

Exploring student experiences of musicing at Friday funk sessions through the lens of critical hope

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PREFACE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I would like to thank God, my father, who has sustained and carried me throughout this journey. This journey made me realise the truth behind Zechariah 4:6, it is not by might nor by power but by the spirit of the living God.

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ABSTRACT

This arts-based instrumental case study explores student participation in 'Friday funk sessions' as a site of critical hope in a South African context. The study examines the potential of musical engagement communities, such as 'Friday funk sessions', to stimulate critical hope. This study's premise is inspired by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's work. Freire (1970:47) states that the strife for critical hope begins when forms of oppression are acknowledged and resisted. Bozalek *et al.* (2013:1) describe critical hope as the ability to recognise an appropriate "antidote to conditions of inequality". Students face many struggles in higher music education and experience a lot of disparity (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012:708). According to Freire (1970:47), critical hope takes effect when there is an intentional effort toward finding a resolution for the disparity experienced in higher education. This study is within the transformative paradigm, which challenges the status quo of oppressive, hegemonic systems to bring about change (Mertens *et al.*, 2011:231). Change is achieved through the collaborative as well as participatory nature of musicing. It also explores the shared understanding of the experience that making music together offers (Hirche, 2011:167).

The purpose of this arts-based instrumental case study is to explore the student experiences of musicing at Friday funk sessions through the lens of critical hope. In this study, critical hope is defined as an insight into the possible and appropriate actions needed to address unjust conditions in higher music education.

This study is an instrumental case study (Stake, 2010:20). I was interested in the theoretical framework of critical hope and the Friday funk sessions as a site that would help me facilitate my understanding of critical hope in practice. The instrumental case study used an applied research design. It allowed me to refine an existing framework for critical hope by making it specific to higher music education and its applications within such a context.

Case study allowed me to use an interpretative and theoretical framework to investigate the meaning students ascribe to a social or human problem, social inequality, and other intersecting oppressions in higher education and higher music education (Creswell, 2013:44; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:3).

For this study, data were collected by conducting semi-structured interviews with five participants selected purposefully through the process of purposive sampling (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:106; Guest *et al.*, 2006:58). The interviews were transcribed and analysed by a coding method called dramaturgical coding, using ATLAS.ti computer software. Each interview transcript was analysed individually and participant write-ups were formulated from the analysis. The data analysis process resulted in monologues of each of the participants. The monologues served as the arts-based presentation pertinent to the research process.

The results of the study showed that three elements influenced participant attendance in the Friday funk sessions, namely, (1) their relationship with music before tertiary music tuition; (2) a significant moment of conflict; (3) the need for a respite from the conflicts of their tertiary music tuition. Each phase serves as a build-up to a specific and necessary moment where critical hope must develop. The Friday funk sessions were effective because they opened up an opportunity for what Elliot (1995:168) calls a self-other dialogue, wherein participants reveal themselves to one another through music. In this way, the participants could have a dialogue and learn about the problems and struggles they face, the causes of these problems, and a meaningful search for a solution to these problems (Ayers, 2006:88).

Key Words: Critical hope, Musicing, Friday funk sessions, Paulo Freire, lived experiences

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CHAPTER 1: EXPLORING STUDENT EXPERIENCES AT FRIDAY FUNK SESSIONS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This arts-based instrumental case study explores the student participation in Friday funk sessions as a site of critical hope within a South African context. An important part of this exploration is understanding the potential of a community of musical engagement (Kenny, 2016:12), such as Friday funk sessions, in achieving critical hope. Friday funk sessions are jam sessions that I started last year at the Koinonia University¹. These sessions aimed to bring hope, through musicing, to students who are part of a socially and racially divided environment. I also wanted to give the participating students a voice to speak out about their experiences in higher music education (Spruce, 2015:288). Having been a student of the Koinonia University school of music, I have an ascribed closeness to the University, and the school of music that places me as a legitimate candidate to speak with authority on their problems, perspectives, knowledge and culture.

This study's premise is inspired by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's work. Freire (1970:47) states that the fight for critical hope begins when forms of oppression are acknowledged and resisted. Bozalek *et al.* (2013:1) describe critical hope as the ability to recognise an appropriate "antidote to conditions of inequality". Students face many struggles in higher music education and experience a lot of disparity (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012:708). According to Freire (1970:47), critical hope takes effect when there is an intentional effort toward finding a resolution for the disparity experienced in higher education.

The modern University has unintentionally become a space that promotes social, cultural, and economic reproduction (Soudien, 2012:32). Universities generally excel in the intellectual and moral advancement of students' lives (Mbembe, 2016:30). But there exists a disunion between the policies that promote inclusivity at universities and students' actual experiences within these universities (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012:688). Therein lies the problem, on one hand universities represent hope to students in that they fulfill the

¹ Kononia University is the pseudonym I gave to the tertiary institution to which I am affiliated.

democratic right to access to higher learning, while also becoming a cite for all manner of systemic inequality to prevail.

Students find themselves experiencing severe conditions of inequality, and as such the disparities in South African society become more apparent to them (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012:708). These disparities result from students' racial and social struggles (Ndlovu, 2017:43–45). These struggles are experienced due to a failure on the part of policymakers in higher education; a failure to bring about the transformation of the higher education system, which was envisioned in the 1997 *White Paper on the Transformation of Higher Education* (South Africa, 1997:11–16).

An overwhelming amount of research highlights these struggles. For the purposes of the research, I have laid out these struggles in five themes: prevailing race and class discrimination (Erwin, 2012:93; McKinney, 2017:xi; Rohleder *et al.*, 2007:253; Smedley, 1998:690; Soudien, 2010:881; Walker, 2005:41), struggles with decolonisation (Bosch & Mutsvairo, 2017:221; Konik, 2018:576; Mbembe, 2016:29), student enrolment and failure rates (Council on Higher Education, 2013:15), gender and sexuality discrimination (Moorosi & Moletsane, 2009:19; Swartz *et al.*, 2018:3), and the growing sexual violence and rape-culture on campuses² (Bashonga & Khuzwayo, 2017:35; Ndlovu, 2017:68; Xaba, 2017:96). I will expand on the themes below, and they will serve to structure the literature overview.

Universities have always been deeply embedded in society and have, in general, had the obligation of contributing to social justice, academic and social development, and democratic citizenship (Badat, 2010:6; Botman, 2012: xiii). *The Framework for the Transformation of Higher Education White Paper 3* (South Africa, 1997:11–12) was issued to redress past discrimination and ensure representation and equal access to educational resources in the South African context. It can be argued that thus far, higher education institutions have failed to achieve these goals, giving rise to an unsatisfied and disillusioned student populace (Walker, 2016:144; Nyamupangedengu, 2017:114).

² Bozalek *et al.*, (2013) refer to a pedagogy of critical hope, which states that critical hope recognises the unjust and unequal societies we inhabit. This is a theoretical framework inspired by critical social justice pedagogy. See hooks, b. *Teaching Community: a pedagogy of hope*. 2003. New York, NY: Routledge.

Swartz *et al.* (2018:1) conducted a large-scale study on education and emancipation, analysing the recommendations and implementation of *The Report on Transformation and Social Cohesion and the Elimination of Discrimination in Public Higher Education Systems* (Department of Education, 2008:1–140), as well as this report's effectiveness in addressing the struggle of students in South African universities. Racial discrimination still plays out in nuanced and crude ways in South African society (Conradie, 2016:5). The report (Department of Education, 2008:41) states that racism is rife across all higher education institutions at both staff and student levels. Additionally, the conditions of inequality perpetuate forms of discrimination. Although the number of black students enrolled in universities has increased since 1995 (Council on Higher Education, 2013:15), there is still a disparity in the achievement of success based along racial lines (Swartz *et al.*, 2018:3; Haslanger, 2014:109). Beyond merely providing access to black students, universities also have to critically engage with the shifting landscape of race relations in South Africa (Soudien, 2004:86–114). Swartz *et al.* (2018:36) found that students acknowledge that racism is a problem and racism manifests differently. Dolby (2001:114) contends that race has been refashioned and has created new ways that inscribe racism.

Racism in higher education may include the access (or lack thereof) to resources, the selection processes in student housing, and university language policies (Swartz *et al.*, 2018:37). Scholarly literature documents the foundations of this type of exclusion (Erasmus, 2010:388). In the South African context, theories such as Alport's (1954:17ff) contact hypothesis – which posits that interracial contact will minimise prejudice and enhance socio-cultural interactions – has been called into question. Studies based on Alport's contact hypothesis (Erasmus & de Wet, 2003:vi; Soudien, 2004:89; Steyn & Van Zyl, 2001:1) show that contact between different racial groups is often a stressor that leads to racial conflict. The fear of racial conflict leads to self-segregation and selective contact between disparate racial groups (Erasmus, 2010:388; Swartz *et al.*, 2018:37). Self-segregation in the university sphere is shaped by colonialism and whiteness (Hale, 2010:1; Baines, 2008:99). Puttick (2011:68–70) found that, even though various efforts to disrupt white superiority have been successful, whiteness and hegemonic systems are still an everyday part of the student and academic life.

The overt vestiges of colonialism are encapsulated in whiteness symbols throughout higher education institutions, such as the Cecil John Rhodes statue that stood on the

University of Cape Town campus until recently (Konik, 2018:576; Bosch, 2017:221; Mbembe, 2016:30). Mbembe (2016:29) emphatically states how statues of, and buildings named after, colonial leaders amount to a form of mental harassment because of what these objects represent – memories of a history of colonised and oppressed people (Mbembe, 2016:30). Mbembe (2016:33) also contends that it is demeaning to black people that universities still uphold the idea of a Eurocentric way of disseminating knowledge, e.g., having English and Afrikaans as the only recognised languages of tuition.

Following the recent #Feesmustfall protests of 2015–2017, higher education institutions have updated their policies to provide an inclusive language of tuition (Konik, 2018:257; Leucher *et al.*, 2017:232; Ndlovu, 2017:20). The University of Pretoria has made English the only medium of instruction in lectures, tutorials, and assessments (University of Pretoria, 2019:2). In December 2017, a constitutional court ruling upheld the University of the Free State's decision to change from a dual-medium Afrikaans and English tuition to an English medium language of tuition school (Eyewitness news, 2017). A constitutional court ruling downgraded Afrikaans as a language of instruction at Stellenbosch University, making English the primary language (Moubray, 2019). The University's official policy document, issued in 2016, also contains a policy that has developed isiXhosa as an academic language (Stellenbosch University, 2016:2–3). Although these recent developments point toward the beginning of transformation, they simultaneously present another discrimination element. Black students who find it difficult to express themselves in English may experience shame and marginalisation (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017:138), leading to dehumanisation (Zinn & Rodgers, 2012:77). This shame as well as marginalisation experiences may lead to a disproportionate failure rate among black students (Council on Higher Education, 2013:15).

Student enrolment into universities around South Africa has risen significantly in recent years (Motala, 2017:16). With increased enrollment, there has also been increased diversity regarding ethnicity, race, and sexual orientation (Simkins, 2016:40). Yet, there are still many significant problems. The Council on Higher Education reported the inequality in the enrolment of black and white students (four times as many white students are enrolled as black students). The percentage of white students that complete their studies in record time is 50 percent higher than that of black students (Council on Higher

Education, 2013:15–17). The failure rates among students stand at 55 percent, and only one in four students complete their studies in record time (Council on Higher Education, 2013:16).

There also seems to be underlying dynamics between racial discrimination and gender and sexual discrimination (Hill & Marshal, 2018: 422–423; Collins, 2004:120–121). Swartz *et al.* (2018:51) show that young women do not understand the significance of their gender when it comes to their university experiences. There is a general resistance in acknowledging that gender, race, and class influence women's social experiences (Chisholm, 2009:24). Both black and white students are reluctant to name the inequality they experience as sexist or racist, regardless of them making sense of and understanding gender dynamics through a patriarchal perspective (Chisholm, 2009:25). Gender also plays an integral part in students' academic and social lives (Naicker, 2013:325). Moorosi and Moletsane (2009:29–45) explained that an in-depth conversation with female students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal showed the multiple ways in which gender affects their lives at University. These female participants rejected the idea that gender inequality marginalised them and didn't feel that it was an obstacle to their success. However, they recognised a sense of unequal, gendered treatment, specifically from male students (Moorosi & Moletsane, 2009:36–37). Gender inequality also influenced the female students' understanding of how deeply patriarchal ways of thinking influence university campuses' daily operations (Swartz *et al.*, 2018:52). In their findings, Swartz *et al.* (2018:51) show that sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity seem to have a bearing on students. These matters influence success or failure within the university setting in the same way that race does.

Another struggle is the increase in sexual violence and rape culture on university campuses (Omar, 2019:123; Mabetha & De Wet, 2018:10). Bashonga and Khuzwayo (2017:35–49) explored the prevalence of sexual violence on university campuses, tackling university policies on sexual violence cases, as well as the public's opinions about sexual violence in universities, as expressed on social media. Their findings show the mounting dissatisfaction with university policies on cases of sexual assault, to the point that these policies are regarded as useless and ultimately ineffective (Bashonga & Khuzwayo, 2017:35). Bashonga and Khuzwayo (2017:45) further explore the possibility that rape culture in universities could be a consequence of the broader hegemonic

patriarchy in society. Gouws (2018:3–15) analyses the #EndRapeCulture campaign of 2016, where South African women went out onto public streets shirtless in protest against the normalisation of sexual violence on university campuses. She conducts her analysis using experience as a form of identity politics (Gouws, 2018:3–5). Gouws (2018: 10) further explores the contribution of digital media to the campaign's success and poses the question of whether or not the campaign can be compared with SlutWalks, a transnational movement calling for the end of rape culture (O'Keefe, 2014).

Guse and Vermaak (2011:527–534) and Bozalek *et al.* (2013:2) conducted studies similar to this study in that they investigated hope within the South African higher education context. Guse and Vermaak (2011:529) explored hope as well as psychological well-being. Their findings show how higher levels of hope are associated with higher psychological well-being (Guse & Vermaak, 2011:529). Bozalek *et al.* (2013:2) create a distinct difference between referencing hope and hope as a necessary element to foster. Bozalek *et al.* (2013:2) state that a culture of hope is cultivated when conditions of inequality are acknowledged, and active work is done to alter specific institutional practices and make such a culture possible. My study is different from these studies in the sense that this study focusses on a higher music education site.

This study's central focus is to explore one instance of musicing as a site for critical hope in higher music education. Music is a pivotal part of human society and culture (Wright, 2015:342). Blacking (1973:43–44) proposes that human beings have an intrinsic need to participate in communal music-making. Bannan (2014:1) argues that the need to participate in music-making is "embedded into the human genome". We cannot disregard the integral role that music plays in the social world and its potential for social reproduction (Gray, 2015:63; Boyce-Tillman, 2015:212; Skyllstad, 2015:172). Friday funk sessions started to explore communal music-making power (Reay, 2015: xvii). Roy (2010:3–4) examines the power of music in affecting social change, focusing on how powerful American folk music was in the Civil Rights Movement. Roy (2010:4) discusses how integrating music on picket lines, freedom rides, and jails contributed to the achievements of the Civil Rights struggle. The same was true for South Africa: Rörich (1989:86–88) discusses the Sophiatown-era of 1940s South Africa and how black people were united and joined together by their similar struggles. Rörich (1989:88) talks about how important music was, in Sophiatown, for promoting social consciousness and how performers were

the cultural and social leaders of their era. Van der Merwe (2015:103–111) employs Afrikaans popular music as a lens through which he shows how Boeremusiek was used as a tool to propel Afrikaner nationalist propaganda. Van der Merwe (2015:110) also discusses how Boeremusiek deepened Afrikaners' national and cultural identity.

From these examples, it is obvious that there is an equally Machiavellian element to communal music making. This quality of communal music can perpetuate exclusionary practices, which are potentially damaging to the above-mentioned goals of change and transformation. Together, this literature points to music's galvanising ability to create a unity of experience. Music can make people come together and experience their joint struggle deeply by helping them express their frustrations through making music. It, therefore, creates platforms that inspire revolutionary change. The allure of communal music making is that from that experience can come a unified purpose towards a common goal, regardless of whether such a goal is a good or bad one. Therefore, exploring student experiences of Friday funk sessions gives me a platform to better understand the issues, struggles and problems that students experience during institutional music study.

1.2 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this arts-based instrumental case study is to explore the student experiences of musicing at Friday funk sessions through the lens of critical hope. In this study, critical hope is defined as an insight into the possible and appropriate actions needed to address unjust conditions in higher music education.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

What can we learn about the student experiences of musicing at Friday funk sessions by using the lens of critical hope?

1.4 RESEARCH PROCEDURES

1.4.1 Research approach

The approach to this inquiry is qualitative. A qualitative researcher uses interpretative and theoretical frameworks that provide a basis for investigating the meaning that people ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2013:44; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:3). The

human problem at hand is students' struggles in South African higher education, which has led to a dissatisfied and often marginalised student populace without hope (Ndlovu, 2017:43–45). This ties into my study because the participants' experiences will most likely reflect the ambiguities between hope and despair for different people, according to their personal experiences.

Qualitative research aims to build knowledge and find meaning by accessing, expressing, and negotiating truths (Leavy, 2013:21). Leavy (2017:4) explains how the knowledge we build is attained through various sources and the multiple personal lived experiences of those around us. Leavy (2017:5) asserts that the knowledge gained through personal life experiences and accounts can often be subject to over-generalisation and distortion of the truth. Therefore, communicating lived experiences effectively is the primary function of any qualitative research (Leavy, 2013:21). It is essential to my study because I want to explore students' music experiences in Friday funk sessions through the lens of critical hope. Qualitative research doesn't provide a single answer to the problem at hand (Braun & Clarke, 2013:21; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:6; Swaminathan & Mulvihill, 2017:6). The participants will have subjective views of participating in Friday funk sessions, and their views might not always coincide with one another. In qualitative research, the role of the researcher is paramount. He/she is the instrument of data collection, having a hands-on role in observing the action, context and in some instances having his/her personal experiences also reflected in the data (Stake, 2010:20). In this study, as the researcher, I am a catalyst for action and a musical and social collaborator.

1.4.2 Research paradigm

The researcher's worldview determines the research design, questions, data collection, and findings procedures (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018:19). My worldview falls within the transformative paradigm (Mertens, 2009:2). I am interested in redressing injustice, no matter how small the scale of redress (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018:19; Mertens, 2011:195). This study's motivation is to try and effect change, no matter how small, and raise awareness of the hopeless situations that, according to research, students find themselves living in due to the various struggles they face in their academic and student lives.

According to Mertens *et al.* (2011:230), the transformative paradigm is defined within the four philosophical assumptions. However, the axiological assumption has more standing in the transformative paradigm. The transformative paradigm informs the full set of transformative assumptions (Mertens *et al.*, 2011:230). The transformative paradigm itself is grounded in the understanding that ethics are defined in fighting for all human beings (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:231). The transformative paradigm also operates according to the tenets of social justice and the reciprocal exchange between the researcher and the participant (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018:20). It is an essential element of research because, as the researcher, I am responsible for collecting and documenting the experiences that my participants express to me in interviews.

