. Although my music qualifications gave me a distinct advantage over other beginners, my inexperience in handbell ringing gave me a better understanding of the challenges confronted by novice musicians in music ensembles.

Situated about 25 kilometres south of the Brisbane CBD, Logan is touted as one of the most diverse cities in Australia (Logan City Council, 2019). With a median age of 34 and 22.6% of its 326,615 residents aged under 15, it stands in great contrast to the Bribie region, which has a median age of 59 (ABS, 2018a). The Logan City Council website lists a multitude of outdoor and sporting activities, and makes note of its Community Arts Centre. However, no resident music activities are featured on the website despite the region’s rich and diverse cultural community representing 217 ethnicities.

Synonymous with high crime (see Figure 18) and relative poverty, Logan is where disadvantage has been allowed to congregate in one place, and “unemployment stretches back three generations” (Robertson, 2016). Robertson colourfully described...
it as “less a city than a patchwork of suburbs where motorways, train tracks and power corridors act like faultlines of social class, dividing prosperous home owners from some of Australia’s most disadvantaged communities.”

Figure 18: Crime offences in Brisbane and Logan, January to March, 2019 (Source: https://content-gis-psba-qld-gov-au.s3.amazonaws.com/apps/OCM/index.html; public domain)

With safety ranking high on the issues of concern to older adults (Boca Home Care Services, 2015), there may be a tendency for potential handbell ringers to avoid localities that are represented unfavourably in the media. Additionally, the lack of public transport to the class venue, and the proclivity of the main highway to become
a bottleneck, makes this class less appealing for people who live closer to or north of the city.

The venue for the classes was a Girl Guides hall surrounded by parkland and sporting fields. Use of the hall was free due to the class facilitator’s long affiliation with the Girl Guides. This meant that the cost for participation was negligible, with the weekly $2 payment helping with the upkeep of the bells and U3A administrative charges.

In the philosophy and spirit of U3A, the facilitator's intention was to share her love of the activity with enthusiastic older-adult participants willing to learn a new skill. Having developed her own skills by travelling to England, learning from experienced handbell colleagues, and buying a valuable set of bells and the necessary tutor text, she also hoped to develop an ensemble of players with which she could continue playing at a more advanced level.

Six female participants of varying music abilities attended the first session, while a seventh assisted the facilitator/tutor. This was an ideal number for a beginner handbell group. Fewer numbers would mean that the facilitator had to fill in playing while also trying to help the participants. Any more participants would mean that someone would need to sit out; the beginner pieces accommodated just 12 bells. One male participant joined the group in the second week. Three tables were set up, each with four bells tuned from C to G across one and a half octaves. Each participant, therefore, was responsible for two bells, playing two adjacent notes.

Guy Ratcliffe’s (1997) *The Handbell Handbook, Ringers Book* provided a steady learning pace and a variety of new or familiar tunes. Letter names of the notes were added for participants who were unfamiliar with the music staff. The facilitator included minimal theory allowing participants to understand what they were playing but without feeling threatened with knowledge overload. At the end of the hour, participants with greater music experience were invited to stay for a little longer to play more challenging pieces. This was a most pleasant environment, embellished by some local birdlife that flew down to the doorway and joined in singing. The use of a hall with no time restrictions is a luxury often lacking for community ensembles.

Four players from the U3A (Logan) handbell class agreed to be interviewed for this research (Figure 19).
All informants were female, three were aged in their 60s and one in her 70s (see Table 37).

Table 37: U3A (Logan) handbell class research participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Handbells Years Played</th>
<th>2nd Instrument</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helena (tutor)</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>60–64</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Voice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>60–64</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Drum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leila</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>65–69</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louise (assistant)</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>70–74</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three informants had learned to play a musical instrument during childhood, and all reported having music influences from an adult family member. One had done a Grade 7 music exam. One informant was born overseas, one had studied at university or teacher’s college, and none had work or caring commitments (see Appendix N). All informants were also long-term members of the Girl Guides organisation in Brisbane.

**OTHER SITES**

Patton (2002) remarked that a “single case study is likely to be made up of many smaller cases—the stories of specific individuals” (p. 297). BIO, a bounded model of
music participation by older adults in South East Queensland, provided rich data from 15 “smaller cases”—the individual research informants. The Duhig ensemble and the U3A handbell group provided a further ten informants.

My own music activities brought me in contact with musicians who had relevant stories to share about their music activities, motivations, and constraints. Seven of these were active older-adult members of QACMS, four were tutors of musical instruments at U3A, two were choral conductors, two were music administrators, and two were unaffiliated. Additionally, when a new string group, Bardon Strings (see Figure 20), was formed specifically for novice adults who desired the opportunity to play in a community ensemble, I felt compelled to observe the group—as a participant violist—and include in this research the narratives of those adults who fit the criteria; namely, that they were active musicians, resident in South East Queensland, and at least 50 years of age.

![Figure 20: Bardon Strings, 2017 (Source: Anne Keenan, with permission).](image)

**QACMS**

Seven musicians from QACMS were interviewed for this research. Four informants were male and three were female. One informant was in his 50s, five in their 60s, and one in his 70s (see Table 38).
Table 38: Queensland Amateur Chamber Music Society (QACMS) research participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Years Played</th>
<th>2nd Instrument</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conrad</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>60–64</td>
<td>Bassoon</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>60–64</td>
<td>Cello</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felicity</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>65–69</td>
<td>Cello</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iris</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>60–64</td>
<td>Woodwind</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julian</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>60–64</td>
<td>Viola</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leon</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>55–59</td>
<td>Viola</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luke</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>75–79</td>
<td>Woodwind</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Voice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the QACMS research participants had learned to play a musical instrument during childhood, and all but one had learned to play the piano. Four participants reported having parents who were musical, and three participants had done music exams for Grade 4 or above. Four participants were born overseas, and four had university degrees (one with a PhD). Four participants had ongoing work or caring commitments (see Appendix N).

**OTHER RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

Twelve other research participants were interviewed: seven males and five females. Two music administrators, one from the Queensland Symphony Orchestra and one from the Open Conservatorium, were aged in their 30s, and one cellist had his 50th birthday shortly after his interview. Two other musician participants were aged in their 50s, three in their 60s, three in their 70s, and one in her 80s (see Table 39).
Table 39: Other musicians and music administrators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>1st Inst.</th>
<th>Years Played</th>
<th>2nd Inst.</th>
<th>Ensemble or Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colin</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>45−49</td>
<td>Cello</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>Bardon Strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>50−54</td>
<td>Strings</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bardon Strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vera</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>80−84</td>
<td>Voice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bluebird Voices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethan</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>30−34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DITO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>60−64</td>
<td>Voice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gleemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gemma</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>60−64</td>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Clarinet</td>
<td>Hervey Bay Recorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oliver</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>35−40</td>
<td>Brass</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U3A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>70−74</td>
<td>Ukulele</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>U3A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gavin</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>75−79</td>
<td>Brass</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>U3A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>65−69</td>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>50−54</td>
<td>Viola</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odette</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>70−74</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least seven of these 12 participants had learned to play a musical instrument during childhood, while just three reported having musical parents. Four had done music exams for Grade 5 or above. At least two participants were born overseas, eight had studied at university or teacher’s college, and six were still working full time (see Appendix N).

Even though the environment, socio-economic level and music activities at each site varied, common issues emerged that included the health, abilities, skills and knowledge of facilitators and musicians; the availability and accessibility of rehearsal spaces; costs of ensemble attendance, instrument purchase, and lessons; and inclusivity, particularly when accommodating varying skill levels. Such themes influenced the motivations for and constraints to music participation.

**Motivations for Music Participation**

As noted in Chapter 1, the purported benefits of music participation provide a strong rationale in submissions seeking support and funding for music research. Consequently, they have gained more attention by music researchers. Associated with the benefits, the motivations of older adults to learn, resume or continue to play a musical instrument are also examined in music scholarship (Pitts, 2017, p. 171; and see, for example, Coffman, 2002a, 2006, 2007, 2008; Creech et al., 2014; Daback, 2005, 2007, 2008b, 2010; Fung & Lehmberg, 2016; Shansky, 2010; Tsugawa, 2009).
Many of the novice musicians in BIO had been encouraged to take up the cello or violin—and even the double bass—by the organisers, who they knew through other activities such as Rotary or U3A, and who were able to teach them the basics of string playing.

Jane said, “Would you like to learn the cello? … We’re a bit short of cello players.” I went oh, crumbs, learn to play the cello and suddenly you’re playing in an orchestra. [Bella]

Felix said, would you like to play the double bass; we need one of these. [Clara]

Diana relished the new challenge of learning the violin, and found great pleasure in playing in the orchestra with her more experienced 80-year-old mother:

It’s my greatest joy to play with mum. I mean, for me to be in the same orchestra with mum is just wonderful. … I do thoroughly enjoy the music and the group of friends. … The orchestra is really helpful for having a goal. And it’s always challenging because there’s always a new piece. I find that really good. It would be a hard slog just to be learning and not be with an orchestra or group.

Other musicians with prior playing experience had become aware of the orchestra through concert advertisements in the local paper. George explained how and why he joined:

[My wife] saw in the local paper, “Oh the BIO are having a concert at such-and-such,” so I said, “Oh, let’s go along. So we went along. … Afterwards I went up to Felix and said, “Look, I’m a retired man here; are you looking for violinists?” He said, “Yes, always.”

It’s surprising how many children actually learnt instruments way back in the 50s and 60s; maybe not as many as learn today. If they’ve had my experience, it’s something that you want to keep alive.
One informant reported continuing with the orchestra only out of loyalty to the organisers; most, however, were motivated by the music, the opportunity to learn or continue playing their instruments, and the friendships.

Because DARE had its foundations in the U3A Brisbane recorder classes, the musicians had initially been motivated to learn, or relearn, the recorder due to the opportunity that U3A provided:

I retired in 2009 and then I joined U3A, so as soon as Hannah started her group, I joined. … I’d always wanted to be in a recorder consort; all my life I wanted to be in a recorder consort, from teacher training days. I had a few CDs with recorder consorts playing and I just love the sound of it; it was really beautiful. [Fiona]

Members with prior music experience, had been motivated by the social aspect of music making, particularly the opportunity to share their talents and give back to the community:

I wanted to go and do something musical; I wanted to get out there and go with a group, because the piano is a very solo instrument; so something to do with a group of people and I thought, oh, that sounds nice. … I thought it was good to be able to use what I’d learnt for other people rather than just for myself to go along and enjoy the music. I still think that: to be able to give enjoyment as a group to other people is beneficial, it is something to do to serve others. [Rose]

I suppose it’s having somebody to play with, otherwise it’s a solitary sort of thing. I think that’s why I quite enjoy the recorder, because it’s a group thing. … Especially the nursing homes because I love interacting with the older generation. Having worked in aged care, seeing the joy that music can give to the older generation, especially people with Alzheimer’s, warms my heart and that’s why I thought, that’s a good thing, I’d love to do that. [Ruby]

The Logan handbell group had also been motivated by the opportunity provided through the local U3A, demonstrating how such an organisation, akin to the New Horizons ensembles in the United States, can engender music interest and
participation. The freedom to opt out at any time without the loss of any major investment was also a positive influence:

I just saw it through U3A. You get all sorts of opportunities and I just thought it might be interesting and I might enjoy it. And if I didn’t enjoy it, it didn’t matter; you could drop out easily enough. … I just loved it from the first day. [Kate]

Brian, who ended up facilitating the U3A (Logan) ukulele class, had also been inspired to participate musically through the opportunity presented at U3A:

I have always had an interest in music although I never learnt to play anything until I retired and took up the ukulele. … I saw an opportunity to learn the ukulele through U3A and have not looked back.

Although most of the QACMS musicians were experienced and played in local community orchestras, playing four times a year with QACMS gave them an outlet to play the more exposed line of chamber music in a non-threatening environment, and to share the experience with like-minded colleagues:

I wanted to meet people. So out of that, I guess I met more people and found more people to play with. [Felicity]

Julian was 38 when he started learning the violin and 40 when he started the viola. However, he had waited until retirement before seeking communal playing opportunities:

I waited until I retired, which was in August 2014. I simply went on to the internet. I was looking for musical groups and I found the Australian Chamber Music Society … I was actually looking for a smaller group because I didn’t imagine I’d be good enough to play in an orchestra. … In many ways, my music has only really started since that time.

Similarly, Leon had waited until parental responsibilities were less pressing:

I suddenly realised I had more time on my hands. Once they get to that age they’re more involved in school and you have more time. I decided, that’s it, I’m going to go and buy a violin and learn. … It had been
nagging me; it had been in the back of my mind for a long time. I just thought, this is the stage of my life, I’m ready to do it,

After playing in several orchestras, Leon turned his attention to QACMS:

Now I’m more interested in chamber music … like the string quartets we had. I find I enjoy that more, now, but that’s hard to organise.

Referring to a local orchestra with which he still played, Leon also highlighted the allure of its location and time commitment:

It’s just around the corner from here. I can literally walk there. … And it’s only once every two weeks as well, which I like.

Colin had found his way to the cello, and Bardon Strings, through personal tragedy, which he shared with me during our interview in September 2016:

When my fiancée passed away three years ago, the first two years were just blank; I didn’t do anything. Then last year I started listening to some cello music on YouTube. Then I hit Zoe Keating …. I’d find an Elgar concerto, and Yo Yo Ma, and then there’d be a Brückner duo. … I couldn’t find any cello music I didn’t like.

It was back in January this year and I was thinking it was probably too late for me to learn. … When your partner departs, it’s like there’s a big emptiness … I found I was also struggling trying to fill that gap.

So even in January this year when I was in the frame of mind that it was too late, I’ll just keep listening to the music, I kept listening to it every day and then one day I just sort of thought, you know what, I’m going to go and buy one; I’m just going to do it. And then I thought that it doesn’t really matter that maybe I’ll never reach the up-there level, maybe I’ll never perform, but at least I could do something. … It not only filled the gap, it took my mind off it.

Three years on and Colin has passed several Australian Music Examinations Board (AMEB) cello exams, with honours, and continues to play with Bardon Strings.
The impetus to join Fred’s male choral group often came from a source with ulterior motives, as Fred explained:

Their wives say, “Look, go and join the Gleemen,” partly because they think it’s good for them, and partly because they want them out of the house.

**Facilitators’ motivations**

The music facilitators in this research spoke of their motivations for running music ensembles or programs that enabled older adults to begin or to continue participating in music activities. These motivations ranged from a personal desire to develop a group so that they themselves had an outlet for playing, to a more philanthropic urge to share their skills, experiences, and passions with other musicians.

Gemma instigated the Hervey Bay recorder group when she moved to the coastal Queensland town and was unable to find other recorder players to play with. Through the local U3A, she started a beginners’ group that developed into a small, independent ensemble of developing players:

I do want them to improve. I don’t want them to stay where they are. And I want them to share my passion and joy for it by doing that.

For similar reasons, Helena started the U3A handbell group in Logan:

I love ringing, and I love the group dynamic of achieving something together. I have the bells now … so it’s no use having them in the cupboard and not using them. I love the tones of the bells. It’s a passion and I need to find enough people to enjoy it with. My goal is to introduce people to ringing and to find enough of those people who have a real passion for bell ringing to have at least one more advanced group.

Hannah, who had taught music in schools throughout her working life, felt compelled to continue sharing her music skills, which she did by initiating the U3A (Brisbane) recorder classes:

One of the reasons why I did it was, after so many years of teaching, you have acquired so much information that you can’t just sit in a chair and
do something totally different. You sort of feel that you still want to impart that information to people who want to be actively involved.

For a number of older-adult musicians in New South Wales and Canberra, the Amateur Chamber Music Society’s Wollongong music camp has become an annual mecca. Iris travelled over 1,000 kilometres to enjoy the long weekend of chamber music immersion:

After a couple of years of going I thought Brisbane needs these playing days. I then started to fly down once a year and attend Sydney playing days because I was loving it. I just thought it was the loveliest experience. There isn’t anything much nicer than playing in a small group, playing gorgeous music with people who are your standard and who you really gel with; it’s just a wonderful experience.

With the support of the Sydney-based organisation, Iris created the local chapter, QACMS, with play days occurring four times a year at a local high school with excellent music facilities. She further explained her motivation:

The original reason for doing it was wanting to bring the passion, excitement and pleasure that I got, to other people

Luke also wanted to provide opportunities for community wind players:

My initial goals were quite simple—to give pleasure to local community players and for them to achieve musical satisfaction from participating in group music making. The success of the group has surprised me, and its continuation is proof of how important music is in the lives of many people.

Enabling other adults to experience the pleasures of music making was also a motivation for string professional Isaac:

I, myself, learnt the cello when I was an adult. I started to learn the cello when I was 33, going on 34. I’m a big believer in adults doing what they wanted to do when they were kids …. I suppose I know so clearly what music can do. Music totally got me through a really difficult childhood and has allowed me to have this really amazing life—travelling around
the world, moving to lots of different countries, working on the radio. It’s allowed me to make money when I’ve moved to a country and haven’t got in anywhere else. I just think it’s an amazing gift and I’d like to pass that on as much as possible.

For Brian, who took over the leadership role of the U3A (Logan) ukulele group, it was about having fun:

I started a beginners’ class and from then on things just grew. People heard about the fun we were having and the group has gone from 5 to 30 members. … My main goal was to have people enjoy themselves and feel better after a session. As long as the group are happy my goal for the group will stay the same.

Fred reiterated the importance of fun for his male choral group:

The point of the whole organisation right from the beginning was to have fun with music. It wasn’t to win an Eisteddfod or thrash out a vocal line over and over to get it polished, and take all the fun out of it. They are too old for that.

Fun combined with challenge were important factors for Grace in initiating Bardon Strings for beginner adult string players:

Running a group such as this is new for me too, but I find that I am enjoying the experience very much. Again, it is about offering a space for everyone to feel safe and encouraged in what they are doing. … Bardon Strings is about making music with others in a fun, nurturing environment, with enough challenge to keep it interesting.

In 2017, the Brisbane U3A members were given the opportunity to participate in percussive music classes. Professional percussionist and UQ lecturer, Dr Mary Broughton, described the pleasure that she and her colleagues gained from facilitating this class:

From a musical point of view, we just loved working with these enthusiastic older people. The stories about growing confidence to make music and improvise, and the fabulous challenges posed to the students
were really heart-warming, humbling, and an affirmation of what we already instinctively know about the value of music participation. (Personal communication, 21 June 2017)

**SUMMARY**

In this chapter I have described the three core ensembles and other examples of music participation by older adults in South East Queensland from which 44 informants willingly shared their music backgrounds, experiences, and attitudes. Their motivations for music participation were reported as consistent with earlier scholarship.

Despite the reported attractions and benefits of music making, many factors arise that act as constraints to participation—a research area that draws less focus and support, possibly because music researchers do not wish to highlight the difficulties associated with fostering music education and music practices. To date, music research demonstrates this bias towards the more positive aspects of music participation. Coffman’s (2008) survey of older-adult musicians in New Horizons ensembles reported that comments about the benefits of participation were “almost uniformly positive (98% of the 1626 statements)” (p. 383; and see Coffman & Barbosa, 2013). Coffman reported that just two percent of the respondents commented on negative aspects of music making: the discomfort in playing or carrying instruments, or the inability to perform as well as they would like. Interviews with older-adult musicians who no longer play their instruments would likely reverse these statistics. In the current research, some musicians reported changing their playing activities—for example, they preferred to play in small chamber groups than in a large orchestra—and the gave reasons for their shifting preferences (see Chapters 7 and 8).

It is precisely the constraints—or, to use Stebbins’s (1992) terminology, the costs of participation—and how these are negotiated by older-adult musicians, that need to be given fuller attention if music programs are to attract and retain participants. Myers et al. likewise allude to the importance of addressing constraints to music participation: “Ensemble participation can satisfy the human needs to seek
challenges, learn, and explore; however, music leaders must provide environments that satisfy the fulfilment of these needs” (2013, p. 140).

This chapter has provided context for understanding the perceived constraints to music participation that emerged from the interviews, and which are covered in the next three chapters. Each chapter examines one aspect of Crawford et al.’s (1991) leisure constraints theory (see Chapter 3)—namely, intrapersonal, structural, and interpersonal constraints—which has been restructured here to more accurately reflect the realities of music participation by older adults. Chapter 6 examines reported intrapersonal constraints to music participation and how these are negotiated by older-adult musicians.
Chapter 6: Intrapersonal Constraints to Music Participation

Contemplating retirement, Emma and Conrad moved to Mackay, a coastal town 970 kilometres north of Brisbane. Hoping to continue their music activities, they searched for a local orchestra by placing an advertisement—Amateur bassoonist trying to form a group—in the local Pocket Trader, a free booklet advertising local trades, businesses, and community events. It took six months for them to receive a response from a local clarinettist and music teacher, with whom they formed a woodwind quintet and then an orchestra. Conrad explained:

She had some connections with the local music school up there, who let us use their venues and things like that. It was good because no payment was required. They were happy to have a little community group starting up like that. ... We did some concerts, mainly nursing homes, churches, and things like that.

Emma took violin lessons from this clarinet teacher but, because the orchestra lacked cellists, she was encouraged to take up the cello. She told of the orchestra’s demise:

And then she got in an accident and decided she wasn’t going to do any of this stuff anymore. She wanted to sail off with some new boyfriend of hers, literally sail off. So, I sent the cello back.

The challenges to community music participation, particularly in regional Australian towns, are exemplified in this narrative from two of the informants in this research. Such challenges include a lack of players, inconsistent or unreliable group leaders or music facilitators, difficulty in obtaining instruments, insufficient resources, such as suitable rehearsal venues and, ultimately, injuries faced by both musicians and facilitators that could hinder or even end their music involvement.
Scholarly research into music participation has focussed on the purported benefits of music engagement (see Chapter 2), particularly where those benefits are put forward to advocate for music education in schools, or to gain government funding for projects that promote health and wellbeing, not only for the ageing population but across all age groups (see, for example, Bartleet, 2012; Bartleet et al., 2009; Coffman, 2006; Daback, 2007; Kruse, 2013; Matthews, 2011; Rohwer, 2016; Sattler, 2013; Southcott & Li, 2017; Victorian Government, 2013).

From the Leisure Activities Survey in Chapter 4, a lack of interest in music making was the overriding factor in non-participation—respondents simply preferred to do other things. Understandably, lack of interest was not a constraint offered by practising musicians, whose participation was initiated precisely because they had an interest playing or learning to play a musical instrument. Once perceived barriers are removed—such as work or family commitments—older adults are free to pursue active music making as an interest. However, active musicians face many other constraints that make music participation challenging, or that negate some of the enjoyment attached to social music making.

This and the next two chapters focus on the constraints to music engagement as reported by 29 older-adult musicians and 15 music tutors or conductors of music ensembles in South East Queensland. They address the third research sub-question:

*What constraints to music participation are confronted, negotiated, and overcome by older-adult musicians in Queensland?*

Using a grounded theory analytical approach within the NVivo12 environment, coded themes that emerged during these interviews were subsequently categorised as intrapersonal, structural, and interpersonal constraints in accordance with leisure constraints theory (see, for example, Crawford & Godbey, 1987; Crawford et al., 1991; Goodale & Witt, 1989; Jackson & Burton, 1989; Jackson & Scott, 1999; Jackson & Searle, 1985; Jackson et al., 1993).

The most common intrapersonal constraints identified in the interviews were a perceived lack of skill or ability, lack of self-confidence, lack of childhood opportunities, conflicting priorities, and inherent or age-related physical disabilities. Cross (1981) similarly recognised several intrapersonal constraints for older adults wishing to access education, such as the physical constraints of poor vision and lack
of mobility, and the psychological constraint of perceiving oneself as too old to learn (p. 28). Pitts et al.’s (2015) study included “concerns about own standard of playing,” “nerves or anxiety around performance,” “pressure of other commitments,” “rehearsals as tiring experiences,” and health problems (p. 26).

Emergent themes relating to intrapersonal constraints are subcategorised in this research as either psychological or physiological to distinguish between themes that relate to mental attitudes and their effect on leisure choices, or age-related bodily dysfunction (Figure 21; and see Davis, 1982). Where constraints are directly attributed to physiological problems that are likely to require medical intervention, they are reported below as physical constraints. However, this is done with the overriding caveat that physical disabilities are known to impact, to varying degrees, the desire and capacity for leisure participation (Agahi, Ahacic, & Parker, 2006; Dupuis & Alzheimer, 2008), particularly where those leisure activities demand travelling to and functioning in social environments, such as community music ensembles. An overlapping of themes both within and between categories, however, is noted in the literature (for example, Campbell & Yang, 2011, p. 330) and discussed where it is evident in the data of this research.

**Psychological Constraints**

In their authoritative book, *Active Ageing with Music*, the Music for Life team categorised lack of interest, confidence, and willingness to socialise as personal or dispositional constraints (Creech A. , Hallam, Varvarigou, & McQueen, 2014, p. 144). Categorised in this research as intrapersonal constraints, and subcategorised as psychological constraints, such constraints are brought about by mental perceptions and attitudes. They may emanate from a lack of childhood opportunities or parental support, a prioritising of leisure activities other than music, negative perceptions of music self-efficacy, a lack of self-confidence to pursue music activities, and perceptions that the cost is beyond one’s socio-economic means, or that one is too old to learn new skills.
Although treated here as discrete themes, the interconnectedness of these constraints cannot be understated; for example, a negative perception of one’s own music skill is likely to lead to a lack of confidence in pursuing music activities; and both lack of skill and confidence are likely to arise where there has been no parental modelling of music activities, or where there has been negative feedback from music teachers or peers during the formative school years. Physical challenges are also likely to impact one’s mental attitudes and holistic wellbeing; a loss of physical dexterity, for example, may act as a deterrent to ongoing music participation. Coutts, a teacher and researcher of adult beginner keyboard players, questioned the complaint of “uncooperative fingers,” and acknowledged that the answer “may not lie in motor issues, but in those of the mind” (2013, p. 2). Similarly, Barry (2008), who took up the violin later in life, questioned whether perceived constraints are really due to age-related decline:
I am inhibited, I avoid a chance of failure, and I do not want to embarrass myself. This fear of failure and avoidance of making a mistake may be attributable to my age, or it may be part of my individual nature (p. 33).

Researchers cannot know if the reasons for non-participation, particularly for ceasing participation, are reported truthfully; they can only report what their informants tell them, and offer speculation where contradictory evidence might suggest otherwise.

Besides the interlinking of psychological and physical constraints, some themes may have an interrelationship with structural or interpersonal constraints. Where a person’s socio-economic status is perceived to present a financial constraint to music participation, it may be that affordable programs are available, but that the structural constraints of public awareness or location play a more realistic constraining role. Bowling (2005) commented that respondents on higher incomes were “far more likely to engage in activities than those on lower incomes” (p. 110). Although beyond the purview of this research, it is possible that people in lower socio-economic brackets are habituated to deprivation, and that financial constraints are more psychological than actual. Such confining attitudes are likely to have been formed in childhood and affirmed during early adulthood (Flowers & Murphy, 2001, p. 26).

CHILDHOOD OPPORTUNITIES

Earlier research has found strong links between the provision of music opportunities in childhood and the continuation or resumption of music activities in late adulthood (see Bowles, 1991; Bugos, 2014; Burch, 2016; Flowers & Murphy, 2001; Gembris, 2008; Hallam et al., 2012; Lamont, 2011; Lewis; 2018; Roulston et al., 2015; Sichivitsa, 2007; St George, 2010). Flowers and Murphy, for example, reported that “school music experiences brought about continued music learning and creating, at least to a greater degree than in those with little musical background” (2001, p. 31).

Howell (2013), who runs music workshops for children in Melbourne, commented that “in Australia, learning to play an instrument is an expensive undertaking, rarely offered at primary schools without passing the cost of the lessons and instruments on to the parents.” However, financial constraints are not the only barrier to participation, particularly when philanthropic programs like Howell’s provide opportunities for children from a disadvantaged background. As Howell added:
Children of this age-group generally need a parent or adult to accompany them to the workshop venue and to pick them up, but in some households this is a huge barrier because parents are working, or caring for younger children, or don’t have transport options, or can’t afford public transport. (2013)

Although interest in various leisure activities can change throughout life, attitudes towards participation in those activities are shaped in the early years, and there is evidence that “early learning provides the palette on which adult interests are formed and developed” (Flowers & Murphy, 2001, p. 26). Scott and Willits (1998) explored the links between adolescent and adult leisure activities, and reported that the leisure activities people engaged in during high school were predictive of those they pursued when they were in their fifties and sixties (p. 319). Douglas (2011) also reported that people seem to seek out experiences that are similar to past experiences, and it is those past experiences that provide “the foundational skills that make future participation possible” (pp. 188–9).

Addressing music participation specifically, Bowles (1991) acknowledged that “parents and home were the most frequently cited positive influences in developing music interests” (p. 191). The influence of parents and other family members is significant during childhood and can generate an extrinsic motivation characteristic of “the beginning of a musical pathway” (Lamont, 2011, p. 373). Hallam et al. (2012) similarly concluded that “adult participation in musical activities is frequently an extension of engagement with active music making in childhood, either in the home or at school” (p. 23).

In Gembris’s (2008) study, almost 80% of the survey respondents had learned an instrument before the age of 20 and 70% had at least one parent who played a musical instrument. Parents had been the deciding impulse to learn an instrument in 35% of responses. Gembris concluded that “playing an instrument in old age is usually preceded by a musically active home and instrumental activities in childhood and adolescence” (p. 107). Burch (2016, p. 95) also noted the lack of parental support as an influence on non-participation in ongoing music activities, and Ernst and Emmons (1992) quoted a “typical comment” from a New Horizons member: “My parents told me ‘You don’t have any music in you,’ so they didn’t let me take lessons.” (p. 30). School students and young adults in St George’s (2010) doctoral
research referred to the lack of encouragement from important adults. They spoke of wanting encouragement from the family, a teacher or the school. St George concluded that “lack of encouragement was seen as a disappointment, and a trigger for discontinuation” (p. 218).

Roulston et al.’s (2015) research also found childhood experiences to have a negative influence on continuing music engagement: “Overall, participants who had prior learning experiences in learning an instrument indicated that they had quit lessons and/or ensembles as children for reasons that included dislike of a teacher, loss of interest, wanting to pursue other interests, lack of money, or simply not feeling good enough to continue” (p. 327).

The current research confirmed that most musically active older adults had received music—even musical instrument—training in their early years. At least 37 of the 44 informants (84%) had music opportunities during their childhood and 29 (66%) had at least one musical parent. Seven of the 44 participants (16%) mentioned that neither of their parents had been musical. Like many Australian families, Colin’s family prioritised sporting activities: “Dad was a rugby league player and we were all into sport. It was about sport and getting fit,” and Odette summed up her parents’ war-time and post-war circumstances:

My parents listened to music on the radio, but just popular music. They weren’t at all into classical music, not at all … They were good parents but they’d come from a different time; they’d come from a difficult background and they didn’t have those values.

Instrumental music tuition in schools in South East Queensland was reported to be deficient during the 1950s and 1960s:

There was no music in school whatsoever. [Ann]

We used to sing, I suppose, but no instruments. [Bianca]

I never had the opportunity then of playing an instrument at all. [Brody]

Nothing there at all … We’re talking about the ancient days. This was the early ‘50s. There weren’t things like that available. [Sophie]
The fife, recorder, singing, and percussion were the main forms of music activities in primary school for 21 informants. In high school, 16 informants had had music opportunities which included singing or playing in instrumental ensembles. Fred described the adverse music attitudes in his school and the rarity of playing a musical instrument:

When I was growing up, it was not a natural thing for a person to do. It just wasn’t natural. We had one girl in the school of 1,700 who had violin lessons, and she was regarded as being a little unusual. I think we had one trumpet player. A few kids played the guitar but just taught themselves. And then there was daylight. It was regarded as being a bit weak and wussy.

Most of these research participants had received some form of private tuition during their childhood; at least five, however, reported that lessons were far from stimulating. Ann had taken private piano lessons at about the age of nine but had not enjoyed them: “I had no idea music was supposed to be fun … The teacher wasn’t particularly fun.” Bianca, likewise, spoke negatively of her childhood piano tuition: “I don’t know that I particularly enjoyed it.” Similarly, Dylan recalled the austerity of his childhood violin teacher: “She was very strict, she used to hit me with a steel ruler; but I tell you what, I didn’t make many mistakes.” In their school years, at least four informants reported having “knuckle rapping” nuns (Coffman, 2006, p. 15) as music teachers:

I was not a terribly successful piano student at the age of 8 and 9. I did it up to grade 2 and stopped after my music teacher rapped me over the knuckles as a 9-year-old. [Gemma]

Other participants spoke about the opportunity to learn the fife and to play in a fife band while at school; however, Rose reported a gender division: “I know the boys had a fife band but I don’t think the girls had anything.”

The scholarly literature and the findings of this research, from both the Leisure Activities Survey and these interviews, are consistent with Flowers and Murphy (2001) finding that “school music experience seemed to be somewhat of a prerequisite to performing, continued learning, and perhaps creating” (p. 30). Psychological constraints, therefore, will be initiated during the developmental
years—in the home, then in school. If there have been few opportunities to participate in singing or playing a musical instrument when young, then acquiring such skills in later life becomes much more challenging. Beyond school and parental influences, even those students who had enjoyed some music engagement in their childhood were prone to discontinue during early and mid-adulthood, when work and family commitments tended to take precedence.

**CONFLICTING PRIORITIES**

Leaving school is the first significant transition in most people’s life course. Students who are given opportunities to learn and play music while at school are suddenly faced with changes—even losses—in music opportunities. If they have been using musical instruments that belong to the school, they are now left without an instrument. If they want to continue their music activities, they may need to buy their own instruments, and seek out an ensemble that accommodates their instrument choice, their skills, and their preferred music genres. This may be a big challenge for someone who is also faced with starting a new job or course of study. Thus, constraints to continuing music participation during early adulthood may result from the lack of an instrument and ensemble once a student has left school, or from conflicting priorities brought about by work, family or further study commitments.

Boswell (1992) acknowledged that prior group performance experiences for most adults ends abruptly at graduation from high school” (p. 40). Murphy (2017) similarly confirmed “the lack of opportunities for connectedness that young people often experienced upon leaving school” (p. 1). In his doctoral dissertation, Burch (2016) explored “issues in the lives of young adults that discourage community music participation” (p. 12). Although the circumstances of young adults entering the workforce and perhaps beginning a new family are fundamentally antipodal to those of older adults transitioning into retirement, the cessation of music participation on leaving school may set a lifelong trend.

Consistent with the literature, participants in this research who had played a musical instrument at school discontinued playing when they transitioned into work or university, or when they faced increasing family responsibilities. Both Brody and George reported being left without an instrument on leaving school; however, George elaborated on his conflicting priorities:
I didn’t have a French horn because it actually belonged to the school, but I got heavily into studies and university and drinking and you know, girls, that sort of thing. That’s what it’s like when you’re 18 and 20.

Iris reported a lack of music continuity after leaving school:

I don’t recall doing anything … it was just a massive change in my life. It wasn’t organised; there wasn’t an obvious pathway to continue with music … It was a busy time and I didn’t even think about it.

Even though ‘lack of interest’ does not arise as a barrier to participation for active musicians, the degree to which they participate may be hindered by conflicting priorities. Musicians might say that they do not have the time to practice, or the money to pay for lessons, when what they really mean is that they prefer to devote extra time and money to different leisure choices (and see Deane, 2015, p. 8). Ho (2012), in her doctoral research investigating the reasons given for continuing or discontinuing music lessons, was also alert to the risk that respondents would provide mere rationalisations rather than actual reasons (p. 137).

Where there is both the interest and the time to participate in music activities, the next constraint that may be confronted is the cost of participation. This may be a realistic constraint because of a person’s low socio-economic status, or it may, again, simply be based on a personal preference to spend one’s money on other activities. Although the cost of joining an ensemble, and the time and effort required to play in an ensemble, may be valid constraints—and as such, they are addressed as structural (organisational) constraints in the next chapter—it is subcategorised here as a psychological constraint to draw attention to personal attitudes that limit music involvement.

The prioritising of leisure activities has been noted in the scholarly literature on leisure studies generally (see, for example, Bowling, 2005; Jansen, 2005; Harris, 1995) and for music participation more specifically (see, for example, Holt, 1978). Both Harris and Bowling point to the increased life challenges confronted by older people, such as reduced income, which affect their priorities (Bowling, 2005, p. 218) and “limit their access to educational offerings” (Harris, 1995, p. 31). Jansen (2005) listed events that create time pressure commitments, such as part-time jobs, caring responsibilities, and medical appointments (p. 45), and referred to financial
constraints as perceptions of not having enough money to take part in activities (p. 46). Although a keen beginner musician, Holt (1978) explained how his interests were prioritised:

Much as I loved music in general and playing the flute in particular … it was still only a hobby, not at the center but at the edge of my life, not connected with any of my concerns about politics or the world or human life. (p. 134)

Even though 68.2% ($n = 30$) of the informants no longer had work, family or caring commitments, they had taken up a variety of activities. Aidan prioritised his Rotary activities over playing with the newly-formed Celtic Island Fiddles: “There’s the Irish group happening but it also happens to be on my Rotary night … otherwise yes, I would be in it,” and recorder group facilitator Gemma spoke of the conflicting priorities of other members of her recorder group: “These are actively engaged women, all of them. They’re active in a number of things, Labor Party, environmental people, Zonta, other music groups.”

Several informants prioritised physical exercise over playing opportunities. Julian was a very active musician, playing regularly with the chamber music society and with smaller ad hoc ensembles. When asked if he was playing with his local community orchestra, he replied, “No, I can’t because it clashes with my squash, otherwise I’m sure I would be.” Such high levels of activity were not restricted to those in the younger age brackets. At 81, choir conductor Vera was also a model of an active retiree: “I think I’m lucky to have good health, and still have enthusiasm for doing a wide variety of activities.”

Apparent from the interviews was the dichotomy between the desire to be a better musician and the desire to participate in other activities. Speaking about the amount of time she devoted to practising her cello, Celia commented, “I think it’s enough. I want to do other things. I enjoy playing in the orchestra and I want to play better … [But] I think that I want more time to do other things.” String teacher, Daphne, reported several reasons that her older students gave for not finding the time to practice:

Most of them say that they can’t afford it, and even if you say, well, I’ll give you a reduced price as a pensioner discount, then their next excuse
is, well I’m in a hundred different other things. Often, they get tired each day, or their arthritis or various other ailments prevent them from practising. Alternatively, they often seem much busier than when they were working. They’ve got different social groups on every day of the week and they just haven’t got the time to practise. And, of course, they haven’t got as much energy as the younger people, so when they come home from their croquet club, they’re not going to suddenly go off and do an hour of music practice.

Not having—or taking—the time to practise may also be a more realistic reason behind a sense of inadequacy as a musician that was reported by several informants.

In Burch’s (2016) investigation into why young people do not participate in community music ensembles when they leave school, lack of skill was given as a reason “second only to time and resource conflicts” (p. 91).

**MUSIC SELF-EFFICACY**

Despite evidence supporting the universality of music ability (Lamont, 2011, p. 371) and the “capacity for continuing growth and development” in adulthood (Myers, 1992, p. 25), personal skills and ability is a commonly recognised ‘dimension’ of leisure constraints that is increasingly pertinent in older age (Jackson, 2000, p. 64). Since competence is perhaps “the most powerful of all the motivational conditions for adults” (Wlodkowski, 2008, p. 310), novice musicians are less likely to expand their playing to community ensembles, which are populated mostly by adults with some expertise on their instruments. People who doubt their abilities are likely to “not only curtail the range of their activities but undermine their efforts in those they undertake” (Bandura, 1994, p. 16).

Gibbons’s (1983) study of the current and desired music abilities of 152 non-institutionalised older adults aged 65 and over found that 84% of the research participants desired an increase in their music skills (p. 67).

Bandura (1997, p. 194) and Stebbins (2001, p. 55) allude to a balance between motivations to participate, and constraints to participation, suggesting that a highly-skilled musician is more likely to counter obstacles in order to continue playing, while a lesser skilled musician may succumb to those same obstacles and discontinue playing. Similarly, a musician with a low level of commitment, due to conflicting
priorities or other constraints, may decide to cease their participation when perceived failures are too often repeated.

Earlier research on older adults and community music confirmed a perceived lack of music ability as a potential barrier to participation (see, for example, Bledsoe, 2015; Coutts, 2013; Douglas, 2011; Gibbons, 1983; Pitts & Robinson, 2016; Shansky, 2010). Recognising his lack of ability as a psychological limitation, Holt (1978) described the associated fear and shame:

> To some extent I was still not psychologically or emotionally ready to play a musical instrument. I was too frightened and ashamed of my mistakes, and the possibility of making mistakes, to be able to give myself wholly to the music. (p. 134)

In the Leisure Activities Survey, fewer than three percent of respondents believed that older adults were not able to learn to play a musical instrument (see Chapter 4), yet a perceived lack of ability was the most common reason for not singing in a community or church choir (see Table 14). It was also the second reason (after lack of interest) for discontinuing to play an instrument (see Table 22), and the main reason for never having played a musical instrument (see Table 23).

At least 15 of the informants in this research were also susceptible to feelings of inadequacy, believing they lacked the technical proficiency to contribute adequately to the artistic level of their ensembles. During observations of the recorder ensembles, at least three musicians discontinued playing in advanced performance groups despite efforts to reassure them that their efforts and contributions were valued.

Perceived ability, however, does not necessarily reflect a person’s actual ability (Demorest, Kelley, & Pfordresher, 2017, p. 415), and it can be a constraint to music making in two ways. On the one hand, musicians who believe they are not good enough for their chosen ensemble, may become stressed, anxious, and disheartened; which may ultimately lead to their discontinuation. On the other hand, musicians who believe the standard of the ensemble is far below what they desire, may become bored or frustrated; and this may also result in their discontinuation. In both circumstances, musicians may seek a more appropriate ensemble, if, indeed, they are lucky enough to have accessible options.
The 44 musicians interviewed for this research possessed a range of skill levels and experience. As instrumental ensemble players, 23 informants—19 musicians and 3 facilitators—commented on their perceived music self-efficacy compared with the music self-efficacy of others in their ensembles. Three participants believed that they were at a level appropriate for their group, while five believed they were above the level of the group and were not challenged enough (Table 40).

Table 40: Informants’ perceived levels of music self-efficacy compared with others in their ensembles

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Five informants commented on feeling held back by lesser skilled players in their ensembles. Alice recognised the accomplishment of her section colleagues but felt that her own skill was unchallenged:
The other people who play are very insecure. The three of them have all only just started learning the violin as adults, so they’re doing fantastic as adult learners, but they just lack … it’s not the challenge there.

Bella was initially reluctant to join the orchestra, commenting, “I just didn’t think that I was at the standard that I should be playing in an orchestra.” Although she still faced individual challenges in her private lessons, she reported that the conductor kept the music fairly simple so she was not really challenged.

The U3A classes, although providing an avenue for older-adult beginners to play in an ensemble, also tended to be a source of frustration when new students joined the more established classes. Kate commented:

> When a new person arrived quite a few weeks ago … he just seemed not up to doing it and I just thought, oh, I feel like I’m wasting my time here. I sent an email … after the class to say, look, I think I’ll just give it a few weeks and wait until you’ve got the advanced group going, which was always her plan … Well, the advanced group never got going so, if I wanted to ring, I had to go back to the group, by which time he’d caught up anyway, so it ended up not mattering. But at the time I just thought … I’ve travelled a long way and my time’s been wasted when I got here. So there’s the potential for those frustrations.

Louise concurred:

> It’s very difficult because we couldn’t do any of the music we normally played; we had to go right back to the beginning, and I must say, I felt very frustrated because I thought, no, that’s not what I’m here for … If we don’t carry on and extend ourselves and get more bells and read other music, it won’t be any point my going.

Often, however, musicians with greater music self-efficacy will join a group that is inappropriate for their skill level; for example, Ivy, a skilled pianist, joined the beginner U3A recorder class in Brisbane:

> Initially, I very much doubted my ability, but after getting in there and getting back into it, I realised that I’d be fine. I think it’s a bit daunting as an adult. I could probably speak for other adults. Coming into something
like that as an older adult: am I going to measure up, am I going to be able to do it? But one thing that I did find is the positive aspect of having a teacher that was just happy to accept anything that was going. … I eventually ended up in the advanced group.

Within two months, Ivy started organising performances in aged-care homes by the newly formed DARE. A year later she became the tutor of the beginner U3A recorder group. This, however, is not an option for musicians who have a lower sense of music self-efficacy.

Three informants continued playing with groups that they initially felt were too easy for them. Rose, an experienced musician who taught piano, found the standard of her beginner recorder group to be rather weak; however, as the other members of the group progressed, she became more satisfied playing with them:

In the early days of that group it was totally boring for me, from the music side of things. But we had to go through that for everybody to get to the same level and be comfortable with that … but now love it.

Edith was one of the first adults to join BIO when it opened its doors to members beyond the school environment. She had initially felt inadequate when she first joined the local orchestra:

I was with school children who could play much better than I could, and I suppose I was of a mindset that I should be better than these younger people who were just learning.