This paradigm aims to dissent from the status quo of oppressive, hegemonic systems to bring about change (Mertens *et al.*, 2011:231). Change, in the context of this study, will be brought about through the collaborative and participatory nature of musicing. This change will be brought about by exploring the shared understandings of intuitive experience that making music together offers (Hirsche, 2011:167). The group experience of musicing together leads to healthy relationships, contributing to collaborative problem-solving and mutual understanding (Hirsche, 2011:167).

1.4.3 Strategy of inquiry: An arts-based instrumental case study

A case study is an exhaustive account and analysis of a bounded system (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:36). A case is a system bounded primarily in time, place, and activity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:36; Stake, 2010:27; Stake, 2005:443). My study focuses on the weekly jam sessions, the Friday funk sessions, organised within one higher education institution and curated for music students. This case study is bound by time since Friday funk sessions will only occur once a week during lunch hour. The place will be different venues within the institution. I will be conducting my research according to their availability. The activity, as stated before, will be musicing. These are jam sessions, where the students will be the decision-makers. The kind of music they will play and what takes place in these hour-long sessions will be entirely up to the students' discretion.

Yin (2014:932) defines a case study as an empirical inquiry investigating a contemporary phenomenon. The phenomenon in my study's context is critical hope and how students can foster it through musicing. Additionally, Yin (2014:950) states that investigating a

phenomenon is important in situations where the “boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clear”. In this study, the phenomenon is context-specific. Arts-based research practices adopt the tenants of the creative arts and use them in some, if not all, phases of social/qualitative research (Leavy, 2009:3). My study is an arts-based instrumental case study. The main reason for this is that I will present my findings in an artistic form. For this study, I will employ the approach of monologue writing guided by the conventions of Ethnodrama (Saldaña, 2011:63). Monologues are useful because they present a powerful way to sharpen the art of dramatic construction. I will use monologic writing components to craft monologues that will briefly tell my participants’ stories.

The motive for conducting my research is to transform consciousness, raise awareness and give proper expression to complicated feelings and thoughts through the creative arts (Eisner, 2002:10–19). An arts-based approach to the study also allows me to take a holistic approach to research, merging theory with practice (Leavy, 2014:403) and increasing access to my study, which is imperative for researchers working in the transformative paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018: 20–21).

1.4.4 Participants

There will be six participants in total. Guest *et al.* (2006:58–82) say that a point of data saturation can be reached with just six participants, depending on the sample size. My rationale for including one more participant is to make sure that I get to a point where I can reach data saturation. I will ensure that the data gathered is rich and thick (Dibley, 2011:13–19). I will employ a type of purposive sampling in selecting the participants for the study, known as maximum variation sampling (Palys, 2008:697; Leavy, 2017:75). Maximum variation sampling works well because the participants cover a broader scope of positions and perspectives concerning this study's topic. The students will be from one higher education institution and that regularly attend Friday funk sessions.

1.4.5 Data collection

In case study research, the researcher explores the bounded system through detailed data collection that involves various sources of data, e.g., observation, interviews, and reflection (Creswell, 2013:97). I will employ semi-structured interviews and reflective diary entries as the main data sources for this study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:106; Yin,

2014:106). Most qualitative research is done by analysing and interpreting what people say and observing what they do (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:65). Semi-structured interviews entail that the participants are free to talk. I can also see how they experience the jam sessions through their facial expressions and body language while interviewing them. Because my study embraces fiction as research (Leavy, 2013:21), reflective diary entries will help me shape a dramatic narrative that will reflect my research findings in the form of participant monologues. Access to my participants' reflective diaries gives me the privilege of extending discursive communication to show additional meanings that otherwise couldn't be expressed in spoken words.

1.4.6 Data analysis

I will transcribe the semi-structured interviews myself. To be thorough, I will first code on ATLAS.ti. I will use ATLAS.ti as a data management and organisation system because it facilitates ease in handling many documents and allows me to work concurrently on shared data sources (Frieze, 2019:60).

Every person has a voice, or a way of communicating that gives the listener a front-row seat to their invisible inner world (Dauite, 2014:2). To honour my participants' voices, I have chosen to analyse the data through dramaturgical coding (Saldaña, 2015:123; Saldaña, 2016:145). In dramaturgical coding, the participants' interactions are viewed as a performance, and interview transcripts and reflective diary entries are treated as monologues and dialogues (Saldaña, 2015:123). Dramaturgical coding uses elements of character, play script, and production analysis. In this sense, dramaturgical coding helps investigate the intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions, enabling me to draft good monologues (Saldaña, 2015:124). In this study, writing the monologues will be central to the research process. Richardson and Pierre (2018:827) talk about writing as a nomadic inquiry because writing is essentially a method of discovery. They also mention the concept of writing as representation and simulation (Richardson & Pierre, 2018:826).

1.4.7 Trustworthiness

Because the reality of any experience is individual, the participants' views are subjective, and I will therefore employ member checking (Creswell & Poth, 2018:261). Member

checking allows me to get feedback from my participants on the data collected, my interpretation thereof, and the conclusion drawn from the data. Thoroughness and aesthetic power are essential in determining trustworthiness in arts-based research (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Leavy, 2014:415). Therefore, I will employ reflective teams for analysis (Jones, 2003:66), where I will engage the participants on what they've written in their diary entries and what was revealed in the interviews. The coherence, trustworthiness of interpretation, and the translation of the feelings, expressions, and meanings that the participants ascribe to the musicing experience are also crucial to arts-based research credibility (Coles & Knowles, 2008:66). To achieve this, I will use verisimilitude, where I will work diligently to portray my participants' stories realistically, using sensory, visual, and auditory queues in my arts-based presentation (Leavy, 2013:25). Due to the subjective nature qualitative research, I, as the researcher, will provide a rich, thick description (Geertz, 1973:20) of the research methods, data collection procedures and the data analysis procedures as well as for my findings (Creswell, 2012:250–252). In keeping with transparency (Leavy, 2015:268), I will provide a detailed account of how my artistic presentation came to be.

1.4.8 Ethics

In adherence to the guidelines put in place by the institution under which I am conducting my study, I will be applying to the Arts Ethics committee. I will adhere to their stipulated ethical guidelines. I will also be applying for gate-keeper consent. I will also issue informed consent forms to the participants (Creswell, 2018:253; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:237; Smythe & Murray, 2000:313). The informed consent form that I will issue will stipulate that each participant has the right to withdraw from the study at any time (Josselson, 2007:539). I will employ the process consent method, which adheres to the principles of personhood and inclusivity (Dewing, 2008:60–62). This method is cognisant that ethical decisions are context-specific, and the ability to make decisions and choices is different for different people. It comprises five aspects that aren't linear and often fluid: “background and preparation; establishing a basis for capacity; initial consent; ongoing consent monitoring; and feedback and support” (Dewing, 2008:62). Assuring full confidentiality is of the utmost importance (Smythe & Murray, 2000:313).

I will also issue a declaration of confidentiality, stipulating that I will change every place or name the participants will mention in their diary entries. I will change the names of the

participants in the Interviews for the purposes of confidentiality. My participants will be chosen from the institution where I am conducting my research. For data management, I will store my work on an encrypted external drive and request access to Nextcloud, which is behind the institution's firewall. My dissertation advisors will frequently check my work to ensure that I adhere to ethical guidelines.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Student experiences in higher music education form the core of this research, and, therefore, expounding on student experiences requires a comprehensive review of South African higher education literature. This literature will inform my evaluation of higher music education concerning higher education challenges. Higher education in South Africa is often a mirror of the wider society (Badat, 2010:6; Botman, 2010: xii; hooks, 2003:40). In my literature review, I have found five social issues that are the significant areas of concern over social inequality and South African higher education oppression. I have contained these social issues into five overarching themes that will ultimately structure my literature review. According to Wooten and Mitchell (2016:476), higher education is a closed body with its specific norms, structures, and practices, which subsequently becomes an “intensified microcosm” of the wider society. There is a broad substratum of inequality present in higher education and society. Therefore, higher education has remained a powerful site for maintaining social inequality and other intersecting oppressions (Bourdieu, 1993:18).

The notion of cultural hegemony is central to my evaluation of higher education. Cultural hegemony is evident in higher education through western values, beliefs, behaviours, philosophies, and epistemologies (Meyer & Land, 2005:54). Embedded in this notion are unchallenged norms, structures, and practices (Naidoo, 2004:458) that are oppressive and manifested as an amalgam of intolerance, preconceived notions, racism, and social prejudice (Bell, 2007:3). In the context of extreme social inequality as seen in South Africa, we cannot deny the profound impact of oppression on issues of power and students' experiences in higher education (Leibowitz *et al.*, 2010:84). With a population of up to 55,7 million, South Africa remains a country with one of the world's highest socio-economic inequality levels (Leibowitz & Bozalek, 2014:94). South Africa remains as racially stratified as it was during apartheid (Allen, 2018:3). Government policies and legislation still refer to the racial categories of African, Indian, Coloured, and White—with 80% of the population being African (black), 9% white, 9% coloured, and 3% white (Stats SA, 2011). Nearly two decades since the abolishment of apartheid, race continues to be a stark indicator of social privilege. According to World bank group (2018:23), there is a

strong correlation between race and poverty, with most African families earning less than R 1600 a month. South Africa carries the highest GINI coefficient globally, which measures inequality levels in the country, with Africans making up most of the country's poorest (WBG, 2018:21).

According to Dermer *et al.* (2010:326), oppression is the use of power to disenfranchise and marginalise specific individuals or groups—oppression exists and thrives in institutions or societies that hold a perceived delineation of dominant and subordinate groups. We can understand oppression in this sense in terms of targets and agents—with targets being the disenfranchised and marginalised individuals; agents being those who have by birth or attainment an unfair advantage over targets (Adams *et al.*, 2007:440; Dermer *et al.*, 2010:3260).

In an overview of the literature on higher education in South Africa, I found many intersecting oppressions, such as race, class, gender and sexuality discrimination, the struggle for decolonisation, and sexual violence on campuses (Bozalek & Boughey, 2012:688; Moorosi, 2010:1; Gouws, 2018:3). Swartz *et al.* (2018:2) conducted multiple smaller studies in three universities investigating the extent and severity of the oppressions mentioned above. This is largely because of the growing number of academic work written on racism (Soudien, 2008:662-678; Erasmus, 2006:51-63; Leibowitz, 2012:3-19; Walker, 2005:129-146); decolonisation (Mbembe, 2016:29-43; Heleta, 2017:48-60; Erwin & Pillay, 2019:69) and gender and sexuality discrimination (Wilken & Badenhorst, 2003:197-206; Bennett *et al.*, 2007:52-77; Msibi, 2013:65-71; Mavhandu-Mudzusi & Sandy, 2015:1049-1056) in higher education. Studies and articles serve as evidence of a clear disjuncture between higher education policies that promote transformation and the experiences of the students who these institutions are supposed to be serving (Ndlovu, 2017:43-45).

By design, universities are supposed to advance student lives by developing a critical civil society (hooks, 2003:8). Universities must strive to be transformative and instrumental in providing a holistic education that steers the personal, economic, social, and critical development of students (Walker, 2006:163). Therefore, it is problematic when, years after democracy, there are still multiple social issues and oppression prevalent in higher education institutions. The administration and effective running of a university is hard work, and it is almost impossible to meet the specific needs of an entire student populace

(Badat, 2001:75). Although universities tend to have their unique set of responsibilities, cultural capital, and historical legacy, the common concern should be campus citizenship for all. Citizenship suggests a sense of responsibility towards those in your immediate locus and beyond. The attributes of citizenship include humanisation (Zinn *et al.*, 2016) and knowing how to navigate the complexities of interacting with others (Leibowitz, 2012:4).

The framework for the *Transformation of Higher Education White Paper 3* (South Africa, 1997:11-12) is a policy issued to ensure representation and equal access to educational resources. The *White paper 3* (South Africa, 1997:8) also stipulates the unmatched obligation higher education has to lay the foundation of a critical civil society. However, there is a gap between the vision set out by various policy documents and the reality of things (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017:134). It is primarily because of the assumption that policy will advertently erase colonialism and apartheid legacy, which have influenced ingrained institutionalised inequalities (Badat, 2001:75). In light of the chasm between what should be and what is, it is essential for higher education institutions to continually rethink and renegotiate their structures, practices, and culture from a perspective other than that of the dominant culture (Norris, 2001:19). Material inequality and socio-historical factors such as racial stratification, gender, and sexuality discrimination pose a threat to campus citizenship promise for all. Universities must be action-oriented in their obligation to be equitable and inclusive (Bazana & Mogotsi, 2017:10).

For this reason, my study relies heavily on critical pedagogy. According to Edginton and Wilton (2018:91), critical inquiry, thinking, and action equip us in knowing how to influence, react to, and resist any aspect of society we perceive as unequal or oppressive. Critical inquiry and thinking have the galvanising ability to disrupt hegemony and begin social reproduction and change. As Boler and Zembylas (2003:115) so aptly put it, "nobody escapes hegemony". While critical inquiry on the issues in the social climate of higher education is uncomfortable, it is indispensable. Halabi and Sonnenchein (2004:11) note that it is an emotionally taxing endeavour, yet contains a promise of hope for the future.

Critical inquiry requires students and educators to know themselves by acknowledging their situatedness and material, historical, and bodily specificity concerning their academic environments (Wear & Aultman, 2005:264; Boler & Zembylas, 2003:108).

Freire (2000:55) coins the term *conscientization*, which refers to an awareness of one's political and social conditions, to prepare a student to challenge that which is unjust, oppressive, and immoral about them. *Conscientization* combines the conscience, which appeals to our morality and consciousness, perception, and informed awareness of the self and the world (Freire, 2000:55). Only when individuals critically recognise their oppression and view it as limiting can they resolve it (Freire, 1970:49).

2.2 RACE AND RACISM

Racial segregation, stratification, and discrimination are all issues that plague higher education in this age (Woods, 2003:2-5). The long and tedious history of apartheid is the primary cause (Clark & Worger, 2013:3). The racialised segregation system based on geography, schooling, and employment changed the entire country and education domain (Nkomo, 1990:2). The rise of the national party used education to systematically and strategically enforce racially motivated policies, further advancing the notion of privilege based on race (Hartshorne, 1996:6; Rakometsi, 2008:14). The passage from apartheid to democracy in 1994 called for social transformation by sheer political will (Prinsloo & Slade, 2016:23). An interventionist approach by the African National Congress engendered the drafting of three critical documents in the effort of transforming higher education, namely, National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE, 1996:1-86) report; Education White Paper 3: a program for transformation of higher education (South Africa, 1997:1-49); and the Council on Higher Education (CHE, 2001:17) report (Prinsloo & Slade, 2016: 26; Badat, 2008:3).

These interventions were effective and ushered new visions of democracy in higher education, with diversity and inclusivity being the driving elements of this vision. Student enrolment into universities around South Africa rose significantly (Motala, 2017:16), and institutions saw an increase in diversity concerning ethnicity, race, and sexual orientation (Simkins, 2016:40). However, according to Young and Campbell (2014:362), black students' integration into historically white universities is not always correctly done.

The focus of such integration is usually access across races and socio-economic backgrounds. Leibowitz *et al.* (2010:84) argue that merely providing students from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities access to higher education does not necessarily suggest that significant encounters and learning across gulfs of divergence is possible.

Assimilating students of all races into historically white universities without considering these individuals' diverse interests is damaging (Mnguni, 2016:18; Norris, 2001:219). Historically white universities suggest an environment that is white friendly, where a dominantly white culture will inevitably prevail (Mnguni, 2016:18). The result of a social arrangement that maintains a dominant white culture is an institutional culture that caters more to white students while negating the values, customs, and practices of a student populace belonging to other race groups (Steyn *et al.*, 2014:386).

An institutional culture unwelcoming to 'blackness' or the identity of non-white students continues to reproduce the discourse of an inferior black or 'other' and the ideal white (Barroso, 2015:28). Bringing individuals of different racial groups together requires a change in personal attitude and critical questioning of stereotypes, especially when there is a discomfort amongst members of different races in speaking frankly on matters of racism (Rohleder *et al.*, 2007:702; Walker, 2005:129; Erwin, 2012:95; Soudien, 2010:892-893).

It becomes difficult to challenge institutional racism when we continue to treat race as an absent presence (Morrison, 1992:9). It makes it even harder to challenge the pervasive silence surrounding race when we don't yet know how to be candid in conversation about it (Bradley, 2006:5). DiAngelo (2011:55) states that the inability to speak candidly about race perpetuates a mindset that assumes racism is a problem exclusive to the other and not a collective problem worth fixing together.

As a result, race and racism take on a more sublimated form (Soudien, 2012:90). The experience of racism shifts for the non-white student and becomes an exercise of constantly negotiating their worthiness in these institutions (Soudien, 2008:670). Woods (2001:103) argues that black students often acknowledge they are subjects of racism, but that the racism is nuanced and expressed by an intolerance of their languages by white students and lecturers. Some black students expressed their disdain regarding reading in class because they're not proficient in English and articulate and that made them feel inferior (Kessi & Cornell, 2015:1). Black students have also indicated that they are afraid to ask questions in class due to an inability to articulate themselves clearly in English (Kessi & Cornell, 2015:2). Others have indicated that some lecturers speak intentionally slowly, implying that they might not understand (Kessi & Cornell, 2015:3-4).

The enduring effect of institutionalised racism permeates all levels of the students' self-

perception and perpetuates structural inequalities and injustices that become barriers to black and non-white students (Heleta, 2018:48; Mekoe, 2011:105). Karenga (2002:39) argues that "racism constitutes the destruction of culture, language, religion, and human possibility in redefining African humanity to the world, poisoning past, present and future relationships with others who only know us through this stereotyping and thus damaging the truly human relations among people". Supposing that higher education does indeed have an "obligation to contribute to the socialisation of enlightened, responsible, and constructively critical citizens" (South Africa, 1997:8), we must ask ourselves if this contribution should stop at not allowing overt expressions of racism or if it should commit to a genuinely inclusive and anti-racist higher education.

2.3 STRUGGLES FOR DECOLONISATION

The struggle for decolonisation has much to do with an abundant embodiment of a culture of whiteness (Magubane, 2016:1; Everatt, 2016:1). Non-white students recognise the academy's alienating nature in higher education discourse, norms, and practices. The academic texts written in dense academic English do not correlate with an African ethos. The alienating discourse, norms, and practices in higher education institutions pay no attention to the marginalised communities' voices, histories, and cultures (Luke, 2018:11). Luke (2018:147) addresses the culture of imposition in higher education institutions, which involves an imposition of overwhelmingly white and Eurocentric practices and experiences. This imposition culture assumes that white and Eurocentric texts, practices, procedures, and bodily dispositions are natural, truthful, and universal (Luke, 2018: 151; Zeleza, 2009:133). Mbembe (2016:33) strongly opposes such thinking because it demeans non-white students. The legacy of apartheid and the marginalisation of the non-white majority through education have been wittingly or unwittingly engrained into our educational environments and continue to reflect hierarchies of power, cultures of imposition, and the repression and loss of voice (Heleta, 2018:53). White and European knowledge has become the grand narrative that has repressed and marginalised indigenous knowledge and discourse and has set unspoken rules and norms that drive universities forward (Heleta, 2018:52; Dei, 2006:12).

Every student entering any university has to adapt to the academy and embody alternative ways of being, doing, speaking, and interacting. Bazana and Mogotsi (2017:5) state that it is difficult to do because previously white universities are loyal to white cultural

norms. Some of the difficulty is in language because they must learn in languages (Afrikaans and English) that are not native (Mkhize & Balfour, 2017:138; Collins & Millard, 2013:74). The student movements and campaigns that ignited from 2015 to 2017 highlighted a need for decolonising knowledge spaces and higher education institutions. The campaigns called for doing away with Eurocentric epistemological teaching, histories, and figures (Molefe, 2016:32).

Students were mainly concerned with fighting for a change in the curriculum that incorporated South African and African perspectives, experiences, and epistemologies in teaching and learning and research (Shay & Peseta, 2016:769). Mngomezulu and Hadebe (2018:71) argue that knowledge decolonisation makes colonial elements dispensable, thereby replacing them with indigenous knowledge. Nkrumah (1965:7) states that even as African countries achieved independence, they turned to Europe to access resources, knowledge, and civil rights. Fanon (2007:12) asserts that this practice has only made social ills such as racism, imperialism, slavery, and contemporary colonialism problems that need contemporary (non-European) solutions.

Therefore, decolonisation is a solution that allows us to reclaim the humanity that was violently taken away by colonialists. Wa Thiongo (1981:87) asserts that the decolonisation of knowledge involves engagement with the plurality of experience and perspective in every culture and part of the world. Africa is at the center of epistemology, knowledge, teaching, learning, and research. Higher education must be critically transformed to rewrite and reaffirm the oppressed's dignity. Additionally, reorienting knowledge production and worldviews for the interests of the present and future of the country and her people, which is the essence of decolonisation, ensuring the nation's independence in engendering and procuring knowledge, values, and skills (Wingfield, 2017:306).

2.4 GENDER AND SEXUALITY DISCRIMINATION

South Africa's constitution was the first in the world in 1996 to avow the rights of the LGBTQI community (Brown, 2018:9). Yet twenty-four years after the fact, people with same-sex sexual identities still experience subtle forms of aggression and are stigmatised in higher education institutions. Same-sex desiring students are often isolated from learning opportunities. They feel that the expectation is that they have to subscribe to

what Mavhandu-Mudzusi and Sandy (2017:325) call a hegemonic heterosexual script should they receive learning opportunities. They are often subtly expected to hide their sexual orientation and act accordingly for fear of prejudice or discrimination (Mavhandu-Mudzusi, 2014:711). The ministerial report (2008:46) highlighted the grievances of same-sex attracted students and the homophobia perpetuated in higher education institutions. Ngcobo (2007:41) documented the homophobia prevalent in the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal. Homophobia ran so rampantly that heterosexual males within the institution protested against the presence of queer or same-sex desiring students.

The ministerial report (2008:46) noted several incidents of sexual assault against queer students. The homophobia perpetuated in these institutions is not just from students but also from staff. Reports from North-West University Potchefstroom campus recount an incident where a lecturer victimised a student for being lesbian, saying that it is unnatural because "male dogs don't mate with other male dogs" (Bailey, 2010:142). There have also been multiple incidents of homophobia noted at the University of Cape Town, where gay pride paraphernalia was set ablaze (Bailey, 2010:142). Msibi and Jagessar (2015:63) conducted a study into the experiences of queer students living in residential accommodations at universities and their strategies to defend themselves against the dangers they face.

Msibi (2013: 65) argues that transformative scholarship in higher education has had a somewhat skewed approach to transformation that focuses mainly on race and gender and, therefore, not addressing the concerning issue of subtle and nuanced institutional homophobia. Brown and Diale (2017:3-4) discuss the symbolic violence and micro-aggressions in the academy. They highlight the harmful perception prevalent in the academy, asserting that same-sex orientation is deviant and heterosexual practice is pure (Brown & Diale, 2017:3). Heteronormative spaces in the academy are symbolically violent because they influence social values (Brown, 2018:10). Such social values present a narrative of heteronormative rules and ways of being that need to be affirmed and upheld continuously. Those who digress from them are subject to symbolic violence, which is oppressive (Valentine *et al.*, 2013:166). Symbolic violence is not overt violence but manifests as either the discomfort heterosexual individuals experience when same-sex desiring and queer individuals express themselves in this way, or the trivialising and condemning of same-sex desiring and queer individuals (Vaccaro *et al.*, 2019:1319).

However, these alienating experiences are not exclusive to queer individuals but are the reality of many heterosexual females. Moorosi (2010:1) exposes the often subtle gendered treatment in tertiary institutions. Morley (2006:550) asserts that gender affects women's academic identities and argues that women's intellectual capital is often disregarded and not valued the same as men's. Maphalala and Mpofu (2017:9334) report that female students feel that their competence and intelligence are always under scrutiny. Johnson and Thomas (2012:156) discuss how young women of colour experience alienation from the academy. Black women especially report feeling out-of-place in their tertiary institutions, where white middle-class males are the dominant demographic (Mahabeer *et al.*, 2018:28-29). Although tertiary institutions call for transformation regarding gender equality, Naicker (2007:21) believes that these are a "smokescreen" that hide the continued suppression and discrimination that women academics at all levels face. Mahebeer *et al.* (2018:30) argue that universities ought to create platforms where women, especially women of colour, can share their experiences with their counterparts, improve teaching and learning, and do away with feelings of isolation and marginalisation in tertiary institutions.

2.5 SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND RAPE CULTURE

South Africa has the highest rates of violence against women globally (NSPGBV, 2020:12). The scale and economic impact of the gender-based violence epidemic are so significant that it costs the country R28 billion per annum (NSPGBV, 2017:6).

Du Toit (2005:253) contends that the endemic nature of rape in South Africa only undermines women's citizenship. Moffet (2006:140) supports this sentiment by saying that sexual violence is "a socially approved project to keep women within certain boundaries and categories" in South Africa. According to Wilson *et al.* (2000:1493), "assault and violence are male strategies used to maintain women's subordination in the home and leave women feeling uncomfortable and unsafe in public spaces". The ubiquity of violence against women in South Africa and the police's paucity in responding to it has created constant fear in women (Gordon & Collins, 2013:94). Corradi *et al.* (1992:2) contend that this culture of fear in women strengthens the unequal power relations between men and women. Thus, they perpetuate a culture wherein the notion of the female body as open to assault and exploitation is maintained (Bashonga & Khuzwayo,

2017:2). Buiten and Naidoo (2016:537) assert that violence against women establishes gendered power in society. All violence against women is about exercising control and power over their bodies, mostly viewed as subordinate to men's bodies. Grosz (1994:44) argues that the perception of the penis as the dominant organ has made society indifferent towards sexual violence against women, with some people even rationalising this violence and thus perpetuating rape culture in society and, more specifically, tertiary institutions.

This notion extends to higher education environments, as reflected in a study by Shefer *et al.* (2012:436) that shows the pervasive practice of coercive sexual practices in university students' dating relationships. Clowes *et al.* (2009:24) found that coercive and unequal practices are commonplace in heterosexual dating relationships among students. A study conducted by Varga (2004:164) shows how aggression and violence are acceptable in these relationships and how young women and men perceive forced sex as a norm and customary. Clowes *et al.* (2005:23) point out that university campuses are sexualised spaces where male students can be sexually active, thereby pressuring female students to engage in sexual acts. Shisana *et al.* (2009:20) observed a predatory attitude among male university students towards first-year female students. One student in the study commented: "It's like they can smell fresh blood, it's like they know you have no choice but to give *it* up". Shefer *et al.* (2012:437) highlight the prevalence of transactional sex, usually marked by age and material difference between the participating parties. Female students are often prone to seeking male students or sometimes older men (sugar daddies) to finance their lives or drinking and recreational habits in exchange for sex as payment (Clowes *et al.*, 2009:27).

According to Gavey *et al.* (2009:96), rape culture emerges when (1) the victim is blamed, which excuses the act of rape, and when (2) heterosexuality normalises male sexual aggression and female sexual passivity. A growing amount of evidence points to rape culture on university campuses (Palm, 2018:1-19; Gordon & Collins, 2013:93-106; Ndelu & Dlakavu, 2017:1-4). The most widely publicised allegations of rape culture were at Rhodes University going as far back as 1991 (CGE, 2016:12). From 2010 through 2016, the University of Cape Town recorded seventy-three complaints of rape reported to the discrimination and harassment office (DISCHO). Cape Town university dealt with 75.3% of all cases internally through mediation between the complainant and perpetrator (UCT,

2016:2-3). The University of Witwatersrand reports that from 2014 through 2016, eight complaints of rape were received (Bashonga & Khuzwayo, 2017:39) and only one was successfully reported to the authorities.

2.6 ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Over the last decade, the matric pass rate has increased by 20%, with 172 043 learners receiving an exemption to university. However, not all high school learners can access university (Walton *et al.*, 2015:264). The enrollment of non-white students in higher education is a severe concern to the government (Matukane & Bronkhorst, 2017:4). Only 16% of black students and 14% of colored students enroll in universities. These numbers are proportionally less than the 55% of white students and 47% of Indian students enrolled in universities throughout the country (Presidency, 2014:54). According to the national development plan, student enrolment into universities must reach 1.6 million by 2030 (NPC, 2011:69). Higher education's massification has been an effective strategy in increasing access to and participation in higher education (Akoojee & Nkomo, 2007:385). However, the poverty rates among Africans in South Africa aggravate the disparity in university enrolment, and lack of funding is the primary reason for the under-enrollment of black or African students in universities (Bishau & Samkange, 2015:108).

Universities are expensive, and too many prospective students cannot afford them. Moreover, higher education is the least government-funded education sector, but it is also the most expensive to maintain (DHET, 2013:153). From 2013, government expenditure on higher education amounted to roughly 0.75% of its budget according to the number of students enrolled (DHET, 2013:153; DHET, 2018:189). There are twenty-six universities in South Africa, and most rely on government funding. Moreover, universities and universities of technology resort to charging exorbitant amounts of tuition to make up enough revenue (Matukane & Bronkhorst, 2017:4). Higher education is exclusionary, and many students who gain entrance struggle to succeed (Matukane & Bronkhorst, 2017:4).

According to Manuel *et al.* (2020:71), undergraduate students find it hard to cope with their universities' demanding course work because they rarely have a stable school background. Although universities have designed various programs for underprepared students transitioning into higher learning to alleviate the effects of unequal education

(Fleisch, 2008:2; Walton *et al.*, 2015:263), these programs do not always produce excellent results. An academic literacy course offered to first-year students investigated by Parkinson *et al.* (2008:11) shows that under-performing students rarely perform better after their first year. Research indicates that African students have a more challenging time adjusting to previously white institutions, and as a result, they do not perform as well as their white counterparts (Senett *et al.*, 2003:107).

2.7 HIGHER MUSIC EDUCATION AND 21ST CENTURY CHALLENGES

In this section, I will focus on the role of music scholarship, practice, and the advent of research that speaks to the challenges experienced within these spaces. Students and music education staff seem reticent to engage with these challenges. Educators highlight how music education can be exclusive and exclusionary by reproducing unequal power relations (Gould, 2005:147). Their writings have since inspired a social justice turn in music education that has produced several scholarly articles and community music interventions to endorse broad-spectrum transformation in music education. Even so, these interventions represent little progress when it comes to the ways in which music is taught in schools and higher education (Bradley *et al.*, 2007:133).

A highly specialised and differentiated discipline such as higher music education emphasises musical syntax and technical proficiency and assumes that society's issues have no bearing on the discipline (Hess, 2017:16). In this discipline, there is continuous discoursing on the myriad challenges, thereby, at times, clothing or masking discussions in neutral concepts (Castagno, 2014:3). However, this fails to provide constructive and concrete ways to address everyday music teaching and learning issues.

In the absence of self-critical educators, music can perpetuate subtle and covert structural violence; structural violence that happens due to individuals' unfair treatment based on "race, gender, disability, and sexual orientation." (Bradley, 2006:2; de Boise & Hearn, 2017:19; Kumashiro, 2002:2).

2.7.1 Race and issues of racism in higher education

Music contributes to social reproduction because of the relationships between a society's types of music and other cultural matters such as power distribution (Wright, 2016:343). Music tends to maintain the cultural interests of dominant social groups (Bordieu,

1984:18). According to Bourdieu (1984:18), music can create a sense of social separation perpetuated by a pervasive silence and shame around race issues. Bradley (2006:4) mentions explicit language avoidance where race is concerned due to discomfort and fear. Castagno (2014:3) discusses how often music education uses neutral concepts and euphemisms in discussing race and issues surrounding race. She points out the importance of challenging the often vague terms used to address race and racism issues in music education (Castagno, 2014:3). Hess (2017:16) emphasises how important it is to use plain language to address racial differences and to come to the point of racial consciousness. Hess (2017:17) calls for a disruption of white culture and dominance by initiating what she refers to as race talk in school music, higher music education, and music education scholarship.

2.7.2 Disability and music education

Scholars often refer to diversity as an amalgam of racial, ethnic, gender and sexuality representation and fail to include disability representation – creating a narrative that disabled persons are not as important as non-disabled or handicapped individuals (Darrow, 2015:204). South African higher education supports disabled individuals by implementing the diversity rights framework (Matsedisho, 2007:686). The framework's premise is on the normative standards of diversity, human rights, and equal opportunity. The law requires higher education institutions to implement the policy of disability support. 83% of higher education institutions in South Africa have disability support available as part of their student councils and independent affiliates, which function on their campuses (Rajohane-Matsedisho, 2007:686–689).

In both the United Kingdom and North America, there has been a significant move towards including students with disabilities into music programs (Adamek & Darrow, 2012:101). Research shows that music has played a pivotal part in the teaching and learning of students with disabilities (Darrow, 2015:204). Therefore, music effectively integrates students with disabilities into various educational programs (Darrow, 2015:207). As promising as the progress in including disabled persons in education has been, disability scholars in the United States (Jones, 2015:13; Charlton, 2000:33; Brown, 2002:347) have written extensively about the lack of disability culture in music education - a culture in which disabled students can share in the unity of experience and create awareness to facilitate a change in society's perception of disabled persons (Darrow,

2015:207). Riddel *et al.* (2001:57) write about the identity of disabled persons and the ways in which it is often constructed by society and, especially, how restrictive these constructions can be – societal labels and stereotypes can have adverse effects on their self-identity. Darrow (2011:14) examined these stereotypes as reflected in popular media, which depict disabled persons as bitter, dependent, resentful and lonely. These stereotypes have been detrimental to many disabled persons in a number of ways. As with race, the language used to refer to disabled persons is concerning. Wright (1983:183), in her seminal text on precisely this issue, discusses the implication of language as being either empowering or devaluing to disabled persons. As a result, guidelines have been published to assist individuals in speaking of disabled persons. In music education, it is appropriate to speak of disabled persons in person-first language, which distinguishes the disabled student from their disability. The use of this kind of language reduces biases and profiling of disabled persons according to their disability (Darrow, 2015:210; Adamek & Darrow, 2018:101).

2.7.3 Feminism and music education

According to Wright (2013:2), any education system that does not explicitly consider the various oppressions that exist within it, by default, maintains the status quo to the detriment of the students. Lamb *et al.* (2002:661) and Gould (2004:67) shed light on the inherent presence of gender in all aspects of music and highlight all the gendered contexts of music education practice. The place of girls and women in music education compared to boys and men shows the imbalance of power that exists, and issues of gender parity in professional music careers remains (Ramos, 2017:120). Lamb (1996:125) discusses gender as a determinant of what positions and jobs music professionals have available to them and the author also notes how women have often been side-lined from jobs in conducting leading ensembles and management positions. The lack of female representation in music professions and the ever male-dominated presence in the professional music sphere is due to historical and traditional socialisation and discrimination (Gould, 2004:147)

Lamb (1994:61) states that any system of domination (sexism, racism, classism) ought to be eradicated; and emphasises the need for feminist critique in music education. A few female scholars have pioneered feminist theory and the feminist critique in music education (Koza, 1994:75; Lamb, 1994:75; O'Toole, 2000:28). However, music educators

have misunderstood their intentions, as is evidenced by many responses to the feminist critique made over the years (Bowman, 1998:1; Reimer, 1995:23; Woodford, 1997:15). These misunderstandings stem from a mistaken idea of what feminism is. The critical responses, therefore, stem from a problem with defining feminism; for example, Reimer (1995:23-33) and Woodford (1997:15-18) have often stated their understanding of feminism is primarily based on gender equity (Gould, 2004:70). To make such an assumption is problematic because it does not consider other intersecting social issues such as race, sexuality, class, and disability. hooks (2000:33) states that the struggle of feminism is to eradicate the underlying cultural bias and causes of sexism as well as various other forms of group oppression. Therefore, the aim of feminism is an all-encompassing strategy used to challenge the agendas, philosophies, and ideologies that perpetuate systems of domination (Gould, 2004: 69). Feminist theory and feminist critique in music education are essentially an analysis of systems of domination in light of their negation to create better lives for female professionals and other marginalised persons within the discipline of music and music education (Lamb, 1994:61).

2.7.4 Sexual orientation and music education

The preoccupation with social justice in music education (Silverman, 2012:16; Bergonzi, 2015:221; Schmidt, 2015:58) has steadily transformed scholarship and opened avenues by which music educators and scholars can develop the critical, analytical tools necessary to understand injustice and oppression. They also investigate how education socialises learners and students within unjust and oppressive systems (Bell, 2002:2). Social justice education in music education scholarship aims to give voice to the 'other' (Benedict, 2015:119). The 'other' is the person who lives and exists outside of what constitutes normal behavior and expression. A growing inquiry has been the exploration of music education's relationship to social justice for sexually diverse individuals (Bergonzi, 2015:221). Such inquiry has revealed that as with all other forms of education, music education reflects entrenched heteronormative ideologies; and has often been accused of being non-inclusive in this sense (Meyer, 2010:61; Daniels & Geiger, 2010:3).

These heteronormative ideologies create misconceptions concerning gender-sexual diversity; one such misconception is that merely discussing diversity as it relates to homosexuality and sexual behaviour is enough to make the 'other' feel included. Another misconception has been that gender-sexual diversity is an irrelevant concern for music

educators (Meyer, 2010:61). Fitzpatrick *et al.* (2011:21) show that gender-sexuality diversity in music education must go beyond just discourse and create affirming physical spaces that focus on being LGBTQ-inclusive. According to Bergonzi (2015:225), affirming spaces ought to be inclusive and embrace otherness and challenge dominant heteronormative ideology. Bergonzi (2015:225) highlights affirming spaces especially as part of undergraduate music education; research has shown that LGBTQ students are more likely to be drawn to music programs that make them feel safe and accepted (Kosciw *et al.*, 2012:47; Greytak & Kosciw, 2014:58).