As the orchestra became less of a youth orchestra and more of a community orchestra, with a predominance of older adults, Edith became one of the stronger violinists. Conversely, Felicity was deterred from playing cello in an orchestra due to both the simplicity and difficulty of the music: “The cello parts were either really boring and nothing much to play, or they were so fast I couldn’t even begin to play them. So, I never got any musical satisfaction out of it.”

Thirteen other informants were anxious about their lack of ability, and frustrated with their lack of progress. When asked what he considered to be a barrier to his music participation, Brody responded without hesitation that it was his ability: “You know, I doubt very much I’d be accepted into the Moreton Bay Orchestra or the
Sunshine Coast Orchestra. So, ability is the biggest barrier now.” Celia, similarly,
doubted that she would have the required skill level to play in other community
orchestras. “If there was another opportunity to be in another orchestra, I don’t know
that I’d be good enough to play in any of the others … I don’t feel very good at all.”

Colin accepted that the other cellists in his beginner adult string orchestra were at a
higher level:

I noticed … they are moving up into other scales that I haven’t done yet.
I always know that they are more advanced than me, I don’t mind it. The
six other cellists are at their level. There’s nothing I can do about that.

Emma, playing in ad hoc chamber ensembles, was intimidated by the better players:

Part of the problem is that when you’re beginning, most people—I
wouldn’t say everyone but some people, me particularly—get
intimidated or a little taken back by all these good players and you feel
bad because they’re stuck with you.

Iris, an experienced clarinettist, turned to the oboe late in life and talked of how she
missed the competence that she had had playing the clarinet:

My brain won’t let me do both. I had a one-year goal to be competent on
both instruments, to switch between the two, but obviously I’ve had to
push it out to a three-year goal. It feels like a long way to go.

Ann was quite critical of her own music abilities, stating that she was “not a terribly
good musician.” She was happy to remain a somewhat covert member of the
ensemble: “No-one can hear me anyway so it doesn’t make any difference what I play.” Other musicians, however, feared upsetting other group members and holding
the group back. Leila reported: “I sometimes feel like I shouldn’t be there because
I’m keeping everyone back.” Those who felt overqualified for the groups gave
validity to this fear; although, having musicians in an ensemble with any music
ability was considered preferable to having insufficient players to keep an ensemble
functioning.

Most of these developing musicians practised diligently in an effort to improve their
musicianship and playing skills. For others, however, a perceived lack of self-
efficacy may be confused with simply not understanding the commitment, in both time and patience, required to learn a new skill and to master new techniques, as Fiona made apparent:

I bought the Irish drum, the bodhran as they call it, and had some lessons … I found the drum very difficult even after a week of practising … so I haven’t played it since.

Some ensemble musicians may be more skilled or experienced than the conductors or tutors. This was observed in community orchestras that hired young and enthusiastic, yet inexperienced, conductors; and was also evident where, like at U3A, tutors were generally untrained yet passionate about their areas of interest. Helena, who shared her time—and valuable handbells—to the U3A group in Logan, felt a little inadequate in her sight-reading skills, stating: “I know I don’t have the reading music background that others in the group do have.” Generally, though, the music facilitators in this research brought years of experience to their ensembles, and shared their views about the music abilities of their older-adult musicians.

Three ensemble facilitators, all with music teaching experience, expressed doubt about the ability of older adults to progress to a technically high level on their instruments. Felix felt that people over the age of 70 were generally unable to reach the same levels as quickly as young people. Gemma suspected that an apparent lack of ability of one of her elderly students may have been due more to personal problems: “I think it’s in their heads, a mental block.” Daphne commented on the slower progress of adults and how it led to some frustration:

I’ve had other men and women … at that age who can’t keep it up. They make progress at a much slower rate than younger students. … The ones that are still working, they haven’t got the time to practise, and the retired ones are too busy doing other things … Some of them get frustrated that they can’t achieve something at a quicker rate, but that’s just generally, because they say, “Oh, I’m getting old, I hope I’m not getting Alzheimer’s”; or “I can’t do something that I used to be able to do a few years ago.”

The music facilitators generally, however, felt that the ability to learn was not based on age, and that older adults were as cognitively able as younger music students.
Grace believed that, even though older adults exhibited greater apprehension about their music abilities, they were not necessarily less capable than young students. One of her string players “was obviously very embarrassed about being an adult and playing at a basic level.”

Wind-band conductor Gavin put music self-efficacy in perspective: “People think it’s rocket science; you’ve got to start violin at age two to be any good. That’s absolutely rubbish. To be Yehudi Menuhin, yes, okay, you’ve got to start fairly young.” Gavin allowed potential musicians to play with his wind band for two weeks before they became paying members, knowing that they could accurately assess for themselves whether they were of the necessary music standard. However, Iris, who organised smaller chamber groups for QACMS, expressed some frustration with people who inaccurately self-assessed:

> It’s very disruptive and very dispiriting … if you have one or two very weak players in a group. That is a problem with having a small number of people … But my feeling is that if they declare themselves to be a lower ranked player … no-one should be under any misconception that they are better than they are.

Luke made allowances for the differences in both technical skill and commitment to practice:

> When leading and conducting amateur players one is aware of their technical limitations. With a wind group, intonation and balance is the most important requirement to attend to, as well as an acceptance that there may be a limit to their technical ability and lack of individual practice time.

**Limitations to practice**

Closely related to music self-efficacy is the motivation to practise and to have lessons. Informants in Coffman’s (2006) research were keen to play their instruments but had difficulty finding the time to practise: “They frequently mentioned regret about not being able to practice as much as they felt they should—most aspired to practice daily but many confessed to periodically not practicing at all outside of band rehearsals” (p. 18). Kruse (2009) also found that “the multidimensional adult lifestyle tended to impede on practice time” (p. 222).
Informants’ comments about their lack of music self-efficacy are by no means unique to older adults but cross age boundaries, inevitably leading to discussions about practice habits. Challenges related to practice reported by the informants, in addition to the more common alibi of not having the time, were the fear of upsetting neighbours and the lack of a suitable practice environment. This then blurs the boundaries between intrapersonal (psychological) constraints—the fear of being heard practising—and structural constraints—the unsuitability of a practice location. The latter is addressed in the next chapter.

Two facilitators were irritated by the lack of practice of some musicians and the affect this had on the functioning of the ensemble. Gemma alluded to the lack of a structure in the practice habits of her ensemble members: “Not all adult learners like a challenge and certainly most are not disciplined at all in their learning.” Iris, too, indicated some frustration with the lack of practice of ensemble members: “The bulk maybe hadn’t done any practice, so we were never really moving along.”

Musicians of all ages may face challenges with practice. In this research, informants reported constraints on their practice time. Ann talked of the difficulties of living in a townhouse, but also admitted to not enjoying playing on her own:

> When I was living out at Esk I practised … religiously. We had a separate shed that I practised in, so that was really good. But … we moved into a town house, and … since then I haven’t practised very much, only from desperation. … [It’s] somewhat worrying about neighbours, but then I realised a year or two ago that I don’t like playing by myself; I just like playing with groups.

Other musicians also commented that they prefer to play with others rather than practise alone:

> Sometimes I feel, if I play my bass, it’s very boring, just practising the bass part. I need to hear or see the other parts because if I see where I play and see the top parts as well, I can imagine how it will sound. [Ruby]

> Not that I do a lot of practice, because, a bit like Ruby, playing the bass on your own is quite boring, and the timing is not there. It’s not as easy
to do it. While the notes themselves are reasonably easy, it’s just putting it all together. [Rose]

Bianca, likewise, had less incentive to practise the orchestral cello part: “The thing is, we’re playing accompaniment so you don’t have the tune.” Her colleague and fellow cellist Bella admitted that “the more time you’ve got, the more time you waste,” and noted the nature of distractions: “You start to do one thing and you get onto something else; go out into the garden to pick something and then, oh, better dig that while I’m here. One thing leads to another.”

Odette feared that others may hear her practising, but also admitted to procrastination and being distracted by “the trivia of the mundane in the house—another chore or something like that, because they’re easy things for me to do to escape from the hard slog of practice.” Her perceived lack of music self-efficacy engendered a sense of music insecurity and a lack of self-confidence. This theme emerged in the interviews as another factor deterring older adults from fully enjoying participation in music ensembles.

**MUSIC SELF-CONFIDENCE**

The *Music for Life* team identified confidence as an invisible, dispositional barrier to music participation (Hallam et al., 2012; Creech et al., 2014; Creech, 2018):

“Dispositional constraints include reticence in getting involved. This can be related to lack of interest or a lack of willingness to socialise. … Some of this reluctance may be related to a lack of confidence” (Creech et al., 2012, p. 45). Bugos (2014) similarly reported that older adults with no previous introductions into music courses may be reluctant to enrol in music programs (p. 27).

In the Leisure Activities Survey, confidence was ranked fifth (selected by 4.7% of respondents) as a reason for non-participation in leisure activities which were of interest (see Table 12). It was ranked eighth as a reason for not singing in a choir (1.9% of respondents, see Table 14). It was, however, ranked low as a reason for never playing a musical instrument, likely because lack of ability, interest, and opportunity, and the cost of participation were put forward as the main barriers (see Table 23).

In the interviews, three informants acknowledged that they lacked self-confidence, and two facilitators spoke of apprehensive students who avoided ensemble playing.
Aidan explained how the actions and comments of facilitators could impact the self-esteem of participants. He talked of the effect of the ensemble leader’s comments on the third violinists:

We feel quite upset if he says, “I think the thirds are playing it wrong; just the thirds play by themselves.” That is terrible. You feel totally picked on, and of course, you play it and it sounds absolutely appalling.

As a facilitator of a regional recorder group, Gemma took responsibility for the insecurities of one of her participants: “It was a bit of a burden because she had a mental block and no self-confidence and I couldn’t get her over it; so that was my problem, not her problem.” However, Gemma was also aware that the attitudes of her less confident group members constrained their music development: “In the end it was her inner voice that was the problem, and her inner voice was telling her she couldn’t do it.”

Isaac related the lack in self-confidence of his adult students to the consequences of adverse childhood messages:

You do see those trials of childhood coming back into adult lives, and I feel very sorry for my adult students when that does happen. It’s not always the issue but you might see those old things of “I’m not good enough” or “Everybody always said I was stupid”; you know, all those mantras that, as adults, we unfortunately so often repeat to ourselves. To see an adult having those things coming up through music, yes, that’s sad … I think being a bit shy would probably be the biggest deterrence.

During observations of the Duhig recorder groups, Fiona did not appear overtly shy, although she regularly commented on her music deficiency. She had been playing with the Duhig performance group since its inception in 2017, after moving up the ranks of the U3A recorder classes. Fiona described her lack of confidence, explaining the challenges faced by novice instrumentalists, particularly when the years seem to be running out:

Not long after I graduated as a teacher, I was teaching in Canberra and, because I love early music, I decided to join the Canberra Early Music Society. It was like doing primary school music and then going for an
audition with QSO! I was just hopelessly at sea and I thought: there’s no way I could finger as quickly as I would have to in order to play the pieces they were playing; so, I dropped out very quickly. I guess I just haven’t had the confidence. I haven’t had enough experience or enough practice or enough training to be able to perform with a group that was very proficient. So, I haven’t found groups apart from U3A that are more or less at my level of competence.

Self-confidence also had an impact on Fiona’s perceived ability to learn new skills:

I actually love the sound of the treble even more. But I don’t have any confidence in myself to learn a new set of fingering at this stage of my life. It’s complicated enough mastering the fingering for the descant.

The fear of public performance, auditions, or merely presenting oneself to a new group may act as psychological constraints for some prospective musicians. Three of Ellis’s 15 respondents “were not eager to perform in public” (2018, p. 117). Stebbins (1992) discussed stage fright and nervousness as a “tension”, a cost of music participation. About half of Stebbins’s research participants said that they suffered “mild nervousness” before performances (p. 130), although “eager anticipation” was a more appropriate descriptor for the experienced performers.

In this research, beginner violinist Odette and experienced recorder player Ruby both admitted to feeling inhibited when playing with others. Similarly, when asked if there were any barriers to her playing, Ruby responded:

Me not being confident enough to think that I can do it, that I’m good enough. That’s the main reason … Even now, coming to a group where they don’t know me and I don’t know them, I find that still very challenging and nerve racking.

A lack of music self-efficacy and self-confidence may arise out of physiological limitations. Sophie’s feeling of inadequacy may have been in part due to her vision impairment:

I don’t think the music playing does anything for my self-confidence at all, and I feel I should be playing better and I’m not. Part of it is not being able to read the notes so well. I think that’s a factor.
A lack of self-confidence may also have underlying causes relating to physical incapacities, particularly for older adults who are faced with age-related degeneration. Dabback (2005) commented, “Although the assumption that older people are incapable of high levels of music achievement and performance is false, the physical difficulties that many people experience as they age are very real.” The musician informants from South East Queensland explained how various disabilities affected their capacity and desire to engage in music ensembles; they also demonstrated resilience in their capacity to negotiate such challenges in order to continue music pursuits.

**PHYSIOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS**

Research into participation by older adults has documented health problems as the primary constraint to engagement in leisure activities in general (Campbell & Yang, 2011; Purdie & Boulton-Lewis, 2003), and in music activities more specifically (see Australia Council, 2014; Coates, 1984; Douglas, 2011; Gembris, 2008; Hallam et al., 2011; Rohwer, 2008a). The *Music for Life* research team reported that, although few people dropped out of the programs, “the main cause of dropout was ill health” (Hallam et al., 2011, p. 4).

Ageing brings about inevitable declines in physiological functioning. Some older adults change their leisure activities because of age-related physical deterioration (Beggs, Kleparski, Elkins, & Hurd, 2014, p. 178), while others, perhaps subconsciously, make compensations without these losses significantly altering their activities (Myers, 1992, p. 26). Music development in older age is constrained by arthritis, breath control, fatigue, vision and hearing loss (Bowles, 2010; Davis, 2011; Tsugawa, 2009), back pain, aching muscles (Beckers et al., 2016, p. 144), learning speed, physical coordination, and music memory (Roulston et al., 2015, p. 329). Bandura (1994), however, reported that such declines are counteracted by “gains in knowledge, skills, and expertise” (Bandura, 1994, p. 15), and Creech et al. (2012) reported physical gains from music participation which included the alleviation of breathing difficulties, the opportunity for a physical and therapeutic workout, and a “contribution to overall, general, physical health” (p. 9; and see Rohwer & Coffman, 2006).

Rohwer (2008a) investigated the perceived health challenges of older-adult musicians playing in a summer wind band. Participants (aged 47 to 91) reported that
the most challenging requirements for playing in a wind band were finger dexterity in fast passages, patience in skill development, and rhythmic accomplishment. Vision, hearing, and joint and hand pain were the main physical constraints during their music activities (p. 54).

In the Australia Council for the Arts (2014) survey on Australian participation in the arts, many respondents reported being prevented from creatively participating in the arts due to poor health, which included “disabilities, arthritis, poor eyesight, deafness, brittle bones, depression and obesity” (p. 87), and the Council on the Ageing reported that, of the nearly 8 million Australians aged 50 or over, 32% were most concerned about health issues impacting their quality of life (Council on the Ageing, 2018, p. 5).

Consistent with earlier research, 40.3% of respondents to the Leisure Activities Survey (see Chapter 4) indicated that they were unable to participate in their desired activities because of adverse health conditions. Health challenges far exceeded the second-ranked reported barrier, cost, which was nominated by 15.4% of respondents (see Table 12).

The informants in this research regarded challenging health conditions not as barriers to their music activities but as constraints; that is, their physiological conditions inhibited or interrupted rather than prevented music participation. Several physiological challenges were discussed by the informants, the commonest being chronic pain, failing cognitive capacity, fatigue, arthritis, vision, hearing, mobility, and limitations as a consequence of surgical procedures.

Every informant in this research mentioned that some form of physiological difficulty hampered their playing to varying degrees. Pain was the most cited physical constraint (see Table 41). The cause of pain and fatigue, and declines in general health, however, may be due to other complications, such as arthritis or recent surgical procedures. Similarly, those who specifically nominated arthritis as a constraint are likely to suffer associated pain or stiffness, and consequently, fatigue. Thus, a thematic overlap can be assumed with many health conditions.
Table 41: Physiological constraints to music participation arising in this research and the number (n) of informants who reported suffering each condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physiological constraints</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pain and Arthritis</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General health</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgery</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PAIN AND ARTHRITIS**

At least 13 informants reported suffering some sort of pain that affected their playing. Those informants with existing back problems complained about inappropriate chairs. Bella said, “The chairs that we have to sit on at the practices are really bad for cellos … by the time you leave, quite often your back’s sore.” In their focus group, both Bianca and Celia agreed. On a separate occasion, Edith, a violinist from the same orchestra, commented on the chairs being “not straight enough for me because I’ve got a back problem; but we make do with cushions.”

There was hardly a participant who did not complain about having back problems. Emma suffered back pain when playing either the piano or the cello:

> I have back pain a lot in the lower back and hips, so even when I’ve played piano all these years, it has transferred now to when I play cello for a long period of time, I start to ache a little bit. But not enough to cause me to quit either one.

Griffith (2006) reported that older adults commonly experience neck strain, and this “may lead to headaches and general muscle discomfort” (p. 16). Odette, a beginner violinist, experienced muscle tightness and pain: “I feel that it would be easier playing a cello sitting down than the violin. The viola is really difficult because of the weight et cetera, but the violin also … I’m not happy with this and my neck.”

Ivy, the facilitator of the Duhig recorder group as well as a U3A recorder class, spoke of the difficulties several of her U3A students were having as a result of playing larger-sized recorders than they were used to playing: “Two of my three
second instrument students have been over-practising and now have wrist and neck problems” (Ivy, personal communication, 24 October 2018).

Arthritis, a term that describes inflammation of the joints (Griffith, 2006, p. 14), is reported to affect 50% of people aged 65 and over, and is the most commonly reported condition after vision impairment (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2015). Prior research has documented the impact of arthritis on leisure participation in general (Griffith, 2006; Mayhew & Swindell, 1996; Myers, 1992) and music participation more specifically (Barton, 2004; Davidson, 1982; Ellis, 2018; Rohwer, 2008a). It has also reported the apparent benefit that playing a musical instrument can have in reducing arthritic damage (Griffith, 2006, p. 15).

In the current research, 50% of informants reported the need to manage health problems related to joint pain, arthritis, or mobility (Table 41), and eight of those spoke of specific difficulties with arthritis or joint pain (Table 42).

Due to wrist problems, Kate could manage only the smaller bells in her handbell ensemble. Leila, likewise, was unable to ring the bigger bells, and Louise told of another group member who was unable to stand and play: “She doesn’t stand so she sits down. And she only plays the small ones; she can’t handle the bigger ones.” This not only prevented other group members from mastering the smaller bells, but also forced them to play just the larger bells, thus they, too, were at risk of wrist strain.

Table 42: Impacts due to arthritis or joint pain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Arthritis</th>
<th>Joint pain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>handbells</td>
<td>fingers</td>
<td>wrist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac (a student of)</td>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>violin</td>
<td>arm</td>
<td>neck, fingers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bianca</td>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>cello</td>
<td>thumbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brody</td>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>violin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>cello</td>
<td>hand</td>
<td>rheumatoid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric</td>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>drum</td>
<td>fingers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iris</td>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>woodwind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiden</td>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>violin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Isaac reported that one of his elderly violin students had ‘quite bad arthritis’ in her fingers:
Getting a nice, soft hand shape for both hands was a bit of a challenge, and because her fingers were stiff, everything else remained stiff, so it was hard for her to get nice smooth bow strokes.

Eric, aged in his 70s at the time of the interview, was forced to give up drumming in a dance band 20 years ago because of his arthritis:

I had trouble with my hands. My right hand became arthritic and I couldn’t hold the drumsticks properly and I used to drop them … I was very sad to give it up and I sold my drum kit.

It was not unusual for research participants to battle on with chronic pain. Emma, a 60–64-year-old cellist spoke of her physical difficulties:

I have problems sometimes. There might be a little bit of arthritis. I’ve never been diagnosed. Some of my problems stem from my neck and some pinched nerves along the way. My fingers lock up sometimes.

Chronic pain was also reported as the reason for some of Alice’s former violin colleagues to discontinue playing:

I’ve got friends that I speak to every now and again and I say, “Oh, do you still play the violin? Perhaps we’ll get together.” But they say, “Oh no, I don’t play anymore, I’ve got arthritic fingers, or I’ve got something else, or I can’t hold the violin with my neck anymore, or it hurts my shoulder.”

Andrew, aged 70–74, reported that he was starting to have difficulties with pain:

I’ve got a few shoulder problems. It starts to ache after sitting there like that for a while. The tenor’s a bit heavy. But that was a lot better than the baritone … The tenor sax, or even the clarinet, starts to get heavy after a while at my age.

Many informants in this research adopted strategies to counter potential age-related physical degeneration. In addition to reducing the time devoted to practising their instruments, compensatory strategies included moderate exercise such as Pilates (Eric and Odette), yoga (George), riding bikes (Aiden, Alice, Ann, George), walking (Aiden, Ann), and swimming (Bianca, Fiona, Julian). The Duhig recorder group
variously played standing or seated, and encouraged each member to play the
different recorder sizes. The handbell group also tried to spread the different bell
sizes around.

**Cognition**

In the past two decades, attention has turned to the capacity of brain training to slow
down or prevent age-related cognitive decline or dementia (see, for example,
Ballesteros et al., 2014; Salthouse, 2006). Čada (2004) reported that “cognitive
decline with aging is often more feared than any other disability” (p. 9). It potentially
affects the ability to learn, to develop skills, and to master and memorise new
material (Bandura, 1994; Coates, 1984; Lederman, 1999).

Age-related cognitive decline manifests as Alzheimer’s or other forms of dementia
and, although affecting only about five percent of the Queensland population
(Queensland Government, 2016), it has significant impacts on sufferers and those
around them. Unless there are music therapy programs available for institutionalised
sufferers, older adults who develop cognitive dysfunction and non-institutionalised
sufferers are eventually forced to discontinue communal music making. The
transition from participation to cessation can create difficulties for community music
ensembles. Fred, who conducts an elderly men’s choir on Bribie Island, commented
on how his “boys” coped with those suffering early cognitive impairment:

> We’ve got a couple with early dementia and they forget to bring their
> music, or they can’t find their music, and the people next to them say this
> is what we’re singing; or they’ll share the copy. The boys are very
> supportive of each other though.

Age-related cognitive decline may take other forms beyond dementia. During the
interview with Alice, I noticed that she had trouble remembering the names of people
with whom she had been playing in the orchestra for many years. She explained the
probable cause of the problem and the effect it had on trying to memorise music:

> I was in a pedestrian accident on my bike in the year 2000, and I had
> brain problems at that stage, a head injury. And I noticed at that point my
> memory and short-term learning was bad … At the moment now it just
> seems like I’m not able to memorise. I might do two bars and think I’ve
> got it and half an hour later it’s gone again.
Andrew also confessed to having memory problems. When asked if he felt it was age related, he immediately responded, “Yes, of course it is.” Brody, too, blamed ageing for memory lapses, commenting on a series of difficulties that he felt were age related:

It’s not so easy when you’re older … I’ve got to think a bit harder. I have memory loss … you sort of lose things more often … When you are older, you’ve got to work harder at it to evaluate things and to work out how it works … Your mind is not so open to change … I don’t think your mind absorbs things … I’ve proved it with myself. I can play the violin. Oh yes, we still have the ability to learn but in a different type of way, I think.

The proclivity of adults to try to “evaluate things and to work out how it works” may be the real hindrance to learning that sets them apart from younger students. One challenge that emerged from Ellis’s (2018) study was “getting fingers to do what they were supposed to” (p. 118). Although failing finger dexterity is more likely associated with joint disease like arthritis, Sophie pondered whether this slower functioning might be related to cognitive decline. When asked if she faced challenges while playing a musical instrument beyond her reported vision problems, she replied, “Just the fingers; they just don’t go as fast as you’d like them too. Maybe that’s partly from the brain.”

Vera, a choral conductor aged in her 80s, identified with her choristers:

Older women find memorising much more difficult than younger women. They are also less courageous about trying to sing without music. I have great empathy, knowing this is certainly a problem for me.

She commented on additional cognitive challenges that her singers faced:

Some are losing their mental focus and can’t find their music. One ended up with four copies of the same thing because she kept claiming that she didn’t have a copy.

Earlier research has reported cognitive benefits of music making as improving attention, concentration, and memory, and providing an appreciation of music, a
chance to keep mentally active, and a sense of achievement (Bugos, 2014; Creech et al., 2012).

At least nine of the informants remarked on the capacity of music participation to protect or improve cognitive functioning. Felicity remarked that music engagement was cognitively “very good,” adding, “Everyone’s talking about Alzheimer’s and how not to get it, so it certainly comes up all the time.” George had read of music helping to “retard the early onset of dementia, which we all fear.” Eric believed that having to read music, and read it quickly, helped to sharpen him up mentally. Odette described the cognitive processes needed while learning to play the violin in her 70s:

> Then there’s the whole neural pathways thing for somebody my age because it is complex, having to think all the time about where my arm’s positioned, where my hand it, where my fingers are, et cetera. It’s quite a complex, cerebral thing to do.

Despite these reported benefits, chronic pain, and the stress that accompanies the declining capacity to undertake normal daily activities in a way that one has been used to, can be exhausting for anyone, but particularly older adults. Additionally, loss of lung elasticity can lead to oxygen deprivation, and result in fatigue, dizziness, and memory loss (Griffith, 2006, p. 17).

**GENERAL HEALTH AND FATIGUE**

Seven informants commented on the impact of health generally, and seven commented on fatigue in particular. Alice spoke about one of her fellow musicians who had had a stroke: “She’s getting better but she’s not sure if she’s coming back to the orchestra.” Ann, likewise, spoke of a fellow musician who was restricted from playing music due to ill health: “She would like to play more but because her health’s not very good; she’s unable to drive.” Clara felt unable to start her own ensemble due to ill health: “I would have started a group of my own if I had had better health.” Ivy, who had started the Duhig group, noticed that some of her recorder players were struggling to stand during rehearsals: “Some of the others can’t stand for that length of time to play, so that can be challenging for some, but they don’t have to stand.”
Energy deficiency was one of five subthemes that emerged from a study by Henderson, Bedini, Hecht and Schuler (1995) into the constraints on leisure activities for women with physical disabilities:

Women with physical disabilities described the elaborate means they used to ‘pace’ themselves through the day, so they would have the energy to perform their expected social roles … [they] described how when they ran out of stamina, they simply had to rest. (p. 29)

Although it would be erroneous to regard ageing as a disability per se, for many older adults, the later years are spent combating an array of often debilitating health conditions and slower functioning. This is reflected in Henderson et al.’s subtheme of ‘time shrinkage,’ where participants commented on taking longer to do everything because of their disability (p. 24). With fewer functional hours in each day, music activities will be forced further down the priority ranking until they are eliminated completely.

Interviewees in this research—and most particularly the facilitators—shared how tired their music involvement made them. Isaac, a private violin teacher, commented on the dichotomy between feeling tired and feeling energised: “I think probably my only burden is tiredness. Sometimes I just get a bit tired. But I often also get really energised by teaching as well.”

Helena, who led the handbell groups in Logan, was facing her own health problems: “It’s very hard work—I go home exhausted!” Additionally, she felt that her class members lacked the fortitude to play beyond an hour: “I cannot have the group for a longer time as no age can concentrate for longer than about one hour, especially the beginners.”

Iris had to curtail music activities due to ill health. She commented on the stress involved in facilitating the chamber music meetings four times a year: “So when you’re not feeling very well yourself, and then to organise this thing …. I’m kind of tired.”

Beginner violinist Odette had felt “totally overwhelmed with tiredness.” This was a common sentiment, particularly during the hot summer months when many of the interviews took place. But exhaustion also resulted from chronic pain. Recorder
player, Fiona had mobility problems, making it arduous for her to get to and from rehearsals: “It’s difficult to do a lot of walking. I can do it but it’s not comfortable for me. Sometimes I have to sit down for a while and then get going again.”

Fatigue can also result from sensory challenges, such as difficulty with vision or hearing, which rank as significant challenges across the leisure constraints literature (see below), and it may also result from chronic painful conditions such as arthritis and joint pain.

**VISION**

In the 2011–12 Australian Health Survey, long- and short-sightedness was the most commonly reported condition of people aged 65 and over (Australian Institute of Health & Wellbeing, 2015). In Australia, age-related macular degeneration affects about 10% of the population, and “the numbers of people with low vision and blindness are projected to almost double by 2024” (Taylor et al., 2005, p. 565). Griffith (2006, p. 21) commented that vision deterioration, particularly at night, is a normal aspect of ageing, and Čada (2004) reported that “as adults age, the flattening of the cornea reduces transmitted light by 30%, affecting their vision” (p. 9). This supports Cross’s (1981) recommendation for improved lighting for adult learners:

> While almost everyone recognises the need for bifocals as a sign of aging, not everyone is aware of the need for increased illumination as people age. After age 50, the amount of illumination becomes a critical factor. A 50 year old is likely to need 50 percent more illumination than a 20 year old. (p. 156)

Much of the scholarly literature on music participation addresses visual impairment (see, for example, Kadrmas, Dyer, & Bartley, 1996; Barton, 2004; Creech et al., 2012; Wehr & Coffman, 2018). In Rohwer’s (2008a) study, vision problems were cited as the most common concern for the musicians, and these were exacerbated by the dual challenge of needing to see both the music and the conductor. As with all disabilities, visual impairment is likely to adversely affect a person’s self-confidence (Bandura, 1997; Creech et al., 2012; Wehr & Coffman, 2018, p. 226).

In this research, vision emerged as a challenge for at least six of these older-adult musicians. Sophie reported being unable to read the music confidently if there was insufficient light: “I don’t know whether I’m looking at an F or a G some of the time.”
I can’t share a stand.” She was also concerned about losing her driving licence: “Every time I go to the optometrist I think, oh well, this is going to be it; they’re going to say, you can’t drive anymore.”

This raised two significant concerns related to problems with vision and playing music: driving, particularly at night, and sharing music stands. Bianca was fortunate to have a husband who could drive her where she needed to go:

I was having trouble with my sight, driving at night … I had a cataract in one of my eyes, but that’s since been remedied … But I’ve got a husband who does a lot of driving, really. If we go together, he’ll always drive, so it lets me off that way.

For George, night vision was also a concern: “I don’t actually like driving at night. I don’t see as well as I used to,” while for Diana, the sharing of music stands presented a difficulty:

I much prefer to have my own music, for a couple of reasons. I find looking through the plastic difficult and I also like to be able to make notations as we progress.

Ernst (2001) reported similar difficulties with older adults in his New Horizons bands:

Sometimes it’s difficult for adults to share music parts, especially if one person has bifocals and the other doesn’t. The solution is simply to provide separate parts for each person. Some adults enlarge their parts by photocopying them if the notation is too small. (p. 49)

Enlarging parts was a compensatory strategy used by the Duhig recorder group, whose arrangements were created using Finale, thus facilitating the adaptation and dissemination of individualised parts. Freiberg (2006) reported this and other strategies used by one of her long-sighted cellists who said:

I had a pair of prescription glasses especially made for the slightly longer reading distance to a music stand. I also make an enlarged photocopy of practice music, which eliminates any reading problems. (p. 68).
HEARING

Hearing impairment is another sensory deficiency which impacts upon music participation by older adults. It can adversely affect self-confidence and “lead to feelings of isolation” (Creech et al., 2012, p. 15). Čada (2004) reported that “hearing loss often leads to social isolation and a weakened sense of balance among older adults” (p. 9).

In a 2010 report to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs, one in six Australians across all age groups were affected by hearing loss. Because of the ageing population, this figure is expected to reach one in four by 2050. Of adults aged 51 to 60, 29% suffered from hearing loss, and this rose to 74% for those aged over 70 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010). Hearing impairment is addressed in the scholarly literature about music participation (see, for example, Barton, 2004; Creech et al., 2012; Griffith, 2006; Henoch & Chesky, 1999; Horvath, 2001; Myers, 1992; Prickett, 2003). According to Ernst (2001, p. 49) hearing loss is the problem most reported by senior adults in the New Horizons bands after arthritis and denture problems.

Cross (1981) reported:

> Of all the physical impairments accompanying aging, loss of hearing is likely to be among the most difficult, because it isolates the individual and is not usually visible to others. Thus, the psychological damage may be more serious than the actual physical impairment. (p. 157)

For fully engaged musicians, this constraint is undeniably more profound. In the current research, facilitators Gemma and Vera both talked of some of their musicians with hearing difficulties. Vera commented, “Some of the women have hearing difficulties so don’t always hear what I say.” Daphne also spoke of an orchestral member who was hearing impaired:

> He wasn’t that great a [musician]; he was as deaf as a doorpost, and he was actually slowing everything down. However, occasionally you need to take a step back and realise that you may be old with disabilities yourself one day.

Felicity was deterred from continuing in an orchestra due to the loudness:
Talking about the volume of the sound and everything, that was an issue for me, especially when I was more of a beginner; I couldn’t hear my own pitch and that undermined my confidence … And in the … orchestra, the brass were right behind the cellos. That’s why I left.

A common infliction that increasingly occurs with ageing is tinnitus, “the experience of noise or ringing in the ears where no external physical noise is present” (Commonwealth of Australia, 2010, p. 14). About 17% of Australian suffer constant tinnitus symptoms (Health Direct, 2019). Leon was the only musician in this research who raised the subject of tinnitus, which had been plaguing him for nearly a year:

It was pretty scary when it first started. It comes and goes. I have days when it disappears completely and I have days when it’s there … It’s been perplexing me since it started. Why has it started? What’s causing it? … Is it playing in orchestras, having the loud trombones blasting in your ears behind you? Is that causing the problem? Or is the viola—putting your chin in that position and holding it like that—stopping the blood flow to your ear?

This difficulty caused Leon to cease orchestral playing temporarily:

Why can’t I go back to how I was a year ago? … That was when the tinnitus started and that’s when I thought, I’m going to have a break from orchestral playing, because I thought at the time it’s playing in the orchestras that’s causing the tinnitus. In retrospect, I don’t think it was, but as long as you think it’s something, you do everything you can. So that’s when I had a break from orchestral playing.

Leon is also an accomplished recorder player who now rarely plays his recorders, partly due to the higher pitches of the instrument:

Yes. I’m happy to not do that so much nowadays. I find I don’t enjoy it as much as I used to … being next to a descant recorder, I feel the shrillness of it.

The differing manifestations of tinnitus in each sufferer and the lack of a cure can be disturbing for sufferers but not debilitating for musicians (see Beukes et al., 2017).
MOBILITY

From the age of 60, walking pace and mobility begin to decline, creating serious consequences for the quality of life of older adults (Ferrucci et al., 2016). Some of Vera’s choristers had left the choir because they had lost their mobility; for others, mobility issues were managed with seating adjustments:

For our concerts we ask for sufficient chairs for all choir members. At least one requests the back row so she can lean on the chair in front. I have offered to let the front row sit, but I think it is a point of pride not to.

Bianca described the difficulty that she had with having to place her soft cello case on the floor:

You’re getting right down to the floor and the floor is getting further away every year; I just find that really hard, because I’ve got a soft case, so I can’t stand it up and put the cello in; I’ve got to put it down on the floor. That is probably the hardest part.

In the handbell group, Louise spoke of the lack of mobility of another player who was forced to sit to ring: “She doesn’t stand so she sits down. And she only plays the small ones; she can’t handle the bigger ones.” As noted above, this created extra load on the other players who were forced to play the larger bells, often without relief.

SURGERY

With ageing comes increased chances of hospitalisation. During the data collection process of this research, several participants were undergoing operations and medical treatment that curtailed their music participation. At the time of responding to the interview questions, Brian was in hospital recovering from an operation; another member of his U3A ukulele group was able to keep the group running in his absence.

Musicians who had operations talked of the interruption to their music participation. Clara reported that in 2008 she had “had to give everything away because I had to have an operation; that takes a lot out of you.” Although still able to play other musical instruments, she was forced to give up playing the double bass: ‘Yes, I miss the double bass, but I can’t handle it now; I can’t pick it up.’
Many of these conditions, whether temporary or permanent, would be considered a barrier by people with less passion for music making. Ruby and Fiona, however, continued to get to rehearsals and performances despite mobility problems and pain following knee replacements. Both were visited in hospital by other members of their ensemble who became not just a music network but a support and social network.

Felicity reported how she was forced to negotiate physical constraints in order to maintain her music involvement:

> I fell and hurt my wrist and I couldn’t play the cello or the piano for about three months without it hurting, so I stopped playing. It was a wake-up to me that it would be such an incredible hole in my life if I couldn’t do the music. But there’s nothing you can do about it except I’m super careful walking up and down stairs.

Several of the participants had battled, or still were battling, various forms of cancer. In 2015, older adults (aged 65 and over) accounted for 76% of cancer related deaths (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2018). In the cases of those interviewed, such inflictions were not a barrier to their participation; however, it was not determined to what extent they were a constraint on their participation. In some cases, music participation may alleviate the stresses of such illnesses. Creech et al. (2012) reported perceived psychological benefits of playing in music groups which include protection from depression and stress, and “the generation of positive emotions” (p. 9). Dylan, who reported that he was living with “major cancer” was still able to get enormous joy from his orchestral activities.

**OTHER PHYSIOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS**

Other physiological inflictions that are likely to restrict music participation include vertigo, loss of muscle mass and tone and thus the propensity for falls, tremors, oral health challenges, and incontinence (for example, Barton, 2004; Griffith, 2006).

Although dental issues did not arise in these interviews as a constraint to music participation—perhaps due to the higher socio-economic status of informants, or conversely, the embarrassment associated with poor dental hygiene—research shows that failing dental or oral health can act as both a barrier and a constraint to participation. Dental problems can be particularly prohibitive for musicians who play wind or brass instruments (see Barton, 2004, p. 132). They may also cause pain or
unsightliness that decreases the desire to participate in social activities, particularly for older generations who were deprived of dental care in their youth, or who are now unable to afford current dental services.

At what stage such diminished capacities become too burdensome to continue playing a musical instrument, either at home or in an ensemble, is highly subjective, and the perceived seriousness of the disability has to be considered relative to a person’s resilience. The determination and motivation to continue participation, therefore, are often weighed against the difficulty of doing so.

**Summary**

Age-related declines in health can lead to diminishing self-esteem and self-efficacy (Griffith, 2006), signifying the cyclical nature of physiological and psychological constraints. At some stage, music-making activities may be replaced by medical appointments.

Older adults, at any age, differ in the way they age and in their attitude towards, and acceptance of, ageing processes. Many courageous and adept older adults carry out activities that some may consider beyond their physical capacities, and some older-adult musicians may persist in playing their instruments despite obvious discomfort. Others may adapt their instruments to help them maintain technical proficiency when playing. These adaptations are discussed further in Chapter 9.

Age-related physiological degeneration and associated psychological impacts are not necessarily the catalysts for restricting engagement in music activities, but often intersect with structural or interpersonal factors that can place limits on music participation. Henderson et al.’s (1995) research found that “the disability *per se* was not a constraint to leisure, but the disability was a contributing element given other environmental factors” (p. 28).

Instead of being viewed as a life sentence, older adulthood could be embraced as a time for continued activities involving learning, personal and social development, and, above all, fun. As Suto commented (as cited in Ball et al., 2007, p. 399), “Participating in leisure neither cures nor removes the effects of ageing or chronic health problems, but it does have the potential to change the quality of life for many individuals.”
With all the physical and psychological challenges of ageing, it is understandable that older adults may doubt their ability or capacity to engage in new or resumed music pursuits late in life. Holt (1978, p. 196) commented that it is hard for most adults to keep their music goals in sight without reproaching themselves for their slower-than-expected progress: “It is the main reason why we old dogs so often do find it so hard to learn new tricks.”

For those older adults who successfully negotiate intrapersonal constraints, structural constraints (discussed in the next chapter) may then need to be negotiated in order for them to continue playing in community music ensembles.
The initial goal for all musicians ... should be personal enjoyment, not a professional career. (Edelstein, 1989, p. 223)

Structural barriers in Crawford and Godbey’s (1987, p. 124) leisure constraints model include organisational factors such as opportunities that are available and awareness of those opportunities; and environmental factors such as seasonal changes (see Chapter 3).

Authors associated with the Music for Life research project in the United Kingdom reported an array of structural constraints relating to music participation by older adults, including a lack of accommodation and physical access to facilities; timing and transport issues; a lack of awareness of opportunities; the cost of music programs and employing skilled facilitators; and a lack of instruments (Creech et al., 2012; Creech et al., 2013; Creech et al., 2014; Hallam et al., 2011).

Questions surrounding structural constraints that were included in Bugos (2014) study addressed programmatic perceptions such as instructional methods, repertoire choices, and the perceived weaknesses of the program. Logistical preferences covered aspects of time, venue, and parking (p. 30).

In this research, structural constraints are those that affect setting up or continuing music activities from an organisational perspective. Following data analysis of the emergent themes from the interviews, structural constraints identified in this research were subcategorised as organisational, musical, or environmental (see Figure 22). Each subcategory and its themes, as reported by the 44 informants (29 older adult musicians and 15 music facilitators), are discussed below.
ORGANISATIONAL CONSTRAINTS

Organisational aspects of music ensembles involve the setting up and provision of music projects, and decisions around advertising, fees, task delegation, timing, and attendance.

OPPORTUNITIES

Mantie (2018) wrote that many people would make music regularly if they were given the opportunity, and by *opportunity* he meant “the complete package of requisite skills, dispositions, and available options.” This is consistent with Jansen (2005):

Limited opportunities were constraints involving a lack of non-monetary resources, skills, or chances to participate in a preferred manner. Participants described wishing to learn and try specific activities such as playing a musical instrument, but were unable to find teachers or classes pertaining to these interests, or were unable to master the requisite skills. (p. 47)
Lacking the skill or lacking the disposition to participate in a music ensemble is categorised in this research as an intrapersonal constraint; that is, it is inherent in the non-participant, possibly due to conflicting leisure preferences (see Chapter 6). Lacking the opportunity—the available options—because there simply are no accessible ensembles that make participation feasible, is discussed in this research as a structural constraint; that is, one that is external to the participant and requires attention by the facilitator or ensemble administration.

Lack of opportunities to learn or play music was offered as a barrier to participation by 4.7% of the respondents to the Leisure Activities Survey (see Table 12, Chapter 4). This, however, should be considered next to the findings of Romsa and Hoffman (1980), who suggested that lack of interest is the main reason for non-involvement in recreational activities. The musicians in this research, most of whom regularly engaged in playing a musical instrument, still described instances where opportunities to play music had been absent. When asked if they had enough playing opportunities, informants responded in the following ways:

Not always, no. [Clara]

I would like more. Time-wise it’s not always easy when you’ve got other commitments, but I would enjoy more because this is probably one of the best things I’ve ever done, to learn the cello. It’s been great. [Bella]

Bianca agreed, although she was somewhat ambivalent about her allegiance to the cello:

I would definitely like more. In fact, I’m a bit frustrated because I would like to spend more time with the piano. The piano’s been neglected because I’ve had to concentrate on the cello, and, you know, there’s other things, other commitments, and I just can’t seem to fit it in. So the piano’s gone by the board, and yet that’s my first love.

Dylan, who travelled the 50-kilometre round trip from Sandgate to Bribie Island every Sunday evening for rehearsals also wanted more opportunities to play: “If someone invited me to dinner and said bring your violin, that would be wonderful.”

Ethan commented, “Well, I am a singer, but I have been thinking I’d like to play the violin, but there’s just no opportunities.” Such perceptions may reflect a lack of
effort to seek out opportunities, or trepidation about starting a new activity. Finding a teacher, and one who is able to fit them in at a time that suits their already busy schedule, is a challenge for people of any age. Finding a group that fosters adult music development from the early stages is an even bigger challenge.

Even though Emma had a musical partner with whom she played “about every other day,” and had cello lessons twice a month, she still hoped for more playing opportunities:

I’d like to have a string quartet or something like that and do that once a month. But that’s hard to find because a lot of the people live way on the other side of the city or they have already found their little groups. I’m not unhappy about it but it would be fun to find a group of people that wanted to get together occasionally, and I haven’t really found that yet. But I haven’t gone out of my way to ask people either.

Fiona wanted more opportunities to play both her djembe and her recorder:

I’d love to [have more opportunities]. I know there’s an African music society in Brisbane, but they usually announce that they’ve got a djembe class about a week before and it’s generally on a Saturday and it’s generally in the city, and I think it’s too difficult to get to, carrying a djembe drum. I’d love to be part of drum circles where people just do call and response and elaborating rhythms and things like that.

Drum circles are a rare feature on the Australian music landscape, which may be attributed to the lack of facilitation, and thus, opportunities. It may also be a consequence of the smaller population compared with, for example, England and the United States, where drum circles have more support from facilitators and participant drummers (see, for example, Higgins, 2006; Hull, 2006; Stevens, 2003).

Kate also played a less common instrument, the tenor drum. I asked her why she didn’t get more involved: “Well, there’s not an opportunity to do it, so you don’t think about it really.” Fiona similarly expressed the desire for more opportunities to play, but she was concerned about her music limitations: “Oh, I’d love to. Yes, I’d love to, so long as the group was prepared to tolerate the fact that I sometimes have to play one bar 45 times before I can play it.” This implied that there was a need for more adult beginner groups to be made accessible.
A related theme to arise in the interviews concerned the absence of playing opportunities during the school holidays, particularly over the long summer break. In Australia, community bands and orchestras generally take a break that aligns with the school calendar. U3A adopts the same holiday periods as their state school counterparts. Many older adults, however, do not feel the need to be confined to the school calendar. Similar to many other community bands and orchestras, BIO usually took a week off following each concert and then over the summer break. Smaller ensembles, such as the more independent U3A classes and the Duhig recorder group, carried on playing during holiday periods, even when forced to find alternative rehearsal venues.

More accomplished chamber music players are able to attend the annual chamber music camp over the Australia Day (26 January) long weekend in Wollongong, an hour’s drive south of Sydney. Similarly, recorder players have the opportunity to sign up for the annual Orpheus Recorder Boutique, held in Armidale, New South Wales, for a week at the beginning of January (Orpheus Music, 2019). In Queensland, however, there are currently no opportunities for summer music activities. This may be due, in part, to the heat and the school summer break, which drive people away for the holiday period. It may also be the only time that older adults have to catch up with family and friends who live in the more southerly, and cooler, states. Rose was observed to be often absent on such trips, while another recorder player had ceased playing to spend time with her expanding family both interstate and overseas.

Colin expressed a desire to play over the summer holidays: “One thing I noticed that is really missing, or maybe I just didn’t find it, is something like summer camps. I’ve been searching for those since day one.” As I was aware of the Riverina String Summer School that was happy to accommodate adults of all levels, I asked Colin if he would be prepared to travel to Wagga. His emphatic answer was, “I’d go anywhere.” Eric was also keen to continue over the summer holidays: “Yes, I’d prefer to go longer than school term. I don’t know why we have school holidays.” In the same focus group, Fiona agreed: “I’d be quite happy not to have school holidays.”

Lack of opportunities and choices was another of the five subthemes in the research of Henderson et al. (1995). In the context of women with a disability, lack of
opportunity addressed concerns about wheelchair access, transport, and the propensity of the effects of the disability to change from one day to the next, making planning for activities difficult at least, impossible at most. This is particularly pertinent for older adults who suffer, often without complaint, the agonies of arthritis, back pain, or regular migraines, and demonstrates the juxtaposition between structural constraints (providing opportunities in accessible venues) and intrapersonal constraints (being physically able to access them). Henderson et al. summed this up: “Being aware of possible opportunities was not enough unless the potential existed for making a choice about involvement in a particular activity” (p. 25).

**Awareness**

Once opportunities are available, making those opportunities known to potential musicians creates another challenge for facilitators, and a constraint to musicians where dissemination of such information is lacking. The Music for Life team exposed a perceived lack of information and publicity for some music programmes (Creech et al., 2014, p. 141; Hallam & Creech, 2016, p. 21), and noted an element of serendipity on the pathway to music participation:

Information barriers were also identified; it was apparent that many participants had come across information about music sessions purely by chance and there did not seem to be any systematic knowledge or place that older people could access reliable information about what was available in their area. (Creech et al., 2013, p. 97–98)

Informants in this research also reported the challenges they had seeking out playing opportunities, and told of how they had become aware of their music ensembles. The most common means of discovery was through word of mouth.

Word of mouth—mostly through friends and fellow musicians—was the main source of information about potential playing opportunities (see Table 43). This was particularly noticeable in smaller communities where membership overlapped between associations. Ann commented on the active role that the orchestra organisers played in the Rotary Club, and how some of those friendships led to increasing the membership of the orchestra. Brody confirmed this: “It’s a small island; everyone knows what’s going on.”
Table 43: How the older-adult musicians became aware of their ensembles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Musicians</th>
<th>NP</th>
<th>WOM</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>U3A</th>
<th>Google</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bella</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Brody</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Colin</td>
<td>y</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edith</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conrad</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Felicity</td>
<td>y</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Julian</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiona</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Leon</td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iris</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LEGEND
NP: Local newspaper or pocket trader
WOM: Word of mouth, usually through friends
U3A: University of the Third Age

Felicity had struggled to find a group she could play with:

I’ve had to go looking for them. You are not aware of them. They don’t get publicised all that much really. … I guess I’ve always found it through other people. If you want to find people who play music, you go where they play, so you go to the orchestra. … I guess it was always through other people who play. Word of mouth.

Often, members of one group formed another group. The Bribie Island fiddle group was initiated by members of BIO; and DARE grew out of the U3A advanced recorder class in Brisbane. The facilitators of each of these ensembles also seemed to rely mostly on word of mouth to share information about their music-making opportunities (Table 44).

Luke said that he had never advertised for members, and that more people had joined his wind ensemble through the “musical grapevine.” Perhaps the most representative example of how things work in regional areas is shown in Felix’s comment:

We didn’t do much advertising at all. We put the odd ad in the local paper when we were holding a concert, but somehow or other, Jane seemed to meet all these people through other things she was involved with: the U3A and the Rotary club. Everything works by bush telegraph on Bribie. … [She’s] got this marvellous knack of talking people into doing something they haven’t done before.
Table 44: How the facilitators advertised their ensembles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilitator</th>
<th>NP</th>
<th>WOM</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>U3A</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>FB</th>
<th>Lib</th>
<th>Booklet</th>
<th>Café</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felix</td>
<td>y</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fred</td>
<td>y</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gemma</td>
<td>y</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>y</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Iris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isaac</td>
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<td></td>
<td>y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vera</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LEGEND**

NP   Local newspaper or pocket trader  
WOM Word of mouth, usually through friends  
FB   Facebook  
U3A  University of the Third Age  
Lib  Local library  
Booklet Member contact list (ACMS, ANCA)  
Café: Notice in local window

Local newspapers are still a popular medium for advertising local commercial and leisure activities in regional areas of South East Queensland, particularly where the information was combined with details of an upcoming concert. When asked how he had heard about BIO, Andrew answered:

There was an ad in the paper I guess, just advertising; so I eventually rang Felix and asked if I could come to a rehearsal. When I rang him on a Sunday he said, “Oh, we’re not rehearsing tonight; we’ve got a concert.” So I went along to the concert to hear them and thought, oh yes, they’re okay.

When Conrad was in Mackay, a coastal town 970 kilometres north of Brisbane, he sought music groups through the local trader:

The Pocket Trader was so popular. Everybody was always reading it. When you walked into the petrol station it was there on the counter and you just grabbed it. It was free. And that’s how everybody found everything then. They weren’t using the internet and there was no Facebook or any of that stuff.
However, he made no music contacts through that source and sought out a local school music teacher. Enlightened music teachers will make their students aware of playing opportunities, and this was particularly evidenced by the novice adult string group Bardon Strings, whose members had been directed there by their teachers.

Colin, who reported having no intention of playing in an ensemble when he started on the cello, followed the suggestion from his teacher:

> It sounded good; I just didn’t think I had enough experience or was ready. I thought, oh, gee, that’s orchestral. I was just getting to read music, let alone get into a group …. I thought, okay, I’ll think about it, and then I thought, yeah, I’ll give it a go. I thought, at the end of the day if I’m not making it I can always just say, well, I gave it ago, thanks for that, see you next year and hopefully I’ll catch up. [Colin]

Bardon Strings was also one of few local older-adult ensembles to engage its members on social media, a resource that is less popular among older age cohorts. In the 2018 Yellow Social Media Report, 33% of people aged 65 and over reported never using social networking, and only 6% of that age group used social networking sites more than five times a day compared with 55% of the 18–29 age group (p. 3). Privacy, security, time wasting, and unauthorised information sharing were reported as some of the deterrents to using social networking sites (Jung, Walden, Johnson, & Sundar, 2017, p. 1076). None of the three core music examples, nor the U3A music classes, had made use of online social networks. Iris had avoided accessing social media for expanding the membership of QACMS: “There’s probably a Facebook page or social media that I haven’t tapped into. I don’t really do social media, so there’s whole other ways of communicating.”

Noticeboards had also been considered as an option for advertising music opportunities. When Felicity assisted with starting a small orchestra in a northern suburb of Brisbane, she found it quite difficult to find anywhere to place a flyer advertising for new members:

> We’re trying to get started and I’ve been looking around for places to put our flyer, and there aren’t many places to put the flyer. There’s one in the shopping centre, but it gets taken down every Sunday.

Fred commented on the limitations of committee members:
At various times we’ve had little advertising signs and things around the place, but it really depends on how energetic the committee is at maintaining all this sort of promotion.

In Hervey Bay, 280 kilometres north of Brisbane, Gemma advertised for players by placing a notice in her local library, but to no avail:

When I got up to Hervey Bay, I advertised in the library, because there is a community notice board there. I advertised for anyone who can play a recorder. I got no takers.

She later used the resources of the local U3A to start a recorder class in order to develop a small group of musicians with whom she could play. Once established, her group continued as an independent recorder ensemble.

**COST**

Financial considerations for facilitators of music ensembles are unavoidable: conductors expect a stipend, venues demand a hire fee and expect community groups to have public liability, and music and other resources need to be purchased. Financial considerations for active musicians are also inexorable: instruments need to be bought and maintained, private tuition can be costly, group lessons or ensemble membership fees recur weekly or annually, travel costs must be factored in, and resources like music and music stands need to be purchased. All of these may be barriers to those older adults who place negligible priority on music participation (see Chapter 4) and a constraint for those who wish to play music but have limited and dwindling financial resources.

The cost of an activity is categorised as an intrapersonal constraint where it is perceived to restrict participation based on a person’s socio-economic capacity (see Chapter 6). In the same way that *lack of interest* or *lack of time* may be based on leisure preferences, the preparedness to pay for community activities may simply be a matter of having conflicting priorities.

In the Music for Life research, cost of music programs was categorised as a structural constraint (Creech A., Hallam, Varvarigou, & McQueen, 2014, p. 138). Fees imposed by an ensemble may be excessive for older adults whose pension or income from superannuation or savings may not stretch to costly leisure activities.
However, where programs are offered at low or no cost, expenses incurred by the ensemble in the form of venue hire, public liability insurance, or the cost of resources will potentially threaten the continuation of activities. Once a music group has raised awareness of its activity, the challenge then is to determine fees that will cover expenses while not deterring prospective participants.

In the Leisure Activities Survey, cost was reported as a barrier to leisure participation by 15.4% of respondents (see Table 12), ranking a distant second after health, which was selected by 40.3% of respondents. Although socio-economic status was not probed deeply in either the survey or the interviews, finances appeared not to be a restriction in the activities of most of the informants. Indeed, most of the Bribie orchestra informants lived in homes that would indicate a comfortable socio-economic level.

Membership fees

The cost of participation in the example ensembles was not representative of most community bands and orchestras. Annual membership in the BIO was $30 at the time of the interviews (2016). The Duhig recorder ensemble paid no fees; and the handbell group paid $2 weekly only when they attended, after payment of U3A’s annual membership fee or $40. This compared with annual fees ranging from $140 to $240 for community bands and orchestras around Brisbane (see Table 45), where costs for venue and music hire, conductors’ fees, and public liability insurance could be prohibitive to smaller ensembles, especially those just starting out.

Table 45: A selection of Brisbane community orchestras and their annual fees (2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ensemble</th>
<th>Annual Fees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane Concert Orchestra</td>
<td>$140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra</td>
<td>$120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestra Concertino</td>
<td>$240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland Wind Orchestras</td>
<td>$240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redland City Bands</td>
<td>$190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redland Sinfonia</td>
<td>$120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunshine Coast Symphony Orchestra</td>
<td>$85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several informants commented on the membership fees of other community music ensembles. Conrad and Emma had ceased playing in a community orchestra due to the cost:

We were recently in a little orchestra … and because the group was so small and we had to pay for the venue and a conductor, [the organisers] decided this group must incorporate as a non-profit organisation and we must get insurance. In order to pay for all of that they came up with a semi-annual cost that just blew us away, so we just left. It was $120 per person, per six months, so it would have been $480 a year for the two of us. … Suddenly the fee outweighed the joy of playing with the group. It was always a fine balance but suddenly that just did it; we were out of there.

Felicity also found the local orchestra costly: “Yes. I was gobsmacked at what we had to hand over. … I just paid $120 for six months. I was quite shocked.” Emma decided that it was more beneficial to have private lessons than pay to be in an orchestra:

I’m not joining them again. I only played with them four or five times. It was okay when I started—very nice people …. The music is really easy, and I know why it has to be that way, because of the players, but it’s become really expensive, and I can’t go every week because my lesson is on Wednesdays as well. So, I just decided that I wasn’t get enough out of it to pay that kind of money. I’d rather spend money and take another lesson during the month.

The fee for Grace’s adult string group in 2017 was $150 for a 10-week term. This is much higher than a standard community orchestra, but membership incorporated a greater element of tuition, and provided a service that was not available anywhere else for novice adult string players. The U3A Brisbane had an annual membership fee of $40 and charged $5 for each weekly class (U3A Brisbane, 2019). U3As in suburban or regional areas charged weekly fees of just $2.

However, even the relatively low membership fee of the U3A was considered an unnecessary imposition by some U3A groups. The Hervey Bay recorder group, for example, saw no point in continuing under the administration of U3A once they had
sufficient players: they met regularly in people’s homes and the annual U3A fees went to the annual Christmas party that was of little interest to the musicians.

The facilitators also talked about the financial challenges to managing their groups. Grace had some difficulties establishing a fair cost when she started her adult beginner string group:

I trialled making it a fixed fee regardless whether they came or not, so people said, well I’m going to have to miss two out of the four, so it’s not really worth my coming, so they didn’t sign up …. I’ve had a couple of people trying to tell me how to run the money thing. So I really need to figure it out, and speak to people who run such groups. I know [name withheld] runs her string thing [Celtic Fiddles in Brisbane] and people just pay as they come. I had thought about making a term payment, like the private teaching lessons, but I’m not so sure if that works.

In the start-up of the Queensland chapter of the ACMS, Iris was also challenged with managing the finances:

The very first ever February playing day, I took the money. I had people giving me cash, giving me cheques and paying into my bank account. It was horrible. But it was almost like the pain we had to go through to establish ourselves.

Cost of instruments

Even though cost can limit the activities of older adults like Alice—who commented “I’ve got no income. I’m not over 65 yet, so cost definitely is a factor,”—it was not a prohibitive factor for the other informants in this research. However, ensemble fees are not the only financial constraints associated with music participation. Julian commented on the cost of instruments and lessons:

Then of course there’s the cost of the instrument, which can be quite substantial, particularly as you get better and you feel you need a nicer sounding instrument. And then there’s the cost of the lessons, which can really be quite significant.

Rose, who was a competent musician on both piano and recorders, would have liked to have learnt the cello, but was put off due to the cost of the instrument and lessons:
“You have to buy a cello, and they’re not cheap either. So you stick with what you’ve got and you improve on what you’ve got.”

**Conductor or tutor stipends**

U3A’s policy of not paying its tutors is an added constraint to initiating and continuing activities, particularly those that demand high skill levels, such as playing a musical instrument. Wong (2013, p. 216) compared the UK and Australian U3A models with those in France, China, and the United States and found that the UK and Australian models were the only ones that did not pay their tutors.

The music facilitators commented on U3A’s use of volunteer tutors and thus the lack of payment for expert musicians. Dr Mary Broughton, who was running a short-term series of percussion classes at U3A shared sentiments that reflected those of skilled musicians: “I know that is not the U3A model—it’s built around volunteering expertise. However, to access the best quality teaching and expertise, in anything really, requires payment” (M. Broughton, personal communication, 21 June 2017).

Some music facilitators had moved away from U3A as an umbrella organisation in order to either save money (for example, Hervey Bay recorders) or to be financially remunerated for their music and leadership skills (for example, DARE).

A contrary scenario was apparent in QACMS, where many participants had acquired years of playing experience. The employment of tutors for the chamber music play days seemed to be quite divisive, with competent musicians preferring not to have costly tutors, while developing musicians benefitted from having a ‘beat counter’. Conrad voiced common sentiments: “I keep telling Iris, ‘we don’t need the tutors; and she says, ‘oh no, people love the tutors; everyone wants tutors,’ and I’m saying, ‘well who is everyone, who is saying this?’”

**DELEGATING**

The lack of enthusiasm of older-adult musicians to be involved in committee membership or ensemble organisation was evident throughout the interviewing process and was consistent with Stebbins’s (1992) finding that some members were reluctant to become involved in the administrative affairs of the group (p. 130). BIO musicians, in particular, seemed content to let others play leadership roles, and there was no suggestion of forming a committee to handle music or financial aspects, even
though several members expressed dissatisfaction at having to provide the concert supper as well as pay for their spouse to attend the concerts.

Iris told of some of the challenges that confronted her as organiser of the chamber music society’s four Brisbane play days each year:

A lot of effort goes into … signing contracts with the provider of the rooms, juggling whether I needed a tutor and who I’d get, who had we used, who would best fit, working with [the Sydney-based head office] to get the groups right, encouraging people to bring food. There’s a fair bit to think about. And then when we get to the week before the playing day and the groups are announced, and making sure people are engaged, and the person who’s choosing the music has communicated with their group, are they bringing the music; worrying about whether people will actually arrive on the day.

Lacking committee assistance early into the inauguration of Bardon Strings, Grace, too, was confronted by all the demands of her leadership position and eventually sent out an email summoning help:

I have been doing quite a bit towards our gig today and have realised what would be really great is if some people could be responsible for co-ordinating three aspects of the concert: Raffle, Marketing and Interval Eats. Each co-ordinator would require a team to work with them.

(Personal communication, 28 April 2017)

At 81 years of age, Felix, assisted by his wife, Jane, was also challenged by chores beyond the music. In an interview the day after a BIO concert he commented:

The biggest burden is setting the whole show up beforehand and dismantling it. For instance, now we’ve got to go and move 50 chairs in our car. … People’s parents or friends of the players themselves are marvellously helpful, but a lot of them are getting very old and I don’t want someone to have a heart attack shifting furniture and stuff on our behalf.

Some tasks were delegated to other orchestral members or their families:
Jane’s got a team of helpful men, but there’s all the heavy work. …
There’s someone on the door collecting the money for us every time.
And we provide supper. The orchestra themselves bring along something
for supper, and they always have a heck of a good supper at the end of
the concert.

Rather than feeling inundated by all the work required in organising rehearsals,
concerts and music workshops, Fred indicated that he thrived on the extra-curricular
activities, and was influenced in part by Conservatorium baroque specialist,
Professor Peter Roennfeldt:

I have had a lot of fun designing the posters and other things for the boys
here. One of my major influences in this was perhaps Peter Roennfeldt,
not just for his musical passion and attention to detail, particularly his
baroque performances with Cantilena, but also his total control of a
concert! I remember him not just conducting, but choosing his choristers,
researching and producing the scores, finding venues, sorting out seating
plans and rehearsal schedules, designing the posters and tickets,
encouraging word-of-mouth advertising, bringing his harpsichord or
portable organ to performances, organising front of house, bringing the
fruitcake for half time, etc. etc. I have found personally that all these
extra elements have their own absorbing interest and reward.

**TIMING**

Creech et al. (2012, p. 15) commented on how daunting it can be for single older
people to attend a group on their own, particularly at night when safety is of greater
concern: “For some participants, time of day is a crucial factor. Older people tend to
prefer activities which take place during the day rather than the evening” (p. 44).
Night travel is further hindered by the reduced provision of public transport services,
and for those who choose to drive, diminished night vision can also influence the
preference for daytime activities.

In Henderson et al.’s (1995) study, the fear of physical safety was magnified for
women with physical disabilities. The same vulnerability exists for older adults,
whose degenerative ageing weakens their muscles, bones, vision, and hearing. This
renders community ensembles that meet in the evenings—as most do—beyond the
comfort zone of those who do not wish to venture out at night. In Henderson et al.’s study, “some of the women interviewed had resigned themselves to not even considering opportunities for leisure outside the home, particularly at night, because safety was an issue” (p. 25).

In the Leisure Activities Survey, the time of day of activities and the aversion to driving at night were also reported as barriers to participation (see Chapter 4). Six informants commented specifically about the timing of their music activities. Groups that were instigated by a sole facilitator were generally organised at a time and location most suited to that person. Gemma, for example, fitted her Hervey Bay recorder group into her very tight schedule: “We’re on the Thursday because it suits me. I’m already down that end of town.”

BIO met on Sunday evenings, also to suit the organisers’ preference, and to enable members to enjoy the weekend away and still have time to travel back to Bribie. However, members did not always make it back for the rehearsal. Alice commented, “Sometimes we go to Brisbane for the weekend and I’m late coming back.” George also found Sunday evenings to be a challenge on occasions: “There are times when it’s not that convenient. If we’ve been in the city visiting grandchildren, you’ve got to drive back on a Sunday afternoon. The traffic’s normally pretty horrific. And then you’ve got to scrub up.”

Bianca voiced a preference for daytime rehearsals: “I would be prepared to go in the morning, if it was a suitable day.” However, she understood that the orchestra was open to people of all ages: “I think there are some people in the orchestra who still work; some of the younger ones.” Therefore, because BIO was not specifically for older adults, they had to make allowances for younger players who may only be able to attend after hours.

Although also preferring daytime rehearsals, Bella had become accustomed to the Sunday evening outing, and even saw the positive side:

And in some ways, it’s good because if the family comes up and they’ve got kids, by then I’m really over it all and they’re staying for dinner and I can just say, “Good bye!” and leave them with all the dishes, and leave them with the kids in the bath. By the time I come home it’s all done.
The Duhig recorder group had not established a rehearsal routine. Many of the group met regularly at the U3A Brisbane recorder classes on Wednesdays, so rehearsals for Duhig were often arranged on a Tuesday or Thursday at a time that suited most of the participants. Rehearsals and performances were always during the daytime, and usually scheduled so that participants did not have to travel during peak hours.

Daphne, who taught adult string players, had hoped for something similar for orchestral players:

One of the disadvantages for older adults is that orchestra rehearsals are in the evenings to accommodate workers and/or students. It would be good to have a daytime adult orchestra … Many elderly people won’t travel at night, and they won’t travel if it rains, and they won’t travel if it’s dark or cloudy or foggy or whatever. So that was a marvellous idea.

The U3A Logan handbell group was timed to suit not only the facilitator, but also the availability of the hall. This suited the members of the group, with Leila commenting: “You don’t want to be on the road at night too much.”

Some facilitators mentioned the imposition on their time. When asked if the commitment was ever a burden, Grace responded:

Oh yes, there are times. If I’m feeling particularly busy with my school work, which was why I did think to try the fortnight rehearsals, it might be more balanced. But I guess I think I’m going to accept that sometimes you don’t always feel like doing these things.

Gavin similarly spoke of the restrictions on the conductor and was a little disgruntled at not being able to freely go on a trip. He commented, “You can take a day off if you’re a cornet player but you can’t if you’re the conductor. That’s a bit of a bind.”

**Frequency and duration of sessions**

Community music ensembles in Australia generally meet weekly, and take breaks that align with local school holidays. They also commonly take a week’s break from rehearsals following a concert. BIO followed such a routine. The U3A handbell group also took breaks during the school holiday, conforming to the convention of the larger U3A chapters. Groups that were affiliated with U3A in regional towns, and which rehearsed in private facilities, were less likely to feel regulated by the school
year. Similarly, the Duhig members were happy to continue rehearsals irrespective of school holidays.

Leon, who was playing with the chamber music society, and who was once an avid orchestral player, had scaled down his weekly commitments, explaining:

Initially when I got the orchestral bug, when I was mad about playing as much orchestral stuff as I possibly could, I wanted weekly rehearsals; I wanted to play as much as possible. But now I feel that I’ve been there done that, I don’t want to do that much orchestral playing; I’m happy with fortnightly or monthly rehearsals.

Grace had started her adult string group on a weekly basis but soon found it to be quite a commitment: “I thought if I run it fortnightly, I’ll have an opportunity for it not to take over my life.” She soon decided to have rehearsals every two weeks but that proved less suitable:

I was trialling fortnightly because at that point I felt pretty busy. I said to them, look, it will just be a trial, and I didn’t feel it worked. I just felt that it lost continuity. There were a few members who just didn’t come because they had things on, on the fortnightly dates. … It just felt like a big break from seeing them, rather than that weekly contact with them all. So I’ve decided that this year will be weekly. I also ran the rehearsals longer. That seems to work better, having one and a half hours compared to one hour, they seemed to make better progress by having an hour and a half. … I did find that when I was doing the hour we just felt too rushed. We’d just get started and I’d have in my mind what I wanted to do and it would be over.

This raised the issue of the length of the sessions. Community orchestras, bands, and choirs generally hold evening rehearsals for about two hours, with a break that allows for some socialising. Grace was less inclined to have a social break: “For me, personally, I don’t want to stretch out the time because I’ve got to go to work the next day.”

The Maleny recorder players held all-day playing sessions, with breaks for meals. Ann described how the group “grew from just being a couple of hours in the afternoon to playing for about four or five hours a day.” Such a time commitment is
understandable for those who have had to travel some distance to attend. Ivy had hoped to do something similar with the Duhig group, in the Brisbane central business district (CBD), but the participants were not prepared to give up a whole day on a regular basis. Ann later spoke of one of her group who occasionally hosted the recorder sessions: “He said, well look, maybe come for half a day. One of his troubles was he was getting tired of playing for the whole day. He was finding that tiring.”

The Hervey Bay recorder group limited their meetings to two hours. Gemma explained:

> It starts at 2pm and goes to 4pm on a Thursday afternoon. We always break about 3pm for a cup of tea for a quarter of an hour or so. These ladies are friends outside, and it’s meant to be a social thing, not just recorder.

Determining a time and duration for rehearsals that will attract the greatest number of players is a challenge for all community music facilitators. If meetings are held in the daytime in an effort to attract greater numbers of older-adult musicians, further challenges arise in locating an available and suitable venue (see below). Once a time and location are established, regular attendance and practice are needed to develop a cohesive group of players and achieve the desired level of artistry.

**ATTENDANCE**

Attendance at rehearsals is essential for the artistic development of music ensembles. Facilitators of community orchestras and wind bands expect their musicians to attend most rehearsals and be available for concerts. Felix, who ran the BIO, expressed some discontent about attitudes to attendance: “I can’t actually believe that some people take on these things and then they just go off to please themselves. Either you can do it or you can’t, but you’ve got to decide what you want to do.” BIO violinist, Dylan, described recent absenteeism in the orchestra:

> Well, there weren’t many there last week. Yes, it does happen a lot because people go on trips. They’re all old and they go on trips. They’ve got family overseas. There’s a bloke that hasn’t been there for a few weeks.
Absences are inevitable, and informants in this research reported illness, travel, and adverse weather events as the main reasons for their absence. Aidan said that he rarely missed rehearsals or concerts, although on one occasion he needed to visit family interstate. Belittling his own music contribution, he believed that his absence made little difference to the orchestra, saying, “Well I’m not that good. They don’t miss me.”

Alice went travelling with her husband for long periods: “Like this last concert, I was away from August to the beginning of November, so I was only here for four weeks.” Brody was understanding of such absences: “Most of the people on the island are retired, they go away on holidays. … So you’ve got to be a little bit flexible in that area.” Andrew defended his travel plans, commenting:

Other people go away too. Actually, we’re going away in March next year which will mean I’ll have two rehearsals before the first concert, but I’ll have some rehearsals earlier, like before March, so I’m not embarrassed about that …. I don’t miss many rehearsals, subject to us going away somewhere. But that’s what we’re here for. We’re retired.

Bella similarly justified her absences:

We have our holidays and that’s all there is to it. But we do try, and we’re requested to try to be there for concerts … When you’re retired you have other commitments, and that’s how it goes.

Ann admitted that, in her small recorder group, a couple of people tended to be absent quite a bit. This caused another member, who was a very competent player, to cease playing with the group. Ann accommodated such absences, “That’s life. If we have to stop when I have a couple of weeks off and have to go away for something, so be it.”

The above comments suggest that older-adult musicians are likely to enjoy competing leisure activities at the expense of the stability, continuity, and artistic development of their music-making activities.

Attendance was also affected by age-related or other health challenges. At the time of their interviews, at least four informants reported missing rehearsals due to
hospitalisation (Brian, Edith, Helena, Ruby), and Dylan reported having to attend an interstate funeral.

The U3A does not enforce class attendance, nor does it seem to impose measures to limit absenteeism, even though this means a loss in fees, diminished class sizes, and, particularly for music ensembles, attenuation of musical sound. Fiona described how this affected her recorder group:

It would be nice if it was more consistent, because seniors tend to go on holidays and get sick … and the inconsistency shows in what we do. But I guess that’s a factor of U3A as well, and we tolerate that. But it would be great to be part of a group where consistency was expected.

For instrumental groups that rely on teamwork, like bell ringing, where each participant is responsible for just two notes in a musical piece, absenteeism may lead to the cancellation of the whole group. As Kate pointed out:

It’s a team thing, but the downside of that is that we’ve had to cancel a couple of practices because there haven’t been enough people to make the group worthwhile.

Annoyances associated with absenteeism were particularly frustrating for music facilitators. Fred expressed this frustration saying:

They come and go because they’re always off having knee replacements, or driving their caravan around Australia, or they forget to turn up, or their visitors are coming and they can’t come that night, so the numbers fluctuate endlessly.

Hannah, who led U3A recorder classes in Brisbane from 2014 to 2017, was concerned about justifying the group within U3A: “You start off with 15 people, and particularly in term four, there will be days that you just have three, and you feel guilty because they’ve only got $15 for really an hour and a half.” However, she also understood the challenges from her students’ point of view:

People don’t turn up all the time. They’re genuine excuses; sometimes they have to look after elderly people, or look after their grandchildren, or they have medical appointments, or they go travelling.
Helena, the handbell facilitator, was often frustrated with absences:

Oldies have family commitments, sickness, go away. For example, I have 5 apologies out of 10 ringers for tomorrow; I’ll have to ring and conduct. This limits learning and the ability of the group to progress, and the satisfaction of achieving a decent level.

Running chamber music play-days four times a year, Iris was particularly frustrated on occasions where attendance was minimal:

Sometimes you just feel like sending an email saying, well, if there’s not enough people then we just won’t run the playing days; what’s the point of doing them?

The effect of absenteeism on the artistic level of an ensemble was mentioned by Sophie, who played with a U3A ensemble:

I’d like it to be more polished, but when you’re doing something on a voluntary basis like this, where people can come and go, and you’ve got holidays and things like that, I don’t think you achieve the same level of expertise.

When an ensemble comprised just several players, whether through absenteeism or location in a smaller regional town, the artistic level of the group was compromised. Thea compared her suburban U3A recorder group with those in Brisbane:

Our classes are quite haphazard compared with those in the city. That's hard to avoid with five students at different levels, one a complete beginner and one who can't read music.

Absenteeism in rehearsals, coupled with a lack of individual practice between rehearsals, will undermine the enjoyment of those striving for higher levels of excellence in a community ensemble (Stebbins, 1992, p. 129). Such deficiencies will also have a detrimental effect on the artistic level that a music ensemble is able to achieve.
MUSICAL CONSTRAINTS

Level of artistry was one of five constraints directly related to the music aspects of community music, the second category of structural constraints that emerged from the interviews in this research. Other musical constraints concerned the provision of music knowledge and skill development, the expectation to perform, and the choice of repertoire and instruments.

ARTISTIC LEVEL

The artistic level of an ensemble, as with all its musical elements, could act as either a stimulus or a barrier to music participation. A skilled musician is likely to be attracted to an ensemble with a majority of skilled and experienced players; however, an ensemble with a majority of novice musicians will not be so appealing. Conversely, novice musicians are likely to steer away from community ensembles that play at a standard they consider beyond their skill level, particularly where auditions are expected. Roy Ernst (2001), founder of the New Horizons organisation in North America, pointed to the advanced level of community bands and their requirement for auditions “when openings occur” (p. 48) as deterrents to novice players. Coffman (2006) confirmed that community music groups expect participants to have experience “which is obviously a barrier to novices, dabblers, and dilettantes” (p. 21).

In the Leisure Activities Survey (see Chapter 4), those adults who believed they did not have the ability to learn to play a musical instrument, or to play their instrument with others, were making assumptions about the artistic level of community ensembles. Such assumptions may be justified by a brief analysis of the expectations of several South East Queensland music ensembles, where most groups demanded skill levels at about AMEB grade 5 or better (see Table 46). Most of the older-adult musicians in this study were from ensembles that had no minimum requirements or audition expectations, although some informants still harboured a sense of music inadequacy (see Chapter 6).
Table 46: Audition requirements and minimum skill levels of selected community orchestras in South East Queensland (2019)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ensemble</th>
<th>Audition Required</th>
<th>Minimum AMEB Grade (guide only)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brisbane region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane Symphony Orchestra</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>7-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane City Pops Orchestra</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland Korean Orchestra</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queensland Wind Orchestra</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brisbane Concert Orchestra</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Coast Philharmonic Orchestra</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duhig Advanced Recorder Ensemble</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestra Concertino</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunshine Coast Symphony Orchestra</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QACMS</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bardon Strings</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indooroopilly Chamber Orchestra</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outer Brisbane suburbs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redland Sinfonia</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>6 (strings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redland Sinfonia</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>8 (winds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreton Bay Symphony Orchestra</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U3A (Logan) Handbell Class</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Brisbane City Pops Orchestra, (2015); Brisbane Concert Orchestra (2019); Brisbane Philharmonic Orchestra (2019); Brisbane Symphony Orchestra (2015); Gold Coast Philharmonic Orchestra, (2019); Indooroopilly Chamber Orchestra, (2019); Moreton Bay Symphony Orchestra, (2019); Orchestra Concertino, (2016); Queensland Korean Orchestra, (2017); Queensland Wind Orchestra (2019); Redland Sinfonia (2019).

BIO had retained an artistic level that attracted novice and returning musicians, while more advanced musicians added support for concerts. The Duhig recorder group, which grew out of the U3A advanced recorder class, had an explicit performance agenda, and members were encouraged to develop capability on both C and F instruments. This led to increasing membership of the U3A recorder classes as adult students returned to lower class levels to improve skills on alternate recorder sizes. The U3A Logan handbells continued to struggle with few players of disparate skill levels. However, its location may be the main constraint to the growth of this ensemble.
Informants in this research had generally managed to negotiate the constraints around skill level by seeking out an ensemble perceived as most appropriate for their current or imminent expertise. Emma was comfortable playing her cello in small chamber groups, but had been deterred from joining her local community orchestra due to a sense of inadequacy: “The music’s too hard and they’ve already got maybe six cellos, or maybe they have ring-ins come in for their concerts, I don’t really know. But they just play too hard music.” This also revealed the practice by community orchestras to employ more skilled players for performances, thus giving audience members—and prospective members—a false impression of the realities of community music. Emma also highlighted the need for groups to cater for developing adult string players to help them overcome often unfounded fears:

I’ve never sat in an orchestra, other than these small groups. I’m not ready for it because I don’t bow properly. If you’re playing with a bunch of cellists in an orchestra, you’ve got to bow the same direction and understand what you’re doing.

Another novice cellist, who played with the adult beginners’ string group, said that she was just grateful they would have her. However, as Stebbins (1992) noted in his study of choral participation, there is a level of selfishness involved for tolerating less capable musicians:

[T]he more able and committed participants tolerate those who are less able and committed because certain minimum numbers of performers are needed to carry out different kinds of music, … relatively weak singers are seen (often grudgingly) as better than no singers at all. An insufficient number of voices would mean that the able and committed would be left with no outlet for their musical aspirations. (p. 131)

Where Bartleet, Higgins, Veblen, and others champion community music for its inclusivity (Bartleet & Higgins, 2018; Veblen, 2008; Veblen, Messenger, Silverman, & Elliot, 2013), one may question just how ‘communal’ a community music ensemble needs to be when a high level of artistry is the goal.

Several informants mentioned finding their ensembles to be less demanding than they would like. Alice commented, “Any time you mentioned the bowing or anything they’d be, oh don’t worry about that. I just felt like, we can do better than
this. I just wanted it a little bit better.” Clara, also wanting to be challenged more, understood the complexities of catering to different music standards:

I notice that sometimes the standard is not what I would like. I’d like to go over things a bit more and get them absolutely right. But you can cause people to feel, oh, not again; you know, that sort of thing—frustration a little bit when you do that. So you’ve got to be careful.

Sophie told of the drudgery of ‘playing the same thing over and over and not moving on,’ while Fiona, voicing frustration over her U3A tutor tending to let mistakes go, understood the difficulties facing community music facilitators:

I’d prefer to be pulled up and told, “That rhythm’s not correct.” She might say, “it’s B-flat,” if we’re playing a B, but not always correct us if it’s not right. And, you know, it’s not right, and you want it to be right. … [But] U3A’s meant to be fun, so we have to try and create a balance between fun and high expectation, because people can be turned off if the expectation is too high.

Edith, a competent violinist in her 80s, was equally pragmatic:

I think that we’re all getting a little bit older and I think the music is just a sideline. … I think we could be challenged more, but whether the group would feel comfortable being challenged, I’m not sure.

Attitudes towards artistic development seemed to differ between age cohorts. Those aged over 80 expressed priorities that centred on solidifying relationships. For example, Edith was at a stage in life where she preferred to connect with family and friends, and communal music making detracted from that: “I have many other demands on my time, and I want to be able to be there for family and friends. I love my music though.” However, musicians aged under 70 were generally still keen to be challenged in their learning and to continue to develop new music skills. Those in their 70s were somewhere in between these two dichotomies, which may have been influenced by their health levels or their opportunities to engage in family relationships.

Aidan believed the biggest problem for the third violinists was that they mostly played on the G and the D strings: “They very seldom go up to the A and almost
never touch the E string.” This suggests that orchestral arrangements need to cater for a wide range of skill levels. Emma noted the difficulty in her chamber music groups:

> It’s hard to find three or four levels between violin and viola and cello and bass, where there’s easy parts and where they all mesh. It is hard to find that kind of music.

Musicians like Andrew, however, were satisfied with not being pushed:

> I’m happy about the level, which I shouldn’t be. Probably comfortable is a better word. I’m not being pushed and I’m quite happy about that because it’s a relaxation, mostly.

Giebelhausen and Kruse (2017) in their investigation of four ukulele groups in the American mid- and southwest, noted that facilitators are largely concerned with how to meet the needs of group members who had “varied abilities, experiences, and interests” (p. 359).

The conductors of community ensembles in this research were mostly accepting of the differing individual standards and general group standard. Leading an adult beginner string group, Grace said, “I just accept it. We’re beginner’ish because that’s what we’re called.”

Stipulating a minimum level of playing, as many community orchestras do, may have the advantage of attracting expert players, but may also deter those with less confidence. However, not stipulating the level can have other repercussions, as wind band founder and conductor Gavin noted:

> The first rehearsal we called, we had about 35 to 40 players, and 90% of them were flutes. I borrowed some music and we played a couple of numbers and a lot of them came to me and said, “Oh, you know, that was very difficult; are you going to start at a lower level?” I said, “No, this is the starting point; from here we go up.” So, the next time I think I had 12 players all up, because it was all too hard for them.

Ivy accepted that her artistic expectations needed to be contained:
I have a couple of players who aren’t confident in their sound. The perfectionist in me would like to work on that, but I feel I’ve just got to be mindful that they’re giving their time, and it’s not all about performance as such. But they also do want to be challenged themselves.

Creech et al. (2012) asserted that attaining high standards and enjoying playing music are not mutually exclusive (p. 32). However, unless novice musicians are enjoying their playing, they are unlikely to attain high standards; worse still, they may abandon playing altogether.

The propensity of a musician to join an ensemble will be influenced by how that ensemble promotes itself. An established community orchestra or wind band generally has an unchanging artistic level, and potential members will either self-assess or audition to establish their suitability for the group. However, an ensemble that is promoted as a beginner, novice, or developmental ensemble will face difficulties when the collective artistic level outgrows its original mission. Bugos (2014) reported that “few community music programs, with the exception of the New Horizon Bands and Orchestras, offer music performance opportunities to individuals with no previous musical training” (p. 27). However, even New Horizons or other adult novice ensembles may lack entry-level programs once the original ensemble has collectively improved. As the Brisbane-based Bardon Strings makes similar advances, it is likely that novice string players will again be left without a communal music-development opportunity.

**Knowledge & Skill Development**

By the time they reach older adulthood, older musicians have accumulated diverse knowledge and skills, but these must be balanced against their increasing physiological and psychological limitations (see Chapter 6). Whereas one-to-one tuition can be adapted around individual capacity, an ensemble or classroom of elderly musicians is challenged with keeping participants motivated enough for them to return for subsequent sessions.

At the University of North Texas, Rohwer (2005b) surveyed 35 band and orchestra directors across the United States to investigate the teaching practices for adult beginners in ensemble settings. She reported a lack of research into how music was taught to adults, particularly concerning content and instructional procedures (p. 38),
and called for greater understanding of the needs and desires of novice adult
musicians (p. 39), She further noted that one paradigm would not work “for every
individual in every setting” (p. 43), and recommended that teacher educators
consider addressing the specific needs of adult learners (p. 44).

Roulston et al. (2015) confirmed Rohwer’s earlier findings, reporting that “adult
learners are likely to approach learning an instrument with specific goals in mind”
(p. 331). Adults tend to focus on the relevance of what they are being taught, and
relevance, according to Wlodkowski (2008), is “the ultimate criteria for sustaining
their interest” (p. 99). Bugos (2014) similarly advocated for addressing an older
adult’s specific purpose for learning a musical instrument which, she suggested,
might merely be to play “Happy Birthday” for a grandchild (p. 27).

From the participant observations, it was evident that tuition was not generally part
of the ensemble experience. However, Grace provided much theoretical guidance for
her adult novice string players, and Felix and Fred shared many educational
anecdotes for the enlightenment—and amusement—of their players and singers. The
U3A groups were mostly initiated as training groups, but once the groups advanced
beyond basic theory, they received little tuition, which was reported as
dissatisfactory by those informants who would have preferred structured classes that
included elements of technique. Fiona commented:

I like a stricter music teacher; I like someone who won’t let things pass,
that will correct them and tell you why they’re wrong … We need to
have a consistent skill development program, whereas we just come and
play a piece, and that’s good, then we play another piece, then we play
another piece, but we’re not actually doing any sequential development
of skill.

Eric also sought more guidance and structure in his music learning:

I’d like to be really shown a structured practice program … I’m not sure
what I should be doing really to improve myself. I’d like to really know.
I mean, it’s hard for everybody because we’re all different, but it would
be nice to have some sort of structured things where, okay, do that, and
this is how you do your practice.
Eric’s comments further alluded to the diverse music experiences of older adults, which Leila, from the U3A handbell group, expanded upon:

It’s hard when you’ve got a group of people who are all at different places in their knowledge … If you get someone like me along, you don’t want to throw too much at them, do you, because you might frighten them off, so it’s hard when you’ve got a group of people who are all at such diverse places in their education of music.

Alice, who played orchestral violin, believed there was not enough tuition or technical assistance provided, and would have liked to have sectional rehearsals to supplement her music development.

Leon felt quite out of his depth when first joining an orchestra:

I think that also as a very inexperienced orchestral player joining an orchestra, you’re so struggling to play the notes. I know this is bad but my method of playing was just to try and listen to the other players around me and try and fit into the music, rather than watching the conductor. I never really had any training; no-one ever taught me you’ve got to watch the conductor. My method was just listening and trying to fit in as best I could with the other players. I was so struggling to play the music that my eyes were glued to the notes. It was only after I’d been playing orchestral music after a few years that I realised you’ve got to watch the conductor, and you’ve got to follow the conductor … When I first joined the orchestra, I didn’t even know what the downbeat was. I found it out. I got a book and learnt all about it.

Orchestral traditions such as Leon described above are possibly taken for granted by conductors of community ensembles, who may assume that the musicians are more experienced than they actually are, and that developing musicians would be taught such music conventions in private lessons.

Another expectation is that community musicians will participate in any public performances presented by their ensembles. For novice older adults in particular, this may be another constraint to their participation in community music making.
Creech et al. (2012) addressed the need for group facilitators to establish goals, but they also recognize the tension that may exist between goals that are challenging but that also foster enjoyment and a sense of achievement (p. 19). The most evident goal of any community music ensemble, they suggested, is a public performance, which provides focus and structure for rehearsals (p. 33).

In Roulston et al.’s (2015) study, however, some informants “saw no role for performance in their music learning, while others were highly motivated to perform” (p. 328). Other informants, although deriving pleasure from performing with others, did not see it as integral to their learning goals. In Bugos (2014) research, 10% of participants regarded the inclusion of a recital as a “primary weakness” (p. 31). This approximates the findings of this research, in which 3 of the 29 older-adult musicians (10%; Conrad, Emma, Fiona) expressed a preference not to participate in public performances.

In Australia, community orchestras and wind bands usually give three or four performances each year, aligning these with the end of each school term. There are obvious advantages associated with such performances, which include raising funds for the ensemble, engaging with families and local communities, and raising both individual and group artistic levels. However, there are also disadvantages, which include confinement to performance repertoire for each concert, and stresses associated with practice, dress code, and the extra time and cost associated with travel and venue hire.