2.7.5 Music education practice in higher education

The pursuit of music as a profession is "a humane calling [...] which has always influenced humanity's progression and shaped individual communities" (Cruywagen, 2018:1). It is a decision that often stems from a passion for music and the level of technical proficiency one holds. Higher music education curriculum aims to strengthen a broad range of technical musical skills, artistry, creativity, and verbal, musical knowledge (Lebler *et al.*, 2009:233; Elliot & Silverman, 2014:58). However, University music programs that educate students to effectively transfer acquired knowledge while developing their students' social, critical, civic, and economic aspects are few and far between (Cruywagen, 2018:2). There is a chasm between the skills acquired through higher music education and the skills required by graduates entering the workforce (Freeman, 2014:xvii; Lebler *et al.*, 2009:233). Music students must receive a balance of technical music skills and critical thinking skills in their tuition so they can effectively negotiate the demands of the current economic climate (Cutler, 2010:4; Watanabe-Crockett, 2015:12).

There must be a synergy between the skills higher music education institutions teach and other essential interpersonal and intrapersonal skills they need for their career development. If music graduates ever want to compete in the working world, they must have skills regarding information communication technology (ICT) as well as literacy, creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills (Kaufman, 2013:78). Music qualifications need to be utilitarian to create employment opportunities for music graduates. Lebler (2007:206) argues that music departments should aim for their students to develop musically inclusive skills in order to grow to be self-monitoring, self-directing, and adaptable. Most university music departments' coursework remains the same as it was a century ago, with the primary focus being western art music (Moore,

2017:3). Moore (2017:3-4) argues that the public's musical tastes and interests are more inclined towards popular music, and people have become passive consumers of art and music. Technological progress means people can access whatever music or artwork they desire at the click of a button. Hence, people find it a daunting and unnecessary expense to buy a ticket to the symphony or a full music concert (McCarthy *et al.*, 2001: iii-iv; Ivey, 2008:171). Moore (2017:4) contends that considering this evidence, it would be unethical for music departments to continue graduating music students each year specialising in western art music performance because their employment opportunities are sparse.

The demographic has changed so much that music graduates must know about business management and entrepreneurship; music technology/production; sound and video editing and licensing (Moore, 2017:12). An aspect of curricula reform that could be of value is to include a direct focus on training students in disciplines outside music. Though many music schools allow interdisciplinary connections, they are not sufficient. The curriculum needs to be more innovative and flexible, emphasising arts entrepreneurship (Moore, 2017:13; Carey & Lebler, 2012:10; Lebler & Weston, 2015:132-133). Essig (2015:2-7) defines arts entrepreneurship as breaking new grounds through artistic expression; or applying specialised skills creatively to solve problems and create new opportunities.

Music students need to develop multiple and fluid identities. Because of the rise of portfolio careers, music students need to work intentionally at becoming versatile (Perkins *et al.*, 2015:15). It requires a combination of musical, academic, technological, entrepreneurial, and networking skills (Carruthers, 2012:82). Hallam and Gaunt (2012:1) note that “pursuing a career in music is one of the most challenging and satisfying things you can do”, and higher music education institutions must do all they can to prepare students for the demands of a music career. The reality is that most musicians have to maintain portfolio careers to sustain their musical lives. Therefore, institutions must give ample attention to preparing contemporary graduates for this reality. Scholars have identified five keys to ensuring sustainable music portfolio careers; (1) business and entrepreneurship, (2) migration and flexibility, (3) technology, (4) gender equality, and (5) overall well-being (Bartleet *et al.*, 2019:283).

Higher music education institutions have a responsibility to serve their students' needs. Lapidaki (2016:69) asserts that music departments conduct themselves as businesses and music students as "individual entrepreneurs" or "self-capitalists". Moreover, this treatment of music departments perpetuates an inorganic engagement with theory and practice within music education. Such conditions in the music academy create an inability to nurture creativity and artistry. Folkestad (2006:139) equates an educator to a gardener who cultivates a space for meaningful learning to take place. In music education, the educator must be the gardener that brings forth the students' abilities and aptitudes.

21st-century music education has reached an intersection where moving forward requires a renegotiation of all that music education is and has been. William (2018:1) highlights the need for music departments in universities to examine the traditional master-apprentice model's value and limitations. The master-apprentice model presents the teacher, who is the master, as the sage who demonstrates, directs, comments, and inspires. This problem with this teaching model is that students accept what they are taught too quickly without becoming inquisitive. Students depend heavily on their teachers for all aspects of their development, thus having no autonomy over their education and training (Carey & Grant, 2015:6). Such a teaching model leaves little room for creativity, thus instilling habits and practices that hardly encourage innovation, growth, and experimentation (Williams *et al.*, 2006:3).

Spychiger (2017:268) shows how affirming students' musical self-concept can facilitate their musical development. Musical self-concept is one factor of a student's general self-concept. It ties the student's musical experience to their musical identity. Musical self-concept, therefore, answers the student's question of "who am I" and "what I can do" in music (Spychiger, 2017:268). Spsychiger (2017:269) contends that what a student thinks they are capable of regarding music will determine whether they do well and put their minds towards achievements of some sort. When negative feelings persist about their musical abilities, students will no longer have the will or motivation to study. The lack of motivation impedes the students' musical experiences, affecting their musical identity and further stifling future achievement.

Another limitation is evident in the growing number of students who drop out of their studies (Crocco *et al.*, 2015:130). Gavin (2012:317) conducted a study on the reasons for

the rise in undergraduate dropouts in music programs. The findings present negative musical experiences as the most pertinent reason. Several students cite ill-treatment from their lecturers or teachers as their reasons for dropping out (Gavin, 2012:318). While other students reported a significant drop in their confidence in themselves as musicians and felt they were unworthy or unmusical, others cited personal issues. Therefore, the challenge facing university music departments is changing pedagogical practices, so that the focus is not only on excellent musical performance but on developing the specific creativity of all individuals within the departments.

CHAPTER 3: TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK OF CRITICAL HOPE FOR HIGHER MUSIC EDUCATION

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Inequality and injustice are salient social issues that continue to plague South Africa. Over the years, these social issues eroded the vision of a democratic republic and caused several social ills to pervade South African civil society. It has always been the expressed vision of higher education to contribute to "the socialisation of enlightened, responsible and constructively critical citizens" (Bozalek *et al.*, 2014: 2). According to the *education white paper of 1997*, "[h]igher education has an unmatched obligation to lay the foundation for a critical civil society" (South Africa, 1997: 8). However, despite the formal efforts made towards higher education institutions' desegregation, there remains ubiquitous systematic injustices and oppressions within these institutions (Wale, 2010:2).

A country like South Africa marked by a legacy of colonialism and apartheid cannot wish to escape inequality and injustice by simply amending policies and legislation. We most certainly cannot assume that white paper policies (South Africa, 1997:8) will advertently erase engrained institutionalised inequality in higher education. As Boler and Zembylas (2003:108) so aptly put it, "nobody escapes hegemony". Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon higher education institutions to be more transformative and steer their students' personal, social, and critical development (Nussbaum, 2001:3).

Scholarly work in music education over the last two decades has magnified the more inconspicuous systemic injustices and oppression in higher music education. These injustices include racial discrimination set against a tendency to pretend that race is a non-issue (Bradley, 2006:3-4), issues of gender parity, which include the obscure place of girls and women in music education (De Boise, 2017:19; Ramos, 2017; Bartleet *et al.*, 2019), the heteronormative and heterosexist systems reflected in music education, the lack of a culture that embraces gender-sexual diversity in music education, and the disadvantage stacked against those who self-identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual (Kumashiro, 2002:1; Bergonzi, 2009:21; 2015:222).

While many praise music for its galvanising ability to cross social boundaries, it can be exclusive and excluding (Bordieu, 1984:14) and often it perpetuates a climate of privilege,

where factors such as class, socio-economic status, race, and ethnicity reflect the distributive inequalities within higher music education. With the advent of the internet, social media, and numerous online platforms used for social movements, it has become increasingly difficult to gloss over injustice and oppression.

In the age of feminism, #Metoo, #Blacklivesmatter, #Feesmustfall, and #Endrapeculture, it is necessary for higher education institutions to develop a firm understanding and sensitivity of the socio-political world. Therefore, the proponents of critical hope reference the need to recognise these oppressions and injustices and collectively strive towards their correction (Freire, 1993:2; Nwoye, 2011:10). Therefore, critical hope is vital for the critique, deconstruction, and destabilising of all constructs, concepts, and biases that uphold and maintain domination based on race, class, and gender (Bedard, 2000:2). One of the essential aspects of critical hope is hope itself; hope for an alternative solution to current oppression and injustice. According to Fromm (1968:19), hope is not merely a passive ideation that somehow "things will get better". He calls this kind of mind-set the alienation of hope because it worships the future and not progress.

Hope is an ontological need, and therefore useful in educational practice in that it can serve as a strong force of resistance against conditions of injustice and oppression (Freire, 1997:44). To have hope is to stretch the limits of what is possible, and in the face of injustice and oppression, hope becomes the vehicle that turns despair into transformation. Freire (1994:14) describes hope as an ontological need and states that it must be grounded in practice in order for it to be effective. Freire (1997:100) argues that hope not grounded in practice leads to a cynical, pessimistic, and fatalistic society (Freire, 1997:44). This kind of hope is naïve and spreads romanticised platitudes that only maintain the status quo. At the centre of this exploration, Freire's pedagogy of hope (Freire, 1970:45) and Snyder's hope theory (Snyder, 1994:2) elicit the idea of hope as a possibility for change enshrined in goal-directed thinking and they argue for critical hope as a humanising pedagogy.

3.2 FREIRE'S PEDAGOGY OF HOPE

Freire's pedagogy of hope is concerned with unearthing the social injustice and oppression in educational systems and disrupting structural power operations and strives to act against them. In Freire's pedagogy, hope is rooted in critical consciousness as the

driving force towards radical transformation in educational systems. In essence, hope links with the idea of critical consciousness, which Freire refers to as *conscientization* (Freire, 1998:69). *Conscientization* refers to an awareness of one's political and social conditions to prepare a student to challenge unjust, oppressive, and immoral things around them. *Conscientization* combines the conscience, which appeals to our morality and consciousness, which is our perception and informed awareness of the self and the world (Freire, 1998:98-99).

Conscientization has much to do with the individual's awareness of their reflections on the world and the action they are willing to take to better the world (Freire, 2000:48). When *conscientization* is explored and utilised, the individual begins to see themselves as capable of growth and liberation, thereby activating the strife for such growth and liberation. *Conscientization* involves an unearthing of problems within our political and social spheres, a clear understanding of what needs to change, and awareness of all the barriers that could hinder transformation.

Critical consciousness is underpinned by a need for improvement, reconstruction, and action (Freire, 1998:8-9). Therefore, education serves its purpose, when our deep knowledge of the human condition facilitates the student in engaging in the process of analysing and evaluating their experiences as part of the world and of the world around them (Kondrat, 1999:451; hooks, 2003:ix). This kind of education essentially challenges the students to think critically, probe and question what they think to be true or false, wrong or right (Kondrat, 1999:451; Van Heertum, 2006:45).

'Reading the world' is the term Freire uses to define critique (Freire, 1985:10). He explains reading the world as the ability to perceive the personal realities of one another and respect the knowledge of lived experience while having a matured social awareness that can see and recognise injustice and oppression and be mindful of how to work against them (Freire, 1985:10; Giroux, 2003:122). Freire (1992:23) states that this awareness leads to dreams of a less ugly and more just society, and that is the beginning of hope.

Freire's conception of a pedagogy of hope, though very compelling and beneficial, is not systematic in the way it's formulated, nor does he provide a clear definition of hope (Tiainen *et al.*, 2019:642). Criticism against Freire's pedagogy involves the fact that it presents a wistful utopian dream that is intangible and at some points contradictory,

making it difficult to be utilised correctly in educational practice (Cho, 2010:310; Glass, 2001:15; Ellsworth, 1989:297; Jackson, 2007:199). However, what is clear and unchangeable about Freire's pedagogy of hope is that it refers to a utopian struggle towards social transformation (Tiainen *et al.*, 2019:643) - which I understand to be the goal of the progressive educator for the benefit and advancement of the student. Therein lies what I think is the core of a framework of critical hope (Webb, 2008:197); a hybrid version of Freire's pedagogy of hope and Snyder's hope theory.

Webb (2008:197) defines hope as an action-oriented human capacity nurtured toward a future good. Webb (2008:198) talks about modes of hoping, and synthesises all literature on hope, to create a taxonomy by which he differentiates between five separate modes of hope, namely, estimative; resolute; patient; critical; and transformative. I am interested in the transformative and critical modes of hope. The critical and transformative modes of hope are connected, in that human agency is highlighted in both (Webb, 2008:198; Duncan-Andrade, 2009:181). When weaved together, both these modes of hope are effective, because on the one end the critical mode of hope (Freire's pedagogy) negates all conditions in which humans are oppressed and made to suffer (Bloch, 1995:18), while the goal-directed, transformative mode of hope propels an action-oriented response to human suffering (Webb, 2008:201).

3.3 SNYDER'S HOPE THEORY

According to Snyder (1991:570), hope is a positive state of motivation and reflects the individual's perceptions regarding their capabilities for success. Snyder (2002:148) theorised that "hope and goal-accomplishment reciprocally influence one another". Hope should not only facilitate the pursuit of goals but must also ensure goal success (Feldman *et al.*, 2009:479). Hope theory is subdivided into four categories: (1) goals (Feldman *et al.*, 2009;) (2) strategies put in place to achieve goals/pathways (Lemay & Ghazal, 2001:10); (3) the motivation behind said strategies (Snyder *et al.*, 2002:249); and (4) elements that might deter the individual from reaching said goals (Snyder, 2000:5).

Snyder (1994:2) defines a goal as anything a human would want to do, achieve, and essentially become (Snyder *et al.*, 2003:122). As such, "pathways and agency thoughts are additive, reciprocal, and positively related but are not necessarily the same thing." For instance, agency thinking (the will to attain specific goals) without pathways is not hope,

it is merely a wish (Pedrotti *et al.*, 2008:100). Goals are the foundation of hope theory, goals must fall within an attainment continuum between those that are easily attained and those that aren't. A goal is defined as anything an individual can experience, create, get, do, or become (Snyder *et al.*, 2000:9; Edwards *et al.*, 2007:225).

3.4 TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK OF CRITICAL HOPE

Freire's pedagogy of hope and Snyder's hope theory capture and echo the old idiom that says where there is a will there is a way. Both capture hope as a strength-based, socially mediated human construct (Snyder *et al.*, 2003:122; Webb, 2008:198). A state of mind fuelled by an optimistic view of the future, of an alternative to the current historical moment, an ontological need that must be anchored in practice to be historically concrete (Bar-Tal, 2001:607; Bloch, 1995:2; Freire, 1994:24). Marrying Snyder's hope theory with Freire's pedagogy of hope provides a clearer understanding of the framework of critical hope, which is born of the sense that something is incomplete (ourselves/the world) and is often experienced, according to Bloch (1988:3-4), as a restless longing for fulfilment. Critical hope is radical and action-oriented (Keet, 2014:69) and cannot be understood as a singular undifferentiated experience.

For critical hope to be born, it first needs to start as an on-going and ever-present scrutinising of the racial, cultural, class, and gender biases and prejudice that exist in the world. An examination of these things should and almost always unearths positions of privilege and under privilege and the causes of such inequality and a way to change the situation (Webb, 2008:197; Jackson, 2017:98). This thorough examination of the world and a sense of social awareness is the entire premise of Freire's pedagogy of hope. Critique alone and merely desiring change is not enough. Harvey and Harvey (2000:9) articulate this sentiment well when they say that the collective response to human suffering must not be blocked by endless romanticised wishes for a better future. Hope must be anchored on a clear, prescriptive, and feasible utopian goal as an objective.

Critical hope is established when a clear and prescriptive utopian goal is formulated, a utopian goal that is action-oriented (Webb, 2008:201). Thus capturing the components of Snyder's hope theory, because critical hope must be grounded on a utopian goal, fuelled by a sense of possibility, and driven by profound confidence in the individual's ability to construct tangible strategies towards attaining a said goal (Webb, 2008:201). If

transformation is the goal of critical hope, it necessitates a complex renegotiation of old, historical social structures and power; as well as strategies to achieve the goal of transformation. Hope is, therefore, necessary for the struggle towards transformation. According to Snyder *et al.* (2000:5), in hope theory, strategies are imperative for goal attainment; these strategies are known as pathways (Lemay & Ghazal, 2001:10; Helland & Winston, 2005:42).

When pathways thinking is activated, we go from not just thinking of ourselves as capable of bringing about transformation but we begin to outline clear comprehensive ways of doing so. Strategising on how best to bring about transformation challenges the students and staff alike to think outside the box. Students have a unique opportunity to critically assess the major events, policies, and structural issues that have contributed to the conditions in their educational environments, to create an awareness of and encourage critical thought and equip them to challenge any ideology that perpetuates dominator values.

3.4.1 Application of critical hope in higher music education

The application of critical hope in higher music education is predicated upon viewing music not just as an object or work to be performed, but as action. This kind of teaching challenges educators to take part in a dialogue that conceptualises music as a conduit for understanding (McCarthy, 2009:30). McCarthy (2009:29) asserts that this happens when the extra-musical is found in conjunction with the musical; when notation ceases to be only an object of analysis, but evidence of the historical context in which the music was made; “when the role of cultural and social contexts are recognised as factors that contribute to embedded musical meaning and when the social values shared through music-making are recognised”.

The music educator who applies critical hope to their teaching ceases to be merely a technician but evolves into a critical educator who develops his/her inquiry within their classrooms (Schmidt, 2005:1; Bates, 2016:1). Such an educator makes use of a learning model that promotes conceptual learning, which is learning that emphasises critical action and critical feeling (McCarthy, 2000:6). This involves creating a space where music is presented as something subject to questioning, change, and transformation. Critical hope when applied to music education can also include problem-posing as a pedagogical

approach (Abrahams, 2005:12; Rivers, 2020:2).

The advantage of problem-posing is that the curriculum is exposed to critique, which would then create opportunities for the curriculum knowledge to be expanded. For example, educators who pose questions about representation and diversity in western art music open the students' minds to think about their world. Do they know of people who look like them that have successful careers in western art music? Does the music they hear in class represent the realities of their immediate world? (Rivers, 2020:6-7; Abrahams, 2005:3-4).

Schmidt (2009:39) states that transformative music education is predicated upon a rejection of the rigid standards that cloud music education, and a negation of the dominant discourse that sets the standards for what "proper" music education should be. Allsup (2012:171) suggests a different perspective in current music education practice, where the focus is on the flourishing of the student. Allsup (2012:172) asserts that music education should be focused on creating a musical human, where music educators at all levels of instruction are, as espoused by Silverman & Elliott (2014:45), mindful of the multi-faceted nature of the personhood (artistic, cognitive, social, cultural, and personal) of their students.