In this research, the facilitators discussed their motives for getting their ensembles to perform, while the older-adult musicians discussed their attitudes to giving performances. Following the trend of most community orchestras, BIO performed at least three times a year, with an extra concert included closer to the Christmas holiday break. Several of the BIO participants gave the general impression that fewer, if any, concerts would be preferable:

I just feel four concerts a year is too much. … Sometimes I feel a little bit resentful about so many concerts, which means we’re tied up a good deal of the year. But then, if you commit yourself to something, you’ve got to
stick with it, haven’t you? I would prefer only three concerts a year.
[Bianca]

I find it a little much at times. [Bella]

I’m beginning to think that’s a bit too many. I think there should be three.
[George]

However, other members were satisfied with the four concerts each year:

We do four a year and that’s plenty. … If they were better spread out
throughout the year it would make it desirable. [Aiden]

I think four is probably enough. [Andrew]

It didn’t really matter for the last two because they were playing things
that we’d played during the year. [Clara]

Yes, they’re just comfortable, four a year. [Edith]

Dylan also felt that it was good to do the performances: “It puts an edge on to it.
Inspiration.” When I asked him about having to get dressed up to perform he
responded, “I hate it.”

Attire did not create any stress for the members of DARE, who performed in
standard clothing for the Duhig Village aged-care facility several times a year (see
Figure 17). The group had been borne out of the U3A (Brisbane) recorder classes,
whose tutor, Hannah, had voiced the need to provide performance opportunities for
her advanced players: “They’ll have to go out there and do some performing really,
otherwise you’ll lose them.” As of 2019, the group has grown and started performing
around Brisbane schools.

Fiona was a less experienced and thus a rather timid recorder player who preferred
not to play publicly too often. She supported the Duhig group at the aged-care
facility, explaining, “I presume that the audience is not going to be as discriminating as a bunch of professional players. If it was a bunch of professional players, I’d probably have to be on Valium.”

In the Music for Life research, the authors reported a sense of personal reward: “Performance also led to a sense from participants that they were giving something back to the community” (Creech et al., 2012, p. 33). All of the DARE informants spoke about the satisfaction they felt at being able to give back to the community.

As a beginner class of ringers, the U3A (Logan) handbell group had not given any public performances at the time of the interviews, although those players who were associated with the Girl Guides had demonstrated the bells for local Girl Guides groups. Helena commented on her eagerness for the U3A ringers to perform:

> I would love to perform when we get to that level—but I don’t know what opportunities exist …. I’d love for the group to perform in due course as I see this as a means to achieving a standard, and it gives members a real sense of accomplishment.

Leila’s comments reflected those of Fiona from DARE in that the composition of the audience determined her willingness to perform. Performing for their fellow Girl Guides presented no concerns: “The group that we play to is not very critical; we know that they’re going to be accepting of it.” Additionally, when being recorded for this research, the group showed little inhibition (see Figure 19).

Conversely, Bardon Strings gave their first performance after only eight weeks of rehearsals. This was the first time that many of the group had performed music in public. Grace explained that it was “to give the members an opportunity to work towards something.” She detailed how the performance came about:

> I put it to them that we had several performance opportunities; did they want to do them? They agreed to all of them. Nobody voiced any apprehension at the time. However, when the whole Magda’s thing happened I could tell that there was stress in the last rehearsal. Yes, they were nervous about it, which was normal. We did that event. I think they were really proud of themselves afterwards. The woman on the double bass mentioned that she thought it had really drawn the group together,
that now they felt more cohesive. And me too, I saw what they could do. I had more faith in them after that event.

Performing publicly was not enough to deter Colin, a beginner cellist, from playing with the string group, but he did consider not doing the performances: “It was daunting at first and I thought maybe I should stay with the group but just not perform.” This is an option that ensemble facilitators could adopt; however, it may cause some difficulties with ensuring that parts are adequately covered.

On one occasion, Grace used one of a performance to raise money for her international charity. At least one musician expressed dissatisfaction with this: “I did have one player complain about the fundraiser. She asked if I was going to continue to involve Bardon Strings in events as she just wanted to play music.”

No such conflicts of interest affected QACMS, where performing for others was not expected of members. Iris explained: “Not everybody gets it. You get questions like, why don’t you want to perform? You don’t need to because the whole experience is enough in itself.” However, Iris had created a unique opportunity for willing players of any standard to “showcase” the pieces they had been working on.

I like it when the lunchtime concert isn’t just our best players performing. I don’t like calling it concert; I like calling it “showcase,” because it’s supposed to be, in my mind, an opportunity for people to just kind of go, you know, we played this really great piece this morning; it won’t be brilliant but here it is. And people go, oh, never heard of that composer before, or never heard of that piece of music, what’s it called? It then promotes a whole new discussion around music players like, oh, I didn’t know you played that; maybe we could get together. Hopefully engendering some kind of connectivity.

Julian, who played with QACMS as well as with a local community orchestra felt that, now he had retired, it was time that he did more practice and participated in more performances. Able to hide himself within the viola section, Julian was not too threatened by public performance: “With the orchestra, it’s very rare that the violas really come into any degree of prominence.”
Emma and Conrad, who not only enjoyed playing in chamber groups but were staunch assistants in organising the play days, were adamant about not wanting to do performances. Emma said:

These community orchestras expect all these people to do concerts because they want to make money. I think you should have an orchestra that is inclusive, where there’s no stress to do these stupid performances; because then you get all these egos at these higher levels, and the conductor having an ego saying, “We’ve got to do this well, so I’m going to bring in all my buddies to play all the hard stuff,” and the poor schmuck that showed up every week for the last six months gets booted into position six or something. That is not the way you run a community inclusive environment; you have to include everybody.

Conrad was also forthright in his opinions about the inconvenience of performing, and colourfully described how the nerves affect him:

I dislike performing period. I don’t care whether it’s deaf people in a nursing home or a mixed audience or a bunch of kids. One day our quintet performed for about 100 school kids …. All the kids were sitting there and were introduced to our instruments. I was just as nervous then as if I had been playing in Carnegie Hall. And it’s not just the nerves; it’s the cost, the total cost. You run in to it almost all the time, especially the smaller the group is. There is a cost to having to do a bunch of last minute rehearsals, drive somewhere to do that because you’re not quite ready, the program isn’t quite finalised until the last week or two or three beforehand. So suddenly you’ve got to go to extra practices, and a lot of times that means driving a long way, and a lot of times you are then suddenly putting in much more time at home practising, et cetera; then you’re giving up half of a Sunday, or six hours on a Saturday because you’ve got to be at that venue two hours before the concert so you can have the practice. And you’re supposed to bring something to eat to help serve the crowd, and then contribute something to the raffle. If one of you is playing and the other isn’t, the other one’s got to pay to get in. And you’ve got to have decent clothes that are washed and ironed, or shined, or whatever. In one concert that we were going to a few months
ago, we got smashed into; the car got just smashed by a guy coming into
our lane. Of course, there are major hassles. You have to get your car
fixed and all that. And then there’s the nerves and the exhaustion and
everything that sets in before and during. So, to me there’s a big price to
pay for doing a concert.

Conrad’s comments cover many deterrents to performing that others musicians may
agree with but do not voice, perhaps because they do not want to sound
unappreciative or grumpy. It may also be that these elements of community music
making keep competent musicians from joining such ensembles.

Leon’s attitude towards public performance seemed to parallel that of Conrad’s:

I’d never really enjoyed playing in concerts that much; I find it stressful.
I’ve always been deflated afterwards because I always feel I’ve never
played quite as well as I could have done. You go back over and say,
“Oh God, I missed that bit.” … I used to find it very hard rehearsing for
two hours in the afternoon and then doing a concert at night. The first
time I did that, my brain was just like, “Ugh! I can’t play; what’s that
note there?” But that’s something you get used to, and you get used to
disciplining yourself …. I wouldn’t miss not playing in concerts.

However, Leon added that he enjoyed performing with better sounding orchestras.

Both Fred and Vera, who conducted choral groups, believed that performances gave
their choristers something to work towards. However, Vera reported that some of her
members preferred not to perform, which “could cause a problem if too many felt
that way.”

When Ann’s recorder group first started, they performed at locations around Maleny,
including at a café and a street festival. Ann commented, “The group actually
performed quite a bit when it started, before it got any good, and then we realised
how bad we were.” When asked if they would ever perform again she was quite
adamant that they would not, giving the reason: “Laziness. Too much organisation.
It’s just not worth it.” This also seemed consistent with a recurring theme that
participants were happy to show up when someone else did the organisation.
The pressure to commit to performances may be a genuine barrier to music participation. As Giebelhausen and Kruse (2017) argued, “Not every musical endeavor needs to have technical proficiency and high-level performance as its intended outcomes” (p. 361). For older-adult music groups where the normal stresses of public performance can be magnified, public performances play a questionable role. Most of the informants in this research, however, enjoyed contributing their music skills to performances.

**Repertoire**

Music choices are usually the purview of the conductor or ensemble facilitators. In the Music for Life research, the authors reported that “facilitators at times had to make difficult judgements relating to how much to challenge participants in sessions as opposed to offering more familiar activities and repertoire” (Hallam et al., 2016, p. 28).

For BIO, Felix made all the decisions around music selection for his concerts. This was based on the music scores and parts that they had collected over the decades, the artistic level of the orchestra as a whole, and the ability of individual sections of the orchestra. He justified his choices by noting the failure of another orchestra: “They’ve had a series of conductors with ambitions to play difficult pieces, and that’s the fastest way to lose members, I’ve found.” However, although they appreciated that acquiring suitable music was restrictive and costly, several members voiced some dissatisfaction with Felix’s music choices:

I find the music at the orchestra very boring—exceedingly so. …
I think a lot of the music is pretty mundane, pretty boring stuff. …
I would probably do more of say one movement of the symphonies that had a tune that was common. Some of the suites that are more popular.
[BIO musician]

The last concert we did before this last one, none of us really enjoyed the music. … I’d like to see more Bach and maybe more Mozart. They’ve got lovely wind parts and they just weave in there and make the thing look like a jewel in the middle of the string playing. Yes, I love that. [BIO musician]
There are certainly ones which we play that I quite like. There are ones which we played on Sunday which everybody hated. [BIO musician]

Diana believed that it was more important to cater to the preferences of the audience: “For the audience, there needs to be many of those familiar pieces, whether we like them or not. … So I thought, it’s not about what I want to play; it’s really about providing some entertainment.”

Musicians from other ensembles were also dissatisfied with music selection. Emma remarked, “There was only one piece that I really enjoyed,” and Leon changed orchestras due to repertoire choices:

I enjoyed the weekly rehearsal but I found the repertoire they were doing was not to my liking …. It’s a mixture of show tunes and popular stuff …. I didn’t enjoy that at all. I would rather just focus on purely classical music, which is what Indooroopilly Chamber Orchestra did, and which is what the Korean Orchestra does. So that was partly the reason for leaving.

Acquiring music for specific instrumental voicing proved challenging for some groups. Most of Fred’s male choristers favoured singing melody lines, which Fred accommodated with the help of one of his members: “He will take some music and put it on Finale, transpose it down and then I’ll add a simple harmony line for two or three extra voices. We do a lot of our music that way now because it’s so hard to get music.”

Repertoire selection was Gavin’s biggest challenge because he had to keep pieces at a fairly basic level to cater for his current band members:

I think the most frustration I have at the moment is with repertoire because, at this stage with this band, I can’t do any advanced repertoire. So I’ve had to take a step back in repertoire. I’m conducting scores now which I can conduct with my eyes shut. So, to me, at the moment, there’s challenge in teaching but there’s not that much challenge in the repertoire … Repertoire’s a problem because I’ve got to satisfy the players, they’ve got to want to play the stuff; but I’ve also got to satisfy an audience otherwise we don’t get paid.
When questioned about his use of online music resources, Gavin reported that they were not ideal: “You can’t just print them out because … community orchestras, can’t play them. They’ve got different instruments, they’ve got different keys.” Ann responded similarly: “Yes. I never get much satisfaction in finding anything there.”

Iris was also challenged with acquiring music for the chamber groups: “The biggest hurdle we have to overcome each playing day is the music.” However, she was in the process of solving this by exploring the “untapped personal libraries” of QACMS members.

The repertoire for the Duhig group was influenced mostly by the perceived preferences of the audience in the aged-care facility. This entailed arranging many old-time music-hall songs (golden oldies) for recorder quartet, which allowed the residents to reminisce and sing along. Ivy also described other influences on her music choices: “Having watched that documentary on Alzheimer’s and the power that music has on unlocking memories, we play some different, more popular music. However, there are one or two residents who love classical music.” Fiona was concerned about making assumptions about the music preferences of aged-care residents:

I don’t think we should put down seniors. I sometimes see that happening in those places where they think you can only play the music of the 60s, or the pop music of the 50s, or whatever. I think, if I end up in one of those retirement villages, I hope they’re not going to only play the music of the 70s and 80s because I don’t even like most of the music of the 70s and 80s. I think there are a lot of seniors who have had a varied musical background that probably would be insulted if we just did popular stuff; but a mix of it is good.

Playing music that pleases the audience, particularly where that audience may comprise nursing home residents, raises issues about the goals of the ensemble and the desire to attract and keep skilled players. Where personal repertoire preferences act as a structural constraint to music participation, in Pitts et al.’s (2015) study it is countered by “finding an ensemble that confirms or broadens musical preferences” (p. 26). The lack of music opportunities for older-adult musicians, and especially for those who may prefer to travel only in daylight hours, further limits their chances of playing the repertoire they prefer.
As with repertoire choices, instrument selection can place constraints on community music participation. The most popular instrument by far is the piano. Flowers and Murphy’s (2001) exploration into the lifetime music activities of older adults found that 27 of the participants wanted to learn an instrument; and the instrument of choice for 20 of those 27 was the piano (p. 29). In the Leisure Activities Survey, the piano was the instrument most played throughout the life course (see Table 16), and was the instrument of choice for 36.7% of those who wished to learn a musical instrument, with the guitar ranking second at 18.9% (see Table 26).

At least half of the informants in this research had played the piano in the past, and several spoke about the popularity of the organ in the 1970s. At the time of the interview, violist Leon was preparing for his AMusA (AMEB) piano exam: “The piano’s different. The piano, I feel I am improving all the time and I’ve actually been playing a lot of piano recently. I try and do about an hour a day and that is going well.” However, Ivy, a highly-trained pianist, spoke of the disadvantages of the keyboard: “When I finished school I had just taken up the flute at high school because the piano, I found, was a very isolating instrument. I wasn’t really with other people, so I joined the orchestra with the flute.”

In the Leisure Activities Survey, six respondents reported playing an orchestral wind instrument when in primary school, 14 when in high school, five after leaving school up to the age of 50, and three after the age of 50. Just one clarinettist reported still playing (see Appendix M).

Seven of the 44 informants in this research played an orchestral wind instrument as their main instrument, while three of the Duhig recorder group also reported playing orchestral wind instruments (see Table 36). Iris reported a lack of wind players attending the chamber music sessions that she organised four times a year:

I’d like a broader number of players. I feel that there are orchestras … the serious orchestras, but we have in no way tapped into that whole orchestral cohort. We’ve never got enough woodwind; we can’t seem to get the horns, oboes, bassoons. We usually get clarinets, but for some reason we haven’t been able to get clarinets lately.
Gavin similarly noted an imbalance of instruments in his wind band:

I want it more balanced. We’re missing a few areas. For example, we don’t have any horns, we’d love some horns. We could do with a bassoon. We need a couple more to balance it. We’re about 24 now; a good balance would be 30 if we had the right instruments.

Andrew, who would have preferred to play saxophone in his local orchestra, was appointed to one of two clarinet parts: “In most of the orchestrations, the clarinets are nearly the same. … The conductor just feels that [the saxophone] doesn’t fit properly. A lot of modern composers use saxophone, not extensively but there’s a few.”

Carroll (1968) attests to the educational value of the recorder.

At its lowest level recorder playing provides a strong motivation for children to learn music notation. At its highest level it can be an absorbing and satisfying means of musical expression, with a wealth of first-rate music to study ranging from the 16th to the 20th century. (p. 29)

In the Leisure Activities Survey 33 of the 272 respondents reported playing the recorder at primary school (see Table 17); five respondents indicated that they were currently playing the recorder. In South East Queensland, opportunities to play in a recorder ensemble are growing, with the spread of U3A recorder tuition, the monthly play days held by the Early Music Society of Queensland (Early Music Society of Queensland, 2019), and the development of groups like the Duhig ensemble and, more recently, the 50 Plus Centre (Brisbane City Council, 2019a).

Three informants (Colin, Diana, and Fiona) who had been classroom teachers, spoke of the ten recorder lessons they were expected to attend as part of their teacher training, which was expected to help them teach recorder in their schools. Colin reported: “As a primary school teacher, we had to do a music course for a couple of semesters, and for that we had to learn how to teach the basics of recorder.”

Fiona’s experience was similar:

I only learnt recorder while doing teacher training. We had to learn how to teach the NSW music curriculum, and part of that was theory and
recorder. So, we were assessed in those and we were expected to be able to teach those when we went out into the school.

Gavin’s recorder experience is reminiscent of many others of his era:

It was only descants; that’s the only recorder I’d ever seen and the only recorder they had. There were no other recorders; other recorders didn’t exist. And wooden recorders didn’t exist. These recorders were made of Bakelite. They were as heavy as lead.

When I first asked Leon what musical instruments he played, he neglected to list the recorder, which I knew him to play very competently. I asked him why he hadn’t mentioned it:

Uh, yes; very good question. Because there’s always that thought at the back of your mind that the recorder is not a proper musical instrument. I know, I apologise! It’s rubbish, I know. But when you say ‘what musical instrument’ you automatically think orchestral musical instruments.

After seeing a friend play the recorder, Emma expressed the desire to learn to play it but was steered towards the flute:

When Conrad got home I said to him, you know I’d like to get a recorder to play, something different than just a piano. So, he took me to a local music place in Sydney and he and the salesman talked me into buying a flute, because they thought, look, if you’re going to take up another instrument—this is the way I took it to mean, anyway—play something that is a real instrument.

These narratives expose the stigma that the recorder carries from public attitudes to primary school music programs. Carroll (1968) commented that “too often one hears the recorder itself being blamed for faulty intonation or poor quality tone whereas nobody would blame the violin for similar misdemeanours!” (p. 29). In Coffman’s (2006) research, an informant regarded the soprano recorder as a “dreadful” instrument (p. 16). Even Gemma, a recorder teacher in this research, commented disparagingly on the soprano recorder, and chose to start her recorder ensemble on alto recorders only: “It’s easier to hear and listen to a bunch of altos playing than a
bunch of descants. I mean, I can’t think of anything worse than a bunch of beginning descants, frankly.”

While no respondents to the Leisure Activities Survey reported that they currently played a bowed string instrument, nine had played either the violin (7) or cello (2) during high school. Of those who desired to play an instrument, just 2% nominated the violin (ranked 10th) while 3% the cello (ranked 7th). Informants in this research comprised 13 upper string players and six cellists.

As with so many school orchestras, BIO favoured using novice string players as third violins in place of violas. This restricted potential violists from having an opportunity to maintain their orchestral skills, as George commented:

I’ve approached Felix on more than one occasion and he’s always basically said, look, we’ve got enough third violins; we don’t really need a viola … Well, I’m probably a bit disappointed because I think if you’ve got a reason to practise it, like playing in an orchestra, you’ll get better at it. But that’s his decision; I’m not going to argue. I’m very fond of Felix; he’s a wonderful man.

Felicity, a keen chamber music cellist, admitted to some dissatisfying orchestral experiences:

I bailed out every time after about a year. People would talk you into joining, but in none of them did I get any satisfaction out of the playing.

The other thing is that, cellos too, seem to spend a lot of time sitting waiting, waiting, waiting, while the conductor and the violinists talked about their parts and the dynamics and everything. The cellos don’t get a lot of input. So it just wasn’t really satisfying.

For community orchestras, often the biggest challenge is acquiring and storing the larger percussion instruments. Felix commented on how this affected his orchestra:

We haven’t got a percussion section in our orchestra because that involves a trained drummer and he’s got to be able to play timpani, which are about $3,000 each. There’s timpani at the Morayfield High School, they own two or three timpani and they’d be happy to lend them to us, but it’s such a job carting them around.
Several of the Duhig recorder players expressed a desire to learn other musical instruments, but could only do so through low-cost programs, such as those at U3A. Unless trained musicians are prepared to teach for no financial remuneration, this is unlikely to occur.

The U3A percussion class lasted for one term only, allowing for a UQ trainee student to meet academic requirements. International models of older-adult music making such as the Late Starters Orchestras in the UK and the New Horizons ensembles in North America employ—and pay—skilled instrumental tutors (ELLSO, 2019). Until similar programs are available in South East Queensland—indeed, across Australia—opportunities for and accessibility to music participation and artistic development by older adults will remain minimal, if not stagnant.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS

The third category of structural constraints to emerge from the interviews in this research is associated with aspects of the geographical, physical, and climatic environment. Geographical environment relates to the location of rehearsal and concert sites and the travel arrangements to get to them. Physical environment concerns the suitability and attractiveness of venues and their surrounding structures such as the availability of parking or access to public transport. The climatic environment addresses Queensland’s notorious weather events and long, hot summers; and how, on the one hand, the climate can be conducive to community music making, but conversely, can place constraints on it.

LOCATION AND TRANSPORT

The geographical location of an ensemble will determine the proclivity of older adults to attend rehearsals and performances on a regular basis. Whereas musicians may be prepared to travel extensive distances for annual events such as the Orpheus Recorder Boutiques in Armidale (Orpheus Music, 2019), the Australia Day long weekend of chamber music playing in Wollongong (ACMS Australia, 2019), Elderhostel activities across the United States (now incorporated into the international organisation, Road Scholar, 2019), or summer workshops across Europe (for example, Learn 4 Good, 2019), they are only likely to attend more frequent activities when those activities are located within a reasonable distance from their homes. A ‘reasonable distance’ is quite subjective and will vary according to
each person’s available, accessible, and reliable transport options, as well as the level of motivation.

Jansen (2005, p. 45) listed a number of difficulties related to transport, including the inability to drive, vision restrictions with night-time driving, and the location of bus stops too far from homes. Transport difficulties were recognised in the Department of Communities (2009) advocacy for improved access to public transport for older adults: “The availability of appropriate transport, which enables seniors to have easy access to the project, is a critical factor for equitable participation. Lack of access to transport is a key barrier which can impact on social participation” (p. 22).

Creech et al. (2012, p. 15) reported that access to affordable and reliable transport can be a barrier to attending evening events. For Australian residents who live in outer suburban or regional areas, public transport, even in the daytime, tends to be infrequent, if they exist at all. Ruby, who lived in an outer suburb of Brisbane, and travelled into Brisbane at least twice a week to attend DARE and U3A recorder sessions, drove 15 mountainous kilometres to the nearest train station, only to be confronted by a lack of available parking. Coping with a double knee replacement and continued pain, Ruby was a model of an older-adult musician who was motivated enough by her music activities to negotiate such travel constraints.

Regional towns in Queensland present limited opportunities to participate in music activities (Australia Council, 2014, p. 19). Gemma commented that a community like Hervey Bay was “starved of good music.” As with all constraints, the location of the ensemble must be balanced against the motivation to participate in an activity. In regional Australian towns, it is not uncommon to travel huge distances to attend functions, as Gavin noted: “In the Warwick band, I was coaching them for a while and the parents came 100 kilometres to bring their kids to play in the band; 100 kilometres!”

Such enthusiasm to continue playing was demonstrated by other informants. Edith, Ann, and Dylan drove to Bribie Island from various Brisbane suburbs for the Sunday evening rehearsals, facing a travel time of nearly an hour each way. Ann, who lived on Bribie and played with BIO, travelled every week to a recorder group in Bli Bli, a town near Maleny in the Queensland hinterland. On the way, she collected another musician from the Sunshine Coast, thus travelling an hour and a half each way.
Geographical challenges exist even in larger urban areas. Iris commented on attitudes in Sydney: “People become a bit upset if they live on the south side and have to troop all the way up to the north side.” Large metropolitan areas like Perth, Sydney, Melbourne, Canberra, Adelaide, and Brisbane are bisected by large water masses (the Swan River, Sydney Harbour, the Yarra River, Lake Burley Griffin, River Torrens, and the Brisbane River) which create a geographical and psychological barrier for commuters. The prospect of spending valuable leisure time in city traffic, especially on a hot summer’s day or in a ‘rain event’, will deter less motivated musicians from attending activities. Sophie, who lived in a northern suburb of Brisbane, said: “I’m quite happy to go into the city. But you’ve got to cater for everybody, so a central location is best, and it’s got to be close to transport so that people down the south can get there as well.”

Conrad, who lived in a southern Brisbane suburb, spoke of travel difficulties when he attended a new orchestra that had started up in a northern suburb:

> They picked a location far away from here because there’s so many community orchestras in this area that they wanted to find a place where there weren’t any other ones, hoping to attract the locals there. Because of that it turned out to be a really long convoluted drive for us at night, and we would have to give it an hour to get there and an hour to get back and we wouldn’t get home until 10.30 and then up in the morning. In the meantime, the [local orchestra], which I had been a member of before, kept bugging me to come back and re-join them, and they’re much closer.

The Logan handbell group was located about 50 kilometres from Louise’s home, making distance and cost her geographical barriers: “It’s a pain, because I go over the Gateway and that’s $4.90 each way, each time I do it. But I love playing bells.” Leila, another U3A bell ringer, also admitted to being constrained by distance, and thus time: “Well I actually go from Samford so it’s quite a long way for me. I come with Louise because I’m not familiar with the roads down there so we travel together.”

The location of another handbell group closer to where Kate lived was a big factor in her joining that group. She also commented on the stricter attendance expectations
compared to the Logan group, whose absenteeism may be in part because of the location some distance south of the city:

Brisbane Bells practise literally seven minutes from where I live, and on a Tuesday evening I have no other pull on my time, so it’s convenient from a location point of view; it’s convenient because there’s a commitment by the whole group to turn up every week, and I don’t have to wonder, like with Logan, is it on this week.

Geographical barriers are not confined to urban sprawls. Bribie Island is the only island off the Queensland coast that is connected to the mainland by a road bridge, yet the channel of water separating the island from the mainland acted as a psychological barrier for many Bribie residents. Fred referred to the bridge as a barrier for attending a choir ten kilometres from Bribie: “The drive there was significant for a Bribie resident who doesn't like crossing the bridge much anymore.”

For the musicians on Bribie Island, however, the location of an orchestra in close proximity to their homes was a blessing. George remarked:

I don’t like the thought of not being able to play in an orchestra. I think that is why a lot of people keep coming back to Felix because he offers a facility for people who are enjoying music and have been playing music and participating in an orchestra, right under our very noses here. It couldn’t be more convenient.

The distance older-adult musicians are prepared to travel, or the transport difficulties they are prepared to tackle in order to play in community music ensembles will be balanced against their motivation to do so. However, once arriving at the location, other structural constraints associated with the suitability of the venue and surrounding facilities, particularly parking convenience, may adversely affect music participation.

**Venue and Parking**

An activity is not usually rendered inaccessible based on just one constraint, but on a combination of constraints. A person with a disability, for example, may be excluded from community participation by “the inability of the environment to accommodate the disability” (Henderson et al., 1995, p. 28). Ostwald (1985, as cited in Harris,
1995, p. 31) listed several “institutional barriers” relating to venue suitability, such as poor lighting, poor acoustics, uncomfortable chairs, and awkward physical arrangements of rooms. The Music for Life team similarly listed “problematic resourcing issues” that can adversely impact the quality of music experiences, including a shortage of space, poor heating, inaccessible buildings, and secure storage space for instruments (Creech et al., 2012, p. 36).

While the lack of heating may be less of a constraint in Queensland, the lack of air-conditioning can be greatly inhibiting. The Bribie orchestra performed mostly in a large air-conditioned hall attached to an aged-care residence, but the “awkward physical arrangements” meant that the audience had difficulty in seeing many of the players. Rehearsals were held at a private residence (see Table 47) without air conditioning. Although the daytime heat had slightly abated by the evening rehearsal, the increased number of players for the final pre-concert rehearsal added to the discomfort. Several informants also reported their dissatisfaction with the use of plastic chairs, which were particularly unsuitable for the cellists.
Table 47: Observed venue constraints for selected music ensembles in South East Queensland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ensemble</th>
<th>Rehearsal Venue</th>
<th>Fees &amp; Insurance</th>
<th>Rehearsal Parking</th>
<th>Public Transport</th>
<th>Noise Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BIO</td>
<td>Private residence</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Street</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DARE</td>
<td>Private residence</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U3A (Logan) handbells</td>
<td>Guide Hall</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QACMS</td>
<td>School</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes, 100m walk</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bardon Strings</td>
<td>Community Hall</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Street</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U3A (Brisbane) recorders</td>
<td>U3A City Premises</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U3A (Logan) recorders</td>
<td>Private residence</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Street</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hervey Bay recorders</td>
<td>Private residence</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Street</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bribie fiddles</td>
<td>Private residence</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Street</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic Clarinets</td>
<td>Community Hall</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Street</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Felix spoke of past difficulties confronting the BIO in accessing rehearsal spaces, and the ongoing difficulty of finding suitable performance venues:

> We had our practices in various places. The school was pretty unsatisfactory. We had to cart stands and things, and a piano had to be available …. We had to pay the art gallery for holding our concerts there. But again, it was very awkward. Occasionally we had to move a lot of art exhibits when we held a concert, although we tried to arrange our concerts in between exhibitions …. We haven’t really found any place we can perform, where the players are sitting in a comfortable position and where the audience can see them.

Membership size of the Duhig recorder group was determined by both the performance venue requirements—a maximum of ten players was favoured in the high-care dementia unit—and the rehearsal space available in the small apartment.
where the group rehearsed (see Table 47). This was a similar problem faced by Vera’s choir: “We may have to limit the size of the group as the venues where we perform (retirement villages primarily) are not very large.”

The U3A Brisbane recorder group had also faced venue challenges, further exposing the constraints imposed by being part of a learning environment that did not cater specifically for music-making activities. Hannah commented on some of the difficulties using U3A premises:

> The room is too small … the reverberation or the echo effect can sometimes be hard on your ears. It’s not only mine; there are other people there who have ear problems … I would change the venue if I could. I would like a bigger room where, with my advanced group, we don’t have tables but we just have our music on music stands. The tables take up a lot of space, but we can’t get rid of the tables.

DARE musicians who also played with the U3A recorder group agreed that the U3A premises were not ideal:

> I’d change the venue for a start; I think it’s too small the venue we’ve got. [Eric]

> The sound is not good there. [Fiona]

> I’m happy with the group size but not the room size. It’s too small. [Ruby]

> Oh, it’s never satisfactory really. I think it’s a very rectangular room, long and narrow, and you can’t really see each other all that well. If you look at Hannah you don’t see anybody else, and I always think you’re probably better off playing in a semi-circle, or have a bigger room where you could sit around. [Sophie]

The Hervey Bay recorder group ceased their affiliation with the local U3A once they had achieved a core group of players and a rehearsal routine. Gemma explained:

> Well, the U3A use the university when they can … but recorder is not really something that you can go and have as a community group on a university campus with a university class next door … We would have
all felt, you know, the acoustics there; there are nursing classes, education classes that happen to be in the next room. That’s fine when you are just doing a class that is not music with fairly raw players.

Except for its southerly location and distance from public transport, the venue for the U3A handbell group was idyllic. The hall was ample in size and had suitable facilities for setting up the bells. In addition, it was surrounded by beautiful sporting fields and parklands, with ample parking about 100 metres from the hall. However, use of the hall by groups not connected to the Girl Guides organisation was likely to incur a cost comparable to the hiring of community halls, which would likely be restrictive to activities involving few participants.

Bardon Strings had difficulty accessing a suitable venue. Grace had the first meeting in her townhouse, restricting both size and volume of the group:

One of the people that had come that night said we could go to her lounge room, so we did that for a bit, and then her lounge room just wasn’t big enough either, because every week we had more people joining. Over the break, I felt we needed a bigger setting …. So I asked one of my schools if I could hire the music room. For the third term of school I paid for the use of a school music room.

After performing the first concert in a local private community hall, Grace was invited to hold her rehearsals there for a small fee. This meant changing the rehearsal night and adapting to a stage area that was too small: “When we did our open rehearsal we did it on the floor; we went sideways and then put the audience sideways.” The hall owner subsequently increased the fees to match those of other community halls, creating more stress for Grace and the ensemble.

Luke had also started his wind group in his home until they outgrew it:

Word got around of our existence, and more and more players turned up in my music room. So we moved out to larger premises to a local school. … The only frustration the group experiences is parking for the members’ cars. We rehearse in a council building … in Bardon which has very limited parking, so most of the members find a space in the street, though that is not getting easier.
Trying to find a suitable venue for an organisation such as QACMS poses even more challenges, because several smaller rooms are needed to accommodate chamber groups. Schools with dedicated music facilities provide a suitable solution, but they are rarely accessible. Ivy, who organised the four play days each year spoke of the difficulties:

I went off on a merry track of trying somewhere to hold the playing days. … Of course, you need rooms with pianos, decent size rooms so that you can have quartets and quintets happening. It’s not just any old place that you can have. It’s the location that you really need to lock in. … I wasted a lot of time waiting to hear back from a college because we wanted somewhere that was central. There’s no point in sending everybody off to Woop Woop …. I’m forever looking for good venues.

The availability of performance spaces, multiple rehearsal rooms, and music stands in specialist tertiary music institutions such as the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, the UQ’s School of Music, and several private schools, make them ideal venues for any community music activity, although issues can arise with building access and expensive parking arrangements. Open Conservatorium Manager, Oliver, spoke about the main constraint to providing programs for older adults:

Space. Venue. The hardest thing with this Conservatorium is that we’ve got … 1500 students who come to the Queensland Conservatorium. There are 800 in the tertiary program and 700 in the pre-tertiary program. All of us are fighting for the same very limited venues. This Conservatorium had something like 300 or 400 events last year alone—from external hirers, to internal events, to concert calendars or to just finding a room to teach in, let alone the students practising. There exists very restricted space. We’ve got a musical theatre cohort that’s completely off campus because they couldn’t fit within this building. So for me, that’s the biggest constraint.

Brody, who initiated the Bribie Island fiddle group, faced difficulties holding the sessions at his local bowls club: “The bowls club are a little bit not sure. You know, they think it’s a bowls club for bowlers, and suddenly they’re getting all these musicians turn up on a Sunday afternoon.” Brody pointed to the insecurities of venue
usage after the group moved to the markets at the Art Centre: “The plan is to play every month until we drop or are moved on. The Art Centre loves us so far, but committees being what they are can change their minds overnight.”

Ann commented on similar difficulties faced by her Maleny recorder group:

One of the members managed to get us into an area the bridge club used in the RSL hall. It was a fairly informal thing because I think it was supposed to be RSL members and there was some fuss about that. … I went to all the halls in Maleny and they were fairly expensive or else they wanted insurance or both. Public liability; that was really difficult.

Local community halls around Brisbane suburbs were observed to be vacant throughout much of the day. The fee of $30 per hour (in 2018) and mandatory public liability insurance are excessive compared to the free facilities and opportunities afforded sporting activities (see, for example, Brisbane City Council, 2019a). Conrad condemned the bias for sporting events over cultural activities:

Part of the problem is the government doesn’t seem to want to fund music much. I think it’s a country-wide phenomenon in Australia, that there’s a very low price-tag put on culture and it just doesn’t mean anything to the politicians, whereas sport is everything …. Because the government and the neighbourhood doesn’t care, you can’t get a free venue; no-one’s going to let you use their school or church, or whatever it is, to let your orchestra practise there, so you’ve got to pay. Everybody’s got to pay.

Noise is a matter of concern not only for musicians practising at home, but for ensembles gathering in both private loungerooms and public spaces (see Table 47). For over ten years, the BIO had rehearsed at a private residence between 7.00 and 8.30 on Sunday evenings, reportedly without upsetting the neighbours. The Bribie fiddle group also rehearsed at a private residence next to one of the canals. When I expressed concern about the sound echoing across the water and disturbing other residents, Brody assured me, “We restrict it from seven until 8.30. By then we’re packed up so it doesn’t upset anybody.
adjacent apartments; however, in the year that I carried out observations, no-one had complained.

The use of the Girl Guides hall by the U3A handbell group had other unexpected advantages. On several occasions during my observations other park users—and their furry friends—would follow the sounds of the music to find out what was happening. This also had the advantage of promoting the group and potentially attracting other bell ringers. One could surmise that the heavenly sound of a well-tuned handbell ensemble has a distinct advantage over the compromised tuning of novice recorder, wind, and string ensembles.

Individual practice at home was of particular concern to several informants. Julian showed his dedication with this comment: “Part of the reason I’m living in this house is to do with music. I might otherwise have considered an apartment.”

Kate had faced constraints on her music practice because of noise concerns:

[As a nurse] I lived in residence at the Mater Hospital and other people complained about this funny noise that occurred at 5 o’clock every afternoon, and I didn’t admit that I was the one creating the noise, but I thought I’d better cut back on this. When I got to U3A age, I considered trying to learn the bagpipes again. I thought it would be very stimulating, but I moved into a retirement village and they don’t like noise. So that’s not going to happen … I thought when I got there I might find a sound-proof room somewhere that musicians could use. But they’re cheapskates … In a way, the bells have taken the place of that sort of desire.

Odette, who lived in a brick townhouse, said that her biggest constraint to practice was the noise: “Making noise and being shy about playing in front of other people or where other people can hear me; that’s my biggest deterrent.” Colin tended to play his cello very lightly to avoid disturbing his neighbours, a practice that can be detrimental to the development of good tone, but necessary for the maintenance of good neighbourly relationships. Holt (1978) addressed concerns about the difficulty of practising an instrument at home:

It makes me realize, too, how difficult or impossible music making is for many city people who have complaining neighbours on all sides, and no
friendly school, or any other place, to go to. Why should there not be some such places?” (p. 149).

Creating more affordable and accessible rehearsal spaces, in the same way that they create and maintain public sporting facilities, is just one way that local governments could promote music participation for active retirees. Music facilitators also need to give thought to appropriate locations and venues, as suggested by (Giebelhausen & Kruse, 2017):

If music educators hope for increased inclusivity in their teaching contexts, they might give greater consideration to the physical setting of their classrooms, the timing of activities, and ways that other issues of space and place … serve as benefits and barriers for students. (p. 361)

CLIMATE AND WEATHER

Weather or even imminent weather conditions can have an impact on attendance at communal leisure activities and even lead to their temporary cancellation. Nine women in Jansen’s (2005) study of participation in mentally restorative activities reported feeling restricted by winter weather conditions; one participant reported that the summer heat worsened her breathing problems (pp. 46–47).

Queensland is renowned for ‘weather events’. With the 2011 Brisbane floods still fresh in Queenslanders’ memories (ABC News, 2019), heavy rainfall can evoke some anxiety, whether real or perceived, and interfere with activities. Ruby admitted to being constrained by the weather: “I missed the last [rehearsal] because of rain. I was thinking, I’m not going out in that; and as it turned out, it was okay, but I’d made the decision in my head and that was that.” Helena even cancelled a handbell class due to the uncertainties of attendance during a storm: “We cancelled it because it was pouring down, and one lady I rang was surrounded by a moat!”

For older adults, travelling to rehearsals carrying instruments, music, and music stands can be strenuous when the weather is pleasant. In the heat or rain, however, a greater degree of absenteeism occurs. Daphne confirmed this: “Some of these orchestras have problems with people not turning up to rehearsals if it’s going to rain a bit, particularly the elderly people.” George admitted to being affected by the heat: “I find this climate very hot. It’s not what I’ve lived in most of my life.”
Johannesburg’s a cold climate. Durban’s always cool, sometimes humid. But here it’s just hot for so long.”

**SUMMARY**

This chapter has shown how structural constraints limit the music activities of older adults. Structural constraints were categorised as organisational, musical, or environmental. Organisational constraints related to the provision, promotion, cost, and timing of activities, the delegation of tasks, and attendance issues that affected individual and group progress. Musical constraints included the varying artistic levels of ensembles, the inclusion of education and skill development, expectations to perform, repertoire choices, and instrument availability. Environmental constraints covered aspects around the choice of venue and its location, the ease of parking and transport, and the effects of the Queensland climate and weather events.

Once a prospective ensemble member has negotiated physiological and psychological constraints (Chapter 6), and the structural constraints discussed in this chapter, they are then able to participate in a community music ensemble. As they settle into playing, they may encounter constraints of an interpersonal nature that weaken the attraction to play. Such interpersonal constraints are explored in the next chapter.
Purported social benefits of music participation have been well documented. The Music for Life team reported that perceived social benefits include fun and enjoyment, a sense of belonging, opportunities to socialise with different generations, and opportunities to give back to communities (Creech et al., 2012, p. 9). Kruse (2007) reported group dynamics as a key factor in sustaining music participation. Social networking within community music circles can also alleviate the increasing social isolation that occurs as a consequence of ageing (Solé et al., 2010, p. 267).

Once older-adult musicians have settled into their regular music activities, intrapersonal or structural constraints (see Chapters 6 and 7) may still arise. For example, they may have to cease driving or move to a distant location; they may be deterred by a lack of personal or group music development; they may develop competing interests or incur injuries; or the ensemble may change venue or increase its fees. However, constraints emanating from social interactions and presented in this research as interpersonal constraints are also likely to arise.

Interpersonal constraints involve social relationships and interactions (Crawford & Godbey, 1987; Crawford et al., 1991; Samdahl & Jekubovich, 1997). Some interpersonal constraints emerge from childhood and family influences, such as religious and cultural traditions, or inflexible beliefs about gender roles (see Creech et al., 2012). These may extend into adulthood when, for example, family, friends, or colleagues react positively or negatively to a person’s leisure choices.

In this research it is assumed that older adults can freely choose their leisure activities, even though, on occasions, pressure from significant others may constrain participation. This chapter reports on the social tensions arising from relationships...
formed while carrying out participatory music activities; tensions that can diminish the pleasure and motivation to continue participation.

Social politicking is a theme rarely addressed in the literature dealing with community music participation, yet it has implications beyond music ensembles, overarching all participatory activities. Davis (2011) categorised it as interpersonal difficulties or interpersonal challenges, and commented that learning to deal with different personalities is a challenging part of their experience (p. 227). In Riley and Gridley’s (2010) research, one participant commented on a singing group as being “too political,” and found the attitude of another participant to be “off putting” (p. 11). Stebbins (2001) attested to the frequency of conflicts, suggesting:

> Nearly every amateur, hobbyist, and volunteer organization is rent with tension at some time, much of it emerging over controversial goals and policies and around alleged favoritism …. Further, there is usually a small set of dislikes that vitiate the rewarding nature of serious leisure; they spring from the disagreeable behavior of certain people and from the unpleasantness of certain procedures and situations. (p. 55)

Following analysis of the 44 interview transcripts, several themes emerged as interpersonal constraints to music participation. These were subcategorised as relationships with leadership figures, such as administrators, conductors, and group or class music tutors; relationships with external stakeholders, such as administrators of rehearsal or performance venues, or retailers, or private music teachers; and relationships with fellow musicians in an ensemble (see Figure 23).

**Leadership Interactions**

“Leadership, leadership, leadership, leadership!” was how BIO musician Ann responded to a question about how to sustain the orchestra. Dylan, too, believed that it was the personality of the leader that engendered friendliness in an orchestra. Participants in Creech et al.’s (2012, p. 41) research reported that good leaders are knowledgeable, patient, positive, enthusiastic, and have a sense of humour.

Several informants in this research reported leadership as the main challenge to sustaining community music activities. Aiden, for example, was playing in the ensemble solely because of his friendship with the organisers. He commented: “If the
orchestra folded and there was another one functioning, would I want to join it? The answer would be no.”

Leadership roles often equate to ensemble conductors; however, they can also be the domain of other stakeholders, such as an organisation’s administrative personnel or committee members, or tutors running classes in musical instrument instruction.

Informants generally voiced positive feedback about the organisational leadership of their ensembles. Some musicians were irritated by certain personalities and attitudes, but not enough to cause them to cease participation:

He’s a little autocratic but things get done.

She’s got a very strong opinion about how things should be run. … From a musical perspective it’s not altogether easy to get on with her.

There were some petty squabbles with other people, yes, and certain people used to annoy me. The lady that was very instrumental in calling the shots and running the whole show, she used to annoy me like crazy.

One informant alluded to the need to “walk on eggshells,” adding, “They’re very sensitive about their orchestra, their baby.”
Observations of all the examples of community music making indicated that the musicians in attendance were satisfied with the level of music leadership provided by their ensemble directors. This is consistent with Shansky’s (2010) finding that, for orchestral adults, the conductor was “part of the overall positive experience” (p. 9).

Instances of dissatisfaction with ensemble directors have been reported in earlier scholarship. Stebbins (2001) reported a community orchestra “besieged by a bitter division over whether to retain or fire its conductor” (p. 55). Power struggles also occurred over the selection of new directors, with some members wanting “taskmistresses” while other preferred leaders who were less demanding (Stebbins, 1992, p. 130; and see Ellis, 2018, p. 118). Flynn and Rich (1982) offered an example of residents in an age facility who were provided with the opportunity for singing:

Almost from the beginning a conflict was evident. The group of residents expected singing in unison solely for enjoyment. The director expected to mold the varied group of talent and experience into a disciplined choir. She wished to teach the fundamentals of music. (p. 540)

BIO informant Daphne, who had played with several community orchestras over 30 years, gave the example of a conductor who wanted to improve the quality of a local, inclusive orchestra by dismissing weaker players: “He wanted to make it audition only, so we got rid of that conductor.”