The key pedagogical principle should be for teachers to consider the awareness and culture of their students, and give them the freedom to express their understanding of the world (Abrahams, 2005:12). Simultaneously, music educators must be able to go beyond their attention to musical knowledge, aesthetics, and performance, and relate to the realities of their students and communities (Schmidt, 2005:9; Abrahams, 2005:13). We must therefore engage music educators in and create spaces for students to reflect on the meanings of their experiences with music concerning a socio-political world (Lamb, 1996:128).

In Freire's seminal works on education, he speaks of the concepts of a humanising pedagogy and hope. According to Zinn *et al.*, (2016:70) a humanising pedagogy must be the leading philosophy in universities because it implies integrative teaching and learning founded on trust, care, and respect between students and staff (hooks, 1994:14). A humanising pedagogy values the whole individual by considering their diverse cultural, socio-political, spiritual, and linguistic realities (Zinn *et al.*, 2016:70; hooks, 1994:14).

Two key principles facilitate a humanising pedagogy, which aligns with a praxis of hope (Cherrington, 2018:2). The first principle is that of humanisation, which is defined as the process of becoming fully human. The process of becoming fully human and shaping one's self-understanding "takes shape by promoting critical consciousness through dialogue and reflection of self and others" (Cherrington, 2018: 2). This can be achieved through a music education that helps shape students' self-understanding and allows students to participate in creating a vision of a better future for themselves and others (Cherrington, 2018:3; Freire, 1970:45).

The second principle of a humanising pedagogy is expressed through critical consciousness and proposes dialogue as an effective method of promoting critical consciousness. According to Cherrington (2018:3), dialogue creates awareness of our current reality and encourages a reimagining and renegotiation of the current historical moment. Dialogue on social issues opens up a platform that could potentially lead to effectual transformation (Boler & Zembylas, 2003:115). A dialogic approach helps us co-create hope with others, thereby shifting our focus away from the problems we may have to the possible solutions.

Dialogue works also to empower students to critique their immediate educational environment in the hopes of resolving that which is unequal and unjust. Bloch *et al.*, (1986:514) argue that it is necessary to analyse, dissect, and criticise social problems, but Van Heertum (2006:45) warns against expanding student minds through critique alone. Critiquing the realities of higher education institutions without offering an alternative only creates false consciousness. False consciousness is dangerous because it allows people to remain complicit in their oppression, even when they know how repressive it is. Simply recognising oppression as limiting and dehumanising does not automatically move people to change the situation of oppression. The centrality of hope is therefore imperative in our struggle for transformation, and for raising the critical voice through reflection and action. A humanising pedagogy is important because it strengthens the struggle for transformation while combating fatalistic attitudes.

3.5 CONCLUSION

My conception of critical hope involves acknowledging injustice and oppressions through a critical interrogation of our educational environments, and opening up the possibility of

transforming present conditions – and also setting a goal-directed, action-oriented response to the injustice and oppression (Giroux & McLaren, 1991:152; Web, 2008:203). When critical hope is underpinned by a pedagogy of humanisation, music education becomes a practice of freedom (hooks, 1994) where music educators are challenged to have an awareness of themselves as practitioners and human beings through the process of self-actualisation. At the same time, this involves teaching their students to be mindful of all forms of injustice and oppression; encouraging them to think critically and challenge any ideology that perpetuates dominator values.

Critical hope facilitates the creation of spaces of liberation and mutuality in the music classroom. Specifically, spaces of liberation where students and educators can partner up and set a foundation for the critique of the present negatives in music education, in light of their future negation. Further, it requires creating ideal spaces for the deconstruction, critique, and resistance of any domination based on race, class, nationality, and sexuality, and for training minds to work towards justice and the overall transformation of music education (hooks, 2003:iix; Haran, 2010:393; Van Heertum, 2006:46).

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH PROCEDURES

4.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

The approach to this inquiry is qualitative. A qualitative researcher uses interpretative and theoretical frameworks that provide a basis for investigating the meaning that people ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2013:44; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:3). Qualitative research aims to build knowledge and find meaning by accessing, expressing, and negotiating truths (Leavy, 2013:21).

Leavy (2017:4) explains how we build knowledge from various sources and personal lived experiences. Therefore, communicating lived experiences is the primary function of any qualitative research (Leavy, 2013:21).

A transformative paradigm (Mertens et al., 2011:230) underpins this arts-based instrumental case study. The transformative paradigm underpins social justice tenants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018:20). Social Justice tenants recognise and uncover injustice, imbalance, and support and promote a fair social order (Silverman, 2012:16). Communities of musical engagement, such as Friday funk sessions, embody the common interests, locality, and social systems among people (Rapport & Overing, 2007:vii).

I believe that the Friday funk sessions were practical because they opened up an opportunity for what Elliott (1995:168) calls a self-other dialogue. Participants reveal themselves to one another through music. In this way, the participants and I could have a conversation where we learn about the problems and struggles they face, the causes of these problems, and a meaningful search to solve them (Ayers, 2006:88). My decision to construct my understanding of critical hope, in the effort to address the challenges and struggles the students of that specific school of music faced, situated me perfectly within the transformative paradigm. The transformative paradigm aims to dissent from the status quo of oppressive, hegemonic systems to bring about change (Mertens et al., 2011:231).

Change, in this study, involved seeking alternative solutions to present problems through musicing's collaborative and participatory nature. The group experience of musicing together leads to healthy relationships, contributing to communal problem-solving and mutual understanding (Hirsche, 2011:167).

4.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is an instrumental case study (Stake, 2010:20). I was interested in the theoretical framework of critical hope and the Friday funk sessions as a site that would help me understand critical hope in practice. The instrumental case study was also an applied research design. It allowed me to refine an existing framework for critical hope by making it specific to higher music education and its applications within such a context.

Case study allowed me to use a theoretical framework to investigate the meaning students ascribe to human problems, social inequality, and other intersecting oppressions in higher education and higher music education (Creswell, 2013:44; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011:3).

Merriam and Tisdell (2016:36) define a case study as “an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system.” A system binds time, place, and activity together (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:36; Stake, 2010:27; Stake, 2005:443). My study focuses on the weekly jam sessions, Friday funk sessions, hosted within a higher education institution and curated for music students. The place is different venues within the institution. The activity is musicing; Friday funk sessions is a space where the students are decision-makers. They choose the music they play and decide how to facilitate the hour-long sessions.

4.3 THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

In qualitative research, the role of the researcher is paramount. I was the instrument of data collection, organising the Friday funk sessions, while also observing the action and sometimes reflecting my personal experiences in the data (Stake, 2010:20). In this study, I was the catalyst for action and a musical and social collaborator. I am also the seventh participant because much of my personal lived experiences informed the decision to conduct this study.

4.4 PARTICIPANTS

I identified five students as participants within my study; all are students of the school of music and have been attendants of the jam sessions since its inception. Within the group of participants are individuals who were instrumental in the creative work behind these jam sessions, and some helped me to bring these jam sessions to fruition.

In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument of research and has discretion in deciding what knowledge they require and must set out to find people who can and will provide the information by knowledge or experience (Creswell, 2009:217; Etikan, 2016:2). Hence, I am the seventh participant in this study. I felt challenged to share my own experiences in higher music education and the reasons for starting Friday funk sessions.

I identified the five participants mentioned through a procedure called purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is useful in strengthening individuals' or groups' experiences and developing theories and concepts (Devers & Frankel, 2000:265). Purposive sampling ensured that I select participants who have essential opinions about the issues I wish to address (Campbell, 2020:3), particularly those who have specific insight and information that would help me better understand their position and their personal feelings about their experiences at the school of music.

Below, I summarise the character and personality of the participants in this study:³

✓ Sephy

Sephy is a sweet and amiable girl, with a laugh that is more like a cackle but rings full. In her third year of music study, she plays the guitar and sings so well; her voice sounds like a warm cup of coffee on a breezy morning. She is from a small town in the North-West and is an avid music lover. Her high school memories comprise notable achievements in school eisteddfods and awards for the singer of the year. She was an instrumental part in the Friday funk sessions and performed often, and on some occasions, helped with organising the sessions.

✓ Ruth

Ruth carries so much grace and stillness in her countenance that it is hard to pass by her and not take a second look to be sure of what you saw. She is from a town in Lesotho. Ruth's love for music stems from being a part of many choirs in her high school years. Her long, healthy locks are her most defining feature and that easy way she refers to everybody as "friend." She is currently in the last year of her degree (she started at the school of music with a diploma) and is a classically

³ The names given to the participants are pseudonyms that were agreed upon by myself and the participants.

trained singer and avid fan of choral music and conducting. She was a weekly attendee of the Friday funk sessions and was mostly there for moral support.

✓ Glory

Glory is shy and mousy, but not in an off-putting way; she is quite endearing and sweet. She is in her third year of music study. Her exposure to music came through school choirs and being part of eisteddfods for choral singing nationally. Glory's passion is singing and being on the stage, and that was mainly her most significant role in the Friday funk sessions. She was the star of the sessions, mostly because the other students did not know she could sing another genre better than how she sang arias and lieder.

✓ Legend

The legend was a fun and charismatic guy. He began his music studies at the diploma level and studied until his honours. He had no prior exposure to formal music education before his time at the school of music. Legend prides himself on having developed in such strides in his musical training and having a steady performance career straight out of University. Legend helped me conceptualise and ultimately start the Friday funk sessions. His enthusiasm and creativity helped establish and maintain the Friday funk sessions.

✓ Thabo

Thabo is tall and handsome and walks like the most unbothered person around. His idea of hurrying is to bend his head down as he strolls, his footfalls not changing their pace or urgency. Thabo's outer appearance can easily fool people who don't know him to think he's unfriendly and rude. But when you take time to look closely at him and into his eyes, you see the gentle concern he has for people. When he sits at a piano, everything about him speaks of a soft and understated joy. Thabo studied for a music diploma. He was the resident pianist for Friday funk jam sessions and was a great help in making these jam sessions a success.

4.5 ENTRY INTO THE FIELD

Friday funk sessions started in 2018 and had become a regular part of the Kononia⁴ University school of music activities. Getting approval for my research proposal at the

⁴ Kononia University is the pseudonym I gave to the university I am affiliated with.

beginning of my research proved to be a rather long-winded process. It took nine months to have the proposal accepted by the research committee of the Kononia University school of music. As a result, they attended my application for ethical clearance later. It took six months to receive ethical approval from the Kononia University, which I am affiliated with. When I received ethical clearance, I applied to the Research Data Gatekeeper Committee (RDGC) to gain access to the Kononia University to conduct my research.

4.6 DATA COLLECTION

As the researcher, my responsibility is to present the most trustworthy findings, and I rely on my participants and their knowledge and experiences to do so. Rabionet (2011:563) asserts that qualitative interviewing is a powerful tool by which any researcher can ascribe meaning and interpret his/her participants' experiences. I used semi-structured interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:106; Yin, 2014:106) because I could ask questions that would produce a particular outcome while also giving my participants the liberty of transporting me through their world of thought and their perspectives on the topic. Semi-structured interviews are helpful in that they aid in narrowing down and focusing my inquiry (Rabionet, 2011:564).

I started interviewing participants at the beginning of October 2020. In the first week, my focus was sending out the informed consent forms, receiving and filing them. By the second week of October, I had already had my first two interviews. I interviewed after every two days since the last interview I had conducted. Semi-structured interviews take a considerable amount of preparation. Hence, preparing an interview protocol is essential. Interview protocol involves introducing yourself and your study to your participant and the set of questions you will ask. Therefore, it is the most important aspect of qualitative interviewing. In introducing yourself as a researcher and the study, your statement must address confidentiality, consent, and the option to withdraw (Fontana & Frey, 2005:695-728).

The questions prepared for the interview are the most critical aspect of an interview protocol, as questions can either give you the information you need or throw you off the mark completely. Using clear language to pose questions is indispensable in formatting a suitable interview protocol (Leech, 2002:667). According to Leech (2002:667), it is

crucial to use non-judgmental or non-threatening wording. I was careful to avoid leading questions, ambiguous questions, and open-ended questions by asking questions that Smith & Sparkles (2016:111-113) refer to as grand tour questions. Such questions are ones that require the participant to give me a verbal tour of specific situations and issues they know about, e.g., their first experience of Friday funk sessions.

Grand tour questions made it easy for me to ask specific questions about specific things because I decided the parameters I wanted to set on the questions (Berry, 1997:94). I asked questions about the participants' music experiences prior to their university education, questions pertaining to their time at university so far and how these experiences did or did not influence their involvement with the Friday funk sessions. I, as a participant, collected data through reflecting on every interview and expanding my thoughts or subjective opinions of why I believed Friday funk sessions were a worthy cause. I also reflected upon the research question for my study, namely, what we can learn from the student experiences of musicing at the Friday funk sessions.

In the interview protocol that I prepared, I had sets of questions that would directly address my study's topic statement. The topic statement read: "An essential part of this exploration is to find out how a community of musical engagement such as Friday funk sessions could start critical hope. In my analysis, I found I substantiated the topic statement by three aspects of the participants' experiences at the Kononia University (1) their relationship with music before tertiary music tuition, (2) a significant moment of conflict, (3) The need for a respite from the conflicts of their tertiary music tuition. Each aspect provides pertinent information as to why critical hope is necessary.

In case study research, the researcher explores the bounded system through detailed data collection that involves various sources of data (Creswell, 2013:97). My second source of data collection was reflective diary entries. According to Travers (2011:207), keeping a diary creates a narrative of significant events, takes records of a person's inner thoughts and hopes, and is intensely private. Diary keeping is beneficial because it is one of the most potent forms of self-reflection and reflection over a person's life. Pennebaker and Segal (1999:1246) assert that diary-keeping is writing for disclosure, which allows for shaping a narrative representation of one's life experiences and for pulling together the fragmented pieces of information in a person's mind. However, reflective diary entries were not as effective as I had initially hoped, as participants were to write them after every

jam session. The hard lockdown because of the COVID-19 pandemic made it challenging to host jam sessions for about three months. The few diary entries that I received from two of my participants were of tremendous help because they gave me the privilege of extending discursive communication to show additional meanings that they could not express during the subsequent interviews.

4.6.1 Data analysis

In qualitative data analysis, when you use coding, your research question will almost always influence which coding method is appropriate and what specific coding choice is best. According to Trede and Higgs (2009:18), research questions set the values, worldviews, and direction of an inquiry and determine what kind of knowledge the researcher are looking to glean from the data. I used the primary research question as a guide to selecting a provisional list of coding methods that work well with the study's conceptual framework. The coding method I chose was dramaturgical coding (Saldaña, 2013:123). Dramaturgical coding provides an understanding of how participants respond to conflicts/obstacles by implementing tactics/strategies suitable for addressing the problems they face.

I consulted Saldaña (2013:123) and found that dramaturgical coding is appropriate for investigating the intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions. Moreover, dramaturgical coding is particularly helpful in studies leading towards narrative or arts-based forms. When I had completed the initial stage of coding, I discovered the connections between the participants' inner worlds, their love for music, and their motivation for studying music. I found that the participants' emotions influenced their actions and responses in certain situations. Dramaturgical coding made provision for coding for emotions, which provided deep understanding of the participants' perspectives, worldviews, and living conditions.

4.6.2 Dramaturgical coding

In dramaturgical coding, the participants' interactions are viewed as a performance, and data, usually in the form of interview transcripts, are treated as monologues and dialogues (Saldaña, 2015:123). Dramaturgical coding familiarises the researcher with the participants' qualities, perspectives, and drives. While also providing an extensive

understanding of how humans in social action, reaction, and interaction interpret and manage conflict.

Communication as performance underpins dramaturgical coding processes and uses the drama frame to do so (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011:206). Dramaturgical coding is useful in studies where the way in which participants articulate their motives and experiences is central to the inquiry. In dramaturgical coding, we use the convention of character analysis, such as objectives, tactics, strategies, conflicts, emotions, and subtext to code the data. The objectives, tactics, and strategy speak to participants' actions in response to the conflicts/obstacles they confront, while the attitudes, objectives, and subtexts create the literary components, feelings, and emotions concerning the actions and situations they find themselves in (Saldaña, 2013:123).

I coded the interview transcripts in ATLAS.ti 8, and then took Saldaña's suggestion of writing monologues for each of the participants. I did so by writing down and reflecting on the most salient aspect of each of the six categories of character analysis that I coded for (Objective, Obstacles, Tactics, etc.). I looked for the most salient quotes/narrative segments in the interview transcripts and weaved them together to create participant monologues.

Monologues are useful as a writing exercise and perfect the art of plotting and storyline (Saldaña, 2011:63). The monologues assisted me in creating individual participant write-ups. In these write-ups, I discussed my analysis of each of the participants using the six categories of character analysis.

4.6.3 Analysis and interpretation of data

Critical arts-based research has a definite political purpose because it positions the researcher as an antagonist towards power structures that perpetuate dominant discourses within a society (Bagley & Salazar, 2019:945). This study can potentially empower participant actors to challenge social issues to inspire a commitment to social transformation. Therefore, the imperative is to stay true to the participants' voices, thoughts, and perspectives. I also had to consider the problem of alterity in the participants' social locations and linguistic codification. A significant part of my analysis involved considering the plurality of lived experience and how different ways of thinking, living, and being influence how knowledge is built in this inquiry (Vaughn, 2019:2-3).

Moreover, I had to consider how indigenous perspectives influence research to combat and challenge oppression (Ansloos, 2018:4). My experience of oppression in the early years of my university education influenced the lens through which I viewed and interpreted the data. I could relate deeply to what the participants communicated to me in confidence because I had walked the same line, though it may have been in different ways.

Another realisation I had while analysing the data was that the participants are not socially or politically impartial. As I sat to read the interview transcripts, I realised that they carry unique perspectives, ways of knowing, and socio-political ideologies inherent to them. The transcripts did not seem personal on the surface, but as I began to read and re-read, I saw that they shared their fears, insecurities, and hurts with me. I had to be sensitive to the personal nature of what was shared with me while being truthful in my inquiry. Additionally, as the researcher, I am responsible for the participants, and the institution I am affiliated with. In building knowledge from my findings and negotiating truths, I must stay true to the participant's voice and perspective while also protecting the institution's integrity.

4.3.6 Writing the participant monologues

A monologue is known as a "rendering of a character's portrait in miniature" (Saldaña, 2011:63), which means that monologues are useful in revealing the participants' thoughts through dramatic construction (Saldaña, 2011:63). Monologues are a powerful way to express and show the participants' views and perspectives because they are the musings of a solo voice telling his/her unique story.

The writing of a good monologue is in the context of either one or more of five staged points of view: (1) speaking to an audience; (2) speaking to oneself; (3) speaking to another person; (4) talking to an unseen character; and (5) speaking as a voice-over (Saldaña, 2011:65). I used a variation of all five of the staged points of view in writing my participant monologues. I use all five staged points of view to dramatically construct the narrative while also staying true to the participants' thoughts, opinions, and perspectives. I believe that writing them in this way made the monologues believable and dynamic in the way they read. I was thus activating the reader's imagination to imagine the setting and context of the narrative (Saldaña, 2011:66).