The attitude of a conductor, as with that of any group leader, will affect the cohesiveness and atmosphere of a music ensemble. Fred reported once having a choral conductor who was “a bit snappy and autocratic.” Leon, who had played under several conductors with several different orchestras, talked of the personalities that gave him some grievance:

For a young conductor, who’s conducting an orchestra who are almost all older than him, it’s hard because you’ve got to stamp your authority. And these people who’ve been playing for 30 or 40 years, he’s got to come along and somehow prove that he knows what he’s doing.

The lack of a non-playing conductor caused difficulty for some informants from larger ensembles. As an orchestral violinist, Edith agreed that it was helpful to have a
pianist who could demonstrate some of the parts, but she also believed that the orchestra “could do better with a conductor.” Aiden explained why he felt the need for a bona fide conductor:

This is a criticism that quite a few have made: he conducts from the piano and all the direction he gives is quietly, “One, two, three, four” and away you go, which means effectively that the speed of the orchestra is entirely dictated by the first violins, which means that if they find a piece they can play well, they go like the hammers, and if it’s difficult, like for instance the Radetzky, we played it at half speed, because that’s what the firsts could cope with, and that’s what happens. If you have somebody out the front waving a stick or waving their arms, you will cope.

At least eight of the 13 Bribie musician informants commented that a conductor was preferable to a playing director. Bella added, “I think it would be wonderful to have someone conducting because some pieces are very hard to time, particularly if you’ve got empty bars and you know when you’ve got to come in.”

Both Ruby and Rose believed that it was better for the ensemble if the facilitator conducted rather than played. Sophie agreed:

When she’s conducting, I wish she wouldn’t play along because she’s too busy reading the music and playing herself to really know what goes on out there, and whether somebody stopped because they’re totally lost, or whatever. So, I think that’s a bit of a drawback.

Such areas of disharmony were also viewed from the perspective of the conductors. At least nine of the 15 facilitators had formed their ensemble in order to create an opportunity for themselves to keep playing their instruments. Felix explained that he preferred to play the piano to provide a percussive support for his orchestra: “Sometimes I’ve stopped playing the piano to see how well they play, but they really have become dependent on the piano.” However, he also admitted:

I think another reason why I don’t conduct it is because I think it is far more fun playing in an orchestra than just standing up and waving a stick, hoping they’ll do what you want them to. I’ve always enjoyed playing music with someone else.
In the Music for Life research (Hallam et al., 2016), facilitators reported “considerable challenges” in working with older people (p. 19) and with managing difficult or unexpected behavior (p. 27). As the authors suggested, “Such issues could have a negative impact on the quality of the facilitators’ experiences, although the rewarding nature of the work seemed to outweigh any possible frustrations” (p. 29).

The ensemble facilitators in this research reported corresponding social setbacks. Grace had been irritated by some ensemble members in the early weeks of starting her group:

> I have had a couple of members email me, trying to tell me how to run the ensemble. It sounded like one was being critical about how much I was charging and I thought, God, ten dollars! So I was very taken aback and pretty offended. But I got over that and thought, well, maybe I’ll just have to toughen up; this might be something that happens when you run a group. Maybe people think they need to tell you how to run things.

After another email criticising the way she handled rehearsals, Grace decided it was not worth continuing to feel stressed about the situation: “I was starting to think, what am I running this bloody ensemble for; if it’s going to stress me, maybe I’d better not run it.”

Such challenges may lead facilitators to retire from their music responsibilities, or not start groups in the first place. During the time of this research, one facilitator was not invited back to the ensemble he had conducted for many years; and Hannah decided that she was not receiving enough gratitude from the U3A for her efforts: “At the end of the year … there could be a little thank you somewhere along the line.” However, she later admitted to feeling inadequate as a recorder teacher for the U3A group due to her lack of formal training on the recorder.

Another conductor had left an ensemble he had conducted for many years:

> I’ve always said, if I don’t enjoy what I’m doing, I’m out of here. I don’t need this for the money or economically. I don’t need this. If I don’t enjoy it, I’m gone. And I was. And I haven’t been near them since.
Kate reported being troubled by the treatment her music facilitator sometimes received:

I’ve observed occasions when some ringers disagree with Helena, and they’ll argue with Helena over something or other and I think, who’s the tutor here? Helena’s the tutor. I would prefer we all respected that and let Helena take charge, but Helena’s sort of a softy.

Choral conductor Fred spoke of the challenges from the conductor’s perspective:

I have this basic overriding statement I keep in the back of my head: The choral animal is very fickle because they go where the action is. If they are having a good time, they’ll remain involved, and as soon as it starts being difficult or no longer fun, or the conductor shouts too much, for too long, too frequently, they don’t protest; they just wander off and not turn up next week.

Conductors may have goals that differ from those of orchestra members or the supporting organisation, forcing them to cautiously balance the desires of all participants. Conrad summed up the circumstances relating to conductors of community ensembles:

Now and then you run into one where you just don’t seem to get much value out of it at all. All the person’s doing is keeping time, and sometimes not doing a great job with that. I think there’s a broad spectrum and the problem is that to be a community orchestra conductor, you have to be a special kind of person who’s willing to work for low wages in your evenings or weekends, dealing with some people that you wish you could get rid of but you can’t, and other people that you wish you could bring in but they don’t want to come in. So, you’re not going to find a Leonard Bernstein or a really great conductor, I don’t think, in these orchestras.

Loss of conductors

A significant interpersonal constraint to music participation is the departure or demise of conductors or ensemble tutors, whose music skills may be hard to find elsewhere within a community. In music activities for older adults, particularly
where group facilitators themselves face increasing age-related frailty, pre-emptive steps need to be taken to find a suitable replacement who can sustain music activities through a period of transition and beyond. In regional and remote areas, this task is even more problematic.

Bribie orchestra informants were asked what they thought would happen when their director, who was in his 80s, was no longer able to continue running the orchestra. Jane, who handled most of the administration of the orchestra, believed that the orchestra would collapse: “It would mean starting again, really. I don’t think we’d like someone taking over particularly, unless they were really good.”

Somewhat surprisingly, many BIO members did not seem overly concerned if the orchestra were to no longer exist. Aiden had no hesitation in responding that “the orchestra would fold,” but later added, “You could fill the piano role in, yes, but you would need someone who had a deep knowledge of music, because most of the pieces we play, obviously, are classical or semi-classical music.” Even though Alice did not want the orchestra to cease functioning, she believed that it took “a much younger person with more energy to even seek out those sorts of things.” Bianca and Bella also expressed doubt that the orchestra could continue following Felix’s retirement as pianist/conductor, with Bella adding, “If somebody stepped forward and said, I’m going to give it a go, I’d certainly be behind them.” Andrew also believed that the orchestra would not survive:

I think it would fade away, because I don’t think there’s anyone that would be willing to take it over …. I would be happy for it to keep going, but I wouldn’t do anything positive to keep it going, probably. I’d be disappointed, but not so disappointed that I’d try to keep it going, probably.

George explained other potential difficulties if they were to lose the current leader:

I think there’d be a hiatus because, first of all, we use his home for practising, so we would now need a venue for practising. … Do we now get a conductor and can somebody step up and become a conductor? Like I said, I think there would be a hiatus, a serious, back to square one, almost. … If this operation here packed up for whatever reason, I’d go
down to my flat [in Brisbane] on Sunday and then just go and play in an orchestra down there.

Clara, who had studied music at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, believed that the players were willing to keep the orchestra going:

Felix has said to me in the past that I’m capable of doing something like that. … I was thinking of stepping up and doing what he’s been doing with them, but I haven’t got the room here to do it.

Edith, who had been with the orchestra from the beginning, also hoped for someone else to take over:

I don’t know of anybody in the orchestra that could really replace him or replace his expertise and knowledge. … Yes, I’d like to [stay with the group] because I’m just so comfortable going with that group. And it would depend how demanding the new person was. … If something new were implemented, that would put some of us out of our comfort zone.

Dylan had similar sentiments: “We should be looking out for an alternative. He should be, too, because it would be a sad thing to see it drop. … We need to do it now; I don’t want it to fold, while I’m living here.” Brody described the potential challenges faced by the orchestra if they were to lose the current leadership:

The key thing is getting somebody with Felix’s knowledge who would sit down and put a program together that we’re all happy with, and we can all cope with … and run the practices every week. … I don’t know anybody with that ability. … I guess if it were me, I’d be actively searching for somebody and bringing them in at this early stage, for the continuity. … I think if they took somebody else on, it would have to become legal in so much as the books and the money, and then I think we’d probably have to pay somebody to come in and run the orchestra.

GROUP TUTORS

The situation with group tutors is not dissimilar from that with conductors. It was apparent, however, that the groups were likely to keep functioning, at least temporarily, during the absence of the tutor. Brian, who led the U3A Logan ukulele group, had already seen other members lead the group during his hospitalisation:
There is always someone to take over temporarily. In the long term I would like to think that the group will continue without me.”

Handbell groups face different challenges when a facilitator, and thus the bells, are absent. Although Louise had been able to borrow the bells and keep the U3A Logan group functioning for the few weeks of Helena’s absence, members generally believed the group would fall apart if she were to permanently cease leading the group.

The U3A Brisbane recorder group participants were asked for their opinions if Hannah were to discontinue running the group. Sophie said, “Unless we found somebody else, I think it would probably fall apart.” Rose confirmed this: “They would need to get another conductor; in itself it wouldn’t survive.” Hannah even commented that “with recorders, there really aren’t that many people experienced with recorders.”

During the course of this research, the U3A Brisbane recorder classes lost their facilitator. However, at least three former or current participants were able to run the classes. This incident highlighted the difficulties faced when leaders, for whatever reason, are no longer available, particularly when no notice is given on their departure. When U3A tutors are absent, it is common practice to ask someone else to run the group. This could have a negative impact on the group in two respects: first, a tutor who has skills superior to the usual conductor is likely to make students reassess the benefits of the original class; and second, a fill-in tutor who comes from the ranks of the class may lack the leadership or musicianship skills required to keep participants gratified.

Shared leadership had been attempted in Giebelhausen and Kruse’s (2017) ukulele research. However, the authors reported that “the ability to lead a song greatly varied with many participants simply struggling to move the group forward through the music” (p. 362).

Although the philosophy of U3A regarding pricing is highly commendable, the lack of payment for tutors may lead to leadership standards that are below what some older-adult students expect, thus causing potential participants to seek other sources of learning or music participation. The use of volunteers rather than trained tutors raised other interpersonal, as suggested by Rose:
Because we’re not paying for an expert, and go to that person for guidance, then there is a certain feeling that anyone can offer suggestions. I think the tutor has to lead it more.

As regular U3A players, Rose and Ruby had found private conversations a source of frustration. Rose added, “One thing that all tutors need to be careful of is the personal conversations that come into it. There are some occasions where there’s a one-to-one while we’re all sitting waiting to play.” Ruby agreed: “Yes, I was going to say that. Even in the intermediate class, a lady next to me said, can we start now because we would actually like to play?” From the facilitators’ perspective, Hannah sensed the friction from group members and explained, “People have come to play; they haven’t come to talk …. But sometimes you just need to answer some people’s questions and you might just get off track a bit.”

Consistent with the findings in Stebbins (1992, p. 130) and Ellis (2018, p. 118), informants from the U3A recorder group differed about the preferred teaching styles of their tutors. Sophie reported being frustrated with the lack of class planning by the U3A tutor:

I think she needs to do a bit more preparation and know what she’s going to play this week. I would really like somebody to say, next week we’re going to work on that and that. Then you can go home and play like mad, get it up to scratch and then put it together at the class and have a better performance.

However, even a tutor who was more structured was not beyond criticism. Rose commented on her U3A recorder classes taken by a substitute tutor:

She was very structured, and I don’t know if we need to have it structured as much as that. There should be more flexibility about it. But she didn’t always follow what was up on the screen. And then the screen didn’t work. That’s the other thing, too. It’s not their fault, but if they’re using PowerPoint, it’s got to be working.

Such feedback demonstrates how group leaders need to find a balance between answering individual questions and keeping the whole group engaged. They also need to find the balance between socialising and playing, and between structure and spontaneity. At U3A, time is limited, tutors are unpaid, and learning is the focus.
normal community ensemble, a social break would generally be factored in, and most conductors receive some sort of remuneration. Where possible, musicians will attend the group that best suits their preferences; however, if there is no alternative, they will either make compromises or simply not attend.

**EXTERNAL NETWORKS**

In smaller towns, difficult relationships with external stakeholders, such as venue administrators, music shop retailers, or private music teachers, can compromise music activities.

**VENUE ADMINISTRATORS**

Several BIO members talked about challenges with the local Art Gallery, where BIO concerts were once held. Clara said, “They used to have quite nice groups playing there. The piano was used a lot. But for political reasons they stopped music.” Aiden commented, “The biggest problem on Bribie is the attitude of the people who run [the gallery].” Fred reiterated the difficulties his choir had with holding music functions at the Arts Centre:

An unfriendly committee took over. They had all sorts of squabbles with outfits like our orchestra that used the gallery for their exhibitions. One by one, the new committee made it difficult for outsiders who weren’t having painting exhibitions, to hold things there. … Anyway, they wouldn’t arrange dates for our concerts a year ahead … and so we started looking around for somewhere else to hold our concerts.

BIO informants also commented on the discontinued use of the Church as a performance venue:

We used to play at the Catholic Church and that was a beautiful location and everybody was happy with it but there was some sort of a political thing going on there. Somebody didn’t like having the orchestra in the church.

The best place, believe it or not, was the Catholic Church, and the new priest said no.
Retailers

As with venue administration, community music groups will often need to network with local, distant, or online retailers. During the observations and interviews, there was no evidence that the Bribie orchestra were collaborating with external suppliers to acquire music resources; however, over the years they had built up a library of almost 500 works. The U3A handbell group used one set of tutor books bought in the UK several years earlier. Bardon Strings made use of school music string publications from the facilitator’s own library, favouring folk music and light popular classics.

DARE performed their own arrangements of light classics, and popular music from the 1930s and later. Two members networked with, Orpheus Music, an online music retailer based in Armidale, New South Wales, which specialises in recorder music. DARE had built up a library of over 100 pieces. There was also evidence of collaboration with the Early Music Shop in the UK for purchasing recorders. The recorder groups in Maleny and Hervey Bay also networked regularly with the Orpheus suppliers.

There was no evidence that any of the example groups collaborated with local music shops; in fact, there did not appear to be a music shop on or near Bribie Island. The last music retailer in the Brisbane central business district (CBD) had closed its shopfront in 2014, and in 2019, there were just a handful of music retailers spread around the greater urban area of Brisbane. For the purchase of music stands or other music resources, musicians are generally directed to these music retailers. A former U3A recorder tutor had strong networks with her local music retailer for the purchase of recorder tutor books and recorders.

With the increasing use of online retailers, novice older-adult musicians are disadvantaged by not being able to assess what they are buying in advance. The DARE and U3A musicians relied on advice from the facilitators when buying instruments and equipment. Attempts to purchase adapted instruments (see Chapter 9) created more of a challenge in that musicians were unable to ascertain in advance if an instrument configuration would be the solution they were seeking to sustain their music activities.
Beyond music and instruments, some community groups also make the use of external professional personnel. The Queensland chapter of the Amateur Chamber Music Society (ACMS), for example, had an affiliation with legal, financial, and scheduling personnel from the Sydney chapter. In addition, the legal mandate that community groups in Australia have public liability insurance (see Chapter 7) requires that networks with insurance companies be maintained.

PRIVATE MUSIC TEACHERS

While studies have explored the implications of interpersonal relations between young students and their music teachers (see, for example, Creech & Hallam, 2011; de Bruin, 2017; Manturzewska, 1990; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sosniak, 1990), very minimal research seems to have been carried out on teacher-student relationships where the student is an older adult.

Interpersonal relationships between teachers and pupils, and teachers and parents were researched by Creech & Hallam (2011). Over 300 violin pupils were surveyed on factors such as enjoyment of music, satisfaction with lessons, motivation, self-efficacy, and self-esteem. The authors found the teacher-pupil dyad to be less influential on the pupils’ enjoyment of lessons and motivation to practise than factors such as long-term goals to improve, or to please their parents (pp. 111–114). Although the interpersonal student-parent dyad is mostly irrelevant as a motivational factor in music development where the student is an older adult, the student-teacher dyad, as well as interpersonal relationships with ensemble peers, could influence whether an older adult continues with instrumental lessons or ensemble participation.

Defining adult as over 40, Schlink (2009) sought to identify the physical, intellectual, and social needs of novice adult violinists in group lessons, noting that many teachers refuse to teach beginner adults (p. 7). Cullen (2009), a cellist and tutor, cautioned about teaching adults, regarding them as less reliable than young students and more likely to “miss lessons, arrive late, not find time to practice, and give up fairly soon after starting” (p. 33). Although work commitments and raising a family may no longer be constraints to leisure participation for older and retired adults, this research has shown that many older adults tend to have regular holidays away, and more social and family engagements that often encroach on their music practice and rehearsal attendance (see Chapter 7).
Regular absenteeism of older-adult musicians not only limits the development of an ensemble but may also deter private music teachers. Freiberg (2006) and Johnson (1996) reported on the difficulty of finding an instructor willing to take on adult beginners. Johnson explained that, although teachers often enjoy teaching adults, their retention rate can be poor (p. 16).

Karlovits (2006) asked music teachers why they avoided teaching older adults. Reasons given included the awkward holes left in teaching schedules because adult students “often beg off lessons because of other commitments”; the increased difficulty of teaching because, when asked to do something, “they want to know the reason why”; and, the physical inability to accomplish needed tasks even though adults “expect to be able to conquer musical frontiers more quickly.”

Several participants reported difficulties in finding teachers willing to teach older adults. Bardon Strings cellist Colin emailed three cello teachers to enquire about lessons but received a positive response from just one. Sophie had played with the U3A recorder groups since 2014 and wanted to improve her recorder technique:

I think I’d like to get a bit more technical instruction as to why I can’t play a high D well, and am I tonguing well enough? I suppose I felt a while back that I wanted some private lessons … I rang the Music Teachers Association and anybody I could think of like that, and came up with a couple of people. I asked a school music teacher I know … but she didn’t even bother ringing me back. So, I never did pursue that.

Leon was aged 49 in 2009 when he bought his violin and sought lessons. He commented:

It was very hard finding a violin teacher at first. Obviously, I googled. All the ones I kept phoning up kept saying, sorry, I’m fully booked, I don’t have any vacancies. … I emailed quite a few people but I think I was probably trying the high-profile ones, like … I remember his reply, he said, ‘How exciting to take up the violin at your age. Sorry, I don’t have any vacancies.’ … But most of the teachers would recommend someone else and I’d phone that person and they’d say, no sorry, but try this person. Eventually I found someone who said, oh yes, I’ll teach you.
Leon arranged to have lessons with a Queensland Symphony Orchestra string player about every three weeks, and continued to have lessons with her from time to time for many years. He added, “I would be so motivated in the few days after the lesson. She was lovely; she was always very positive, always very complimentary.”

However, other research participants were not so fortunate. They talked of having “appalling” teachers and thus developing bad habits, while another commented, “I felt as if I wasn’t really learning how to play the instrument.” It was not uncommon for participants to seek tuition elsewhere, even though this meant travelling more than an hour to the city or a neighbouring town.

Grace, who teaches strings and conducts a string orchestra for older adults shared an experience of one of her students who had trouble finding a suitable teacher:

Yes, I’ve heard that; or not necessarily that they couldn’t find a teacher but an adult student came to me; she basically left the person she’d been with because she felt that they became impatient with her; that they’re not very considerate of the fact that she had a lot of anxiety about being an adult and being such a novice. She felt very embarrassed about playing in front of other people with her students, but this teacher would let other people into the room before the lesson was over. It was very insensitive by the sound of it. I think you have to be sensitive to each individual and where they’re at.

Diana, a novice violinist, believed that the age difference between her and her teacher contributed to a difficulty in communication:

I had a young strings teacher, who must have been in her late 20s and she was very talented although we struggled to connect, partly I think because I was older and also because I had some music experience but was a rank beginner on the violin.

The challenge of finding a suitable music teacher are exacerbated in rural and regional areas of Queensland. When based in Mackay, Emma hired a cello but had difficulties finding a teacher:
I decided just to send it back because I didn’t have a teacher; there weren’t any other teachers there; and it’s not like you can learn on your own. I had a hard time with trying to teach myself.

Freiberg (2006) reported that she prefers teaching adults because they understand what she is talking about, they are motivated, and “they really want to be there, which isn’t true for all children” (p. 66). Similarly, the music teachers in this research were in favour of promoting tuition for the older age groups. Only one of the music facilitators expressed some negativity towards teaching older adults, saying, “It’s almost impossible to teach some old people.” In context, this teacher had only one adult student, and that student was overcommitted with different leisure activities; practising a musical instrument was not a priority.

When Isaac returned to Brisbane, he had hoped to start music classes for older people but, as Odette shared with me, “he had to make a living, so he’s had to teach music to children.” The shortage of available, skilled, patient, and affordable music teachers in South East Queensland places further constraints on older adults seeking music tuition. Because most good music teachers are employed in the school system in Queensland, it is even harder for private students, particularly older adults, to find a teacher in an accessible location. Some teachers are willing to teach in the homes of students, but that is time-consuming, costly and, in the heat of a Queensland summer, can be quite stressful. BIO violinist Daphne used to teach in students’ homes, particularly if the student was elderly and had mobility challenges. However, she admitted that it was preferable for the students to go to her home.

While private music tuition is beyond the purview of the current research into music activities by older adults in community music settings, it does demonstrate some of the difficulties that older adults face when wishing to improve their technical skills on their instruments, particularly where advanced skills are a requirement for membership in many community ensembles. Of more pertinence to this research are the interpersonal relationships between peer musicians within an ensemble setting.

**PEER MUSICIAN INTERACTIONS**

Older adults vary in their preferences for social interaction (Department of Communities, 2009, p. 7). Community music making is inherently a social activity,
yet participants may be seeking only musical rewards, social rewards, or a mixture of the two.

While socialising ranked highest as a motivation for participation in leisure activities (see Table 9), the strongest motivations for participating in a music ensemble, in this and earlier research, seems equally balanced between social and musical rewards (see Chapter 5). In Shansky’s (2010) study, music motivations and learning opportunities were ranked higher in priority than socialising (p. 9); and Pitts (2017) cautioned that “those players in our study who had joined an ensemble primarily for social reasons had sometimes been disappointed” (p. 177). Coffman (2006) reported that just one individual out of 90 questionnaires and 12 interviews was “equally happy playing his instrument alone” (p. 19), although research into the quantity of “closet” musicians has yet to be undertaken.

In Bugos’s (2014) keyboard and percussion intervention, 30% of participants indicated that the chance to expand social networks was inherent to their enjoyment of the program (p. 31), while the Music for Life team reported that social and pastoral aspects became crucial to continuing and enjoying the music activities (Creech et al., 2014, p. 146). Conversely, in Pitts et al.’s (2015, p. 26) research, finding an ensemble unfriendly or unwelcoming was one reason for ceasing music participation; however, this was countered with “enjoying friendship and camaraderie of rehearsals” as a factor for continuing music participation.

At one of the music sessions I attended as a participant-observer, I was placed next to an elderly participant who did not address personal hygiene. In other orchestras, I have shared a desk with fellow string players who insist on placing the music stand where they have ease of viewing, without considering the comfort of their desk partner. Such irritations, particularly when combined with other challenges, may outweigh the purported benefits, and result in musicians ceasing participation.

One informant reported that an ensemble “was going reasonably well but it ended up imploding because of personality problems within the group.” It took just one particular individual who “frustrated a succession of musical directors … to the point where they stopped being involved.”
Fred’s experience with elderly male choristers demonstrated how participants may not only be constrained by their infirmity, but may also be a hazard to other participants when they continue to participate:

We’ve got one Vietnam vet who subsequently actually developed a brain tumour, so that affected his personality a little more. He can get a little stroppy and a bit difficult to manage at times, but most of the time it doesn’t seem to matter.

Several participants in a novice recorder class voiced dissatisfaction with some of their cohort. Ivy explained it this way: “What I observed is that some adults feel inadequate and they compensate for it and can be a little irritating with their comments during class.” Leon also spoke of a fractious situation in one of his orchestras. When asked if he believed this caused other people to leave, he responded:

Absolutely; no question at all. That’s a huge thing in community orchestras. My view of community orchestras is that people go along for the weekly rehearsal. Most people don’t care about playing concerts. I know there are some exceptions but my view is that the weekly rehearsal, the thing they go to every Thursday night or every Wednesday night, that’s why they do it; that’s what they enjoy, that’s where they have fun, and it’s important that they’re with people that aren’t going to annoy them.

Most of the informants, however, remained detached from any social politicking and continued to enjoy making music:

I put that all to one side. I’ve got an avenue to play music, to associate with other musicians, to take part. [George]

I try to keep the politics within the [group] very minimal … there were personality things, and schisms come in. [Fred]

Oh, I just let it wash over me. [Alice]

There’s a few rumblings but I don’t take any notice of that. [Andrew]

I just put it down to the personality. I’ll live with that; that’s fine. [Diane]
The source of some social constraints may be found in demographic factors, such as the age of participants, or issues around gender, cultural background, religion, or spousal support.

**INTERGENERATIONAL ENSEMBLES**

Community music ensembles do not usually stipulate age limits; however, the scheduling of rehearsals in the evening and the provision of ensemble opportunities in schools are likely to preclude or deter young students from playing with their local music groups. The location of BIO, in what is regarded as a retirement area (see Chapter 5), means the orchestra comprises mainly older adults; just two school students were playing with the orchestra at the time of observations. The U3A handbell group and DARE—were designated specifically for musicians over the age of 50.

Members in ensembles restricted to older adults may range in age from 50 to more than 100; thus, such ensembles may still be defined as intergenerational (see Creech et al., 2012, p. 14). This research explored the willingness or desire of informants to play in groups with younger age cohorts, particularly where there may be a majority of school-age students, or whether they would consider the presence of younger players a deterrence to their own participation.

Comments by the informants about their preferences for playing in ensembles that welcomed all age-groups were divided somewhat evenly. Twelve informants indicated they would prefer to play in groups with mixed age-groups, 13 placed conditions on intergenerational interaction, and 14 were adamantly against playing with non-adults. The general consensus was that they did not wish to be the only adult, or one of just a couple of adults in a group. The main reason put forward for this was the social aspect:

I’d like to think that there were some other adults that I could interact with. … I’m very selfish in this. I enjoy getting to know people; it wouldn’t be just about playing, so if there’s not people there of my age or stage of life that I could get to know, there would be no point in me going. That’s my motivation for going. It’s not just purely for the music.

[Ivy]
Provided there were enough of the adults for the social interaction. But on the musical level it wouldn’t matter. [Alice]

I think it’s easier if you’ve got at least one player who’s somewhere roughly around your own age. I think that helps, because it wouldn’t be so good socially, if I was the only older person. [Diana]

I think that it’s comfortable for me to interact with the adults more so than attempting to make conversation with younger people who I’m a little bit out of touch with and what their interests are and what’s cool. [Edith]

I prefer adults just because I think kids are harder to include in the group when you have your breaks and stuff. A lot of the kids hang back because there’s all these old folks standing round chatting …. I like kids, I don’t have a problem talking to them, but I think it would make it uncomfortable if you were the only adult in that section. [Emma]

QACMS cellist Felicity described the uneasiness she felt seated with a younger player in an orchestra:

I did have a few times the experience of being next to a very young player. The first time it happened I can still remember. It was at the Macgregor Summer School and we were in a string orchestra. I sat beside a girl, about 13 or 14. I think I’d been learning four or five years, maybe. I didn’t know where a note was or where to play a note in a particular passage and I’d asked this 13-year-old next to me and she looked at me with absolute horror and disgust …. I’ve also had a few times where a really young person has been patronising. So, if you’re thinking about older people and orchestras, that is a factor: how you are treated by lots of younger people. It could actually discourage you …. I have heard other older people complain about some of the young ones just being patronising when the older people can’t do stuff.

As a facilitator of a wind group, Gavin provided several reasons for preferring adult groups, including the requirement in Queensland for acquiring Blue Cards when working with minors:
That’s one of the reasons I didn’t want kids in the band for starters. In those days it wasn’t Blue Cards, but it was chaperoning and wheels and whatever. Parents had to bring them and take them home, whereas adults drive themselves and carpool …. Adults don’t want to play in a kids’ band and play the kids’ repertoire, which they’re playing at school; and the kids don’t want to be with mum and dad and older people either. There’s a social thing there. And from my personal point of view, I was teaching kids all the time; I didn’t want to teach kids at night …. Very often adults are more motivated than children. Very often you get children in the band because they have to be, and they don’t attend very well.

**Gender**

Gender balance is less pertinent to instrumental groups than to mixed choirs where musical works require specific voicing and male voices are often too few (Riley & Gridley, 2010, p. 14). Gemma reported that the Orpheus annual recorder workshop in Armidale, New South Wales, always had a majority of women. She said of the gender divide: “With recorder that is irrelevant. But as you know from Orpheus … only one-eighth is men.”

At the time of observations (2016), BIO had a balance of male and female participants, and Bardon Strings had six registered males and ten females. The U3A handbell and Duhig recorder groups, however, had just one male participant each, validating Creech et al.’s (2012) finding that “men seem to be more reluctant then women to become involved in music-making activities, although those that do attend very much enjoy their engagement” (p. 44).

Even though the absence of male players did not place any constraints on their own music activities, both Fiona and Rose, who played with DARE and other recorder ensembles, commented that they would like to see more men playing the recorder. The handbell group seemed to be disadvantaged by the lack of male strength required for ringing the larger bells.

**Cultural Background**

The ethnic homogeneity of informants in this research prevented a deeper study of constraints resulting from gender, culture, or language differences. However, minor
occurrences during the ensemble observations and interviews revealed challenges that could have undesirable outcomes for music participation in locations where greater cultural or religious diversity exists.

Cultural backgrounds were not apparent as constraints to music participation in this research, yet pockets of music activity by people from specific ethnic groups, such as the Scattered People’s Refugee Choir (n.d.) and the Queensland Korean Orchestra (2017), can be enjoyed in Brisbane. This is consistent with Creech et al.’s (2012) finding that “very few people from ethnic minorities participate in organised music-making activities unless they are specifically organised for a particular ethnic group” (p. 44).

Summing up the cultural background of his men’s choir on Bribie Island, Fred’s comments substantiated what was evident in the music groups under investigation, as well as in other music groups observed around Australia:

Race doesn’t generally come up a lot. We don’t have anybody of a different race in the group actually, and Bribie is like that pretty much. It’s a very much a homogeneous, Anglo-Saxon type community. I would have no objection to it but I don’t know if somebody was a bit different would feel all that welcome.

Of the participants interviewed for this research, six were not of Australian, New Zealand, or British background. One Japanese lady, despite having limited English language proficiency, took up the cello and joined the Bribie orchestra. Two other Bribie orchestra informants were originally from South Africa and North America. Two informants from North America regularly played with the chamber music society, and one wind player from Switzerland played with the Duhig recorder group. Another skilled recorder player from Japan, who also had limited English, was observed playing with the Duhig group.

Besides playing in various local community orchestras, Leon also played with the Queensland Korean Orchestra that was formed in Brisbane in 2008. Leon described the cultural mix of this intergenerational orchestra, which perhaps exemplifies music as a medium for fostering intercultural bonds:
The Korean Orchestra is an interesting demographic because most of the string players are Korean and most of the brass players are non-Korean, they’re Australian; and the woodwind are a mixture of the two.

**RELIGION**

Religious affiliation is barely detectable as a constraint to community music participation in Australia. Hallam et al. (2012, p. 37) categorised it as an invisible barrier (see also Creech et al., 2014, p. 138). Students whose parents have prohibited them from playing music on religious grounds (see Butler, Lind, & McKoy, 2007, p. 246) may continue with such choices in adulthood, though in this research, personal choices or attitudes are categorised as intrapersonal constraints (see Chapter 6).

In the 2016 census, 29.2% of Queensland residents reported having no religious affiliation, while the most popular religions were Catholic (21.7%) and Anglican (15.3%, ABS, 2018a). Australian music facilitators perhaps implicitly know not to arrange regular activities on a Sunday morning, the assumption perhaps being that there will be too few participants due to church attendance, or that Sunday mornings are valued as the time for sleeping in.

Wind band director Gavin reported that he had not been confronted with major religious issues despite playing for religious events:

> No, I’ve never struck those problems in the orchestra or the bands, and we have played for religious institutions. With Brisbane Excelsior, we used to do the big religious festivals in the Exhibition Ground—Corpus Christi. We used to play for that. Not many of the people in the band were Catholic. With this band, we do a thing for St John’s Ambulance; they do a big church service once a year. We play for that. Religion’s not mentioned.

Gavin added, however, that on the few occasions that the band performed on religious days, some members may not be available to play due to church commitments. Conversely, Ivy, a keen musician and music facilitator, had previously engaged in music activities only within the confines of her church: “I was involved at church; that was my musical outlet at the time, so that was enough for me.”
A large Jehovah’s Witness community is located close to Bribie Island and two of the orchestra’s members were Jehovah’s Witnesses. This presented a challenge for the BIO leadership. Prior to the BIO ‘Christmas’ concert, orchestra members received an email addressing attire for the concert:

We have tried to make the first part of the concert non-Xmas in any way, therefore we must not wear Xmas shirts or baubles as we have been used to at this concert. If you wish to do so, wear them after the interval, but not before. Thanking you …

In the interview with Felix the day after the concert, I asked if he had any challenges of a religious nature. He responded:

Well there’s one, and that was evident last night. We’ve got two very good Jehovah’s Witness players—a mother and daughter—and we’ve always had members of that family, and they will have nothing to do with anything to do with birthdays or Christmas, or anything like that. So, if we play something of a religious nature, they object to playing it, and to practising and holding concerts in the Catholic Church. They’ve always stayed away from the Christmas concert, but we said to them, “What if we don’t have anything to do with Christmas and don’t call it a Christmas concert in the whole first half, or first two-thirds, and then have an interval and you can go home?” And they said, “Oh yeah, we’ll do that” and that’s what happened last night.

Generally, orchestral members were content enough to go along with the attire and music restrictions. Some either had not read the email or chose to ignore it by wearing trimmings indicative of Christmas decorations. Informants were asked for their impressions about the suppression of a common Australian tradition. Some anonymous comments include the following:

A couple of people who’d been at the concert as audience said they felt it was sad not to have the whole concert as a Christmas concert, because previously … the orchestra played about 15 or 20 carols that the audience has sung, a huge amount, an overwhelming amount; plus a few good orchestral pieces.
The orchestra even went to the trouble of waiting until the second half when the JWs had left before they displayed the wall hanging on the stage which said ‘Merry Christmas’. I thought that was a bit over the top.

I guess I feel that it’s a shame. Anyway, it’s not my business.

That is the first time that we’ve been separated over the issue of Christmas music. Other times those players absented themselves from the Christmas concert.

I thought it was wrong. I’ll be totally frank, I thought it was a mess … pandering to a very small minority because of religious reasons. That’s all it boils down to.

They either lose the musicians to satisfy everybody else or they compromise. And they compromised.

I find that very sad, but once again, that’s a religious thing. That’s not for me to be critical, particularly with those people because they’re beautiful people.

Other informants—the “beautiful people”—discussed their religious choices and why they choose not to participate in Christmas and other Australian practices:

Another reason why we don’t celebrate birthdays is that the early Christians did not celebrate their birthdays but the pagans did. Jesus, the foundation of true Christianity, didn’t celebrate either, nor did he leave instructions for the celebration of his birth. Instead he left explicit instructions to celebrate his death.

Alice confessed to not even knowing about the “compromised” concert: “I didn’t notice that at all. … Oh, well see, I wasn’t even aware of any of that. I didn’t even know that they were Jehovah’s Witness.” Conrad, who had played with local community orchestras before settling for the chamber music society, encountered his own religious challenges:

Every year I have a minor religious issue which is the fact that I was raised Jewish, became an atheist, but every time I’m in an orchestra
around Christmas time I’ve got to play all this Christmas music, and it bugs me, but I know that’s just part of it; you just have to live with it.

Religious affiliation was not the only reason for not participating in a Christmas concert. Fred told of how one of his choir members would not sing Christmas carols. I asked if he was Jehovah’s Witness. Fred replied:

No, no; he just won’t sing carols. Doesn’t believe in carols, won’t sing in a church. … He’s one of our important members. … We work around that. It is a shame. But mostly there’s not that much of a problem.

Gemma also reported challenges in getting her recorder group to play Christmas music: “A couple of them aren’t at all into Christmas. I did actually get them to play a couple of Christmas things but [one player] is a bit of a Buddhist and she doesn’t like Christmas carols.”

**Spousal Support**

Rohwer (2013) investigated spousal attitudes to band participation and found that most of the spouses regarded participation in a band as “a positive hobby that improved their relationship with their spouse, although time away for rehearsals was viewed as a negative by some spouses.” Spousal support for playing in a music ensemble was confirmed by the informants in this research; 31 of the 44 informants had partners, and all spoke of being supported by them in their music activities.

Rohwer (2013) also suggested that band directors consider ways to increase opportunities for spouses to become involved in the band’s activities. This was observed to be somewhat enforced in the Bribie orchestra, where members and their spouses were expected to provide supper after concerts and assist with logistical functions, such as carrying equipment and setting up the hall. Task delegation was not viewed positively by many informants and their spouses (see Chapter 7).

**Summary**

The focus of this chapter has been the constraints to music participation brought about by interpersonal tensions between or among members of an organising committee, conductors or group leaders, or regular players of an ensemble. Challenging interpersonal relationships and social conflict create dissatisfaction,
disharmony, and dysfunction, and may be a catalyst for many musicians or music facilitators to cease participation.

Despite such conflicts and frustrations, the perceived benefits of playing in a community music ensemble outweigh the difficulties of doing so, at least for regular participants. This is consistent with Ellis’s (2018) finding that “in general, although the ukulele learning experience had sometimes presented challenges and occasional frustration, participants rated it overall as something positive in their lives” (p. 119).

New Horizons founder Roy Ernst (2001) commented, “Like everyone else, adults want to learn in a situation that is comfortable, nurturing, and enjoyable. They want their conductor to be a positive person with a good sense of humor, and they don't want to be intimidated or embarrassed.” (p. 49). By understanding what factors inhibit many older adults from participating in music activities, community music facilitators can offer programs that either aim to eliminate constraints, or assist older adults to negotiate those constraints. The following chapter presents the MASTER framework to show how perceived barriers and constraints can be tackled to provide quality, ongoing music engagement for older adults.
In community music activities, the proximity of organizer and facilitator (often the same person), direct feedback (e.g., not showing up), and activity-based funding can serve as a strong corrective force.

(Schippers, 2018, p. 29)

Analysis of the reported barriers and constraints to music participation by older adults as presented in the previous three chapters would be futile without providing stakeholders with an inventory of strategies for promoting and sustaining participation in music activities. The MASTER framework for facilitating participation by older adults in community music builds upon the EAST framework of the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT, 2014) and its subsequent adaptation by the parkrun organisation into EASTER (Robins & Tan, 2018; and see Chapter 3). However, rather than music participation being ‘easy’, older-adult musicians seek enriching music experiences (make it musical) and varied levels of learning (make it educational) in addition to attractive, social, timely, and regulated activities.

The MASTER framework also draws on Jackson et al.’s (1993) proposition that “leisure participation is dependent not on the absence of constraints but on negotiation through them” and that “such negotiation may modify participation rather than foreclosing it” (Jackson et al., 1993, p. 1). It therefore synthesises the motivations of older-adult musicians with how they negotiate or overcome constraints when engaging in music activities (see Figure 24). This chapter, therefore, addresses the fourth sub-question of this research:

*How can music facilitators in Queensland best promote music activities for older adults?*

In this chapter, I present a functional taxonomy that could be used as a guide by accomplished older-adult musicians as well as by those who harbour a desire to learn to play a musical instrument. However, it is particularly pertinent as a guide for music facilitators, such as conductors and directors of community music ensembles,
and teachers or tutors in group instruction, who wish to implement strategies that promote and sustain community music participation for older adults.

Creech et al. (2014, pp. 149–150) reported that, to increase participation, music activities need to be of a high standard and directed by skilled facilitators (make it musical); venues need to be conveniently located and easily accessed, publicity needs to be targeted, and activities need to be engaging, welcoming and enjoyable (make it attractive); participants could be encouraged to act as buddies, and activities should be inclusive, joyful, and incorporate opportunities for socialising and pastoral support (make it social); music programs should offer progression and develop skills (make it educational); credible facilitators should be employed, yet costs need to be kept to a minimum (make it regulated).

Informants in this research reported that the benefits of participation outweighed the intrapersonal, structural, and interpersonal constraints to music making. This is consistent with Stebbins (2001), who acknowledged that “the rewards are too powerful, too attractive, to be undermined by a handful of petty annoyances” (p. 55). In this chapter, therefore, the motivations (Chapters 4 and 5), reported benefits (Chapters 1 and 2), perceived barriers (Chapter 4), and constraints (Chapters 6 to 8) associated with music making are thematically synthesised according to the

![Figure 24: The MASTERT Framework and the balancing act.](image-url)
MASTER framework, and presented as a functional taxonomy for promoting community music participation for older adults.

This chapter also responds in some measure to Creech’s (2018) instruction that “careful thought needs to be given to how music-making opportunities can be truly inclusive and accessible” (p. 103). By making activities *musical, attractive, social, timely, educational*, and *regulated*, the MASTER framework offers suggestions that music facilitators, musicians, and potential musicians may wish to consider in order to negate or, at least, reduce the impact of the constraints and perceived barriers, and to encourage and promote music making across all instrument types.

**Make it MUSICAL**

The most significant dimension that differentiates the MASTER framework from the EAST and EASTER frameworks is the dimension of music. Music creation and production is the primary motivation, the raison d’être, for any music ensemble, even though the opportunity to socialise with like-minded older adults may be of greater importance for many older musicians. Adults in King’s (2009) study participated in community bands “out of love for music,” and to satisfy their need to express themselves musically (p. iii). Older-adult participants in Bugos’s (2014) study reported that the most enjoyable element of the intervention was “learning to play a musical instrument and reading musical notation” (p. 31).

Following analysis of the interviews, several constraints emerged that related to the music aspects of an ensemble. For example, the music goals of some participants and facilitators were at odds, with some preferring a high level of artistry and technical standards, while others preferred to focus on fun and socialising. Some participants enjoyed performing while others did not; and this had the potential to conflict with the need for the ensemble to raise financial support through performances.

Based on constraint negotiation by informants in this research, and on findings in earlier research, the music dimension of the MASTER framework provides recommendations about levels of artistry, decisions to perform, repertoire choices, and instrumentation and arrangements for older-adult music ensembles.
Even though community musicians are often content just to go along to rehearsals and play at their current level of ability, many informants in this research reported being keen to be taught correct technique and musicianship, and to improve their playing as best they could. Myers et al. (2013, p. 141) advised that facilitators of music ensembles should address elements of musicality, such as tone, articulation, dynamic contrast, and phrasing.

Leon enjoyed performing with better sounding orchestras, although he preferred not to do performances:

> With the Korean orchestra, it was okay because the orchestra actually sounded good and there was great feedback from the audience and you could tell they were really enjoying it.

In the Bribie orchestra, Edith wanted to raise the standard of the first violins, but spoke of difficulties in organising sectional rehearsals:

> On a few occasions, some of the firsts did get together at different homes to practise a couple of pieces that we wanted to improve. However, this was rather difficult with diverse work and family commitments and our travel distances.

This could be combatted by holding a sectional rehearsal in lieu of a general rehearsal, even if for just the first or final half hour of a general rehearsal. Alternatively, or additionally, the section could arrive a little early or stay a little late. However, members of other sections may need to be requested to conduct private conversations at some distance from the rehearsing section.

Improving artistic levels may not be the goal of all participants. Pitts et al. (2015) referred to the “matching of music and personal needs” (p. 28) as a factor in the retention of musicians. The motivations and expectations of both the individual player and the ensemble need to align for an ongoing, mutually satisfying partnership:

> Joining an ensemble expecting a fun, social interaction, and then finding it to be strongly focused on performance goals, for instance, had been a source of frustration for several lapsed players; similarly, expecting
musical challenge and finding an over-emphasis on socialising could lead to equivalent disappointment for someone motivated by improving their playing amongst like-minded people. (Pitts et al., 2015, p. 28)

**PERFORMANCE**

For many community ensemble musicians, the main or even sole motivation to practise and develop music artistry and instrument technique may be the prospect of an imminent performance (and see Karlovits, 2006). However, some musicians are reluctant to play in public (Roulston, 2010).

In Davis’s (2011) exploration of community-university partnerships in an intergenerational string program, one adult informant suffered performance anxiety and would only play within a large ensemble setting (p. 169). Davis believed that “his identity as a musician was in conflict with his stage fright.” However, this assumes that all musicians are, by definition, performers, an assumption that may be erroneous in the context of community music activities, particularly for older-adult musicians. Although performance is an inevitable outcome of hours of music practice, and only a handful of musicians expressed a preference not to perform (see Chapter 7), music facilitators and their ensembles could accommodate non-performing musicians. However, this research has shown that some musicians who are initially reticent to perform, at least in public, often develop the confidence to do so. Such accommodation was reported in Davis’s (2011) research by an informant from the University of South Carolina String Project:

> His solution for the conflict did not involve giving up on being a musician. He simply decided not to participate in the activities that were too overwhelming for him. He knew his personal limitations and negotiated a solution with the USCSP program design so that he could still participate as a musician and feel confident in his role. (p. 170).

Performance was also a way for some groups to give back to a community beyond their immediate music circle. The Duhig recorder group, for example, played several times a year for the residents in an aged-care facility (and see Coffman, 2006, p. 20).

Wind band conductor Gavin’s practice was to only perform music that the band could play well: “We would never go in public without being well rehearsed, so anybody that heard us would think, that’s a good band, I’ll join it.” This had the dual
appeal of not only attracting prospective players, but also of not deterring current members.

For Fred’s choir, the main goal was to have fun, but this joy was also transmitted through their performances:

It’s basically a fun organisation just for the fun of singing and we should keep that as our focus. The boys though do like to perform. We’ve done probably about 370 performances since we started—different types of things. I don’t mind. … I like the idea of a performance because it focusses their minds and gives us something to work to.

Fiona found both pleasure and challenge through performance: “We played for the opening of the U3A art show on two occasions. That was lovely; it was nice to be able to do that. … I think performing in public challenges you; it’s good.”

One member from the U3A Logan recorder group, which is much smaller in size and far less formal than the Brisbane group, described why the group had attempted their first performance:

More to motivate ourselves than anything else …. We do not expect more than a few friends and family of the players, and that's just as well as this is our first venture and we are not very confident, nor very skilled. None of us have been learning for more than 18 months, but we are rehearsing hard and will do our best.

[J. Townsend, personal communication, 7 January 2018]

Helena, who used to perform with a handbell group at nursing homes in the UK, was also keen for her Logan members to perform:

I would love to perform when we get to that level—but I don’t know what opportunities exist … I’d love for the group to perform in due course, as I see this as a means to achieving a standard, and it gives members a real sense of accomplishment.

Iris adopted an inclusive perspective towards the chamber music lunchtime “concerts”:
I like it when the lunchtime concert isn’t just our best players performing. I don’t like calling it concert; I like calling it “showcase,” because it’s supposed to be, in my mind, an opportunity for people to just kind of go, “You know, we played this really great piece this morning; it won’t be brilliant but here it is.” And people go, “Oh, never heard of that composer before,” or “Never heard of that piece of music, what’s it called?” It then promotes a whole new discussion around music players like, “Oh, I didn’t know you played that; maybe we could get together,” hopefully engendering some kind of connectivity.

Preparing for performances is an important factor in sustaining music participation (Creech et al., 2012, p. 33) and can also be a source of income. However, facilitators may need to balance these goals with preferred social, educational, or other goals of those who are reluctant to perform. Accommodating both could prove difficult but not impossible. In time, those who are less inclined to perform may change their attitudes as they become more confident with their own playing, and when they see the impact that performing has on other members of the ensemble, on audience members, and on their own self-esteem (Creech et al., 2012; Gibbons, 1985).

Gemma’s recorder group, which was initially part of the Hervey Bay U3A, was eventually converted to the idea of performance:

There was a seniors’ concert in August, so we talked about it and I was trying to be really encouraging; and then they chickened out. But after they’d been playing for six months, when we went to the sign-on for U3A at the beginning of last year, we actually did play something. We went down the back of the room and played; and they were a bit disappointed that people didn’t drop everything and come and listen to them.

Iris, who runs the chamber music play days four times a year, sings in a choir, and plays in an orchestra, commented on some participants’ aversion to performing:

You play to perform, although not so much in chamber music. Really, it’s all about being in the moment and all eyes are on you and you just have to deliver the goods on the day. But a lot of people didn’t
necessarily want that; they like to sing, they like to go for the whole congenial thing on a Monday night, but not actually perform.

This is consistent with Myers et al.’s (2013) discussion of “hobbyists,” who “may profess a similar work ethic and level of appreciation for music yet wish for looser structures and little to no emphasis on performing” (p. 143). The authors recommended that directors develop greater understanding and compromise, and de-emphasise aspects like performance that are found to be burdensome.

In planning the first performance for her adult beginning string group, Grace’s goal was to give the members something to work towards:

I put it to them that we had several performance opportunities; did they want to do them? They agreed to all of them. Nobody voiced any apprehension at the time. However … I could tell that there was stress in the last rehearsal. Yes, they were nervous about it, which was normal. We did that event. I think they were really proud of themselves afterwards. The woman on the double bass mentioned that she thought it had really drawn the group together, that now they felt more cohesive. And me too, I saw what they could do. I had more faith in them after that event.

On another occasion Grace planned a quasi-performance that was meant as an open rehearsal, “so people could just come along and check it out.” A non-threatening performance experience of this type is especially beneficial for novice players, while providing an opportunity for the ensemble to boost its membership.

Aged-care facilities create another non-threatening performance opportunity that is popular among older-adult ensembles. The Duhig recorder group was formed in the first instance to perform for the high-care dementia ward of the Duhig Village and has returned regularly to play for that ward as well as the main residential wards. Brian’s ukulele group gave weekly performances at an aged-care facility:

The residents come and listen. … Sometimes we have up to 20 residents and we have started a program where they are now using maracas and rattles as we all sing. I have been told by staff that most are way happier for a few days after we have been.
Luke’s wind group was also a regular at retirement homes:

We play 3 or 4 concerts a year. Many are in retirement homes as well as in local churches. The group has travelled throughout Queensland as well as playing concerts in NSW. It is a reflection of the standard we have reached that we are frequently invited back to play again the following year.

**Repetoire**

Music selection is important for music fulfilment (Carroll, 1968, p. 30; Myers et al., 2013, p. 141). It should reflect the preferences of group members’ and potential audiences (Giebelhausen & Kruse, 2017), include repertoire with which musicians are familiar (Roulston, 2010), include layered parts for different abilities (Durrant, 1993), be challenging but able to be performed well (Creech et al., 2012), and be varied so that easier pieces are interspersed to provide some relief, allowing musicians to concentrate on the quality of their sound.

Earlier studies reported that older adults often prefer music that was popular during their early adulthood (Gibbons, 1977; Gilbert & Beal, 1982). Hallam et al. (2011, p. 8) suggested that music making for older adults should provide opportunities to re-engage with music from their youth, even to the extent that preferences may be gender specific (Hallam et al., 2012, p. 40).

Older-adult participants in the Music for Life research (Creech et al., 2012, p. 35) indicated preferences for classical, easy listening, blues, folk, rock, and popular music. This is consistent with the findings in both the Leisure Activities Survey and the musician interviews. Respondents to the survey indicated preferences for classical music (24.3%), easy listening (18.5%), and blues (11.1%), followed by country, rock, dance, and popular (see Table 32). Most of the informants preferred classical music, although folk and, particularly, Celtic fiddling, emerged as popular music preferences. Some of the recorder players expressed preferences for Baroque and Early Music.

Roulston (2010) recommended that music learning in adulthood “be informed by non-western perspectives of learning” (p. 349). In the current research, a cellist informant and an observed DARE recorder player were Japanese, providing their ensembles with opportunities for incorporating Japanese traditional music into their
repertoires, thus appealing to wider audiences, and even attracting more musicians of non-European heritage.

Acquiring a varied repertoire can be achieved through free online resources or retailers. The State Library in Brisbane has a vast music collection available for loan, and has been particularly useful for QACMS play days. Conservatorium students and staff are also at liberty to borrow music from the Conservatorium library, but this is a resource that is not available to the general community musician.

Informants reported their impetus for repertoire selection in their ensembles. Ivy commented that the Duhig ensemble were using those pieces from their former U3A classes that she felt would be recognised by and appeal to the aged-care residents. The group had also added “golden oldie tunes” to their repertoire so that the residents could reminisce.

Where performances incorporate aspects of audience participation such as encouraging sing-alongs, the pitch and range of pieces need to be compatible with the vocal range and abilities of the intended audience, particularly for residents in aged-care facilitates. Facilitators may also consider providing song sheets, with words typed in large print.

**INSTRUMENTATION & ARRANGEMENTS**

Choice of instrumentation is also a factor in attracting older-adult participants to music ensembles, and much of the literature suggests that the ukulele, guitar, recorder, and percussion are best suited to adult beginners (Hallam et al. 2011, p. 8).

The ukulele has been growing in popularity in Queensland, particularly through U3A classes, but also with the formation of groups like the Brisbane Ukulele Musicians Society (BUMS, 2019). The instrument has been described as “playful, inexpensive, and musically flexible” (Thibeault & Evoy, 2011, p. 44).

The recorder is also growing in popularity among older adults in Queensland, again as a result of U3A classes. Like the ukulele, it is cheap, transportable, easy to learn, and not physically demanding, making it an ideal instrument for older-adult beginner musicians. Difficulties occur in beginner recorder classes where F and C instruments are taught concurrently; however, the overall ensemble sound is more appealing. As players become more adept with their instrument, they can readily transfer to another
size and pitch of the instrument, which adds a cognitive challenge when rapidly swapping from one pitching to the other.

In her recorder ensemble, Gemma provided a mixture of pieces, some that were “not musically difficult” and some that were more complex and necessitated work on individual parts:

If it’s too hard we might leave it for a few weeks and then come back to it again. I’ve found that doing something else probably builds their confidence and their skills and that when they come back to stuff they found hard a few weeks back they can play it much better, without any struggle.

Ivy was optimistic about raising the profile of recorder ensembles, commenting on the stigma surrounding the instrument:

I think we could fix that because a lot of people have got their own negative memory about it and the squawky soprano, which we know still happens. But there’s so much more to the recorder world which would be nice to introduce people to.

Arrangements that inspire and challenge players of all standards without extending them too far beyond their perceived abilities will add to the overall satisfaction of ensemble participation.

**Make it ATTRACTIVE**

The second dimension in the MASTER framework is attraction. It extends the EAST concept of making an activity attractive visually, to making the activity appealing and accessible. Community music activities, in the first instance, must attract participants. They, therefore, need to be visible, audible, attractive, appealing, and accessible if participation is to be initiated and sustained.

Financial and time constraints emerged in the Leisure Activities Survey as perceived barriers to music participation (see Chapter 4), but were acknowledged as the subjective prioritising of leisure interests. To attract interest in music activities, opportunities need to be created, and ensembles must be visible and appealing. Visibility is brought about through publicity—making musicians and potential
musicians aware of the music opportunities. Appeal demands addressing cosmetic or logistical aspects of the activity, such as location, venue, scheduling, fees (see Chapter 7, Structural Constraints), and the accommodation of people with disabilities, particularly where older adults have age-related physical challenges (see Chapter 6, Intrapersonal Constraints). Perhaps of greatest importance is that the activity is—and is seen to be—enjoyable. Enjoyment was reported as both a benefit of and a motivation for music participation (see Chapters 1, 2 and 5).

**OPPORTUNITIES**

“Build and they shall come” is an adage emanating from the movie *Field of Dreams* (Frankish, 1989) that has implications for music as well as for sporting fields. In the first instance, music opportunities need to be instigated, and then supported by skilled facilitators (Hallam & Creech, 2016, p. 21). Hallam et al. (2011, p. 8) recommended that music activities be “open access,” requiring no prior experience or auditions, and allowing for progression from beginner to advanced levels.

Providing more playing opportunities on Bribie Island, particularly if the local orchestra were to disband, was one reason for Brody initiating the Celtic fiddle group:

> That’s another reason I wanted to form this Celtic group, so that we’ve still got an outlet to play, and in the future, we could probably diversify into string quartets and that type of thing …. If the orchestra doesn’t go forever, if we don’t get somebody to take over, you’ve got to have some sort of outlet to play; this’ll be it, our little Irish band.

Most of the music examples observed for this research were instigated by musicians seeking to create opportunities for themselves to continue playing their instruments (see Chapter 5). This finding is inconsistent with other community ensembles that have been established for a long time and hire external conductors for a limited term.

One way of creating attractive opportunities is to make instruments available for participants to borrow during and between sessions. Coffman (2006) reported the practice of loaning instruments as “a successful strategy in supporting a full range of participants” (p. 15). This practice was demonstrated by the music groups in this research. BIO lent violins to adult beginners, and made a double bass available to anyone capable of augmenting the orchestra’s string section. The handbells were
provided by the facilitator for use during the weekly meetings; however, unlike other instruments, handbells are not an instrument suitable for home practice due to the requirement to have several participants.

The Duhig recorder group loaned larger recorders to members who wished to ascertain if their fingers could adapt to the wider stretch before buying their own instruments. Facilitators of music gatherings where wind instruments are available on trial by more than one participant should ensure that medical wipes are available for cleaning. The Academy of General Dentistry (2011) warned that “cleaning should not be confined to the mouthpiece, since the bacteria invade the entire instrument.” However, all wind players should be made aware of the condition known as “saxophone lung” (see McPherson, 2017), a type of hypersensitivity pneumonia.

Cross (1981, p. 251) suggested that people are willing to pay for things that meet their needs. However, until they realise and experience the pleasure and benefits of music participation, they will remain averse to such financial outlay.

Inclusivity is another aspect to making music activities attractive. An atmosphere where all people feel welcome could be generated by creating a buddy or mentoring system to help new and potential members integrate (see Creech et al., 2012, p. 47). Facilitators could also promote inclusivity by ensuring that most activities are not perceived as either too easy or too difficult. Without challenges, participants may become bored. Conversely, music that is overly difficult will create frustration (Murphy, 2017, p. 200; Myers et al., 2013, p. 140). Turino (2008) remarked, “Participatory traditions usually include a variety of roles demanding different degrees of specialization, so that people can join in at a level that offers the right balance of challenge and acquired skills” (p. 31).

Inclusivity could also be promoted by offering workshops to people with various disabilities, such as music making for the vision impaired. The Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre’s research project Sing to Beat Parkinson’s (Crossen, 2017) is an example of such research, which could be extended to include musical instruments.

Convinced of people’s ability to accurately self-assess, Gavin allowed interested musicians to play with the group for two weeks so that they could determine for
themselves whether they were up to the required standard. If they were unable to keep up with the music, Gavin would suggest that they seek private tuition. Iris similarly welcomed potential participants to trial chamber music sessions on QACMS play days: “I think for a novice, they need to come along and just sit in for a while. If they want to bring an instrument, they can come and play.”

**PUBLICITY**

Once an opportunity for music making has been created, facilitators are challenged with making potential participants aware of their activity. The Music for Life team recommended addressing informational barriers by posting notices in local and electronic media; in post offices, libraries, and health centres; and by conducting open days or “taster sessions” (Creech et al., 2012, p. 46).

Word-of-mouth advertising is perhaps the most common recruiting device for music activities in South East Queensland (see Chapter 7; and Cross, 1981, p. 140). BIO relied on networks between friends and with other local organisations, and advertised concerts in the local newspaper. However, they lacked an online presence, which has become characteristic of most community orchestras and bands. When asked how he came to hear about the orchestra, Brody’s response highlighted the importance of public performance in attracting attention and prospective players: “It was through a friend who was already living here and she said, “Oh, it’s lovely to have this orchestra every three months. They play a concert and it’s lovely.”

In Australia, U3A provides a practical approach for launching adult ensembles; however, many adults are oblivious even to the U3A’s existence. The Duhig recorder group had emerged out of the U3A to become an independent performance ensemble. Recruitment beyond U3A members, however, occurred only in 2018 when the group became affiliated with the 50 Plus Centre in Brisbane (Brisbane City Council, 2019a), subsequently gaining more publicity and, thus, more invitations from external stakeholders to perform.

Beyond U3A class schedules, two of the handbell participants became aware of the U3A handbell group through their friendship with the facilitator in the Girl Guides. Bardon Strings, in addition to having an active Facebook page, held open rehearsals, which served to attract new members, and to allow friends and family to view their activities without the stresses associated with formal performances.
Iris was reliant on word-of-mouth marketing to boost QACMS membership:

We have this whole thing about marketing—let’s go out and see if we can get more players. But the best way to communicate—to market—is by bringing along players already known to those in the chamber music society.

Music as medicine is another way of advertising music activities that target older adults. This, however, requires the support of general practitioners and medical centres. The idea of music as medicine is promoted by Hallam and Creech (2016):

GP practices could assist in relation to this by making information about musical and other social activities available in their surgeries. They might also consider encouraging patients to engage in organised social activities including those involving active engagement in music not as an alternative to medical interventions but in addition to them. (p. 25).

The growth of parkrun has been driven by a desire “to impact the health and happiness of communities, and this has meant proactively reaching beyond our traditional audiences” (P. Sinton-Hewitt, personal communication, 28 December 2018). In mid-2018, the organisation launched the parkrun Practices initiative, whereby GP surgeries could formally link with their local parkrun events to “give patients the option of physical activity rather than traditional medication.” By the end of 2018 there were 550 certified ‘parkrun Practices’.

Another area of external affiliation that music facilitators could explore is sponsorship with, for example, local retailers. Stakeholders such as musical instruments shops have a vested interest in supporting growing numbers of musicians, from which they benefit through the sale of instruments, sheet music, stands, accessories like strings and reeds, and instrument repairs. Like the local library, a music shop is a recognisable first stop for visitors and new residents to the area seeking community music activities.

Ideally, school and private music teachers could promote community music opportunities to facilitate the transition from school to adult music participation, thus enabling music making to become a lifelong rather than just an early- or late-life activity (Cavitt, 2005, p. 52). Music facilitators could also consider exploiting the current brain training fad (Simons, et al., 2016) by offering cognitive training
programs that incorporate “performance of a novel task, a progressively difficult curriculum, practice requirements, and a social component” (Bugos, 2014, p. 27).

Cross (1981, p. 151) wrote that highly motivated people will go to great lengths to seek information, whereas unmotivated people will not even see information in front of their eyes. Most people, however, cannot ignore visible and audible exemplars of music activities. Perhaps the best form of publicity, therefore, is to be seen and heard in open spaces, where commentators can extend invitations to onlookers to join their music community for fun, friendship, and musical harmony. For older adults who prefer to sample but not commit to different leisure activities (see, for example, Myers et al., 2013, p. 143), music facilitators could run open rehearsals, music workshops, or “taster sessions” (Creech et al., 2012, p. 46), that serve as advertisements for ongoing music activities. Outreach activities targeting older adults provide recruitment and performance opportunities. Adventurous groups could also initiate travel opportunities to promote ongoing networks with musicians and ensembles in distant locations.

Maintaining a website presence, at least on community websites, is now almost obligatory for music groups wishing to attract new members. Appropriate keywords need to be chosen to ensure that search engines point potential participants—‘older adults’, ‘seniors’, ‘musicians’, and those wishing to ‘learn an instrument’—to the local ensemble.

Colin pointed to the need for ensembles to gain a greater internet presence:

> Your first goal would be trying to get something in internet searches on that topic. I was just lucky that [my teacher] knew that group; and I was lucky even to find [my teacher].

Websites, if used purely for informational purposes, can be created free of charge. However, as groups become more established, there is a tendency to add membership pages, which will lead to an increase in costs and, thus, membership fees. As with any costs associated with leisure activities, older adults may be hesitant to increase their outgoings when they face insecurity around income.

As newspapers become more established online rather than in print, and as ensembles create their own websites and Facebook pages, the internet will be the preferred source for exploring possible music-making opportunities, at least for
larger, long-term ensembles. For smaller and informal groups, word-of-mouth may remain the predominant knowledge source.

**LOCATION AND TRANSPORT**

With global ageing comes increasing demand for conveniently located, affordable venues in which community groups can meet regularly without fear of disturbing surrounding neighbours. Ideally, opportunities for active music making should be many and local (Hallam & Creech, 2016, p. 21), spread around urban city sprawls, as well as available in regional towns. Creech et al. (2012, p. 46) recommended using central locations that are easily accessible by public transport.

In Queensland, with its lower population density compared to those locations represented by the British research team—and even compared with other Australian capitals such as Sydney and Melbourne⁴—music activities are not as easy to initiate and sustain, particularly in rural and regional areas.

Groups whose members prefer to drive and who are willing to give non-drivers a lift, may prefer to find a venue with adequate, preferably free, parking. Vera spoke of the assistance provided by some of her choral members: “We give concerts throughout greater Brisbane, and the driving members are excellent in making sure non-drivers get to our venues.” In addition, several of the Bribie orchestra members and the Logan handbell group reported sharing the driving responsibilities.

Additionally, the dissection of towns and cities into north and south of a river creates a perceived geographical barrier for some commuters. This has been combatted by some groups where population densities justify separate music opportunities. For example, the Amateur Chamber Music Society (ACMS) in Sydney holds play days in two or three locations around suburban Sydney. Iris has attempted to do the same in Brisbane: “It had always been my goal to have 40 people, two locations.”

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⁴ Melbourne is Australia’s most densely populated city with 453 people per square kilometre. Brisbane’s population density is 145/km², while Newcastle, the location of Sage Gateshead in the UK, has a population density of 2,605 people per square kilometre. (Source: www.population.net.au/sydney-population/ & www.ukpopulation.org/newcastle-population/)
However, the need for multiple rooms conducive to smaller chamber groups, some with pianos, has created venue challenges.

Running workshops, or “taster sessions” in regional areas, or in towns on the fringes of big cities, could greatly benefit people in those areas who are less likely to travel some distance for rehearsals. It may also inspire them to make the effort to travel to regular sessions in more distant locations. As Ruby demonstrated by travelling more than 1,000 kilometres from Brisbane to Canberra for a single play day of lower recorders, there are older-adult musicians who are keen to play and just need a little help in getting involved. By initially introducing music activities closer to their locations, older adults may then be inclined to join in more regularly elsewhere.

Opportunities are also opening up for people living in remote locations. Research is underway in the UK that explores the use of network technologies and “telematic performance” to provide access to large-scale ensemble music making (see Rofé, Murray, & Parker, 2017). In Australia, Dillon et al. (2008) explored the value of collaborative jamming using online technologies. As these new technologies are developed further, such community music making could become an attractive option, and perhaps the only option, for musicians living in rural and regional Australia.

Music lessons using online technologies are also becoming increasingly popular, particularly for remote music students. London-based Tasmanian guitarist Justin Sandercoe had presented about 1,000 lessons on YouTube and on his own channels, and Sydney-based flautist Brian Hayes offered lessons in saxophone, ukulele, and brass instruments on YouTube (Strahle, 2017). Members from the Duhig recorder ensemble reported making regular use of Sarah Jeffery’s (2019) YouTube channel, which provides advice and tutoring on many aspects of recorder playing and technique.

**VENUE & PARKING**

Finding a venue that can accommodate regular music activities is made more difficult by the requirement that it also accommodate the reduced health status and limited mobility characteristic of older adults (and see Hallam & Creech, 2016, p. 21).

In Ellis’s (2018) research into the psychosocial and physical benefits of learning the ukulele as part of a music ensemble, the local University of South Australia campus...
provided the group with “a rent-free meeting space for U3A activities” (p. 115); and following his investigation of New Horizons activities in North America, Sattler (2013) reported:

In each of the three university-administered programmes I visited, the New Horizons community was valued by the university as an important component of its community connection. Notwithstanding the occasional room or equipment scheduling issue … the relationship appears to be one of mutual appreciation and respect. (p. 316)

Holt (1978, p. 168) called attention to classrooms being empty in the evenings. In Australia, school administrators hold concerns around security, public liability, and usage fees, making them averse to opening their classrooms for public use. However, more advocacy could be conducted in this area.

Although school buildings may not be available during weekdays, facilitators could explore the use of school rooms after 3.30 pm, but before it gets dark. This may also open up opportunities for intergenerational music making, and promote lifelong music participation by facilitating a path for students to transition from school to community music ensembles.

The comfort of a venue is also important for attracting older-adult participants. To sustain interest in community activities, venues need to be heated in winter and, particularly in Queensland, air conditioned in summer. Creech, Hallam, and Varvarigou (2012, p. 46) also recommended that facilitates be provided for serving refreshments. These aspects appeared to be neglected by BIO and the Logan handbell group, although the shorter rehearsal period reduced the effects of any discomfort. The Duhig group were very conscious about ensuring the comfort of participants and making time for refreshments.

Both the Bribie orchestra and the Duhig recorder group had overcome rehearsal venue challenges by making people’s homes available. Similarly, the U3A Logan handbell group took advantage of existing networks to access the Girl Guides hall. These solutions are unlikely to be sustainable when those organising the activities withdraw their assistance.

Libraries, sports centres, senior centres, community centres, schools, and tertiary institutions could be made available for a minimal fee, and in turn could help to
combat social isolation among retirees, and create or enhance vibrant music communities.

ACCESSIBILITY

In addition to hiring venues that accommodate people with age-related physical challenges, music facilitators also need to address aspects relating to rehearsal structure, instrumentation, and print music. Creech (2018) suggested that music activities for older adults accommodate compensatory strategies that help to mitigate age-related constraints (p. 102), and Myers (1992, p. 26) recommended that music facilitators be sensitive to the needs for breaks, changes in tasks, and seating adjustments. To cater for participants who are challenged by night driving, Griffith (2006, p. 20) suggested that facilitators schedule rehearsals and performances during daylight hours.

Several physical, mental, and musical compensatory strategies are reported in Gembris’s (2008, pp. 105–6) study of the music activities of amateur older-adult musicians in Germany. Physical strategies include strength and cardiovascular training, relaxation exercises, and attention to posture; mental strategies include attitudinal responses such as acceptance, tolerance, patience, and humour; and musical strategies include efficient and regular practice, limited performances, and simplified parts.

Although age-related disabilities are a leading constraint to music participation (see Chapter 6), older-adult musicians continually seek out ways to work around these and to continue playing their instruments (Douglas, 2011, p. 37). For example, Ernst and Emmons (1992, p. 34) recommended the use of airline luggage carts when carrying large instruments, or adapting instrument cases to accommodate arthritic hands.

Rohwer (2008a, p. 56) proposed methods for accommodating joint pain when playing music. Beyond the more clinical treatments of medicine, massage, cushioning, braces, gloves or splints, Rohwer recommended incorporating stretch breaks during rehearsals, adapting instruments such as extended keys for flutes and using instrument stands for larger instruments. These are particularly useful for recorder players as they move on to the larger recorders. However, most importantly,
older adults should be advised against long practice stretches in activities that are new and may take their bodies some time to adapt to.

Appropriate physical warm-ups and movement to music can assist older bodies that are suffering from wear and tear to maintain mobility (Creech et al., 2012, p. 15; Freiberg, 2006, p. 68). None of the music ensembles observed for this research undertook any form of physical warm-up; however, as most of the groups were observed over a long, scorching summer, participants—and their instruments—were in more need of cooling down.

In the current research, an alto recorder player was observed using the little finger on her left hand instead of her painful and arthritic ring finger (see Figure 25), and Vera reported how she overcame mobility issues with her choristers:

For our concerts we ask for sufficient chairs for all choir members.
At least one requests the back row so she can lean on the chair in front.
I have offered to let the front row sit, but I think it is a point of pride not to.

![Figure 25: Substituting the left little finger for the ring finger on the alto recorder.](image)

Even though researchers regard adulthood as a period of continuing development (Myers et al., 2013, p. 139), for those older-adult musicians who fear cognitive decline, being encouraged and taught how to memorise music can have a positive effect on their cognitive capacity and, in turn, on their music self-efficacy (and see Bandura, 1994, p. 15).
Coffman’s (2008) survey explored adaptations that older-adult musicians made in order to play their instruments. Of the 570 respondents, 94.6% had made adaptations to accommodate poor vision: “Most had acquired special glasses for reading music (90.5%) and the remainder cited using supplemental personal lighting, enlarging the printed music or having eye surgery” (p. 383).

Rohwer (2008a, p. 56) also advocated for suitable lighting, seating placement, and appropriate conducting technique, and recommended the use of one’s own music stand, large print music, and original rather than photocopied music. Wehr and Coffman (2018) offered possible solutions that include differing paper colour, adjustable reading glasses, and reading music notation from an iPad (p. 227).

The Duhig recorder group, who had created many of their arrangements with the computer application *Finale*, had experimented with extracting and enlarging specific parts on request. Although this solved vision difficulties, novice musicians reported being disadvantaged that they could not see the full score, which they used to maintain their place. This could be solved by enlarging the required part and minimising other parts.

Choral conductor Vera spoke of her members overcoming vision difficulties: “A few members enlarge their copies of music. Other than that, I’m not aware of problems. Perhaps people don’t come if they have real visual problems.”

Sophie found that enlarging the music helped her to play more confidently: “If I blow it up myself, I do it as black as I can, and a suitable size. I’ve even tried going on to A3 lately, but I think that’s too big.”

Music facilitators who are enthusiastic about engaging musicians with vision impairment could explore state, national, or international Braille societies, which offer a range of resources designed to help people learn or write music using the internationally recognised Braille Music Code (Australian Braille Authority, 2018; see Figure 26).
Sight limitations or musculoskeletal restrictions make it preferable for many older adults to use their own stands (see, for example, Coffman & Levy, 1997; Rohwer, 2005b, p. 38), even when they part of a band or orchestra where desk sharing is the norm. However, this may aggravate traditionalist orchestral players, particularly in string sections, where facilitators would need to accommodate extra space, and rearrange parts to facilitate page turns.

To assist musicians with hearing impairment, Rohwer (2008a, p. 56) suggested that personal interventions, such as earplugs and hearing aids, could be supplemented by seating placement and placing stands so that lip reading is possible. Other adaptations proposed by Rohwer put the onus on the conductor who, she suggested, should speak clearly, avoid talking over ambient noise, wear a microphone, and not jump around in the music. Wlodkowski (2008, p. 37) suggested that facilitators attend to the acoustic environment and moderate the speed of presentation and verbal delivery to help older adults adjust for hearing loss.

Rohwer (2008a, p. 54) also advocated for the use of earplugs, screens, and risers to prevent noise-induced hearing loss; however, the latter two are likely to be beyond the resources of many community ensembles. Ernst and Emmons (1992, p. 34)

Figure 26: Blind Braille music expert, Dorothy Hamilton, playing Braille music (Source: Leona Holloway, Australian Braille Authority: http://brailleaustralia.org/about-braille/music-braille/; reprinted with permission).
suggested trying different positions in a group, and dividing large ensembles into smaller sections for some rehearsals so that everyone can hear well. Ernst (2001, p. 49) also recommended the use of closed-loop audio systems. This method was used by a hearing-impaired cellist in a local Brisbane community orchestra; however, informants in this research reported that conductors had objected to using it, and the cellist was asked to leave.

Hearing impairment, however, is more likely to result from playing one’s own instrument (Wenmaekers, Nicolai, Hornikx, & Kohlrausch, 2017), making earplugs the most effective hearing protection. Playing high notes on a sopranino recorder or piccolo can be particularly excruciating—for players and audiences.

Several informants reported that they had changed instruments when they were unable to continue playing their first instrument. When Gemma realised that she could not play her clarinet for longer than 20 minutes “because I had lost my embouchure,” she returned to playing the recorder, an instrument she had not played since leaving school. Eric, who had been forced to cease drumming in a dance band due to wrist problems, turned to the recorder:

I have a wrist splint type of thing. It’s got a solid piece of stuff up here so that it keeps my hand in the right position, otherwise my hand would go all over the place.

Aiden, an orchestral violinist, had alternative musical outlets that included singing in the local men’s choir and playing the piano:

You have to be very, very incapacitated not to play the piano. The violin, you have to be very agile to play the violin. They’re at totally different ends of the spectrum. If I get any touch of arthritis in my fingers, then the violin becomes a problem, to the point even now where I restrict myself to one piece to practise, and then I put the violin down and go and play the piano.

Gavin reported that one of his cornet players had previously been a violinist, but had lost “a finger or two” in an accident. Gavin explained:
You can go from one thing to another. You don’t have to stay on the one instrument … A lot of people step down, like from playing trumpet to playing tenor horn or something easier physically.

It is not always necessary to discontinue playing a long-loved instrument due to pain; small adaptations can be made to how an instrument is held, or to the instrument itself.

Ernst and Emmons (1992, p. 34) reported that flautists with arthritis have eased their problems by playing flutes with curved head joints; and Rohwer (2008a, p. 54) reported that trombonists can avoid physical injuries by wearing splints, resting instruments on stands, or using specially engineered instruments.

In handbell groups, allocating and swapping the different sized bells among all ringers decreases the chances of one player straining with the weight of the larger bells, and also provides each ringer with cognitive and sonic variety. However, as informants from the U3A Logan handbell group reported, wrist or mobility problems meant that some players could manage only the smaller bells. The challenge for facilitators of older-adult groups is to make the ensemble inclusive without causing other members to develop overuse strain. Ringers need to be drawn from their comfort zone to try different bells, and thus different notes of the scale.

For musicians who play bowed or strummed string instruments, the option of playing ‘left handed’, which implies the left hand doing the bowing or strumming and the right hand fingerling the notes, may help to alleviate debilitating arthritic pain, and would certainly provide a new cognitive challenge. Conrad spoke of a young cellist school friend with whom he had played bassoon and cello duets: 

I had a friend during high school … He was a great cellist … When he was about 15, he had an accident with some fireworks and he blew off three and a half fingers of his left hand, which is the hand that most cellists do the fingerling with; and he retaught himself. He strung the cello backwards and turned the left hand into his bow hand, and became just as great playing that way.

Playing an orchestral string instrument in the ‘left handed’ position may create challenges within an orchestra, and frustration among less empathetic colleagues.
Standing up to play could also be an option for instrumental ensembles in the same way that choirs alternate between standing and sitting during rehearsals. This is achieved best when the ensemble has access to easily adjustable music stands. Leon commented on his preference for standing: “When I practise viola, I always practise standing up, but normally you sit down for chamber music, don’t you?”

Another consideration for elderly string players is the placement of pacemakers. This became evident in the Bribie orchestra, as Felix reported:

> The oldest was Bert Shepherd. He was 85 and still playing a week before he died. He had to get a heart pacemaker fitted and he said to the doctor, “Now, I don’t want it on that side because it will interfere with my violin playing.

Carrying, packing, and unpacking instruments may also present challenges. Bad backs and bad knees are not conducive to getting instruments from cases lying on the floor. The Bribie Island cellists complained of having to unpack cellos from their soft cellos cases on the floor; however, they acknowledged that solid, sturdier, yet heavier, cases would negate the need to kneel or bend over. Where possible, music facilitators need to accommodate such difficulties by providing ample tables or chairs on which to place instrument cases. Younger or fitter members of intergenerational community bands and orchestras could be requested to leave tables or shelves available for less agile people to use, while being mindful of not drawing attention to their disabilities.

The TravelBass (see McPherson, 2019b) may become available as an option for double bassists who have difficulty managing the larger, heavier standard basses. It may also be a viable option for beginner older adults who prefer a lighter, more manageable instrument but who wish to contribute a bass line to an ensemble.

Recorders are ideal instruments for all ages and all levels of musicianship. They are inexpensive, lightweight, compact, almost indestructible and easy to clean and maintain. Although the soprano (descant) recorder is often more suited to people with arthritic fingers, the alto (treble) recorder is generally more suited to adult-size hands. The alto and lower pitched recorders like the tenor and bass, have a mellower tone which is preferred by older players with sensitivity to higher pitches. The larger instruments can also be adapted with extra keys to facilitate fingerling.
Unlike tin whistles, recorders cover the full chromatic range; unlike other wind instruments, the construction of the recorder mouthpiece makes it easy to produce a sound; and unlike bowed string instruments, the smaller recorder sizes can be comfortably played in a car, allowing people who live in non-insulated homes to escape the potential chagrin of neighbours while practising.

Bob Harrell (Children's Hemiplegia and Stroke Association, 2011) provided advice on how to adapt a descant recorder for a person who has the use of just one hand. Descant and treble recorders have been designed to suit people with finger limitations. The treble version, for example, is suitable for players with at least two usable fingers in each hand, and a total of six or more usable fingers in both hands, including the use of a thumb (Orpheus Music, 2017). Tenor recorders are commonly fitted with an extra key to facilitate playing, even for fully able recorder players.

Another very much understated instrument, and one which may not carry the stigma of the recorder, is the ocarina, which has been experiencing a renaissance thanks to the work of Christa and David Liggins in the UK (Ocarina Workshop, 2017). Smaller, lighter and more compact than even the soprano (and sopranino) recorder, it has a limited range of just over an octave, but can be a great introduction to learning music for any age group. It has yet to find a voice as an instrument for community music gatherings in Australia, but that does not diminish its potential as a suitable instrument for participatory music making.

The standard four-hole ocarina demands minimal manipulative skills and is appropriate for anyone with a disability if they have the use of two hands (Ocarina Workshop, 2017). If players have the use of just one hand, the one-handed ocarina can play the same tunes, with either the left or right hand, using modified charts (see Figure 27). It is also handy for a music director who needs to augment the sound while still conducting.
Musicians demanding a more cognitively challenging instrument while still maintaining compactness can be encouraged to play the duo ocarina (see Figure 28).

For drum circles or percussion groups, Stevens (2003, p. 26) suggested that facilitators provide mallets for people with arthritis in their hands and wrists. Accessories have also been designed for musicians with other limitations, such as a violinist with no left hand (Litson, 2017), a violist with cerebral palsy (McPherson, 2018), and a clarinet student with cerebral palsy who played in his school band (McPherson, 2019a).

In addition to providing information about instrument adaptations such as thumb rests, key extensions, and earplugs, music tutors could disseminate information so that potential players could make educated instrument choices. However, many of these accommodations and adaptations may not be accessible to older musicians who are less wealthy, less healthy, or less musically dedicated (Rohwer, 2008a, p. 57).
Facilitators such as ensemble conductors and music tutors need to be aware not just of the instruments and devices available to enable ease of playing, but also of the challenges specific to older adults. Young facilitators may lack understanding of such constraints, and empathy for their older-adult sufferers. Accommodating older adults who wish to play their instrument no matter what their challenge, will lead to increased participation rates for community music in general, and older adults in particular.

Just as we see increasing sports activities for disabled athletes (Invictus, Paralympics) and older athletes (Masters Games), it seems equally justifiable to promote accessible music activities that accommodate the constraints confronted by older adults. Adaptability, as Bowling (2005, p. 9) pointed out, is a key constituent of quality of life.

**Enjoyable**

In their exploration of the characteristics of older-adult music participants, the Music for Life team found that enjoyment was the predominant reason for participating in music activities (Hallam et al., 2012, p. 21). Wlodkowski (2008) reported that “adults want to be joyful in the pursuit of valued learning, especially in the realms of life where competence is cherished but formidable to obtain” (p. 101); and Davis (1982, p. 241) made the point that people can enjoy activities even when they are unhappy.

Community music ensembles continue to be focus on high levels of artistry rather than on the intrinsic pleasure and enjoyment of music making (Burley, 1987, p. 33). Although older adults aim to be the best they can be within age-related or other constraints, they accept that they are participating predominantly for the camaraderie and enjoyment, knowing they are unlikely to develop high-level artistic skills.

Facilitators and fellow musicians contribute to the general ambience surrounding an activity, and they can increase or diminish enjoyment for others. Emma described how a young, insensitive tutor of her chamber group had depleted her enjoyment:

> I was only still really new to it, with just a year and a half of lessons, and I couldn’t play a passage, and it was a solo passage. So, he just gave me all sorts of shit about it. He said, “So how does it make you feel coming up to that passage?” I said, “What do you mean how does it make me
feel? Scared? Embarrassed? What do you want? Do you want me to cry?” There was a lot of tension in the room because this guy was just picking on me. He didn’t realise.

Enjoyment is an important element for making an activity attractive. Additionally, the activity must be seen to be enjoyable if it is to attract even more participants. Enjoyment is subjective and dependent upon each person’s goals and motivations; it is therefore related to several of the MASTER dimensions, but may differ in manifestation and intensity for each person and within each dimension. In Davis’s (2011) study, for example, enjoyment was defined by a social dynamic (p. 175).

Podilchak (1991) described enjoyment as more internal or phenomenologically self-reflective than fun, “indicating a detachment to the other's emotionality” (p. 133). Several of the community partners in Davis’s (2011) study used the word ‘fun’ when talking about their experiences in the University of South Carolina String Project. Informants in this study similarly distinguished between enjoyment and fun, implying that the former was intrinsic and insular, while the latter relied on relations with others and was likely to incorporate laughter. The social implications of fun, therefore, justify its categorisation within the MASTER framework’s social dimension.

**Make it SOCIAL**

The third dimension of the MASTER framework is the social aspect of community music participation. Music has been identified as a way for older adults to maintain social contact (Prickett, 1998), and Coffman (2009) argued that music making is inherently a social activity (see also, Cross, 2001; Giebelhausen & Kruse, 2017; Weren, Kornienko, Hill, & Yee, 2017). The social benefits of music making have been reported as among the most important reasons for participation (Bugos, 2014; Cavitt, 2005; Coffman, 2007; Dabback, 2007; Fung & Lehmberg, 2016; Goodrich, 2019; Hallam, Creech, and Varvarigou, 2017; Tsugawa, 2009). Beggs, Kleparski, Elkins, and Hurd (2014, p. 175) reported that participants over the age of 65 were more highly motivated by social aspects of leisure; the authors, therefore, recommended that older adult options focus more on building social environments and less on developing competency.
In the Leisure Activities Survey, 24.6% of respondents nominated themes around social connectedness as their motivation for leisure participation (see Table 9), and 19.8% stated that enjoyment was their motivation. Confusingly, these two are likely to be interconnected, with the choice of wording at the time of doing the survey being subjective and arguably random. Nevertheless, the social dimension of music making cannot be overlooked as a vital factor for sustaining music participation.

To enhance opportunities for developing social connections, Myers et al. (2013, p. 142) recommended incorporating sectional work and breaks. Ernst and Emmons (1992, p. 32) reported that most New Horizons band members arrived early and stayed late to talk over a cup of coffee. Rohwer (2013) recommended that music facilitators consider the extended family circumstances of ensemble members when planning concerts and rehearsals because, even though spouses generally regarded music activities as “a positive distraction that helped keep their marriages healthy” (p. 43), some regarded the time apart as negatively impacting their marriage.

Perhaps the most significant list of recommendations for enhancing social connectedness through music participation was offered by the Music for Life team. Acknowledging the importance of social and pastoral support, Hallam et al. (2011, p. 4) recommended setting up buddying systems and following up absences. Creech et al. (2012, p. 47) added to this by recommending that facilitators make time for socialising, exclude auditions, accommodate irregular patterns of engagement, offer taster sessions, and explore different music genres to attract participation from ethnic minorities.

While many community bands and ensembles incorporate a break in the middle of their weekly rehearsals, thus allowing time for members to socialise and share supper, the groups observed in this research were exceptions. The Bribie orchestra rehearsed for about an hour and a half with no break, and members had little time to talk before or after the rehearsal. After concerts, informants spoke of being too busy with their allocated chores to socialise even with their own guests. For the Duhig recorder group, sharing a meal after rehearsals and performances was a valued, but not mandatory, part of the experience. The relaxed ambience of the U3A Logan handbell group allowed for participants to chat before, after, and occasionally during sessions; however, there was no suggestion, at least in the first year, of participants meeting over a drink or a meal. The chamber music society shared food, drink and
chatter before and after each of the three hour-and-a-half sessions, with the lunch hour also incorporating a relaxed “showcase” of musical works that people wished to present, while also allowing time to socialise.

Gemma’s recorder group centred around social as well as the music aspects. When asked how long her sessions went for, she replied:

Two hours. It starts at 2pm and goes to 4pm on a Thursday afternoon. We always break about 3pm for a cup of tea for a quarter of an hour or so. These ladies are friends outside, and it’s meant to be a social thing, not just recorder.

The success of the social dimension of community music may be measured by the continuance of social activities beyond the music environment. Perkins and Williamon (2013, p. 560) noted how music engagement has the potential for facilitating social interactions beyond music contexts; and Goodrich (2019) reported how “social interactions that occurred in the sectionals outside of rehearsals made up a highly important part of how the participants spent their leisure time” (p. 8).

Interaction external to ensemble activities was evident in the current research, where informants reported cycling, and going to movies and social gatherings with other members of their ensemble. New friendships were formed during QACMS play days that carried beyond the society, with members forming interim groups to continue playing chamber music, socialising and, from 2018, performing. Camaraderie between DARE participants grew into close and supportive friendships, manifested by hospital visits, transport assistance, and home visits after colleagues had undergone surgery.

Often, members of groups like to get together between rehearsals to practice parts or play duets or trios. They will generally exchange contact details to organise such occasions. The Amateur Chamber Music Society (ACMS) which has chapters in Sydney, Canberra, and Brisbane, publishes a member booklet which includes each person’s instruments, self-graded ability, and contact details. This is a valuable resource enabling members to arrange private music sessions between the larger play days held in Brisbane four times a year. Edith from BIO, commented on the lack of such a resource for her orchestra: “We would like to have names and contacts for each person, because sometimes we might have a person we’d like to phone.” Such a
resource is also valuable for pastoral care, particularly when there are concerns about an elderly member who is unexpectedly absent. Privacy concerns can be overcome by including only those who are happy to be on a members-only list.