The participant monologues are an adaptation of the semi-structured interviews with the participants. I used various queues in the transcripts to elicit an idea, thought, or emotion. The participants gave detailed descriptions of important events and musical experiences they had, which helped me to produce a repertory of stories, problems, tensions, and irritations for the narratives.

4.7 RESEARCHER STANCE

In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument of data collection. It is necessary, therefore, to discuss my role within this study. As a student, writer and singer, I was a catalyst for action, musical and social collaborator, and participant in this study. Critical hope informed me as referenced by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. Although Freire's conception of critical hope was interesting, I found it lacking in explaining such a framework's practical implications. As such, I tried to develop a framework of critical hope informed by a hope praxis and underpinned by a humanising pedagogy. A creative space such as Friday funk sessions seemed the best avenue to explore how critical hope can be achieved in music education.

As an undergraduate student, I struggled to reconcile my love for music and singing and the difficulties I encountered while studying. Besides the everyday challenges of higher education, I struggled with feeling inept, unworthy, and unmusical because of how the "perfect" music student was framed. I did not fit the mould, and as a result, I felt like a misfit and not good enough to be studying. The need for something like Friday funk sessions came from a place of desperation and despair, a need to express myself and show what I could do. The depth of revelation from both the interviews and my reflection revealed challenges music students experience in music study that, in my opinion, are not addressed as thoroughly as they should in music education scholarship. Given my research and my involvement in it, I understood that the Friday funk sessions and this study were unconscious labours of love. It was humbling to find out how vital the Friday funk session was, but that knowledge forced me to keep my own bias in check. I found myself challenged in my analysis and monologue writing process not to exaggerate the participants' views on Friday funk sessions so as to present them in a perfect light.

4.8 DESCRIPTION OF FRIDAY FUNK SESSIONS

The idea of Friday funk sessions came to me when in a place of complete confusion, unhappiness, and discontent. I was speaking to Legend and he told me of this amazing experience he had while on an exchange programme in Europe. He recounted a story of how he had been invited to an underground jazz club in Europe that ended up changing his whole mind about music. It was in that dark dingy club that he finally understood the eclectic almost evasive quality of music, how one can never know or hear enough music that would convince them that they have heard all that they could hear. It was then, spell-bound by his passionate monologue that it came to me; I thought to myself: imagine if we could have something that's an archetype of what Legend experienced in that jazz club. Being blessed with an overly active imagination, I began to seriously map it out in my mind, how I wanted the atmosphere to be, what music would be played, and who I would invite to be a part of the band.

As we sat hashing out the details, we finally came up with the perfect structure:

- It would happen on Fridays at lunch hour
- We would invite the best instrumentalists we know, but anyone can come and play
- We would have the standard instruments needed, e.g. piano, guitar, drumkit etc.
- It would be a set-up similar to that seen on Snarky Puppy album recordings.⁵

The first ever Friday funk session was met with much curiosity from the teaching staff and excitement from the student body. We had been the two minds behind one of the strangest and innovative ideas the school of music had seen in some years. We were met, at first, with resistance but the more we sold the idea the more support we gained. Legend was instrumental in the work of receiving permission to host these jam sessions, and he had been the one to speak to the school of music director at the time. He also helped me with the marketing and spreading the word to more people outside of the conservatory.

⁵ Snarky puppy is an American instrumental ensemble that combines a variety of jazz idioms, rock, world music and funk.

4.9 ETHICS & TRUSTWORTHINESS

I view my research as participatory research because it involves people whose musical lives and experiences of a musical event inform facets of my research design, process, propagation, and impact (Banks & Brydon-Miller, 2018:1). The ethics in such research is concerned with regulation and compliance with ethical guidelines and the relationship-based approaches to ethics (Banks et al., 2013: 267).

With this in mind, building a rapport between myself and my participants became very important to me. I used the process consent method (Dewing, 2008:60-62), which considers my participants' personhood. This method required clarifying my study's purpose and why I asked for their participation. Leech (2002:665) highlights the importance of putting participants at ease and convincing them that you, as the researcher, are genuinely interested in what they have to say. My having amicable relationships with my participants helped me with that. It was reasonably easy to make them comfortable talking to me, and they also care about the work that I am doing. Although there was a certain level of ease to my interactions with the participants, I found that I needed to navigate a new identity as a professional among people I considered my peers.

According to Macfarlane and Roche (2019:20), researchers who develop or already have good personal relationships with participants struggle with their role and the boundaries between themselves and the participants, especially when they are privy to insight in their inquiry. In some instances, in interviews, I found that I had to ask the participants to be more transparent in their answers, as they would often say something and then say things like: "you know what it's like" or "you've been there right?" In as much as ethics and review committees address contractual ethics, researchers must also consider relational and operational ethics because having close relationships with participants can have implications for the research (Macfarlane & Roche, 2019:21).

I applied for ethical clearance in adherence to the institution's ethical guidelines in which I am conducting my study. According to Creswell (2018:253) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016:237), as the researcher, I must apply for gate-keeper consent; this is to seek permission to interview the students of the tertiary institution for my study. I applied to the Research Data Gatekeeper Committee (RDGC) to gain access to the Kononia University

after receiving ethical clearance. On 10 November 2020, I received gate-keeper consent from the tertiary institution's RDGC committee.

Creswell and Poth (2018:261) state that any reality of an experience is individual and the participants' views subjective; it is, therefore, my responsibility to capture their voices and give meaning to their experiences. For this reason, member checking (Creswell & Poth, 2018:261) was a suitable way to get feedback from the participants about whether or not I accurately interpreted their thoughts and ideas. I did that by having reflective group sessions, where I sat with each of the participants and had a conversation about their interviews. I asked them if they were satisfied with their interviews, what they would like to add and what they would change, etc.

Thoroughness and aesthetic power are essential in determining arts-based research's trustworthiness (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Leavy, 2014:415). Therefore, I needed to dig deep within myself as a writer and hone in on my writing; I did so by practising writing, writing about my day, or my feelings about any event that stood out to me.

The coherence, trustworthiness of interpretation, and the translation of the feelings, expressions, and meanings that the participants ascribe to musicing experience are also crucial to arts-based research credibility (Coles & Knowles, 2008:66). I tried to be as authentic as possible by ensuring I express the participants' lived experiences and realities. They shared so much of themselves with me; I felt it was my responsibility to stay loyal to them. It was important that the details, subjects, and characters in the monologues portray real-life situations and occurrences in the participants' transcripts. As advised by Leavy (2013:25), I used sensory, visual, and auditory queues in the interview transcripts to relay a more realistic presentation of the Friday funk sessions and the experiences of the participants at the University of the north conservatory.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of participant monologues and an analysis of the participant interview transcripts. The monologues are rewritten excerpts from interviews that show the objectives, obstacles, tactics, emotions, and attitudes of the participants in the context of higher music education and Friday funk sessions experiences. The monologues were created from themes and material generated through coding and recoding and in-depth analysis of semi-structured interviews with the participants. To understand the significance of the Friday funk sessions I needed a deep understanding of the cultural context of the Koinonia University school of music. Reimer (1999:43) states that any form of musical activity, thinking and feeling are important ways individuals make contact with, internalise, express, critique and influence their cultural context. Friday funk sessions were a perfect example of a community of musical practice instituted for the purpose of internalising, expressing and understanding the cultural context of the Koinonia school of music. In my analysis, I found three aspects of the participants' experiences at the Koinonia school of music, aspects that influenced the student participation in the Friday funk sessions. These aspects are (1) their relationship with music before tertiary music tuition, (2) a significant moment of conflict, (3) the need for a respite from the conflicts of their tertiary music tuition. Each aspect provides pertinent information as to why critical hope is necessary in higher music education and also helped me understand the role of Friday funk sessions as a cite for critical hope.

5.2 GLORY

Glory is shy and mousy, but not in an off-putting way; she is quite endearing and sweet. She hails from a mining town, and is in her third year of music study. Her exposure to music came through school choirs and being part of eisteddfods for choral singing nationally. Glory's passion is singing and being on the stage, and that was mainly her most significant role in the Friday funk sessions. She was the star of the sessions, mostly because the other students did not know she could sing another genre better than how she sang arias and lieder.

5.2.1 Glory's monologue

(Talking to herself, as she checks her pots on the stove)

Glory: All of this because I saw a guy play violin on SA's got talent and thought, "man, that would be cool."

(Turning around, throwing her hands up facing the audience)

And to think I wouldn't say I liked music in the first place *(Pauses thoughtfully)*, but then again, I suppose I wanted to be different, you know? I didn't want to be the girl that took after her parents and became a musician.

(To the audience, sadly)

But like all beautiful things, I began to love it, you know. The more I sat in on the many choir rehearsals my mother's choir had, the more I got sold. The more choir competitions I attended and the costumes I saw singers wearing, the more I knew I wanted to do that with my life.

(Walking across the stage to sit on a stool)

Alas, it was a hard thing to admit to people you know? That I want to study music. It felt like I had to find a better way to say it. *(Laughs sombrely)* I remember seeing the word "Ethnomusicologist", and I thought: "Huh, it was just what I needed". I didn't know what an ethnomusicologist did, but I knew if I said that the next time someone asked me what I wanted to be when I grow up, that would be it.

(To the audience)

But I finally got over it and went ahead to apply for University with one thought in mind: "I am going to be a soloist one day".

(Sighs deeply and looks down at her fidgeting fingers)

I found a music school, I was accepted, but not for voice. *(With a crack in her voice)* I was accepted for choral conducting instead.

Glory: Yeah, it was hard, because every time (*Chuckles*) and I mean every time I would see people on stage, I would be like that should be me. I should be on that stage.

(Looking up, she smiles)

I found, to some extent, that choral conducting helped me. Yes, it... (*Sighs*) it helped me. I got to come out of my shell, you know. With conducting, there was no time to be shy or anything. I just had to stand up and do something (*Laughs in nostalgia*). I wouldn't say I liked it, yes, but it built my confidence from zero to a hundred.

(Face lighting up and sitting up on the stool)

You know what kept me coming back? (*Pauses*) the performances! Singing at Brooklyn theatre and all these places was it for me.

Glory: Even though the actual performance was always fantastic. The rehearsals and preparation for them weren't.

(Standing, she begins to pace along the stage)

In the choir, we have these factions, you know (*Rolls her eyes*) you get those that have the best voices, then you get those that aren't so strong vocally. And man, do they clash. I just don't understand how people could judge others according to their perceptions of how well enough or how talented they think others are.

(Stops pacing, faces audience)

People don't even care that you are a good person; if you have a lousy voice, you are unwanted. Too much competition, you know? Yeah.

(Standing with arms akimbo, she smiles)

But then there were the Friday Funk sessions. Friday Funk sessions were where I found my place, where I had the assurance that there was nothing wrong with my voice that I am just cut from a different cloth. Friday Funk sessions was a place where I felt accepted, like "you are different, and that's okay, you are unique, and that's okay".

(Smiles thoughtfully)

Do you know that I sang my original songs first at the Friday Funk session? Yeah (*Laughs heartily*), ooh, but I was so nervous and excited at the same time. (*Sighs*)

I embraced the Friday Funk sessions because they were a chance when I came here, I expected that I would perform all the time, and people would like my voice.

(*Looks down, sighing sadly*)

But it was the complete opposite; it was almost like I was thrown in a pit, you know, left there to stink. It was like, no, you can't sing, and there is nothing we can do about it.

5.2.2 Glory's analysis

Glory did not always like music. Her parents were musicians, and she wanted to pursue a different path. She began her music education at an academy of music. She played violin but opted to become a singing student. Glory had always known she wanted to be a soloist; she wanted to perform. Glory was accepted into the conservatory with one objective in mind; to study and become a great opera singer.

5.2.3 Objectives

Glory carried romanticised thoughts and ideas about how studying music will be. Glory had her sights on being a singer. She expected that lecturers and students would be mesmerised by her voice and perform all the time.

She began music study with many aspirations and apprehensions relating to the musical, academic, and social aspects of embarking on musical study. She looked forward to being surrounded by music and other talented and like-minded people. She talks excitedly about the conservatory — that it felt like she was a part of a small family. These feelings heightened lecturers who had auditioned her and adjudicated the choir she sang with at various school choir eisteddfods. Glory felt known when she stepped into the conservatory, which may have made her confident about what lay ahead.

She approached her studies giddy and excited, expecting that she will have access to many opportunities to perform and hone her singing technique. She viewed the conservatory as a bastion of opportunity to provide high-quality education while also giving her exposure. Glory wanted to be a star; one of the most memorable moments in

the interview with her was when she told me how she decided to pursue a singing career. She said: "It was simple, I asked myself, do you want to be the one waiting for the soloist to come onto the stage, or do you want to be the one that is accompanied?"

5.2.4 Obstacles

Glory's expectation of the conservatory and the reality was different. She says that when that realisation hit her, she was shocked. When Glory arrived at the conservatory, she found that she had been placed as a choral conducting major instead of a singing major. Glory says she felt as though she had been thrown in a dark pit and left to rot.

In as much as Glory was a choral conducting student, she needed to be part of the conservatory choir. Glory describes her time in the choir as unpleasant and toxic; she mentions an air of unhealthy competition. Glory refers to this unhealthy competition many times throughout the interview. She uses words such as "toxic", "unwanted", "inhuman", and "stepping on each other's toes" to describe the extent of the competition. It seems to be a sore subject, one that she talks about with a hint of cynicism. She also mentions how she developed insecurities about her voice and felt inferior to the higher standard singers. Glory says she feels there is an invisible contract between students that excel in musical performance and the voice lecturers, to disregard all the other students that are not so talented and this created feelings of isolation and disinterest in her studies and even her singing.

5.2.5 Emotions

Glory says that she experienced quite a bit of frustration and jealousy in her first year. When she saw a singing student perform during a recital or concert, she always thought it should have been her on the stage.

She also battled feelings of being unwanted by students and lecturers alike. All Glory wanted was to be accepted with the kind of voice she had and be trained to be a better singer. She felt that she was always criticised and could do nothing right.

5.2.6 Attitudes

Glory adopted a positive attitude about her studies and found the value of being a choral conducting student. The value in conducting for her was a boost in her confidence and musical knowledge.

But I'm glad it went that route because choral conducting was sort of like a firm aspect in building my confidence because I literally had to stand in front of people and do what I had to do you know. There was no time to be shy or anything, I just had to stand up and do something I didn't like, but it built my confidence from zero to a hundred. (Glory, interview).

5.2.7 Tactics and Strategies

Glory was able to garner a positive outlook on her studies and bettered herself in the process. She started writing songs and found joy and solace in the performances and productions that the conservatory choir held.

Friday funk sessions

Oh my goodness, my experience for me Friday funk sessions went by a different name. Amplified Friday said, there is a place for you. There's nothing wrong with your voice; maybe you are just part of a different group. (Glory, interview).

Friday funk sessions signified hope for Glory in more ways than one; it was a safe space where she could perform and not be afraid. Friday funk sessions were where she could just be herself and not worry about being judged too harshly. She was also able to step out of the boundaries and limitations of classical singing.

And you are one of the very few that can juggle two genres and still make it in life. (Glory, interview).

Through Friday funk sessions, she realised that she could move easily between Contemporary Christian Music and classical singing and how much of an asset this was for her. She had mastered versatility, and she had also developed a song writing skill.

At Friday funk sessions, Glory sang an original song and managed to impress and even shock a few of her fellow students and some lecturers who were in attendance. Moreover, Glory had found a platform where she could perform and be free to do so.

I was going to perform for the very first time, you know. I didn't know who was gonna be there. I just wanted to sing because that had been my desire for a long time, and I didn't know if it would work out or if it was for me, but I said let me try it out. (Glory, interview).

Glory began frequenting the Friday funk sessions and felt appreciated and affirmed her voice. Because of her performances at Friday funk sessions, she began to believe that indeed she could sing, and more so that she had a good enough voice.

5.3 SEPHY

Sephy is a sweet and amiable girl, with a laugh that is more like a cackle but rings full. In her third year of music study, she plays the guitar and sings so well; her voice sounds like a warm cup of coffee on a breezy morning. She is from a small town and is an avid music lover. Her high school memories comprise notable achievements in school eisteddfods and awards for the singer of the year. She was an instrumental part in the Friday Funk Sessions and performed often, and on some occasions, helped with organising the sessions.

5.3.1 Sephy's monologue

(To the audience, as she sips on a tall cold glass of better)

Sephy: My whole music journey has been a song *(Laughs)* music is *(Sighs)* music is life.

(Plops down her glass on the table, sitting back comfortably)

It's powerful music. It has the power to pull you away from reality literally, and it's just so magical, you know.

(Stuffing her hands in her pockets, stretching out her legs) It was easy for me to decide to pursue music study. It was inevitable *(Laughs)*. I remember the day of my audition, the excitement, and the nerves, but I was well prepared, and I managed to impress. I guess it's funny, though, because I was just like, "oh my gosh!" This is not going to work!

(Laughs nervously, facing audience)

I was like, "A whole year of this". I got it together eventually, motivated myself, you know.

(Sighs)

I am glad I did, though, because I am sure I would have dropped out if I didn't push myself.

(As if speaking to a friend, leaning forward in her chair)

Sephy: It was hard, though everyone is just vying to be the best *(Places her finger under her chin)*. I mean, there is healthy competition, but then you get bad competition. Students we look down on one another, I hated it, I would just be there like "for what?" I didn't do anything to you, you know?

(Shaking her head, arms stretched out at the sides)

I think it's a musician thing. Everyone just wants to be the best. That conflict made me a bit negative I was often like, "Aaah, I don't want to do this". It was exhausting, you know?

(Sitting up in her chair, she pulls out a box of cigarettes, lighting one up, savouring the pull)

Sephy: I love music; it's private for me, and I don't share it with just anyone. *(Taking a pull and blowing out the smoke)* Every day, I take an hour or two hours to isolate myself from the world and play guitar and sing. When I am in that space, I don't want anyone around me. I also love people; I met many people through Friday Funk sessions.

I met a lot of like-minded people. I remember one amplify Friday Funk session, in particular, was a tribute to Xenophobia; it touched my heart. It felt like for that one day, and music could fix everything.

(Putting out her cigarette and taking a sip of her beer)

I loved Friday Funky sessions, and I would be there making music and be so wrapped up in it. I wasn't aware that I was in the room with other people. It was just amazing.

(To the audience, as she put her glass down)

For the time, Friday Funk sessions were a thing. They were soothing. Especially if you had had a rough day, you just go in there in that lunch hour, and you know (*Sighs, shrugging shoulders*) engage with people, play your instrument, and learn to play other instruments. It was enjoyable.

(Sitting back in her chair, staring out into the audience)

At times, I would go through the most, and somehow Friday Funk sessions made me feel that I was not alone, that we were all going through things, yeah.

5.3.2 Sephy's analysis

Sephy's music journey started at the age of 16. She entered a lot of eisteddfods in her younger years and won a few trophies for singing. She also dabbled in a few instruments, guitar and piano being amongst her best. She is a light music singing student at the conservatory and very passionate.