**INTERGENERATIONAL MUSIC MAKING**

Intergenerational activities are another aspect of the social dimension of music making for older adults. Creech et al. (2014, p. 2) reported how intergenerational music making may support quality of life and subjective wellbeing for older adults, at the same time providing benefits to younger people; and McGuire, Boyd and Tedrick (2004) reported that programs bringing older and younger people together are “an effective way of reducing negative perceptions about the elderly” (p. 11). Jellison (2000) made a pertinent case for intergenerational recorder activities:

> What results would occur if students experienced ongoing collaboration with members of the local Recorder Society throughout their years in the upper elementary grade levels and middle school, playing with adult mentors and performing quality ensemble music with peers? Would these types of experiences in school make a difference in attitudes, knowledge, skill, and their choices as adults to participate in these types of experiences? (p. 11)

At the time of writing (early 2019), members from the Duhig group had been invited to perform for and with students of a local primary school, and this is expected to lead to ongoing music—and intergenerational—collaborations. The increasing popularity of the ukulele could also foster intergenerational collaborations.

Although only four informants in this research (Brody, Felicity, Leon, & Leila) said they would prefer to play in an intergenerational ensemble, nine others indicated that they would not be deterred from playing with younger age-groups. Clare had, in fact, joined the local orchestra because her children were in it. Leila reported loving anything that involved generations: “There’s not a lot that’s around these days that involves generations. I think there should be more.” Edith was in awe of the expertise of younger musicians: “The younger people with their music are so fantastic, and they are inspiring.” Both Leon and Ivy believed it was about the capacity of the musician, not their age. Ivy commented, “I think music is cross age-groups, cross age stages. Music is music. If you’ve got someone who’s able to play
at a similar standard, then that’s your commonality; it doesn’t matter about the age so much.”

**FUN**

Informants in this research were more inclined to refer to *enjoyment* rather than *fun* when speaking about their motivations for playing music; and in the Leisure Activities Survey, *enjoyment* was referenced on 129 occasions, against 21 references to *fun*. Enjoyment can be felt alone or in the company of others (Podilchak, 1991); fun, however, seems inherently reliant on the presence of others, and may manifest in laughter. As Stevens (2003) commented, “There is a reason we say that we *play* music. … Laughter opens the heart and frees the spirit” (p. 76).

Koopman (2007), in exploring the educational potential of community music for schools, saw the goal as fun, rather than learning (p. 156); and Giebelhausen and Kruse (2017) reported that music development and performance “were secondary to the objectives of having fun and the social benefits of group involvement” (pp. 355–356).

Fun and enjoyment are at odds with the inevitable difficulties that arise from social politicking and interpersonal relationships (see Chapter 8). However, Stebbins (2001) made a point rarely acknowledged when considering deterrents to leisure participation: that it is the constraints—referred to by Stebbins as *costs*—as well as the rewards, that provide participants “with still more common ground for conversing and building togetherness” (p. 55). The challenges that confront music participants may help create and strengthen social bonds.

**Make it TIMELY**

The fourth dimension of the MASTER framework addresses timeliness; in particular, encouraging music participation by older adults following significant moments of change in their lives. Creech et al. (2014) acknowledged that engaging in music activities can help meet the challenges of transitions in later life and “contribute to sustained cognitive vitality and social-emotional wellbeing” (p. 153). The Department of Communities (2009) reported, “Interventions occurring soon after a critical life event or during a transition point for an older person can help to prevent social isolation” (p. 13).
Moments of change or “trigger events” (Aslanian & Brickell, 1980) relevant to this study occur when older adults transition from work to retirement, when their children move out of home, when they make decisions to relocate, when they are confronted by injuries or illness, or when friends or spouses fall sick and die. The birth of grandchildren may also impact their leisure participation. Some changes can be prepared for; others may be more sudden and traumatic (Cross, 1981, p. 144; and see Shum, 1998, p. 440); most represent a loss. If they have not maintained music activities from school through adulthood, it is likely to be more difficult to return to playing music later in life. By presenting timely opportunities that are attractive and accessible, music ensembles can better facilitate participation for all older adults.

Pitts et al. (2015) found such moments of change to be influential on decisions to leave or join an ensemble. In their study, participants who ceased playing reported finding rehearsals too demanding or demoralising, while those who stayed or joined were seeking an escape (Pitts, 2017, p. 176).

In this research, Colin reported how he had taken up the cello while recovering from the sudden, tragic loss of his partner (see Chapter 5). Whereas for some people the loss of a partner may act as a barrier to starting a new activity, for this informant it was a catalyst for his immersion in playing the cello.

Support groups that have been established within ensembles before such traumatic events can play a major role in helping fellow musicians navigate their life without their partner.

**Retirement**

Retirement from paid work, or from 24-hour home duties, usually allows people to enjoy increased leisure time (Bowling, 2005, p. 93); indeed, for some, it may be their first opportunity to participate in leisure activities. However, it may also bring about unwelcome role changes and, as a consequence, modifications in self-concept and self-esteem (Coates, 1984, p. 35). Ethan spoke of an elderly relative who was not adapting well to retirement:

> I’ve recently had a very close family member retire and it has been interesting watching her struggle with it. I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that she doesn’t have any really strong hobbies. If she were into music, I could understand that retirement would be easier.
Proactive music facilitators and ensembles could target older adults at such critical moments. Pamphlets that gain the attention of potential retirees, preferably while they are still in the workforce, could provide them with a new challenge to take them through and beyond the transition to retirement. Similar but carefully worded pamphlets could be left at medical centres, retirement villages, and on display in shopping centres.

Music activities started prior to retirement can bring about a sense of continuity as one moves into retirement. As Campbell and Yang (2011) commented, continuity is “a way of preserving and maintaining existing individual and social identity” (p. 326).

**Make it Educational**

The fifth dimension of the MASTER framework addresses aspects of music education that occurs during ensemble rehearsals or in group instrument instruction. It also makes recommendations for accessing individual tuition.

Learning was one of five dimensions reported to correlate with quality of life (Flanagan, 1982, p. 56; active recreation was another, after material comforts, work, and health). Questions pertaining to the ability of older adults to learn, and the rationale for teaching them (see, for example, Formosa, 2011, p. 317), reflect the parochialism of an ageist society. Doidge (2007, p. 46) instructs that plasticity exists from the cradle to the grave and that even the elderly can improve cognitive functioning.

**Learning Goals**

Unlike school students, who commonly study subjects according to the school curriculum, adults are motivated to study something for a specific reason (Freiberg, 2006; Myers, 1992; Pitts et al., 2015). Bugos (2014) recommended that music educators “strive to offer new programs that address the learning needs of beginning adult musicians” (p. 33). Older adults may be motivated to learn an instrument following a long-term desire, or to support their grandchildren, or to explore new leisure avenues or new social connections. They also need to know that there is a purpose to what is being taught and what they are expected to learn and practise (Knowles, 1980). However, facilitators can create purpose by giving students goals and performance opportunities (Hallam et al., 2011, p. 8). Playing for a friend or at a
home or teacher’s concert can provide motivation without the levels of stress associated with large public performances (see Freiberg, 2006, p. 69).

Gavin, who became a wind band director, commented on his own brass training: “If I learnt a new thing about my cornet, it was because I needed that for performance, and that’s the way I taught. Everything was for performance.” At the educational extreme, Coffman (2006) reported:

Two individuals in their 50s and 60s had decided to intensively study music by pursuing Bachelor degrees at the University of Tasmania—they were not looking to have professional careers, rather they just wished to learn as much as they could. (p. 19)

Coffman’s Iowa City band attracted both novice and veteran musicians, but unlike normal community bands that emphasise performance, Coffman (2002b) included a significant element of tuition in technique:

My band and most New Horizons Bands … differ from other amateur community bands because we do not simply rehearse music for an impending performance. I am dedicated to teaching participants how to play better. For some players, the band is an opportunity to improve skills they acquired in school years ago. For others, this program is an invitation to an experience that they may have thought was not possible for them. (p. 134)

In the current research, Grace was observed to direct the Bardon Strings with the same educational philosophy adhered to by the U3A instrumental teaching groups. The Duhig group, which comprised more advanced recorder players, shared their knowledge and expertise to develop the overall artistic level of the ensemble. Members of the Bribie orchestra, which is a community orchestra in the more traditional sense, spoke of the pleasure they derived from music anecdotes imparted by the experienced music director.

**TEACHING STRATEGIES**

In drawing up the “keys to success” of music education, Davidson (1980, pp. 28-9) prioritised leadership attributes, but included aspects such as adequate equipment and materials, regular scheduling, and a progressive course of study. She also
recommended that facilitators acknowledge the talents of participants. Participants in Kruse’s (2009) study attributed their satisfaction with music experiences to “the level of musical difficulty, the teaching styles of instructors, the ownership and sense of belonging to the larger community and a strong awareness of reciprocity within that community” (p. 222).

Roberts (2010) provided advice to string teachers about ways to create an appropriate learning environment for adult students. Recommendations included providing context for what is to be learnt, a safe learning environment, and opportunities for performance, all of which are relevant to teachers of any musical instrument and facilitators of any instrumental ensemble.

Opinions regarding teaching methods also vary in extremes between fully directed or authoritarian, and self-directed or democratic. Coffman and Levy (1997) reported that “adults prefer directors and instructors to make authoritarian decisions rather than seek consensus” (as cited in Dabback, 2005, p. 3), yet Dabback advised music educators “to give up authoritarian classroom control, serve as guides to participants, and view themselves as co-participants” (p. 12). Kruse (2009), whose comments were consistent with the current research, reported, “While some adults in this study were content with student-centred approaches, a majority of participants preferred teacher-centred, autocratic approaches and were not concerned with maintaining a democratic classroom” (p. 222).

Self-directed learning has been cited as a common characteristic of adult learners (Myers, 1992, p. 25; Myers et al., 2013, p. 139). This may be the case for competent musicians, and perhaps for those whose socio-economic capacity prevents individualised, private tuition. In the U3A recorder classes in Brisbane, directed learning seemed to be favoured, although U3A philosophy and structure is likely to attract older adults who prefer such direction. Some of the DARE informants were critical of classes that lacked structure or evidence of incremental progression. Learning strategies need to be age appropriate, varied, and should account for the capabilities, learning styles, and prior experience of participants (Bugos, 2014, p. 33; Coates, 1984, p. 35; Myers et al., 2013, p. 138). However, the diversity of motivations and goals among older adults makes it difficult to satisfy every group member. Where players in an ensemble are of a similar level, there is little risk of the
more accomplished players becoming bored; but where there are extremes of accomplishment, frustrations may evoke to an exodus.

**INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES**

Teaching resources also need to be age appropriate (Boswell, 1992, p. 40; Bowles, 2010, p. 58; Burley, 1987, p. 29). Informants in this research preferred teaching materials different from the beginner tutor books designed for young children. This should not deter music facilitators incorporating children’s tutor books into lessons or rehearsals, especially where they present an opportunity for intergenerational practice and performance and where older adults, many of whom are grandparents, can play a supportive role to children or grandchildren on the same or other instruments. String teacher Isaac provided justification for using the Suzuki Method with older adults:

I think that the actual printing of the Suzuki is not at all child orientated; it’s actually orientated towards the parent, because the child essentially won’t look at that book. … The idea behind Suzuki is you learn everything aurally. So the book is really solely for the parent, at that point. So I think that that book is actually good because it is aimed for an adult to read, so it looks like an adult book yet the content is for a child, which is perfect, I think, for an adult beginner. Also, it comes with the CD, where it’s really clearly played. So I think the only thing that you need to add with the Suzuki for an adult beginner is a theory book to help them to learn to read and write.

Online resources are another avenue that musicians and music facilitators can explore to access music materials, and websites or YouTube videos offering free lessons are growing in popularity (see especially Jeffery, 2019; but see also Strahle, 2019). Thorgersen and Zandén (2014) investigated the internet as a tool for learning to play musical instruments; however, unlike the young adults in their research, older adults, who have experienced a lifetime of resourcefulness across many areas, are likely to cope better with such self-directed learning.

At the time of observation, the U3A recorder classes made no attempt to access the internet as a teaching and learning tool. Conversely, members of the Duhig group regularly accessed online educational recorder sources. Ivy reported:
I found online a recorder player who has many YouTube clips; for example, how to play the high notes on soprano and so on. She’s funny and easy to listen to, and she provides loads of information, even on how to buy a recorder.

Howell (2017b), however, cautioned that although internet resources provide “powerful solutions and learning opportunities to some community music projects” (p. 449), particularly where geographical distance is perceived as a barrier to community music participation, music facilitators need to be aware of the limitations:

Programs freeze, updates suddenly need to be installed (which may not be a quick process), operating systems crash, or shut down, or need to be rebooted. Work may be lost, and group music making will definitely be paused while solutions are found. Individuals may require more personalized attention to assist them with their project. It may be that the group leader or person in command of the technology does not have sufficient knowledge to troubleshoot or solve the problem on the spot, requiring access to specialized technicians …. These interruptions halt the momentum and flow of the music-making experience and endanger the sustained engagement of the group. (p. 449–450)

Another challenge arises when developmental ensembles such as Bardon Strings collectively improve, thereby excluding new beginner musicians (see, for example, Pitts et al., 2015, p. 29). The solo facilitator may be expected to initiate other groups to cater for different playing abilities. Hannah’s U3A Brisbane recorder classes grew over three years to three groups: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. This may have created an element of burnout, resulting in Hannah’s departure from all groups a year later. This has been resolved by having players from the advanced group take over the beginner and intermediate classes.

**Music Tourism**

Adventure and special interest tours (edu-tourism, Patterson, 2006, p. 182) are attracting increasing numbers of older adults who are still physically and financially able to tick off ‘bucket list’ goals, and who want to participate in physically challenging leisure activities rather than be passive spectators (p. 159). Annual music
camps held in various locations around the world foster a network of music activities that replicate the goals and philosophy of edu-tourism.

Road Scholar (2019), which grew from Elderhostels, recognised as the first travel programs to cater for the leisure education needs of adults aged 55 and older (Boswell, 1992, p. 38; Wong, 2013, p. 100; Patterson, 2006, p. 185), began with five colleges in the US in 1975 and grew rapidly to a network of more than 300 colleges and universities across 50 states (Cross, 1981, p. 148). In Hong Kong, the most popular classes offered in 32 Elder Academies to March 2008 were music classes (Wong, 2013, p. 100).

In Australia, recorder players from every state and territory gather in Armidale, New South Wales, every January for the Orpheus recorder boutiques (Orpheus Music, 2019). Although intergenerational, the summer school attracts mostly female older adults. Also held in January, the Riverina Summer School for Strings (RSSS, 2019) music camp in Wagga, New South Wales, attracts mostly young students, but several adults of varying levels also attend. Both the annual chamber music long weekend in Wollongong, New South Wales (ACMS Australia, 2019) and the Chamber Music Summer School (CMSS, 2019) at Mt Buller, Victoria, are primarily for adults. All of these opportunities may be prohibitively expensive once participation fees, mandatory music purchases, travel, and accommodation are factored in.

**INDIVIDUAL TUITION**

While playing in a group satisfies social and musical aspirations, as well as fiscal limitations (Ernst & Emmons, 1992, p. 34; Hallam et al., 2012, p. 41), research indicates that private tuition is preferable for those wishing to make individual technical progress on their instrument (Bugos, 2014, Bowles, 1991).

As reported in the previous chapter, many older-adult instrumentalists would like proper music instruction and correct technical development. Informants who sought one-on-one instrument instruction reported difficulties in finding affordable and conveniently located music teachers. Those who lived in regional towns spoke of travelling some distance every two or three weeks for private lessons; however, irregular lessons may not be a satisfactory arrangement for many music teachers reliant on a steady income. A system whereby two or more older-adult students alternate their lesson weeks could enable more older-adult musicians to access
individual tuition while providing more stability for the teacher. This would undoubtedly take considerable organisation, as well as reliability on the part of the students who, as explored in Chapter 6, could be absent for a number of reasons (illness, injury, car breakdown, carer responsibilities, holidays).

Students who find the expense of individual tuition prohibitive could team up with other students of similar ability and share the time and expense, thus creating their own group tuition environment. Finding a teacher who would accommodate such an arrangement may prove difficult. Moreover, the fluctuating levels of instrumental proficiency between students would create teaching and learning challenges (Kruse, 2009, p. 218).

Tacitly sitting in on lessons, where permitted, is another way to gain tuition benefits without the cost. Diana reported being able to observe her mother having violin lessons:

> I prefer Mum to have the lessons and I listen in, because I’ve got that much to learn, and I feel I get the benefit anyway if I am there to hear and see Mum and the teacher discussing techniques. So I feel like I get the lesson anyway!

There is no specific teaching paradigm that is suited to all adult learners in all settings (Rohwer, 2005b, p. 43), but addressing the general instructional needs of this age cohort will help in their ongoing pursuit of music learning and music activities.

Music participation for older adults may be more attractive when varying levels of music education and technical development are incorporated into the activities. However, the degree of cognitive and practical challenge needs to be balanced against the musical aspirations of participants. Make it Educational, but make sure it is also Enjoyable.

**Make it REGULATED**

The sixth and final dimension of the MASTER framework concerns aspects of regulation and organisation. It encompasses decisions around organisational affiliations; costs and funding; leadership; the delegation of tasks; and membership rules and expectations.
ORGANISATIONAL NETWORKS

Joining an ensemble provides individual musicians access to established networks, and opportunities for developing these further (Creech et al., 2012, p. 51). Similarly, making links with larger organisations or institutions provides ensembles access to administrative resources and broader networks. The success of the New Horizons ensembles has been accredited in part to its institutional support (Ernst & Emmons, 1992, p. 34). In Australia, U3A is an established and affordable organisation for reaching older-adult participants. Tertiary music institutions, although seemingly appropriate, tend to be less affordable and accessible.

When forming QACMS in Brisbane, Iris established strong links with the Amateur Chamber Music Society based in Sydney:

> There are lots of advantages of being under the umbrella of the Amateur Chamber Music Society. In particular, they take out public liability insurance. So when we hire these venues, they all want proof of public liability insurance. … I just make sure that people are financial members and then I can supply the certificate that [the Sydney administration] sends me and I don’t have issues.

Vera reported having public liability insurance through the Australian National Choral Association (ANCA), and all the U3A groups were similarly covered.

The Bribie orchestra and the Duhig recorder group did not have any formal affiliations, but there was evidence of informal connections with organisations such as U3A, Rotary, and bowls clubs (by BIO), and U3A (by DARE). In 2019, DARE had also established a formal affiliation with the 50 Plus Centre, a Brisbane City Council initiative in the Brisbane central business district (CBD).

COSTS AND FUNDING

Music facilitators have the capacity to improve the quality of life of all musicians, particularly those facing inequitable wealth distribution (Mantie, 2018). Creech et al. (2014) reported, “The Silver programme at the Sage [in Newcastle, UK] has been life-changing for many retired people, offering as it does tuition at a low cost” (p. 140).
Fiscal barriers could be reduced by accessing funding, requesting material support from local authorities, and charging a small, weekly participation fee (see, for example, Creech et al., 2012, p. 46). Ensembles may also consider offering “scholarships” to dedicated but financially constrained participants. Different ensemble sizes and offerings could also benefit those who are financially challenged. Brisbane Bells (2018), for example, has a $10 drop-in session for beginners that demands no strict attendance or ongoing commitment.

New Horizons ensembles have sought sponsorship and support from music retailers, schools, college music departments, recreation centres, and senior centres, who in turn benefit from the good will and publicity that is generated through the association (NHIMA, 2018).

Evidence from the Music for Life project based at the Institute of Education, University of London, confirmed that “active engagement in music supports wellbeing amongst older people” (New Dynamics of Ageing, 2012; Creech, Hallam, Varvarigou, McQueen, & Gaunt, 2013, p. 36). This has given impetus to continued cross-council funding of free workshops for musicians interested in facilitating music activities for older adults.

The Gambling Community Benefit Fund (Queensland Government, 2019a) has assisted community groups through the provision of resources. Kate reported that Brisbane Bells had acquired a five-octave set of bells through the gambling fund, and Louise reported that the fund had provided her Girl Guides hut with a toilet. Older-adult music groups may consider such a fund to cover the cost of instruments and music stands. The fund had enabled Vera’s choir to buy music and ergonomic folders.

Fred reported that his choir on Bribie Island was financially sound. This was perhaps a reflection of the socio-economic status of Bribie residents and their entrepreneurial experience with grant applications. Fred explained:

They pay $10 a year to join and at the end of the year they get $10 off their Christmas dinner, so it works out even …. We’ve got people who are ex-public servants and they keep applying for grants and that’s why we’re in such a good state as well. Yes, we’ll get a grant for a piano, or for a PA and that sort of thing. We got $6,000 for a PA and $10,000 for
lights. All the stuff is sitting there, plus we’ve got money. It’s actually a very strong organisation.

However, as the participant interviews revealed, members who were not interested in attending the annual Christmas dinner felt that such a membership fee was not to their benefit. A similar complaint was apparent with the Hervey Bay recorder group’s affiliation with the local U3A.

In the early days of Gavin’s wind band, fees were not imposed. He explained:

We were very fortunate because we were working on the Kedron campus and my boss supported it. I didn’t get paid because it was part of my job. He gave me some free lecture hours to do this, so it was part of my lecture hours. And the venue was free, so everything was free. We just walked in and played. A lot of [the music arrangements] were bought through the campus library … so we didn’t have any problems at all. It was clover the first few years, it really was.

Gavin’s wind band paid him for each performance and rehearsal. Beyond membership fees “The band earns its money by performing and occasionally if we get into a bit of trouble we do a fundraiser, so we hold a raffle.”

Luke’s wind group may also serve as a model for similar music ensembles:

The group is self-supporting. The members pay an $8 fee at each rehearsal which covers a fee for me, the purchase of music (we have a library of over 100 items) the rent of the rehearsal room and insurance. The group also earns a small fee for each concert we give …. I don’t claim a fee for our performances.

**Leadership**

The notion of strong and inspiring leadership was ranked as the primary critical success factor in Australian community music (Bartleet, 2010, p. 34; Cahill, 1998, p. 147; Giebelhausen & Kruse, 2017, p. 357). Davidson (1980) prioritised “dedicated, enthusiastic leadership” (p. 28) as a key to success for community music programs for older adults. Goolsby (1996) reported that experienced teachers provided the most break time, used the most nonverbal modelling, “got the ensembles on-task the quickest, and talked the least during rehearsals” (p. 286).
Ensemble leaders need not be experts (Hull, 2006, p. 24). They should, however, be skilful, creative, and sensitive to both the abilities and disabilities of their participants. Perhaps most importantly, they should make the experience fun.

Grace understood the need to be “sensitive to each individual and where they’re at.” Leon described the traits of a conductor who inspired him to join an orchestra:

The thing I liked about him was that he didn’t muck around; he was very, very serious; it was all about the music; it wasn’t about his ego; it wasn’t about him standing up on the podium making jokes and making everyone laugh, which is another reason to leave another orchestra. It was all about the music. He was totally focussed on the music: playing the music as well as possible, interpreting what Beethoven wants us to play and getting it right, and just pursuing excellence. I loved that. Not everyone liked that. They thought he was too serious and too strict.

In the *Music for Life* research (Hallam et al., 2011; and see Creech et al., 2012, p. 43), good leaders were reported to be “knowledgeable; patient but in charge; positive, enthusiastic and enhancing motivation; having a sense of humour; responding to needs; and keeping a good pace and focus” (p. 4). While such individuals exist throughout the international community music fraternity, they are more likely to be fully employed—and paid—by professional ensembles or academic institutions.

Despite no specific training in dealing with older-adult musicians, most of the facilitators who took part in the current research displayed comparable characteristics to those mentioned above. It is likely that musicians would not submit themselves to such a challenging, often unpaid undertaking unless they knew they had the skills and temperament to provide an enjoyable and fulfilling music environment.

**DELEGATION**

Whereas community bands and orchestras are generally run by elected committee members and employ an external accountant, BIO was managed solely by the founder and his wife, who made all the music and financial decisions but delegated some of the manual tasks related to concerts. Some informants reported that they had made repertoire recommendations that were not taken up, and most informants seemed content to play no administrative role.
The Duhig group was managed by Ivy, who also hosted most of the rehearsals and lunches. All participants had input as to repertoire choices, all of which were adopted where possible. Scheduling of rehearsals and performances was by agreement of all collaborators, but accommodated the requirements of the Duhig Village staff and residents. Ivy spoke of the benefits of delegation:

> Again, the power of a group. Each member has a particular strength, and then when you get to know them and to work together in the group, that starts to become obvious. I personally like to empower people to do what they like doing, rather than me taking on everything; that’s not the way I function.

The U3A Logan handbell group was managed by Helena, with U3A as the administrative umbrella organisation. Another member of the group assisted with tutoring, and all capable members assisted carrying equipment to and from the parking area. Repertoire consisted mainly of one tutor book, although all participants were receptive to other musical challenges (see, for example, Appendix O).

Iris also took managerial responsibilities for the chamber music society but was supported by several other dedicated members. Repertoire choices were made by an allocated group leader for each session, usually in collaboration with the other group members. Bardon Strings was managed by the founding facilitator who, like the Bribie orchestra, delegated tasks around concert performances.

Directing his wind band, Gavin emphasised the importance of teamwork over musicianship:

> You don’t need auditions, but you need good members; you need members that are dedicated, because everybody’s got to put up their own chairs, everybody’s got to help sort music; you don’t have paid librarians; and everybody’s got to help to raise the funds and organise the transport. It’s a club, they’re all clubs, they’ve got to be a club, and if you can’t make it a club, the music doesn’t work.

As with most community orchestras and bands, administrative tasks in Gavin’s wind band were carried out by elected committee members who were either ensemble members or their relatives. Gavin commented, “No, I don’t do the secretarial work or
the money side of things. We’ve got a secretary, treasurer, and a chairman who runs
the meetings and so on.”

Luke’s ensemble also had a committee with delegated responsibilities:

I choose the repertoire and we have a very able secretary who e-mails the
members with dates, rehearsal programmes; and when we travel out of
town, organises the coach arrangements. We also have a treasurer who
takes care of the bank account and who pays me my rehearsal fee and
keeps an overall look on the general financial state of the group.

**MEMBERSHIP**

Participation in community music ensembles is voluntary, and older adults are likely
to drop in and out. Boswell (1992, p. 40) recommended that ensemble facilitators
remain flexible to groups that are “changeable and fragile.” Creech et al. (2014)
observed that “facilitators needed to be able to accommodate irregular patterns of
engagement and to help individuals to maintain a sense of being part of the group
even when various constraints prevented them from regular attendance” (p. 147).
The right of retirees to go away travelling (see Chapter 7) causes difficulties for
ensembles when trying to cover parts or when trying to maintain and improve artistic
standards, particularly for smaller groups.

The U3A handbell participants stressed the importance of having a number of
committed ringers so that people could be absent without the group having to cancel.
Kate reported that Brisbane Bells, the main bell ringing ensemble in Brisbane,
expected members in the advanced groups to attend regularly:

You have to make a commitment to be at practice every week. Now that
might seem onerous but I can see the benefit of that, and I don’t have a
problem with it at all, because this is a group of ten or so. How will you
ever, as a group—as a semi-professional group of ten—ever learn to play
well if people aren’t committed? But U3A’s not like that; you can’t really
say to U3A-type people, you’ve got to come every week.

However, even where commitment is considered mandatory, ensembles have to
accommodate unexpected events. People get sick, have accidents, or have to care for
others who are unwell. This is especially so for older adults. Environmental factors
such as floods and bush fires may also impact activities (see Chapter 7). Queensland is particularly prone to the former; Australia more generally to the latter.

Music ensembles have to negotiate the tension between low commitment levels, and the need to present quality performances that attract audiences and competent musicians. However, the goal of community music participation for older adults is, first and foremost, to provide them the opportunity to participate, and to raise their levels of artistry and technique to the extent that they are prepared to devote their time and resources.

Where a locality has sufficient numbers of musicians to justify more than one ensemble, each group’s mission statement can help potential members choose which group suits their preferences. Conrad explained:

> Basically, there’s got to be a charter; each orchestra committee comes up with their charter and says, this is why we exist. Some of them are going to say, it’s just to open our arms and welcome anybody that loves music and we don’t care whether you’re a beginner or a pro. And then other orchestras may say, our goal is to master some of the world’s toughest symphonies and concertos.

In Higgins’s (2008b) contribution to community music scholarship, “it is this commitment to openness that allows a genuine ‘welcome’ to the potential music participant, a feature that should, I believe, permeate all community music programmes” (p. 391). Higgins regards the welcome as an “unconditional embrace.” However, we need to be wary of the term “unconditional” as conditions are placed on the potential participant to fit in with the status quo of an established group, starting with the desire to play or learn to play music.

**SUMMARY**

Older adults are more likely to be attracted to leisure activities that are welcoming, safe, comfortable, and fun (Department of Communities, 2009, p. 16; Higgins, 2008a, 2008b; Koopman (2007). Emphasis on music, social, or educational aspects should be varied to meet the goals, preferences, and skills of all participants. Making opportunities visible and available before, during, and after trigger events in an older person’s life can help them negotiate difficult transitions.
Contrary to Rohwer’s (2008a) finding that most older-adult musicians want to be treated as “normal, productive musicians in a traditional ensemble” (p. 57), informants in this research were content to adopt non-traditional practices, such as individual stands and enlarged music, to ensure comfort and better vision while playing. While Vera’s choir preferred to stand in performances despite discomfort, members in another Brisbane-based choir, Vintage Voices, were observed walking onto the stage using walking frames, and were provided with seating, or space for wheelchairs. Compensatory measures may be frustrating for healthier, more able musicians, but are enabling for people living with disabilities. A balance needs to be established whereby the majority can be accommodated while just a few, if any, may face exclusion.

Like any grounded theory, the MASTER framework emerges from the utterances of informants acting in an increasingly complex world. It is, therefore, “an imperfectly plausible instrument” (Strauss, 1995, p. 17) for placing some order on that worldly complexity. In the same way that the EAST framework advocates for behavioural change by making the activity easy, attractive, social, and timely, and the EASTER framework promotes exercise by also making it enjoyable and regulated, the MASTER framework advocates for greater music participation by making it musical, attractive, social, timely, educational, and regulated. Despite its somewhat commanding tone, these dimensions are offered merely as guidelines, and should be astutely applied according to the differing and complex contexts of community music making. Furthermore, many ideas and suggestions within these dimensions are not only applicable for older-adult ensembles but can be employed by facilitators of community music activities across all age cohorts.
The presence of musicians on stage ranging from school age to old age gives the community the strongest possible message about the lifelong value of music making. (Roy Ernst, 2001, p. 50)

The purpose of this mixed-methods research was to examine the perceived barriers and constraints to community music participation by older adults, and to offer suggestions about how these may be overcome in order to provide sustainable and joyful music experiences. This examination began by asking the overarching question:

**How can participation by older adults in community music instrumental ensembles be better facilitated in order to initiate, promote, and sustain appropriate, engaging, and dynamic music-making experiences?**

Chapter 1 provided the context and rationale for this research under three themes: the ageing of the Australian population; the lack of music opportunities for older adults in Queensland, Australia; and the reported benefits of community music participation. From a review of the scholarship on older adults’ participation in community music (see Chapter 2), it was evident that the positive aspects—the purported benefits of and motivations for participating in music—were more popular music research areas than the negative aspects of perceived barriers and constraints to playing musical instruments in community ensembles. If music is so enjoyable, so uplifting, and so good for our health and wellbeing, why then do so few older adults start, continue, or resume playing a musical instrument in social, inclusive environments?

In an attempt to learn how to break down perceived barriers or overcome perceived constraints to music participation, the following four secondary research questions were designed to explore the realities of leisure and music participation by older adults in Queensland:
1. How do music-making activities factor into the leisure choices of older adults in Queensland, and what are the perceived barriers to music participation?

2. What are the characteristics and motivations of Queensland’s older-adult musicians?

3. What constraints to music participation are confronted, negotiated, and overcome by older-adult musicians in Queensland?

4. How can music facilitators in Queensland best promote music activities for older adults?

Following a review of the literature on leisure and music activities by older adults (Chapter 2), I then outlined the philosophical and methodological influences on my selection and application of the various research methods used to respond to these questions (Chapter 3). I described the research design and elaborated on the practical, grounded, approaches that guided data collection and analysis in this mixed-methods study. I justified my use of a grounded theory approach and explained its implications for intersecting data collection with data analysis, and for theory development. I finished Chapter 3 by explaining why and how two theoretical models were adapted for use as tools of thematic synthesis and structure: the popular leisure constraints model of Crawford et al. (1991), and the lesser known EAST framework of the UK government’s Behavioural Insights Team (2014).

I now provide a summary of the research activity and its findings, addressing the four research areas covered by the sub-questions: the leisure activities of older adults and perceived barriers to music participation; the characteristics and motivations of older-adult musicians; the constraints to music participation and how these are negotiated; and the best ways to promote and facilitate community music ensembles for older adults. I then offer some reflections on the implications of the research, as well as recommendations for future research as a way forward for researchers and music facilitators who have an interest in furthering music opportunities for active older-adult musicians.

**Sub-question 1**

*How do music-making activities factor into the leisure choices of older adults in Queensland, and what are the perceived barriers to music participation?*
The first sub-question of this thesis related to the leisure choices of older adults, their motivations for and influences on their choices, and the barriers they believed prevented them from engaging in desired activities. It also considered their music experiences throughout each life stage.

In Chapter 3, I reported on the design and application of the online Leisure Activities Survey, through which 275 respondents aged 50 and over from across Queensland reported their leisure activities and the extent to which active music participation had featured in those activities at different life stages (see Chapter 4). Their reasons for not participating in music making indicated what they perceived to be some of the barriers to music participation.

The results of the survey showed that watching television was the most popular leisure activity for older adults in Queensland, closely followed by working on the computer, reading books for pleasure, surfing the web, listening to music (other than at a public concert), and walking for pleasure. The least popular activities were playing team sports, singing in a choir, studying towards a degree or qualification, running, and playing a musical instrument. Health issues and the cost of participation were cited as the main reasons for not participating in preferred activities.

The piano was overwhelmingly the most popular musical instrument played during school years and beyond. Of the 10% of respondents who reported playing a musical instrument, only one percent played in a community music group.

The most reported barrier to music participation was a lack of interest, although deeper reflection of the data suggested that a prioritising of leisure activities in the available leisure time and a lack of childhood music influences may contribute to this lack of interest. Lack of ability and health challenges also ranked highly as reported barriers to music participation.

Overall, the findings of the Leisure Activities Survey suggested that more retirees were likely to take up active music making if affordable and accessible opportunities were offered across more communities.

**SUB-QUESTION 2**

*What are the characteristics and motivations of Queensland’s older-adult musicians?*
The 44 musicians, music teachers, and music ensemble organisers who acted as informants for this research were drawn from older-adult music ensembles in South East Queensland. Three core ensembles (BIO, DARE, and the U3A Logan handbell class) representing different socio-economic levels (high, medium, and low), geographic locations (north, centre, and south of Brisbane), and musical instruments (orchestral, recorder, and handbells) served as descriptive and comparative examples (see Chapter 3) that illustrated the realities of older adults’ participation in community music in South East Queensland. In Chapter 5, I presented contextual information about these and other music sources in Brisbane from which informants were recruited for face-to-face recorded interviews and follow-up questions. Informants spoke of their music backgrounds, motivations, and experiences, and the constraints they had to negotiate to participate in music activities.

Informants were mostly of European (Caucasian) heritage (see Appendix N), and at least 37 of them (84%) had learnt to play an instrument in their childhood.

Consistent with earlier scholarship (see Chapter 2), the reported motivations for music participation were predominantly fun and enjoyment, health and wellbeing, and the opportunity to make music in a social environment. Chapter 5 provided context for understanding the perceived constraints to music participation that emerged from the interviews, and which were discussed in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

**SUB-QUESTION 3**

*What constraints to music participation are confronted, negotiated, and overcome by older-adult musicians in Queensland?*

Research into aspects of music making that act as deterrents to participation is much more limited than research into motivational aspects. This may be because music researchers prefer to represent their field of study in a positive light, which is more likely to attract funding or other means of institutional support. By exposing the numerous barriers and constraints that have been reported in this research, there is a risk that stakeholders and potential funding agents may question the validity of promoting community music participation. However, such perceived barriers and constraints are not unique to music participation; many of these challenges are faced by older adults—indeed, by the general community—across all leisure activities that take place in public locations.
To better promote music participation, facilitators are advised to look not only at the reasons why people start and continue to play music—the motivations for and purported benefits of music making—but also at those factors that can potentially deter music participation. Only by understanding these less attractive realities of community music participation—the factors which obstruct, constrain, inhibit or prohibit music engagement—will musicians and music administrators be able to facilitate more appealing and ongoing music activities for the community in general, and for older adults in particular.

Ascertaining the perceived barriers and constraints to music participation required sourcing two cohorts of older adults: non-participants, who could provide knowledge about their motivations for their leisure choices and why these did not include music participation (see sub-question 1 and Chapter 4); and music participants, who continue to play in community music groups despite being challenged by intrapersonal, structural, and interpersonal constraints. The interviews with 29 older-adult musicians and 15 music facilitators (music teachers, ensemble organisers, conductors, and music directors) provided a rich source of data on the perceived constraints to music participation. An extensive analysis of these constraints, categorised according to an adaptation of Crawford et al.’s (1991) leisure constraints theory, was detailed in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.

Analysis of the constraints using NVivo led to the logical subcategorisation of intrapersonal constraints as physiological or psychological. Structural constraints comprised organisational or environmental obstacles to music making, and interpersonal constraints comprised challenges of a social nature that emerged from the interviews, and that can arise in any arena relying on human interaction.

Chapter 6 examined the reported intrapersonal constraints to music participation and how these were negotiated by the informants. The most common intrapersonal constraints that emerged from the interviews were a perceived lack of skill or self-efficacy, a lack of self-confidence, conflicting priorities, and inherent or age-related physical disabilities.

In this research, structural constraints comprised those that limited music activities from an organisational perspective. Structural constraints identified were subcategorised as organisational, musical, or environmental (see Chapter 7, and Figure 22). Organisational constraints related to the provision, promotion, cost, and
timing of music activities; the delegation of non-music and music tasks; and attendance issues that affected individual and group progress. Musical constraints included the varying artistic levels of ensembles; the existence of education and skill development; performance expectations; repertoire choices; and the availability of instruments. Environmental constraints comprised aspects around the choice of venue and its location; the ease of parking and transport; and the impact of Queensland’s climate and weather events.

Once prospective ensemble members have successfully negotiated any intrapersonal and structural constraints that confront them in their efforts to play in an ensemble, they may encounter constraints of an interpersonal nature that diminish the attraction of continuing to play. Interpersonal constraints were explored in Chapter 8 and, following analysis of the themes that emerged from the data, were subcategorised as relationships with leadership figures, such as administrators, conductors, and group or class music tutors; relationships with external stakeholders, such as administrators of rehearsal or performance venues, retailers, or private music teachers; and relationships with peer musicians (see Figure 23). Difficult or unpleasant interpersonal relationships and social conflict were reported to create dissatisfaction, disharmony, dysfunction, and distress, often resulting in the cessation of music participation.

Despite reported conflicts and frustrations, the reported benefits of playing in a community music ensemble outweighed the difficulties of doing so, at least for participants who attended rehearsals regularly. In his investigation of the leisure lives of barbershop singers, Stebbins (1992, p. 130) concluded that dislikes were merely a minor sentiment. Similarly, in the current research, active older-adult musicians were happy to have the opportunity to play, and were prepared to tolerate the ‘dislikes’ or grievances. Therefore, their motivations and the benefits and rewards of music participation outweighed the constraints.

Music facilitators who wish to provide enjoyable and sustainable music activities for older-adult musicians, or for enthusiastic older learners of musical instruments, would do well to understand the constraints confronted by this age cohort and to offer programs that either aim to eliminate or minimise such challenges, or that assist older adults to negotiate them. A synthesis of the reported motivations, benefits, and
constraints associated with community music participation provided a solution to the fourth sub-question.

**SUB-QUESTION 4**

*How can music facilitators in Queensland best promote music activities for older adults?*

Perceived barriers to music participation identified in the Leisure Activities Survey (Chapter 4), when combined with the perceived constraints to music participation that emerged in interviews with active older-adult musicians (Chapters 6, 7, and 8) and balanced against reported motivations for and benefits of music participation (Chapters 1, 2 and 5), formed the foundation of Chapter 9, the MASTER framework for promoting music activities. The purpose of creating this framework was to provide a memorable taxonomy of suggestions about how perceived barriers and constraints could be managed by music facilitators to provide high-quality and sustainable music activities for older adults.

The MASTER framework stems from the Behavioural Insights Team’s (2014) EAST framework, which aimed to make societal changes *easy*, *attractive*, *social*, and *timely*, and parkrun’s extension of it to EASTER, which aimed to make exercise *enjoyable* and *regulated* (Robins & Tan, 2018; and see Chapter 3). Rather than being ‘easy’, however, the older-adult musicians in this and earlier research sought enriching music experiences (*make it musical*) and varied levels of learning (*make it educational*) in addition to *attractive*, *social*, *timely*, and *regulated* activities. They were musically and socially motivated to negotiate constraints and to modify their participation to keep playing their instruments and sharing music and harmony with and beyond their immediate communities.

**CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS RESEARCH**

The contributions of this research are threefold: empirical, theoretical, and social. The empirical contribution is the detailed exploration and categorisation of the perceived barriers and constraints to music participation as reported by older-adult non-participants across Queensland and older-adult participants in South East Queensland.
The theoretical contribution is also twofold. First is the minor adaptation of Crawford et al.’s (1991) hierarchical model of leisure constraints to reflect the intrapersonal, structural, and interpersonal qualities of the constraints to music participation by older adults and their more likely ordering, while also recognising the interrelationship of themes. The second theoretical contribution is the substantial adaptation of the Behavioural Insights Team’s (2014) EAST framework for behavioural change, and its extension by the parkrun organisation (Robins & Tan, 2018), to create the MASTER framework for community music participation by older adults. Therefore, the MASTER framework plays a harmonious role in the evolution of the EAST framework.

The greatest contribution of this research, however, is its endeavour to open the conversation—or at least to increase the volume—on the rights of older adults to participate in accessible and sustainable community music activities. This research, therefore, has not only contributed to knowledge about music participation as a leisure pursuit for older adults but has also offered a framework for facilitating improved participatory practices for older age cohorts. In short, it contributes to both music research and music practice.

**Implications: The Way Ahead**

Although this research has focussed on older adults in Queensland, population ageing is a worldwide phenomenon, with the proportion of the world’s population aged 60 and over set to double from its 2006 figure of 11% to a projected figure of 22% by 2050 (World Health Organization, 2019). Subsequently, this research has implications for the following groups:

- all adults interested in participating in music activities, particularly as they consider leisure choices in retirement;
- facilitators (conductors, teachers, organisers) of music activities, who have the skills and enthusiasm to lead the way in music education and performance;
- academic institutions that are willing to provide resources and support in establishing sustainable community music programs for older adults (for example, arranging for schools or universities to provide affordable and accessible venues for creative music practices would go a long way to enabling music opportunities for older adults); and
government and institutional policy makers who can provide financial and structural resources for older-adult music groups.

Implications of this research could also be used to increase membership in existing community music ensembles, who may be influenced to modify their approaches, expand their information distribution, and attempt to reduce constraints to music participation to ensure that participation is available across all age groups generally, but for older adults in particular.

In 2012, the New Dynamics of Ageing (NDA) cross-council research programme in the United Kingdom offered a series of free one-day workshops, in nine centres across the country, for musicians who were interested in facilitating music activities with older people (Creech et al., 2012). An enterprising music establishment such as the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, perhaps in collaboration with their interstate counterparts, could consider leading the way in conducting similar ventures around Australia. Greater collaboration with the NDA team could guide this initiative.

The U3A continuously encourages the development of new courses for its members (U3A Brisbane, 2019). With the near absence of music programs for older adults across Australia, and a growing demand for more activities due to the ageing population, there is a growing market for goods and services related to music participation and music instruction. Skilled music facilitators, however, should not be expected to initiate and facilitate programs without remuneration, and yet many receive no compensation or are grossly underpaid. Approaching local councils for support with resources, funding, and subsidies may be an administrative burden that detracts from the diminishing time that older adults have left to enjoy their leisure pursuits.

This thesis provides a strong evidence-based case for lobbying local councils and other government agencies for greater funding and support to enhance the musical lives of older adults and to inspire more community music initiatives. The factors that promote dynamic, ongoing music activities by older adults, as identified and explored in this research, could also aid policy makers and service providers when deciding how to spend funds on improving the quality of life of this age cohort. Such stakeholders could be supported by further research into all aspects of music and ageing, some examples of which are presented below.
**FUTURE RESEARCH**

*Music education*

Bowles (2010) recommended that the music education profession “organize a task force to explore, develop, and implement strategies that respond to the specific needs of teachers of adult music learners” (p. 58). Additionally, Hallam et al. (2016) made a case for training programs that prepared music facilitators and future music teachers to work with older adults. Effective teacher practices for older-adult musicians is an area that is deficient in research, and the NDA’s free workshops for music facilitators seem to have been the only opportunities in this area. Additionally, research exploring the clientele of private music teachers could shed more light on the propensity of such teachers to teach beginning, continuing, or resuming adult musicians.