5.3.3 Objectives

Sephy has a self-proclaimed obsession with music. She has always been eager to learn and eager to soak up all the knowledge that she could. Sephy highlighted several positive pre-university music experiences; winning in school eisteddfods and being awarded singer of the year in high school. Music performance always has been and remains a gratifying aspect of her everyday life.

Every day I just take an hour or two hours to isolate myself from the world, and I just play without thinking about anything, and in that space, I don't want anyone near (Sephy, interview).

Sephy is motivated by something bigger than just making it as a recording artist one day. The music is what keeps her sane, and it's the very essence of what it is to be her. When I asked her if she thinks about herself and forms her identity by the music she makes and listens to, Sephy, without hesitation, answered yes. She even described how the music she listens to influences her dress sense and expresses her personality. As such, Sephy hoped she would learn as much as possible from studying at the conservatory. She was enthusiastic about learning from experienced and distinguished lecturers.

5.3.4 Obstacles

A month into her studies, she realises that music study is not all it's cut out to be; she mentions how she was demotivated and wanted to drop out. It seems Sephy was disgruntled and unsettled when she realised that coupled with her practical performance module, she had the added academic work. I sensed that her demotivation also came from her struggle with the work's standard and quantity. Expressing her feelings of being overwhelmed by schoolwork, Sephy sighs loudly, almost fitfully, saying, "*There's so much of it*". What is more, Sephy struggled to assimilate into the conservatory's highly competitive environment.

Because I just wanted to learn, you know. And I wanted to know, and let's just say a month into the groove, and I was just like, "oh my gosh! This is not gonna work!" (laugh) I was like, "yooh, a whole year of all of this", like how am I gonna juggle it. But then I had a moment of motivation, just to get myself out of that space because I think I would have dropped out if I didn't push myself. But I was very pessimistic about all of it. (Sephy, interview).

A more in-depth look at her interview transcript also shows the challenge it was for her to adjust from high school's controlled environment to the University's less controlled environment. The conservatory's self-sufficient learning culture presented problems for her because she is a friendly person and explains that that aspect of her life has often made it difficult for her to perform at her best academically.

For instance, things happen, especially the night before, you know, you want to go out with friends, and then one beer becomes five beers. And then you wake up, and you've already missed two classes, you know. (Sephy, interview).

5.3.5 Emotions

Throughout her music studies, Sephy's emotional state has been frustrated with herself and her surroundings. She mentions that she hated how fellow students seemed to look down on her and expresses her frustration. As a singer, self-perception is very important and unlike instrumentalists singing becomes personal and close to the singer's heart. When musical peers begin to look down on you based on your instrument, it is something that can scar a person.

5.3.6 Attitudes

Sephy's countenance speaks of someone with a very relaxed and calm personality. This very personality seems to carry her through her time at the conservatory. She mentions how she decided to let things unfold and enjoy the little she could. She has developed a positive attitude and make it a point to grab every opportunity presented to her. She talks happily about the positive influence her voice lecturer is on her and how being a part of the university choir opened opportunities to tour Europe. The traveling experience made Sephy believe again.

But if I have to highlight something, it has to be the Europe tour, and I've never seen anything like that. I can't explain it. You have to see it to believe it like...but what I can say about it is it opened my mind; to say there's more to just being here in this country, there are other things out there that you need to explore. It broadens your knowledge to explore so many things. (Sephy, interview).

5.3.7 Tactics and strategies

Sephy found a lot of joy in performing and being a part of music ensembles within the conservatory and on the main campus. She describes the times when she is performing or rehearsing or making music as "magical", "Life", "emotional", "private".

It's amazing! They say, people who sing together, after a while, their hearts start beating at the same rhythm... just engaging with people through music is an emotional thing. It's personal; the music is private. (Sephy, interview).

She also appreciates that she and her ensemble members treat one another like family.

We are a family, even though we fight a lot, to the point of pulling each other's hair out, we have that sense of nobody messes with my family. Like that, I can, but you can't, kind of thing you know.

It is comforting to be around people she can connect with musically and personally. She recounts an incident when she was depressed and feeling very lost, and she describes how much comfort she got knowing that she was not alone.

She also takes a lot of comfort in social engagement. She is entirely a fun-loving and genial, and amiable personality. She loves socialising:

"I think one of the good things about it is the fact that when we see each other, we at least greet each other, and I think it has a lot to do with having a lot of aksies. Like with the vlei aksie, where it always rains and then we somehow always end up partying at the conserve (laughs). So those small little things really bring us together and make the social connections between us a bit stronger.

Friday funk sessions

Sephy says that she was excited when she first heard and saw the Friday funk sessions fliers. She appreciated it because she could meet more students from the conservatory that she did not know and collaborate with them. For her, being wrapped up in the music-making and forgetting about everything else was soothing.

She remembers one session that was a tribute to the injured immigrants due to xenophobic attacks. Sephy says that at that moment, making music with others around her, she felt that music could fix all the world's ills. She describes how comforting it was to be around the music, listening to it, singing, and playing the music. She mentions how that one hour of jamming with fellow students made her feel that she was not alone. She found comfort in knowing that she was not the only one going through challenges among the people who gathered every Friday for these jam sessions.

5.4 RUTH

Ruth carries so much grace and stillness in her countenance that it is hard to pass by her and not

take a second look to be sure of what you saw. Ruth's love for music stems from being a part of many choirs in her high school years. Her long, healthy locks are her most defining feature and that easy way she refers to everybody as "friend". She is currently in the last year of her degree (she started at the school of music with a diploma) and is a classically trained singer and avid fan of choral music and conducting. She was a weekly attendee of the Friday funk sessions and was mostly there for moral support.

5.4.2 Ruth's monologue

(Kneeling in her prayer corner, hands in a posture of prayer)

Ruth: For what it's worth, I appreciate the phases, seasons that I went through in my time studying music. It was and still is a personal journey of triumph.

(To the audience, as she stands to her feet)

I didn't always have such peace about it, nor did I always feel this good. You see, I struggled to be accepted at any university for a long time.

(Shaking her head thoughtfully)

My grades were not so good, you see. So I had to do many extra things to qualify.

(To the audience, smiling)

In 2016 was when I finally got university entrance. *(Clapping happily)* It had been a long time coming.

(Sitting on the floor, legs crossed)

I was a singer long before I got to University. I was a part of a choral choir in my home country. I attended and sang in all manner of choral music competitions. I even sang significant works, you know. I even sang an aria from the Opera Aida.

(To the audience, a melancholy smile flickering across her face)

When I auditioned for the school of music, I hoped that the school would catapult me to greater heights. I thought that I would have more opportunities.

(Sighs heavily)

But my voice was tired. I couldn't sing. It hurt to sing. Yeah, my range changed when I could hit a middle C comfortably. I couldn't even reach Bb flat. Life was pretty bleak.

(To audience)

But I thank God you know. Yeah, I had a lot of support from my voice teacher. You know she got an appointment with a doctor, yeah. The doctor explained that my vocal chords were swollen and that I had to be on vocal rest for six months.

(Sighs heavily, to the audience)

For a first-year, it was torture.

(Looking up as if to God)

I was like, God, I am losing something that you gave me! *(To the audience, sighing)* that year, I would go to school and then go straight to my room and start crying my lungs out.

(To audience)

But I got tired of crying. I got tired of having myself a pity party. I decided to become proactive. I worked hard, pushed my voice. I managed to sing the exam and passed, but my voice has never been the same.

(Stretching her legs out in front of her)

As much as I could no longer sing the way I used to. I started appreciating other people's voices. I started developing an interest in instrumental music.

(To audience)

I even changed majors, choral conducting. *(Gesticulating like she is conducting)* I enjoy it, and I have a newfound passion for it. Still, I miss the person I used to be when I sang prominent roles in productions and singing solos at one point. I became the one who is overlooked for these roles.

(To audience)

I still sing in choirs, but I just never was the same again. I also made friends *(Laughs)* we became close and joined by one thread, the thread of disappointment.

(Shaking her head, looking up as if stopping tears)

It felt as though I was forced to pursue something that was not giving me joy.

(Shaking her head and smiling)

But I made the best of a terrible situation. I also started attending Friday Funk sessions. It was amazing to sit in and watch all these deemed underdogs showing off their talents.

(Standing to her feet)

My friends performed. They improvised and sang or played their original works. It was powerful. I could tell that they were telling their stories through the music. They share themselves and showcase their talent through the Friday Funk sessions platform.

(To audience)

To me, Friday Funk sessions were soothing. They impacted so many students, you know. The Friday Funk sessions mattered.

5.4.3 Ruth's analysis

Coming to South Africa had always been a dream of hers. She was first exposed to music through choral singing that she would hear in her home country over the radio. She also comes from a singing family, and hence it was easy for her to assimilate later in her schooling years into the choral world. She has a good singing voice and dreamed of becoming a performer, mainly an opera performer. Her first Solo was in primary school. She goes into the next phase of her life (after matric) very enthusiastic and eager to begin and establish her career.

5.3.4 Objectives

Ruth believes that music is her calling, she had the opportunity to venture into another field, but she knew she would not ever be happy. The main thing that motivated her was expanding her musical knowledge, training her voice, and becoming a performer. Ruth maintains a resilient attitude and dreams of building a lasting music career.

She seems very passionate about bringing awareness to young school children from her country to have a music career. What motivates her the most is learning. She is devoted to learning and growing within the field of music.

5.3.5 Obstacles

Ruth explains that she did not qualify with enough marks to be eligible for university study when she matriculated. She had to upgrade and better her marks but was conditionally accepted at the school of music. Ruth had to work harder than most to even be in the country, let alone at the University.

When Ruth finally got to the school of music in 2016, she found that she had difficulties with her voice. Her vocal chords were swollen because they were strained over many years. She was placed on vocal rest for six months; she could not sing in the choir. The only kind of singing she could do was vocal warm-ups and singing vocalise.

5.3.6 Emotions – over her voice problems

Ruth describes it as "torture" to have been in a situation where she could no longer sing. She harboured so many negative feelings about not only herself but the trajectory of her life.

I would go to school and then go straight to my room and start crying. I was like, God, I'm losing something that you gave me. (Ruth, interview).

Ruth explains how she had fallen into a deep depression because she struggled with being teased and made to feel small by those students that thought themselves better than her. She describes her time at the conservatory as a severe time of phases and seasons, which speaks to her studies' profoundly personal nature.

5.3.7 Tactics and strategies – coming to terms with her voice problem

Ruth mentioned that in 2018 she was not happy with her voice major and changed it to choral conducting. She says that it was a decision she took for her peace of mind. Yet, it was also an essential step towards exploring other aspects of music.

She developed an interest in music education, choral conducting, choir adjudication, and academics. Because she was determined to make the most of her time at the conserve, Ruth even got an opportunity to be a part of an exchange program for six months.

Friday funk sessions

In discussing how the Friday funk jam sessions impacted her, Ruth begins with an exposition of the mind-sets of friends she studies with at the conserve. She explains how those students she knows, who also participated in the Friday funk sessions, were battling discontent about their studies; they feel that they are forced to pursue majors they did not choose. Ruth points out that, like herself, they had been forced by circumstance and things outside of their control to study majors they had no interest in. Like her, these friends had dreams of becoming performers and performing regularly at the conserve. They never expected that so much of their learning would focus on academics and so little time on their practical modules.

Ruth and her friends heard of Friday funk sessions, and at first, they weren't sure what to expect, but they attended these sessions anyway. What they found in these jam sessions is a place of safety, creativity, and freedom of expression. In Friday funk sessions, they found a place where they could share themselves, tell their stories, and experiment with their talents freely, without judgment.

Ruth strikes me as someone whose confidence was thwarted by her vocal problem. The subtext I got from her describing her battle with her voice is that even after receiving a clear and concise diagnosis, her voice has never been the same since. When Ruth changed her major from singing to choral conducting, she ran away from the hurt of not singing and performing as she did before she came to the conserve. I think she struggled quite a bit with the new lot in life. She went from being a brilliant soprano that had afforded her opportunities to sing prominent roles and perform at many big national choir festivals to not being able to sing at all for six months. Moreover, even after those six months of vocal rest, she would never again be in the same shape vocally.

To Ruth, Friday funk sessions brought a sense of comfort. I say this because she talks rather candidly about a particular culture in the conserve, especially among singers, of condescension among students. Students seen as gifted singers look down on those they deem less than they are.

Ruth says they "exalt themselves because they are chosen to sing solos in school productions". I detect in what she said, as a kind of 'mean girl' undertone among singing students.

Friday funk could very well have been a place where she was accepted and welcomed without judgment. A space where she and others could feel free to express themselves. Though she did not ever stand to sing or play with her friends during the sessions, Ruth recognised the benefit of such an undertaking. Although she attended the session as just a spectator, she attests to the jam sessions' value among those students who saw themselves as "the underdogs".

Student performance is of prime importance to most conservatoire students; success in recitals, concerts, and competitions makes a start student. That being said, a student who struggles in musical performance and finds themselves performing poorly in recitals and concerts automatically view themselves as inferior. Jam sessions, such as Friday funk sessions, that promote the idea of less is more and that encourage letting go of your worries and fears about your performance abilities become important to student lives.

5.4 THABO

Thabo is tall and handsome and walks like the most unbothered person around. His idea of hurrying is to bend his head down as he strolls, his footfalls not changing their pace or urgency. Thabo's outer appearance can easily fool people who don't know him to think he's unfriendly and rude. But when you take time to look closely at him and into his eyes, you see the gentle concern he has for people. When he sits at a piano, everything about him speaks of a soft and understated joy. Thabo studied for a music diploma. He was the resident pianist for Friday funk jam sessions and was a great help in making these jam sessions a success.

5.4.1 Thabo's monologue

(To the audience, as he sits behind his keyboard)

Thabo: Being South African and growing up black, I would inevitably love music. Music is equivalent to what it is to be South African.

(Plays a few chords, his eyes closed)

However, in the church, my love for music was nurtured.

(Stops playing, looks to the audience)

Some guy who was a pianist at church just left, and I had to start playing. But I learned by listening, tapes, recordings, all kind of sources. I just listened and began to play.

(To the audience, standing up from behind his keyboard)

The church was my first jam session. As I continued playing, my interest grew, I went for my grades and acquired them all, and that is when I decided to further my music journey.

(Pacing with his hands in his pockets)

I started studying at the school of music, and it was suitable for a while until it was not. I struggled and quickly concluded that studying music is unmusical. I felt trapped, unable to do what I want, play what I want and learn the kind of music I wanted to play.

(Shaking his head, sighing heavily)

I became semi-depressed because I had learned what I was being taught by myself, I couldn't escape the boundaries set up around my playing.

Friday Funk sessions for me, it was like finally!! This is why we came. Friday Funk sessions were excellent because music students could finally come together and show one another what they can do. I would teach another student what I know and what I can do and have them teach me. Friday Funk sessions were more of a therapy session, where I could play with other musicians and exchange ideas.

5.4.2 Thabo's analysis

Thabo recognises that music is a form of socialisation. He says loving music is equivalent to what it is to be South African. That is the way of South African people. By default, he would also develop an enduring love for music. He also mentions another area of socialisation that contributed to his love for music – the church. In the church, he was thrown in the deep end, instructed to play an instrument, and just did what needed to be done. From the beginning of his journey with music, Thabo learned music by literally playing music. It was an organic experience where he was just placed in front of a keyboard, and he was expected to do it, which made him an inquirer, an eager learner because all he wanted was to perfect this skill. Thabo single-handedly developed himself into a musical human by just listening, doing, and paying attention.

5.4.3 Objectives

Thabo said and reiterated throughout the interview that he already knew music. He had already developed a music education without going to a school to attain it. He mentions how the formal education he received gave words and terminology to what he already knew, experientially, and intrinsically about music.

He came to the conservatory with set ideas of what he thought a school of music would be. For Thabo, a school of music was where students and lecturers exchanged musical ideas, where musical diversity was welcomed and celebrated, and where learning happened practically, not just in theory.

5.4.4 Obstacles

Thabo found that the boundaries and rules that are such an intrinsic part of the conservatory suffocated him. He has always been confident in his musical abilities and musical prowess and felt that coming to a conservatory would elevate him and not tie him down.

The conservatory considers western classical music worthy of study, emphasising specific western constructs for expressing meter, dynamics, articulation and designating those as most essential to learn in schools. Thabo's problem is that it alienates all other genres and concludes that it is, in fact, unmusical to do so.

He also stresses how much music study becomes unmusical when we don't embrace the intrinsically musical about it. When it is not practiced but merely comes down to an elitist knowledge transferred from the lecturer to the student, the music ceases to become a critical and creative experience.

5.4.5 Emotions

Thabo speaks very candidly of his frustration at being in the conservatory. He mentions too many rules and too many limitations that made it hard for him to have a valuable learning experience. Thabo also shared how he went through a depression because he could not handle the conservatory model and how teaching and learning were approached.

5.4.6 Tactics and strategies

Thabo is naturally a creative and collaborator. For most of his tenure at the conservatory, Thabo created and collaborated outside his studies' boundaries. He was a part of a popular marimba group at the school, and he and his fellow group members created a fusion sound from that. A sound and texture that was unique to them.

He also went beyond his love for music and embraced other art forms. He became a model and modelled clothing for various clothing brands.

Friday funk sessions

Thabo's first thoughts when he heard that Friday funk sessions was going to happen, was "finally". Not only were the sessions therapeutic, but they were also a place of learning and discovery, flow, and just organic music-making.

Thabo was the pianist for the jam sessions, and he was instrumental in selecting the people we mobilised to play in our band. He also made all the students that came to perform or jam with the band comfortable. He also approached Friday funk sessions as an opportunity to learn from other instrumentalists. Thabo enjoyed collaborating with different instrumentalists and spontaneously writing songs and putting together melodies.

Friday funk sessions represented what he had envisioned as a school of music; he stresses this sentiment when he says that Amplified Fridays should have been a module.

In the first weeks of Friday funk sessions, not many students were willing to step up and perform or jam. Thabo came up with the idea that it would be better to make up a set of about four songs that were well known and easy enough to play. He was responsible for bringing the band together to have quick rehearsals before the jam sessions and arranging some of the African music songs we incorporated.

5.5 LEGEND

Legend was a fun and charismatic guy; anyone who met him instantly liked him. Legend prides himself on having developed in such strides in his musical training and having a steady performance career straight out of University. Legend helped me conceptualise

and ultimately start the Friday funk sessions. His enthusiasm and creativity helped establish and maintain the Friday funk sessions.

5.5.1 Legend's monologue

(To the audience, clutching his drumsticks to his chest)

Legend: When I think of my music journey, it's the craziest thing, from where I was and where I am.

(Laughs heartily)

All I knew about was music was the C major scale at some point in my life, but I couldn't even pitch the notes.

(To audience)

I struggled for quite some time, but I worked harder than I had ever worked. I just kept developing myself until I came out top of my class.

(To the audience, pouring himself a cup of coffee)

It also helped tons of brilliant friends who were patient with me and taught me so much about music.

(Sipping his coffee thoughtfully)

If I am honest, a lot of musical knowledge I received was through friends that had been out at the conserve before me.