*Online communities of music*

Online and digital music making was beyond the scope of the current research, which focussed on face-to-face, community music activities. As online community music forums gain in popularity, there is scope for research on their attributes and benefits across all age groups, particularly those who are homebound. In addition, people who experience motor impairment as a result of a stroke or amputation may still be able to make music using an encephalophone, a device which turns brain signals into sound (Deuel, Pampin, Sundstrom, & Darvas, 2017). Although the sound output is currently that of a synthesised piano and limited to a one-octave C-major scale, further development of musical capacity and sound variation could potentially lead to an imaginative online community music setting.

*Wellbeing*

The health and wellbeing benefits of participatory music making have been well documented (see, for example, Coffman, 2008; Coffman & Barbosa, 2013; Creech, Hallam, Varvarigou, McQueen, & Gaunt, 2013; Hanna-Pladdy & Gajewski, 2012; New Dynamics of Ageing, 2012; Perkins & Williamon, 2013). Hallam and Creech (2016) have proposed that general practitioners be proactive in prescribing ‘music as medicine’. Research into the potential of doctors to recommend music participation to older adults, perhaps even in lieu of prescribing medicine, and the potential of older adults to follow such advice could benefit not only the patients, but also the nation’s health budget.
Serving social justice

While observing the musicians on Bribie Island, I reflected on how privileged they were to be able to afford to retire in such a beautiful location and in such good homes. No doubt such fortune is well deserved after a lifetime of work and raising families. However, I also reflected on those who, for whatever reason, have been significantly less fortunate, and who may appreciate the gift of music fulfilment and its resultant benefits (see particularly the work of Grant, 2019a, 2019b). Reaching out to disadvantaged older adults as they cope with the injustices of ageing would present new research challenges, but would also lead researchers to perhaps question if the struggle to pay the next electricity bill takes the gloss away from any of life’s potential luxuries.

After conducting the Leisure Activities Survey, I received emails from people with disabilities or other disadvantages who found themselves precluded from group leisure activities such as community music ensembles, and even from social life in general. This forced me to question how music researchers could connect with keen musicians or potential music students. If a network of volunteers can supply food to homebound residents through Meals on Wheels, can a network of skilled and caring musicians supply music nourishment in the form of music lessons or small chamber music sessions—Music on Wheels? Alternatively, could a network of volunteers be despatched to collect the homebound from their homes and transport them to local music activities?

Ethnic diversity

Creech et al. (2014) noted that a limitation of the Music for Life research was the homogeneity of informant demographics, such as gender, social class, and ethnicity, and that “there was little sense amongst the responses of how activities might be structured in order to meet the needs of the groups who were not participating” (p. 142).

The current research was similarly unchallenged by cultural and gendered constraints, with the ensembles comprising older adults of predominantly European heritage (see Chapter 8). As a result, demographic characteristics such as gender, marital status, cultural background, and religion were generally not perceived as barriers or constraints to music participation in South East Queensland. However, the changing cultural demographic of Australian society resulting from global
population movements may necessitate further exploration into the factors that promote music participation across wider and more diverse religious and cultural landscapes.

**Lapsed musicians**

Using the Leisure Activities Survey, I was able to gain data from non-participants in Queensland about their perceived barriers to music participation. Through examples of instrumental ensembles in South East Queensland, I was also able to gather data from musicians about their constraints to music participation. Research that targets formerly active but now lapsed musicians may shed new light on perceived barriers and constraints to music engagement, and on what changes could be made to encourage them to return to playing music.

**FINAL REFLECTIONS**

This research has its roots in my own history and experiences of community music activities, during which I watched the struggles of older adults as they were challenged by age-related constraints: second-violin leader Bob, who was gradually going blind; front desk first violinist Marj, whose arthritic fingers negated her former artistic excellence, and thus her self-esteem; and back desk cellist Norm, whose hearing impairment necessitated the conductor to wear a microphone, and angered all around him. Then there are those who perhaps cease coming to rehearsals, unable to drive, or to hobble to bus and train stations due to bad backs, arthritic knees, poor vision, or vertigo. As a violin teacher, I would often be asked by older adults if I would teach them. Through such experiences, I discovered the abilities and enthusiasm of older-adult learners, and the adaptations they were prepared to make to continue their musical growth. It was evident that their motivations outweighed the constraints.

Successful ageing is the process of overcoming the challenges associated with inevitable age-related physiological and cognitive decline (Campbell & Yang, 2011, p. 326). This thesis has examined those and other challenges that hinder older adults in their music endeavours. As Ernst and Emmons (1992, p. 34) asserted, older adults want and need more opportunities to learn and perform music; therefore, providing music education for this under-served segment of the population needs to be a top priority. By examining such constraints, and how they have been negotiated in the pursuit of continuing music activities, facilitators and other stakeholders can promote
programs, projects, events or other activities that engage increasing numbers of older adults in active music participation.

**SOUNDING THE FUTURE**

While programs such as the New Horizons wind bands and the Late Starters Orchestras enable music participation and music education by older adults in North America and the United Kingdom, there does not appear to be any evidence of similar national or state programs in Australia that provide a cohesive program of music facilitation or instruction. Ageing strategies instigated at all levels of government appear to favour the promotion of non-music activities, while ignoring the cognitive and social benefits of music making that can contribute to healthy ageing and vibrant communities.

Global ageing and the reported holistic benefits of music participation mean that it is timely to promote innovations in community music activities that facilitate engagement by future generations of independent and active older adults. The purpose of this research was to explore why relatively few older adults take up or resume playing a musical instrument. It sought to better understand the constraints faced by active, older-adult musicians, and how they overcome these constraints in order to fulfil music motivations as they move from their later working years into a fulfilling retirement phase. With the resourcefulness of enthusiastic and skilled music leaders, it is hoped that community music activities for older adults will develop and flourish as we move deeper into an era of ‘youthful’ ageing.
### APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF DIFFERENCES AMONG FIVE APPROACHES TO SOCIAL RESEARCH (NEUMAN, 2014)

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Reason for research</th>
<th>POSITIVISM</th>
<th>INTERPRETIVE</th>
<th>CRITICAL</th>
<th>FEMINIST</th>
<th>POSTMODERN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct relationship to my research;</td>
<td>To discover natural laws so people can predict and control events</td>
<td>To understand and describe meaningful social action</td>
<td>To smash myths and empower people to change society</td>
<td>To empower people to advance values of nurturing others and equality</td>
<td>To express the subjective self, to be playful, and to entertain and stimulate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nature of social reality</td>
<td>Stable pre-existing patterns or order that can be discovered</td>
<td>Fluid definitions of a situation created by human interaction</td>
<td>Multiple layers and governed by hidden, underlying structures</td>
<td>Creative, adaptive people with unrealized potential, trapped by illusion.</td>
<td>Gender-structured power relations that keep people oppressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Human nature</td>
<td>Self-interested and rational individuals who are shaped by external forces</td>
<td>Social beings who create meaning and who constantly make sense of their worlds</td>
<td>Bounded autonomy and free choice structurally limited, but the limits can be moved</td>
<td>Gendered beings with unrealized potential often trapped by unseen forces</td>
<td>Structural limits based on gender confines choices, but new thinking and action can break the limits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Human agency</td>
<td>Powerful external social pressures shape people’s actions; free will is largely illusion</td>
<td>People have significant volition; they develop meanings and have freedom to make choices</td>
<td>False beliefs that hide power and objective conditions</td>
<td>False beliefs that hide power and objective conditions</td>
<td>People have great volition, and all structures are illusoryary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Role of common sense</td>
<td>Clearly distinct from and less valid than science</td>
<td>Powerful everyday theories used by ordinary people</td>
<td>A critique that reveals true conditions and helps people take action</td>
<td>A critique that reveals true conditions and helps people see the way to a better world</td>
<td>The essence of social reality that is superior to scientific or bureaucratic forms of reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Theory looks like</td>
<td>A logical, deductive system of interconnected definitions, axioms and laws</td>
<td>A description of how a group’s meaning system is generated and sustained</td>
<td>Resonates or feels right to those who are being studied</td>
<td>Supplies people with tools needed to change the world</td>
<td>A performance or work of artistic expression that can amuse, shock, or stimulate others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. An explanation that is true</td>
<td>Is logically connected to laws and based on facts</td>
<td>Is embedded in the context of fluid social interactions</td>
<td>Is informed by a theory that penetrates the surface level</td>
<td>Is informed by a theory that reveals gender structures</td>
<td>No one explanation is more true; all are true for those who accept them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Good evidence</td>
<td>Is based on precise observations that others can repeat</td>
<td>A practical orientation is used; knowledge helps us embrace/share empathetically others’ life worlds and experiences</td>
<td>A dialectical orientation is used; knowledge lets people see and alter deeper structures</td>
<td>Knowledge raises awareness and empowers people to make change</td>
<td>Has aesthetic properties and resonates with people’s inner feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Relevance of knowledge</td>
<td>An instrumental orientation is used; knowledge enables people to master and control events</td>
<td>Values are an integral part of social life; no group’s values are wrong, only different</td>
<td>Values are essential to research, and feminist ones are clearly preferred</td>
<td>Values are integral to research, but all value positions are equal</td>
<td>Formal knowledge has no special value; it can amuse or bring personal enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Place for values</td>
<td>Science is value free, and values have no place except when choosing a topic</td>
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## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SHEET

**Interview / Focus Group Demographic Information**  
*Promoting community music participation by older adults*  
*Doctor of Philosophy Research—Teresa Kunaeva*  
*GU Ref. No: 2015/874*

**CONFIDENTIALITY** - The information on this form will not be divulged to anyone apart from the researcher and her immediate supervisor. The form and all records of personal information will be destroyed five years after the research is complete.

### CONTACT DETAILS

Name: ____________________________________________________

Email: ____________________________________________________

Phone: ____________________________________________________

*The above information is not for publication. All questions are optional. Participants will be provided with an edited transcript of their remarks for verification.*

### Musical Group(s) __________________________________________________________

### Length of Membership  ____________________________________________________

### Age (please tick one)

- □ 45 – 49  □ 70 – 74
- □ 50 – 54  □ 75 – 79
- □ 55 – 59  □ 80 – 84
- □ 60 – 64  □ 85 – 89
- □ 65 – 69  □ 90 or over

### Marital status (please tick one)

- Never married
- Currently Married
- Previously married, now single
- Widowed

### Family Status (please tick as appropriate)

- No children
- Children at home
- Children left home
- Grandchildren at home

### Occupation

(e.g. retired accountant; family care-giver; self-employed lawyer; apprentice mechanic).

### Highest Educational Qualification ____________________________________________

### Highest Music Qualification (if any) __________________________________________

### Culture/Ethnicity

(e.g. Australian Greek—20 years in Australia; Taiwanese Australian-born).

### Instruments/voice: Please list any instrument(s) you play or parts that you have sung in a choir (or similar group e.g. quartet), for how long and the highest of any exams you have passed, if any.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument/voice?</th>
<th>How long?</th>
<th>Exam?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C:  INTERVIEW GUIDE—OLDER ADULT MUSICIANS

Welcome and thanks, explanation and ground rules
- Thanks for participating
- PhD thesis researching the experiences of older adults in community music making
- Semi structured interview

Recording
- Audio recording and transcript
- Transcript will be sent to you for checking
- Recordings and transcripts are confidential

Ethics
- Participation is anonymous
- All opinions, views and feelings are welcome.
- You have the option not to answer a question.

Questions
1. Could you tell me a bit about your musical background. [Parental/teacher influence, etc.]
2. What instruments have you played and for how long?
3. Why did you choose those instruments?
4. How long was it before you joined an ensemble? Which ensemble(s)?
5. How long have you been with this ensemble?
6. Are you playing anywhere else? Have you played anywhere else? e.g. Smaller groups? Annual groups?
7. Why did you join a community music ensemble?
8. Have you always had ample opportunities as an adult to play music? If not, what have been some of the barriers to your participation?
9. What benefits do you feel that you gain most by playing in a musical ensemble? [Social, intellectual, musical, physical, emotional, fun]
10. Thinking about your health and wellbeing, can you talk about the impact that music making has on you, if any? [E.g. physical, intellectual, emotional, social.] Any negative effects (e.g. injury)?
11. What would you change about your music-making activities if anything? Ask re location, cost, level of artistry, leadership, frequency, size of group, genre of music, teaching materials, other.
12. Have you ever missed rehearsals on occasions? For what reasons?
13. Are there any gender, race, cultural or religious issues that affect your participation in community music ensembles?
14. Have ensemble conductors always been inspiring?
15. Do you feel you have enough or too much musical tuition as part of your playing activities?
16. Would you consider doing music exams? What about waiting in a room full of kids?
17. Do you teach? Adults?
18. Do you prefer to give regular performances, or would you prefer not to perform in public? Why?
19. Would you prefer to play with adult groups or intergenerational? What if the group were mostly school children?
20. Where do you think you’ll be with your music in, say, five years time?
21. If the present conductor was unable to continue, what do you think would happen to the ensemble and/or your playing?
22. Is there anything you’d like to add?

Conclusion
- Repeat: discussion is confidential and transcripts will be sent to you for checking and further comment
- Many thanks. Now let’s make some music!
APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE—MUSIC FACILITATORS

Welcome and thanks, explanation and ground rules
- Thanks for participating
- PhD thesis researching the experiences of older adults in community music making
- Semi structured interview

Recording
- Audio recording and transcript
- Transcript will be sent to you for checking
- Recordings and transcripts are confidential

Ethics
- Participation is anonymous
- All opinions, views and feelings are welcome.
- You have the option not to answer a question.

Introductions
- Introduce myself

Interview questions
1. Could you please start by stating your name, a bit about your musical background and how you came about leading/facilitating your music ensemble?
2. What level of older-adult musicians do you generally get in your group and how do you go about recruiting them?
3. Do you ever get beginner or fairly novice older adults wishing to join? If so, how do you accommodate them, or do you recommend alternatives for them?
4. What benefits do you gain by facilitating a musical ensemble with older adults? Is it generally a joy or a burden?
5. Are there any specific frustrations (e.g. religious or cultural observance)?
6. What changes would you make if you could? (Ages, venue, level of artistry, size of group, choice of repertoire, financial remuneration, administrative support, other.)
7. Do you provide any sort of group or private tuition to older adults?
8. Do you prefer to give regular performances, or would you prefer not to perform in public? What influences your preference?
9. Where do you think you’ll be with your music in, say, five years’ time?
10. Has anyone else shown an interest in taking over the ensemble? Have there been discussions about the future?

Conclusion
- Repeat: discussion is confidential and transcripts will be sent to you for checking and further comment

Many thanks. Time for a cuppa!
Full Research Ethics Clearance 2015/874

11/12/2015

to me, p.roennfeldt, b.bartleet, research-ethics, k.madison

GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS REVIEW

Dear APro Brydie-Leigh Bartleet

I write further to the additional information provided in relation to the provisional approval granted to your application for ethical clearance for your project "Facilitating community music participation by older adults" (GU Ref No: 2015/874).

This is to confirm that this response has addressed the comments and concerns of the HREC.

The ethics reviewers resolved to grant your application a clearance status of "Fully Approved."

Consequently, you are authorised to immediately commence this research on this basis.

Regards

Kim Madison
Policy Officer, Human Research Ethics and Integrity
Office for Research
Bray Centre, Nathan Campus
Griffith University
ph: +61 (0)7 373 58043
fax: +61 (07) 373 57994
email: k.madison@griffith.edu.au
APPENDIX F: LEISURE ACTIVITIES SURVEY QUESTIONS

RESEARCH & CONSENT INFORMATION
GU Ref No: 2015/874

Why is the research being conducted?
The global ageing population and the increasing number of baby-boomers who are now entering retirement raise the need for leisure activities that could contribute to the health and wellbeing of ageing societies. This research project is designed to investigate the leisure choices of older Australian adults and evaluate the benefits and challenges of such participation.

The expected benefits of the research
We are conducting this research so that we can better understand the motivations for and obstacles to the leisure choices of older adults. We also want to use the knowledge we develop in this research to develop resources and materials that can facilitate community participation by older adults in the future. We hope that this research will enable more adults to actively engage in leisure activities that help to benefit an ageing Australian society.

Survey Participant’s Consent
By submitting this survey, I confirm that I am happy to be involved in this research project. I also confirm that I understand the dot points below, which talk about how my information will be used and what I might get from participating in this research. I will not submit this survey unless I am happy that I understand all the dot points listed below.
I understand that there will be no direct benefit to me from my participation in this research but that my feedback may help to make future community leisure activities more beneficial for older adults.
I understand that I do not have to participate in this research if I don’t want to;
I understand that I do not have to answer any questions that make me feel uncomfortable;
I understand that I can stop participating in this research at any time if I feel uncomfortable in any way;
I understand that survey data will remain anonymous;
I understand that survey questionnaires will be securely stored for five years;
If I have any questions regarding my part in this research I can ask the researchers at any time;
I understand that I can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee on (07) 3735 4375 (or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au) if I have any concerns about this research project; and
I agree to participate in the project.

There are 61 questions in this survey

POSTCODE
PC01: Please enter your postcode:
Please write your answer here:

GENERAL LEISURE ACTIVITIES PART 1
GLA01: Please check the frequency in which you engaged in the following activities in the past two months. Check only one answer for each possible leisure activity:
Please choose the appropriate response for each item:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watching television</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Playing games at a table (such as cards, mah-jong, bingo, chess, etc.)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Walking for pleasure</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gardening</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading books for pleasure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Studying towards a degree or other formal qualification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Studying for pleasure (includes U3A courses)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Singing in a choir</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playing a musical instrument</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playing bowls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Playing other team sports (for example, soccer, baseball, basketball, etc.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bicycling</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Running</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in other individual sports (for example, tennis, ping pong, triathlon, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Going on a family outing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Going to church</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Going to the library to read or borrow books/DVDs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Going out for the evening for drinks and entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Going to the movies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attending opera, ballet or dance performances</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attending musicals or classical music concerts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attending other concerts (for example, popular, rock, jazz)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visiting art galleries and museums</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening to music (other than at a public concert)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collecting or making something (for example, hobbies, knitting, woodwork)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending sports events as a spectator</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surfing the Web</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working on the computer</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling internationally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling nationally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
GLA02: Please specify any other leisure activities in which you have engaged in the past two months.
Please write your answer(s) here:

•

GENERAL LEISURE ACTIVITIES PART 2
GLA03: Do you regularly participate in a club or group activity?
Please choose only one of the following:
○ Yes
○ No

GLA04: What club or group activity do you mostly participate in?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
○ Answer was 'Yes' at question '4 [GLA03]' (Do you regularly participate in a club or group activity?)
Please write your answer here:

GLA05: Why did you get involved in that activity in the beginning?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
○ Answer was 'Yes' at question '4 [GLA03]' (Do you regularly participate in a club or group activity?)
Please write your answer here:

GLA06: What is the main reason for continuing in that activity?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
○ Answer was 'Yes' at question '4 [GLA03]' (Do you regularly participate in a club or group activity?)
Please write your answer here:

GLA07: Is there an activity that you would love to do but are unable for any reason?
Please choose only one of the following:
○ Yes
○ No

GLA08: What is that activity?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
○ Answer was 'Yes' at question '8 [GLA07]' (Is there an activity that you would love to do but are unable for any reason?)
Please write your answer here:

GLA09: What prevents you from doing that activity?
(e.g. cost, location, health issues, etc.)
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
○ Answer was 'Yes' at question '8 [GLA07]' (Is there an activity that you would love to do but are unable for any reason?)
Please write your answer here:

RETIRED ACTIVITIES
RA01: Do you work full time (more than 30 hours per week)?
Please choose only one of the following:
○ Yes
○ No

RA02: Since ceasing full-time work, have you continued with former leisure activities?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
○ Answer was 'No' at question '11 [RA01]' (Do you work full time (more than 30 hours per week)?)
Please choose only one of the following:
○ Yes
○ No

RA03: Since ceasing full-time work, have you ceased any former leisure activities?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
○ Answer was 'No' at question '11 [RA01]' (Do you work full time (more than 30 hours per week)?)
Please choose only one of the following:

☐ Yes
☐ No

RA04: Since ceasing full-time work, have you taken up new leisure activities?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
° Answer was 'No' at question '11 [RA01]' (Do you work full time (more than 30 hours per week)?)
Please choose only one of the following:

☐ Yes
☐ No

RA05: Please feel free to add any comments regarding your activities since retirement:
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
° Answer was 'No' at question '11 [RA01]' (Do you work full time (more than 30 hours per week)?)
Please write your answer here:

MUSICAL ACTIVITIES PART 1
MA01: When you were in primary school, did you sing in a school, community or church choir for longer than 8 weeks?
Please choose only one of the following:

☐ Yes
☐ No

MA02: When you were in secondary (high) school, did you sing in a school, community or church choir for longer than 8 weeks?
Please choose only one of the following:

☐ Yes
☐ No

MA03: Since leaving school, have you sung in a community or church choir for longer than 8 weeks?
Please choose only one of the following:

☐ Yes
☐ No

MA04a: Do you currently sing in a community or church choir?
Please choose only one of the following:

☐ Yes
☐ No

MA04b: Why do you not sing in a community or church choir?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
° Answer was 'No' at question '19 [MA04a]' (Do you currently sing in a community or church choir?)
Please write your answer here:

MUSICAL ACTIVITIES PART 2
MA05: When you were in primary school, did you play a musical instrument for longer than 8 weeks?
Please choose only one of the following:

☐ Yes
☐ No

MA06: What instrument(s) did you play in primary school?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
° Answer was 'Yes' at question '21 [MA05]' (When you were in primary school, did you play a musical instrument for longer than 8 weeks?)
Please choose all that apply:

_____ Piano
_____ Ukulele
_____ Cello
_____ Guitar
_____ Violin
_____ Double Bass
_____ Recorder
_____ Viola
_____ Ukulele
_____ Cello

(Appendices) 343
Clarinet  Trumpet  Percussion
Oboe     French Horn  Ocarina
Bassoon  Trombone    Mandolin
Saxophone  Tuba     Other:

MA07: When you were in secondary (high) school, did you play a musical instrument for longer than 8 weeks?
Please choose **only one** of the following:
- Yes
- No

MA08: What instrument(s) did you play in secondary school?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
- Answer was ‘Yes’ at question 23 [MA07] (When you were in secondary (high) school, did you play a musical instrument for longer than 8 weeks?)
Please choose **all** that apply:
- Piano
- Double Bass
- French Horn
- Guitar
- Flute
- Trombone
- Recorder
- Clarinet
- Tuba
- Ukulele
- Oboe
- Percussion
- Violin
- Bassoon
- Ocarina
- Viola
- Saxophone
- Mandolin
- Cello
- Trumpet
- Other:

MA09: Since leaving school and before turning 50, did you play a musical instrument for longer than 8 weeks?
Please choose **only one** of the following:
- Yes
- No

MA10: What instrument(s) did you play since leaving school and before turning 50?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
- Answer was ‘Yes’ at question 25 [MA09] (Since leaving school and before turning 50, did you play a musical instrument for longer than 8 weeks?)
Please choose **all** that apply:
- Piano
- Double Bass
- French Horn
- Guitar
- Flute
- Trombone
- Recorder
- Clarinet
- Tuba
- Ukulele
- Oboe
- Percussion
- Violin
- Bassoon
- Ocarina
- Viola
- Saxophone
- Mandolin
- Cello
- Trumpet
- Other:

MA11: Since turning 50, have you played a musical instrument for longer than 8 weeks?
Please choose **only one** of the following:
- Yes
- No

MA12: What instrument(s) have you played since turning 50?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
- Answer was ‘Yes’ at question 27 [MA11] (Since turning 50, have you played a musical instrument for longer than 8 weeks?)
Please choose **all** that apply:
- Piano
- Double Bass
- French Horn
- Guitar
- Flute
- Trombone
- Recorder
- Clarinet
- Tuba
- Ukulele
- Oboe
- Percussion
- Violin
- Bassoon
- Ocarina
- Viola
- Saxophone
- Mandolin
- Cello
- Trumpet
- Other:

MA13: Do you currently play a musical instrument?
MA14: What instrument(s) do you currently play?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
° Answer was 'Yes' at question '29 [MA13]' (Do you currently play a musical instrument?)
Please choose all that apply:

- Piano
- Guitar
- Recorder
- Ukulele
- Violin
- Viola
- Cello
- Double Bass
- Flute
- Clarinet
- Oboe
- Bassoon
- Saxophone
- Trumpet
- French Horn
- Trombone
- Fuba
- Percussion
- Ocarina
- Mandolin
- Other:

MA15: Do you currently play with a community orchestra or band?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
° Answer was 'Yes' at question '29 [MA13]' (Do you currently play a musical instrument?)
Please choose only one of the following:

- Yes
- No

MA16: Which community group(s) do you currently play with?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
° Answer was 'Yes' at question '31 [MA15]' (Do you currently play with a community orchestra or band?)
Please write your answer(s) here:

MA17: Do you currently play with a small private group?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
° Answer was 'Yes' at question '29 [MA13]' (Do you currently play a musical instrument?)
Please choose only one of the following:

- Yes
- No

MA18: If you once played a musical instrument and no longer do, why did you stop playing?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
° Answer was NOT 'Yes' at question '29 [MA13]' (Do you currently play a musical instrument?)
Please write your answer here:

MA19: If you have never played a musical instrument, what is the reason?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
° Answer was NOT 'Yes' at question '29 [MA13]' (Do you currently play a musical instrument?)
Please write your answer here:

MA20: Do you believe that older adults are able to learn to play a musical instrument?
Please choose only one of the following:

- Yes
- No

MA21
Please feel free to comment on the inability or ability of older adults to learn to play a musical instrument:
Please write your answer here:

MA22: If a 2-hour musical-instrument session were organised for beginner older adults, how likely is it that you would attend?
Please choose only one of the following:

- Very likely
Appendices 346

MA23: Please feel free to comment on why you would or would not attend a musical instrument workshop:
Please write your answer here:

MA24: If musical instrument tuition were available within a manageable distance from your home, and at a manageable price, what is the likelihood that you would attend?
Please choose only one of the following:
☐ Very likely
☐ Likely
☐ Unlikely
☐ No chance at all!

MA25: Please feel free to comment on why you would or would not seek musical instrument tuition:
Please write your answer here:

MA26: Would you like to play a musical instrument?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
☐ Answer was NOT 'Yes' at question '29 [MA13]' (Do you currently play a musical instrument?)
Please choose only one of the following:
☐ Yes
☐ No

MA27: What musical instrument(s) would you most like to learn to play?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
☐ Answer was NOT 'Yes' at question '29 [MA13]' (Do you currently play a musical instrument?) and Answer was 'Yes' at question '42 [MA26]' (Would you like to play a musical instrument?)
Please choose all that apply:
☐ Piano
☐ Guitar
☐ Recorder
☐ Ukulele
☐ Violin
☐ Viola
☐ Cello
☐ Double Bass
☐ Flute
☐ Clarinet
☐ Oboe
☐ Bassoon
☐ Saxophone
☐ Mandolin
☐ Trumpet
☐ French Horn
☐ Trombone
☐ Tuba
☐ Percussion
☐ Ocarina
☐ Other:

MA28: Why would you most like to play this / these instrument(s)?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
☐ Answer was NOT 'Yes' at question '29 [MA13]' (Do you currently play a musical instrument?) and Answer was 'Yes' at question '42 [MA26]' (Would you like to play a musical instrument?)
Please write your answer here:

MA29: What deters you from playing, or from learning to play, a musical instrument?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
☐ Answer was NOT 'Yes' at question '29 [MA13]' (Do you currently play a musical instrument?) and Answer was 'No' at question '42 [MA26]' (Would you like to play a musical instrument?)
Please write your answer here:

MA30: What would motivate you to play, or to learn to play, a musical instrument?
Only answer this question if the following conditions are met:
☐ Answer was NOT 'Yes' at question '29 [MA13]' (Do you currently play a musical instrument?) and Answer was 'No' at question '42 [MA26]' (Would you like to play a musical instrument?)
Please write your answer here:

MA31: What benefits, if any, do you believe can be gained by playing a musical instrument in music groups?
Please write your answer here:
MA32: The types of music I would most like to play are (select up to five):

Please number each box in order of preference from 1 to 24

- Alternative Music
- Blues
- Classical Music
- Country Music
- Dance Music
- Easy Listening
- Electronic Music
- European Music (Folk / Pop)
- Hip Hop / Rap
- Inspirational (incl. Gospel)
- Asian Pop (J-Pop, K-pop)
- New Age
- Jazz
- Latin Music
- Opera
- Rock
- R&B / Soul
- Reggae
- Singer / Songwriter (inc. Folk)
- World Music / Beats
- None of the above
- Other

MA33: I would prefer to play with groups consisting of:

Please choose only one of the following:

- adults over 50 years of age
- adults over 18 years of age
- both adults and children
- I will never want to play music in a group

---

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

DI01: Age

Please choose only one of the following:

- under 50
- 50 – 54
- 55 – 59
- 60 – 64
- 65 – 69
- 70 – 74
- 75 – 79
- 80 – 84
- 85 – 89
- 90 – 94
- 95 – 99
- 100 or over

DI02: I identify as:

Please choose only one of the following:

- Male
- Female
- Other

DI03: My current residential location is:

Please choose only one of the following:

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural
- Other

DI04: I live alone:

Please choose only one of the following:

- Yes
- No

DI05: Marital status:

Please choose all that apply:

- Never married
- Currently married
- Previously married, now single
- Widowed

DI06: Family Status:

Please choose all that apply:

- No children
- Children at home
- Children left home
- Grandchildren at home

DI07: The category which best describes my current family income is:

Please choose only one of the following:

- Lower
- Lower middle
Middle
Upper middle
Upper

D108: My culture/ethnicity is:
(e.g. Australian Greek—20 years in Australia; Taiwanese Australian-born)
Please write your answer here:

D109: My religious affiliation is:
Please choose **only one** of the following:
- Anglican (Church of England)
- Baptist
- Buddhism
- Catholic
- Greek Orthodox
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Lutheran
- Personal Spiritual Beliefs
- Presbyterian
- Russian Orthodox
- Salvation Army
- Taoism
- Traditional Beliefs
- Uniting Church
- Wesleyan Methodist
- No religion
- Other

D110: My highest level of education is:
Please choose **only one** of the following:
- Literate without educational level
- Below primary school
- Primary school
- Middle school/Junior high school
- Matriculation/Senior high school
- Diploma or certificate not equal to degree
- Graduate (equal to degree)
- Postgraduate (e.g. graduate diploma, masters degree, doctorate)

D111: How would you describe your current primary occupation, profession or job title? If RETIRED, how would you describe your past primary occupation, profession or job title?
Please choose **all** that apply:
- Professional
- White collar
- Blue collar
- Other:

D112: How did you hear about this survey?
Please choose all that apply and provide a comment:
- Club or organisation notice (please specify)
- Newspaper, magazine, e-news or journal article (please specify)
- Website notice (please specify)
- A friend told me
- Other (please specify)

---

**Thank you for your participation in this research.**
If you would like more information about the benefits of learning a musical instrument in later adulthood, please email me at:

Teresa.Kunaeva@griffithuni.edu.au
APPENDIX G: INTERVIEWEES' INFORMATION SHEET

INFORMATION SHEET

Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University: GU Ref. No: 2015/874

PhD Research: Promoting community music participation by older adults

Research Team: Ms Teresa Kunaeva, PhD Candidate; Supervised by Associate Professor Brydie-Leigh Bartleet & Professor Peter Roennfeldt

Why is the research being conducted?
The global ageing population and the increasing number of baby-boomers who are now entering retirement raise the need for leisure activities that could contribute to the health and wellbeing of ageing societies. This research project is designed to investigate the leisure choices of older Australian adults and evaluate the benefits and challenges of their participation in community music activities.

What you will be asked to do?
If you agree to be a part of this study, you will be asked to participate in a 40-60 minute semi-structured interview, to be conducted at the Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University, South Bank, Brisbane, or at an agreed, convenient venue. During this interview, you will be asked to complete a brief demographic questionnaire. Ms Kunaeva will then talk to you about your involvement in community music activities. Your discussion will be recorded on audio and transcribed by Ms Kunaeva. You will be given the opportunity to correct or modify the transcription. As required by Griffith University, all audio recordings will be erased after transcription. However, other research data (interview transcripts and analysis) will be retained in a locked cabinet and/or a password protected electronic file at Griffith University for a period of five years before being destroyed.

The basis by which you have been selected to participate in this research
You have been invited to participate in this research due to (a) your identification as an interested older adult; (b) your participation in community music activities predominantly for older adults; (c) your desire to play a musical instrument; and/or (d) your avoidance of community music activities.

The expected benefits of the research
We are conducting this research so that we can better understand the motivations for and obstacles to musical engagement by older adults. We also want to use the knowledge we develop in this research to develop resources and materials that can facilitate musical participation by older adults in the future. We hope that this research will enable more adults to participate in community music making and help to generate active music communities for the benefit of an ageing Australian society.
Risks to you & your confidentiality
There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this research. Any reference to comments provided by you in subsequent publications will remain anonymous.

Although the researchers will take every precaution to maintain confidentiality of the data, the nature of focus groups prevents the researchers from guaranteeing confidentiality. The researchers would like to remind participants to respect the privacy of fellow participants and not repeat what is said in the focus group to others.

Your participation is voluntary
You do not have to participate in this research. You should only agree to participate if you feel very comfortable with being involved. You can change your mind at any time and withdraw from the research. There will be no penalty or bad feeling from the University or any of the researchers if you do not wish to participate.

Questions
For more information about this project, please contact Dr Brydie-Leigh Bartleet.
Phone: (07) 3735 6249 or email: b.bartleet@griffith.edu.au

The ethical conduct of this research
Griffith University has rules to make sure that researchers act in appropriate ways during research projects. There is also a set of national guidelines that researchers must follow which is called the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans. If you have any concerns or complaints about how this project was run you should contact the Manager, Research Ethics on (07) 3735 4375 or at research-ethics@griffith.edu.au

Feedback to you
Researchers can give you a copy of the publications or a plain language summary of results from this research if you would like to see them. Please ask the researcher for a copy if you are interested in seeing the publications or a plain language summary of results, or contact Ms Teresa Kunaeva. email: Teresa.Kunaeva@griffithuni.edu.au

Privacy statement
The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and / or use of your identified personal information. As outlined elsewhere in this information sheet, your identified personal information will not be reported in resulting publications. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded. For further information consult the University’s Privacy Plan at http://www.griffith.edu.au/privacy-plan or telephone (07) 3735 4375.
INTERVIEWEE CONSENT FORM

PhD Research: Promoting community music participation by older adults

GU Ref. No: 2015/874

Research Team: Ms Teresa Kunaeva, PhD Candidate (Teresa.Kunaeva@griffithuni.edu.au); Supervised by Associate Professor Brydie-Leigh Bartleet (b.bartleet@griffith.edu.au) & Professor Peter Roennfeldt (p.roennfeldt@griffith.edu.au)

By signing my name at the bottom of this page, I confirm that I have read the information sheet and I am happy to be involved in this research project. I also confirm that I understand the dot points below, which talk about how my information will be used and what I might get from participating in this research. If I do not understand any of these dot points I will ask the researcher to explain them to me. I will not sign the bottom of this page until I am happy that I understand all of the dot points listed below:

• I understand that I will be interviewed by a researcher and that this might take 30-60 minutes to complete;
• I understand that my interview with the researcher will be audio recorded* and transcribed so that there is a record of my feedback for the research project;
• I understand that there will be no direct benefit to me from my participation in this research but that my feedback may help to make future community music activities more beneficial for older adults;
• I understand that I do not have to participate in this research if I don’t want to;
• I understand that I do not have to answer any questions that make me feel uncomfortable;
• I understand that I can request to stop participating in this research at any time if I feel uncomfortable in any way;
• If I have any questions regarding my part in this research I can ask the researchers at any time;
• I understand that I can contact the Manager, Research Ethics, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee on (07) 3735 4375 (or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au) if I have any concerns about this research project; and
• I agree to participate in the project.

Name: ___________________________________________
Signature: ________________________________________
Date: ____________________________________________

* As required by Griffith University, all audio recordings will be erased after transcription. However, other research data (interview transcripts and analysis) will be retained in a locked cabinet and/or a password protected electronic file at Griffith University for a period of five years before being destroyed.
## APPENDIX I: NVivo Categories & Codes

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### A Intraperersonal
- Psychological
  - Ability
    - Ability overcome
    - Practice
    - Tuition
  - Childhood obstacles

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<td>Religion</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social politics</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Z Miscellaneous</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Coding Segments** 2908
Dear [organisation contact],

Would it be possible for you to forward the information below to your older-adult (50-plus) members and/or to include the article (attached as a Word document) in your next newsletter?

The survey, for Queensland residents aged 50-plus, is completely anonymous and will be active online until the end of March.

With sincere thanks,
[Signature]

---

**Older adults (50-plus) chosen for Griffith University’s Leisure Activities Survey**

Are you “chronologically gifted” and living in Queensland?

The global ageing population and the increasing number of baby-boomers who are now entering retirement raise the need for leisure activities that contribute to the health and wellbeing of ageing societies.

Teresa Kunaeva is a 60-year-old doctoral candidate at Griffith University. She and her supervisory team are conducting research that is designed to investigate the leisure choices of older Australian adults and evaluate the benefits and challenges of such participation.

“We are conducting this research so that we can better understand the motivations for, and obstacles to, the leisure choices of older adults. We also want to use the knowledge we develop in this research to develop resources and materials that can facilitate community participation by older adults in the future. We hope that this research will enable more adults to actively engage in leisure activities that help to benefit an ageing Australian society.”

Your participation in this online survey may help to make future community leisure activities more accessible for older adults.

The survey is completely anonymous, takes 15-20 minutes, will be online until the end of March, and can be accessed through the following link:

[https://prodsurvey.rcs.griffith.edu.au/LeisureActivities](https://prodsurvey.rcs.griffith.edu.au/LeisureActivities)

Please contact Teresa for further information.
Many thanks,
Teresa.Kunaeva@griffithuni.edu.au
Griffith University Ref No: 2015/874

1 attachment: Leisure Activities Research for Newsletter (doc)
Appendix K: AMI Newsletter Article

December 2016

RESEARCH PROJECTS

Older adults (50-plus) chosen for Griffith University’s Leisure Activities Survey

Are you “chronologically gifted” and living in Queensland?

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Your participation in this online survey may help to make future community leisure activities more accessible for older adults.

The survey takes about 15 minutes and can be accessed through the following link:

https://prodsurvey.rcs.griffith.edu.au/LeisureActivities

Please contact Teresa for further information.

Teresa.Kunaeva@griffithuni.edu.au
Griffith University Ref No: 2015/874
Other leisure activities named \((n = 120)\) and the number of respondents who named them where this was more than one.

- Aerobic dance classes
- Amateur theatre
- Animal health lectures
- Aqua aerobics
- Art (in groups) \(x 7\)
- Attending lectures/talks
- Audio books
- BBQ’s with Friends
- Beach \(x 2\)
- Bird watching \(x 3\)
- Boating \(x 4\)
- Book launches
- Breakfast events
- Browsing shops
- Bush care \(x 2\)
- Bushwalking \(x 4\)
- Cafes
- Camping \(x 6\)
- Caring \(x 7\) (grandchildren and invalid)
- Christmas parties
- Church
- Cocktail events
- Community Service \(x 2\)
- Cooking \(x 4\)
- Corresponding with family and friends
- Croquet
- Cruising
- Dancing \(x 3\)
- Darts \(x 2\)
- Daytime activities with friends
- Driving
- Exercise classes
- Family history \(x 2\)
- Fishing \(x 6\)
- Fitness exercises
- Fossicking \(x 4\)
- Friends get togethers
- Golf \(x 12\)
- Graphic arts
- Gym \(x 12\)
- Having friends over for dinner
- Health lectures
- Hiking
- Hill walking
- Home handy-man duties
- Horse riding
- House sitting
- Hoy
- Kayaking
- Lapidary \(x 2\)
- Lead lighting
- Line dancing \(x 3\)
- Lions club \(x 4\)
- Local activities
- Local day tours
- Markets browsing
- Meditation \(x 2\)
- Meeting friends \(x 10\)
- Men’s Shed
- Model ship making
- Morning teas
- Mosaics
- Mountain climbing
- Natural health
- Naturopathic lectures
- Nordic walking
- Oystering
- Pan Pac Games
- Parkrun
- Parties
- Pets \(x 4\) (includes walking the dog)
- Photography \(x 6\)
- Pilates \(x 3\)
- Playing games on the iPad
- Playing pool
- Plays
- Probus
- Pub trivia
- Public exhibitions
- Public lectures
- Qi Gong
- Reading magazines / newspapers
- Reading \(x 2\)
- Renovations
- Restaurants
- Rock Climbing
- Rowing
- Russian language
- Sailing model boats
- Sailing \(x 3\)
- Service Club Membership
- Shopping
- Sightseeing \(x 2\)
- Silver smithing \(x 4\)
- Singing alone
- Snorkelling
- Socialising \(x 2\)
- Sorting family photos
- Stand up paddle boarding
- Surfing
- Table tennis
- Tai Chi \(x 4\)
- Teaching
- Teaching Bridge
- Teaching Chess
- Tech work for Men’s Shed
- Theatre performances
- Trekking
- Tutoring
- Unpack & organise boxes
- Visiting bookstores
- Visiting friends in hospital
- Volunteer work \(x 30\)
- Walking
- Walking in City
- Water aerobics \(x 2\)
- Weights
- Window shopping
- Writing \(x 5\)
- Yoga \(x 2\)
### APPENDIX M: INSTRUMENT POPULARITY ACROSS LIFE STAGES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Primary School</th>
<th>High School</th>
<th>Post-school to age 50</th>
<th>After age 50</th>
<th>Currently play (2016)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accordion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Bass drum</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.49</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>1.86</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>0.93</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1.49</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.85</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>45.37</td>
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<td>4.63</td>
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<td>2.78</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>2.99</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6.48</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

| Primary School | 134 | 108 | 73 | 53 | 34 |
## APPENDIX N: STATISTICS OF INFORMANTS

**Older-adult musicians (all names are pseudonyms)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Years Played</th>
<th>2nd Instrument</th>
<th>Ensemble</th>
<th>Music in Childhood</th>
<th>Parent Musical</th>
<th>Highest Education</th>
<th>HighMs</th>
<th>Born Overseas</th>
<th>Work/Caring Commitments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aiden</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>75−79</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>BIO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>B.Pham</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>60−64</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>BIO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>M.Ed</td>
<td></td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>70−74</td>
<td>Saxophone</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>BIO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Matriculation</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>70−74</td>
<td>Recorder</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>BIO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bella</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>70−74</td>
<td>Cello</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>BIO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Junior</td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bianca</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>75−79</td>
<td>Cello</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>BIO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Year 12</td>
<td></td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brody</td>
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<td>70−74</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Cello</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>BIO</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>MSc</td>
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<td>Japan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clara</td>
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<td>55−59</td>
<td>Flute</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>BIO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Year 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colin</td>
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<td>45−49</td>
<td>Cello</td>
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<td>Recorder</td>
<td>Bardon</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>B.Ed</td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes/FT</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Conrad</td>
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<td>60−64</td>
<td>Bassoon</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>QACMS</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>B.S</td>
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<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daphne</td>
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<td>Violin</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>University</td>
<td></td>
<td>ATCL</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Piano</td>
<td>BIO</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dylan</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>80−84</td>
<td>Violin</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>Piano</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Professional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edith</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Grade 8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Piano</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tech IT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eric</td>
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<td>Drums</td>
<td>DARE</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>Dip.T.</td>
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<td>Grade 3</td>
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<td>Felicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Instrument</td>
<td>Years Played</td>
<td>2nd Instrument</td>
<td>Ensemble</td>
<td>Music in Childhood</td>
<td>Parent Musical</td>
<td>Highest Education</td>
<td>HighMs</td>
<td>Born Overseas</td>
<td>Work/Caring Commitments</td>
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<td>Guitar</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>G.A.</td>
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<td>UK</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Midwifery</td>
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<td>DARE</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>Teacher Certificate</td>
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### Facilitators (all names are pseudonyms)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Gender</th>
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<th>Instrument</th>
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<th>Ensemble</th>
<th>Music in Childhood</th>
<th>Parent Musical</th>
<th>Highest Education</th>
<th>Highest Music</th>
<th>Born Overseas</th>
<th>Work/Caring Commitments</th>
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<td>Brian</td>
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<td>70−74</td>
<td>Ukulele</td>
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<td>30−34</td>
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<td>DITO</td>
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<td>Felix</td>
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<td>80−84</td>
<td>Piano</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>BIO</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<tr>
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<td>60−64</td>
<td>Voice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gleemen</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Doctor</td>
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<tr>
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<td>75−79</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>Yes (Aunt)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Recorder</td>
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Composition written for advanced members of the U3A Logan handbell group, with two ringers playing four bells each, plus solo alto recorder.

APPENDIX O: HANDBELL COMPOSITION


Silverman, & D. J. Elliot (Eds.), *Community Music Today* (pp. 79–97). Plymouth, UK: Roman & Littlefield Education.


doi:10.1177/002242589103900306


doi:10.1177/8755123310361762


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doi:10.1177/8755123313502346


doi:10.1080/14613808.2018.1563057


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doi:10.5195/hcs.2015.195


doi:10.5195/hcs.2015.195


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