(To audience)

I have always been an eager learner, so I quickly became consumed with music. I listened to any music I could get my hands on, and every opportunity to practice that I had I took.

(To the audience, taking a seat on the couch)

I listened to all kinds of music, rhythms memorised riffs that I liked from the song and began practicing them.

(To audience)

I was lucky to have come to the school of music when the idea of having a Jazz band was still new. I learned so much from playing drums for the Jazz band. But I was eager to learn more.

(As if to someone standing in front of him)

I even ended up being part of an exchange program in Europe. That was mad eye-opening and life-changing.

(To audience)

You see this music school in Europe, and it was different from the music school I came from. People there loved to create. They made music all the time and enjoyed it. The school was good vibes and great times. The European students that I met brought a fun energy to music study.

(Moving to the edge of his seat excitedly)

My European friends even introduced me to the concept of jamming. *(Laughing)* Aaah yeah. They had jam sessions every Friday afternoon in one of the school's common rooms. Sometimes, the student would go into the school's recording studio, set up cameras, and just make music.

(Slapping his thigh emphatically to the audience)

It was amazing. And every time I attended these Friday jam sessions, I thought, "This would be nice to do back home".

(To audience)

You see, the conserve is very bound to classical music, and to me personally, that was very draining.

The very place itself was not uplifting. There was no joy at the conserve, and the more time I spent there, the less joy I had in making music.

(To the audience, sipping on his coffee)

The more I spoke about creating in house jam sessions and the more music I listened to, and the Friday Funk sessions developed from there.

(Putting the coffee mug down on the floor)

It was great for me to develop the Friday Funk sessions idea because we were prepared and motivated to make it happen.

(To audience)

We managed to bring together a few people to form a band. We didn't have that many instruments, only drums, a guitar, and a piano. But it worked. If any of the Jazz clubs I used to go to in Europe taught me something, less is more.

(Pushing forward on the couch excitedly)

The Friday Funk sessions were a hard sell. The lecturing staff was not too comfortable about allowing us to have them. That upset me quite a lot because I thought creativity would be nurtured and welcome.

(Rubbing his hands together)

We had a vision of Friday Funk sessions being a place where students could get away from the stress of life and studies and just make music, hang out, create and have fun.

5.5.2 Legend's analysis

Legend's story is inspiring in so many ways because his love for music developed as he studied. He applied to the conservatory because he was following his best friend. He struggled through his first year, but through sheer will and determination, he expanded his musical knowledge and became a self-taught percussionist.

5.5.3 Objectives

Legend is the only participant in this study who did not study music with prior musical experiences. His decision to study music was taken on a whim, but he was excited to learn and develop musically. Much of his music education was informed by vernacular musical experiences. His performance skills were developed aurally in natural social settings through observation and imitation. He was often thrust into situations where he

had no choice but to pick up an instrument and play. As a result, Legend plays various instruments, including drums, the trumpet, marimba, violin, and various percussion instruments. Like Thabo, he had an organic experience with music and an appreciation for musical creativity and experimentation.

5.5.4 Obstacles

Although Legend developed ear-playing ability, he still struggled with music's academic aspects. He mentions how he often felt insecure in class because he did not yet have a firm grasp of music theory. Legend also mentions how hard it became for him to stay enthusiastic about his studies because of all conservatory rules.

There was no joy at the conserve. The more time I spent there, the less joy there was in making music or even just studying. (Legend, interview).

Legend mentions a stifling of creativity at the conservatory, which created a repressive atmosphere among the students. He describes that repressive atmosphere as draining and that he also became drained of all his love for making music. Legend says that the conservatory's problem is that learning stopped being about the music a long time ago; he laments that there's not enough energy invested into finding ways to make learning more engaging and enjoyable.

5.5.6 Emotions

Legend says he felt drained and struggled with negative emotions. He talks at length about the absence of joy and excitement over his studies. He mentions many things that made him mad about the conservatory, but the one thing he spoke passionately about was the rules set around practice rooms. It angered him that practice rooms were not open all through the night; he said that practice rooms are safe spaces for music students, a place where they can get away from the stress of personal issues, academic work, and stress and just play or sing for as long as you need to feel better.

The conserve, for some reason, made so much about themselves. It was never about the music or the students. It was the conserve way to just drain the joy out of anything. (Legend, interview).

5.5.7 Tactics and strategies

Legend went on an exchange program after completing his diploma and subsequently doing a music degree. As part of the exchange program, he rekindled his love for music. He also started attending jam sessions to listen and be inspired, but quickly got involved. He was more exposed to other music genres and developed a keen interest in jazz and jazz fusion. Dabbling in other music reignited his creativity, inspired him to practice more, and made him eager to develop his technical skills.

I discovered how to have fun through jamming and making money from it; I just got more and more hooked. The music students I met in Europe brought a fun energy to the study of music; it suddenly didn't feel like a chore anymore, you know? (Legend, interview).

Friday funk sessions

Legend came back from the exchange program inspired to imitate what he had seen in Europe. He and I had formed a strong bond over the years at the conservatory and talked often; him about his newfound love for jamming and jazz fusion, me about my depression, and how much I wanted to quit my studies. The more we talked, the more the idea of the Friday funk sessions came about. We had a vision, and we were committed to making it happen.

Legend remembers how hard it was to convince all the lecturing staff of the conservatory that the Friday funk sessions were a good initiative. He mentions the red tape surrounding Friday funk sessions and says he quickly remembered he was not in Europe anymore. He thought of the Friday funk sessions as his baby, which needed to grow and develop.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Research question: What can we learn about the student experiences of musicing at Friday funk sessions using the lens of critical hope

My research question is concerned with what we can learn from the students' experiences of musicing at the Friday funk sessions using the lens of critical hope. The framework of critical hope references the need to analyse and critique the immediate environment and locus the participants find themselves in. The environment under critique is the Koinonia University school of music, which is the place where the Friday funk sessions were established and hosted. These sessions aimed to bring hope, through musicing, to students who are part of a persisting socially and racially divided environment. This inquiry necessitated an analysis of the Koinonia University school of music's immediate environment, particularly the socio-cultural context. Music has a lot to do with people, people making music, people interacting musically, people introduced to musical practices imparted primarily by other human beings' musical actions. This chapter discusses the participants' involvement with music and the Friday funk sessions. From the analyses done on each of the participants, I bring to the fore the fears, hurts, despair, and hopes that the participants have held throughout their university education, which subsequently influenced their involvement with the Friday funk sessions.

From my analysis, I understood that the Friday funk sessions illuminated the common interests, everyday stressors, and shared social systems of the participants experienced in their music tuition. The quest of understanding the student experiences of Friday funk sessions revealed the participants' inner world as they relate and respond to the external factors in their immediate socio-cultural context. The interview transcripts, monologues, and analysis of each participant express the obstacles, attitudes, emotions, and lived experiences they speak of with excitement, disappointment, and hope. The participants' views of Friday funk sessions speak of a community of musical engagement that inculcated acceptance, inclusivity, and individual creativity as the primary concern.

I highlighted three of the most salient points I took from the analysis. These three points helped me to assess the research question sufficiently. The first area highlights the

participants' relationship with music before coming to Koinonia University school of music. The second point is the specific conflicts or obstacles that have contributed to the participants' feelings of inadequacy or general dissatisfaction in music study. Thirdly, the participants' need of respite from the conflicts and obstacles they face.

6.2 PARTICIPANTS' RELATIONSHIP WITH MUSIC PRIOR TO UNIVERSITY

In the analysis, the participants' pre-university experiences contributed to how they relate to and respond to the Koinonia school of music. When students begin their studies, they view music schools as a labyrinth of opportunities and new experiences that will either supplement or enhance their previous musical experiences. Students come with diverse interests and talents and excitement about receiving the highest quality education. Participants express their excitement and enthusiasm about getting into a music program that they expect will facilitate their musical development and open up career and job opportunities post-university. Below is a table that shows the pre-university musical experiences that the participants came to the Koinonia school of music with.

Sephy	Glory	Ruth
Studied music in high school	Studied at a music academy in her hometown	She was part of a community choir in her hometown
Was part of many school eisteddfods	She was a part of her high school choir; participated in school eisteddfods	She was a decorated soloist and had sung prominent roles, e.g., Aida
Won a trophy for singer of the year in the whole school	She was a part of a thriving community choir	

Table 1.1 A table showing the participants' pre-university musical experiences

The participants' pre-university music experiences started in schools, at home, or in church. The school music teacher or an adult figure involved in music projects in their communities surfaced significantly in the participants' musical lives. Sephy mentions how

she was encouraged by her music teachers to pursue music study. Ruth spoke openly about her choir conductor, telling her she would never be happy if she went into tourism instead of music. This is important because these important figures affirmed their musical confidence and self-concept.

Moreover, Sephy, Glory, and Ruth say how they were convinced that the Koinonia University school of music was the best institution to further their music study. The participants trusted their school music teachers and music practitioners; they expected to have the absolute best time studying. Music teachers or music practitioners' significance in influencing students to pursue music is detailed in various studies (Kelly, 2000:235; Madsen & Kelly, 2002:41; Rickels et al., 2010:294).

Participants report positive pre-university music experiences and music-making as an enjoyable component in their musical lives. Ruth talks at length about the challenging and vocally demanding music she enjoyed singing. Glory mentions all the soloing opportunities she enjoyed before coming to the school of music. Sephy, Glory, and Ruth had unambiguous musical identities; Sephy described herself as a singer, Glory and Ruth secured in their identities as soloists. However, the three of them report a drop in confidence in their singing abilities after a considerable time at the school of music, thus creating identity crises in them all.

McClellan (2014:280) discusses how music departments' socio-cultural context affects undergraduate music students' musical identities. McClellan (2011:49) calls attention to how the students' self-concept can be affected so much by a music school's tendency to focus on preparation for exams, recitals, and competitions. Musical self-concept is formed by the students' experiences with the environment and reinforced by elements within the music departments' socio-cultural context (McClellan, 2011:35). The competitive environment in conservatories and the conscientiously high standard of vocal tuition can more often than not be intimidating to students. Though indispensable, vocal tuition and voice lessons create a somewhat compressed learning experience, causing feelings of inadequacy and stagnation in the development of singing students. Sephy talks about how she was convinced she wanted nothing to do with the school of music after a month of studying. Glory says she felt unwanted, which made her doubt her singing ability.

Burt and Mills (2004:1) and Lebler *et al.* (2009:233) show how music students' pre-university musical experiences influence how they approach their learning. They highlight the fact that students with prior musical experiences have pre-existing ways of learning and how these affect their performance in formal music study. Carey (2012:312) suggests that the accepted master-apprentice model of teaching in music school can negatively impact these students by restricting skills development and restricting the utilisation of the skills they already came with. For example, Thabo had taken many annual external examinations for piano, where he was assessed according to his ability. Thabo came to the school of music with above-average performance competence and impeccable ear-playing ability. His expectation in coming to the school of music was that he would get the chance to expand his musical knowledge and brush up on his sight-reading abilities. He also expected that his own vernacular musical experiences would be embraced at the school of music.

That was my definition of a school of music. A place where I can learn classical music, someone else can teach me about jazz, and I can teach you about gospel music. (Thabo, interview).

Thabo started his formal music education, having encountered the informal approach to music. His musical enculturation was established in church and influenced his learning processes. A few of these learning processes include listening-copying, improvisation, and own compositions. His music engagement was mostly un-binding and unhindered, and he battled with the rules that came with formal music education. Jaffurs (2004:189) contrasts informal learning outside of school with formal learning and asserts that the formal setting is where the student learns standardised music methods while alienating and discouraging the students from incorporating their vernacular musical experiences into their formal education. Green (2002:4) notes that inasmuch as music schools have made considerable strides in incorporating various music styles and pedagogical practices, there is still some indifference in the way it is done. This treatment of different music styles and pedagogical practice is a form of structural violence because it perpetuates a mind-set that is unwelcome of 'otherness'.

Sandoval (2016:238) acknowledges how music education unwittingly perpetuates indirect structural violence by promulgating Eurocentric music curricula and pedagogical practice. Jaffurs (2004:191) describes how before she considered incorporating informal music

practices and teaching methods, her classroom was informed by a dominant ideology of standardised learning outcomes as stipulated for her district by the National Arts education standards. Students like Thabo find themselves aggrieved by such practice because it is essentially infringing on his ways of expressing and representing himself, his perspectives, and his relationship with music. The reluctance to embrace the 'otherness' of various musical styles and learning approaches creates an environment where students are not encouraged to flourish.

6.3 CONFLICTS AND OBSTACLES LEADING TO FEELINGS OF INADEQUACY AND DISSATISFACTION WITH MUSIC STUDY

I found that the participants have, at some point, had negative musical experiences in their time at the school of music. Students enrol in music programs expecting that they will encounter challenges, but they hope their experience will ultimately be rewarding. Performance competence is the prime concern of most conservatoire students because an undeniable attribute of a good student is their success in recitals, concerts, and competitions. Webster (1993:23) speaks in detail about what is called a performance product myth, which is the notion that quality music teaching is evidenced by how well a certain fraction of 'gifted' students perform in concert, recitals, and competitions. For example, if one teacher has more students doing well in performance and winning competitions, they are perceived to be better teachers and better music practitioners. This kind of mind-set cultivates an environment of what both Sephy and Glory call "unhealthy competition" amongst students, an environment where students do not have much consideration for one another and focus on being the very best and 'stepping on one another's toes'.

Further perpetuating a hostile environment where winning is the measurement for success, this mind-set isolates students from one another, creating adversarial relationships among students. Glory talks about how difficult it was for students to get along and build amicable relationships with one another. She also points out how hostility created a divisive culture among singing students. There was a distinct delineation between students of exceptional performance competence and those of average performance competence. Scholars (Rohrer, 2002:38; Eisenberg & Thompson, 2011:129) argue that competition demoralises character instead of building it up; this is evident in how Ruth calls students of average performance competence the 'underdogs'.

When Ruth finally got to the school of music in 2016, she found that she had difficulties with her voice. Her vocal chords were swollen because they were strained over many years. Research shows that 87% of undergraduate students suffer from either one or all of the following vocal issues: hoarseness, reduced pitch, and vocal fatigue (Achey *et al.*, 2015:192; Donahue *et al.*, 2014:316). Research also suggests that untrained pre-collegiate students are the most likely to have the above-mentioned voice problems (Timmerman *et al.*, 2005:138).

Classical singing students are often advised to take special care of their voices, and voice lecturers promote vocal hygiene. However, the musical, academic, and social demands of the school of music require regular voice use, and the demands of one-to-one voice lessons also contribute to the stress on the voice. As a vocalist, Ruth's voice is a part of her body, emotional life, and mind, and so for her, not being able to sing was complete torture. She mentions how her voice problem created a massive dent in her confidence as a singer, thus creating despair and hopelessness. Ruth suffered through a series of emotions, and for months she would go home from school to cry by herself. Ruth speaks candidly about how the voice problem she suffered changed everything for her, that she battled with her musical identity, and how difficult it was to call herself a singer. Generally, all music students must practice and rehearse to achieve fluency, excellence and competence; more especially when they have to sing or play before a panel of examiners who grade them. Ruth explains that it was hard not to do what she came to do, and says it devastated her.

Ruddock and Leong (2005:10) argue that the two elements of performance and competition in most music schools' musical cultures have a role in the negative self-perception that music pupils impose on themselves. Self-perception theory (Bem, 1972:2) states that the way individuals perceive themselves is directly proportional to their own emotions and attitudes and external factors or cues; the strength of those emotions and attitudes will express how they feel about themselves. The fact that she could not do what she had previously done with ease caused her to have a skewed idea of her musical abilities and competencies. Sandgren (2019:469) found that music pupils' self-perception has a lot to do with their musical achievements.

Legend laments that he found no joy in his time studying music. Legend recounts how he had no prior musical knowledge and little experience making music in his early years at

the music school. He describes his undergraduate years as an exercise in faking it until he made it, and because he did not know much and had a difficult time learning, he was insecure about himself. Ruddock and Leong (2005:3) assert that the value individuals place on music facilitates musical abilities. In Legend's case, we see how this is true in the sheer will and effort he expressed in developing himself musically. He says that his musical knowledge was self-taught and acquired by collaborating musically with friends. Bassist Victor Wooten, in his seminal TedTalk,⁶ describes how he grew up in a family of musicians and that when he was old enough to walk, he held a guitar in his hands and never looked back. He describes how his older brothers allowed him to make his mistakes and experiment with his heart's content, all in the name of teaching him how to play.

Legend's experience with music was the same way. He found himself in the company of friends who valued music, friends who encouraged him to focus and learn as much as he can. Claire (1993:21), in a study on creativity, discovered that mutual rather than hierarchal learning spaces often make for creative individuals and shows that peer interaction is an excellent influencer of such creativities. Legend mentions how awkward and joyless an experience it was for him to balance the standardised methods he was learning at the school of music with the free and unbinding music-making he did with his peers.

Like Thabo, Legend struggled with the rules, but he makes a different point altogether; how the lecturers at the school of music did not seem to care about the music he cared about. He felt as though they did not understand that he loved music so much. He did not mind performing, listening to, and even creating it for himself. Lamont (2002:42) stresses the importance of the values that music educators express to their students, further stating that music institutions need to reinforce students' positive attitudes and values by embracing them and considering their individual specificity.

There is an indomitable consensus among the participants that despite the conditions they have found themselves in, nothing can ever take away the sheer joy of being able to make music. Besides music-making being a personal and private experience, the communal aspect of it is one that is said by most participants to be indispensable. In

⁶ Wooten, V. 2013. Music as a language [Video]. Talk presented at an official TED conference. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zvW9arAZ0>

Sephy's own words are that people make music together, and after some time, their hearts start beating at the same rhythm. Anytime Sephy spoke of performing, rehearsing, or making music, she describes those moments as "magical", "life", "emotional", "private". Glory, Ruth, and Legend share the same sentiment; they all say in one way or another that there is nothing quite like it. The participants all highlight how vital making music with others is for them. Glory spoke about how she felt music's ability to bring people together when she performed with the school choir members. Sephy talks about how connected she is to her two ensembles; she shares how much of themselves they share when they make music together. Legend speaks of the fun and creativity that comes with making music and creating with others, and Thabo talks about how wonderful it is to learn from people when making music with them. Each participant brings to light various aspects of simultaneous collaborative music-making (Bishop, 2018:2).

Sephy touches on the deeply personal and private nature of making music with others. As much as the task is communal, the others around them always judge their creative outputs and abilities. According to Bishop (2018:3), the extent to which collaborators judge one another's output will determine each person's participation or withdrawal in the ensemble. Keller *et al.* (2010:508) found that it is easy for members in an ensemble to work in harmony because they experience flow. The flow experience happens because, in performance, musicians are less self-conscious and less aware of themselves and concern themselves only with the immediate act of making music (Hart & Di Blasi, 2015:275). McGillen and McMillan (2005:12) found that making music with others in ensemble fashion creates a sense of belonging among students. Sephy notes how she experiences familial bonds with her other ensemble members, making her feel less alone. Ruth discusses how she made many friends and how she has forged lasting bonds.

6.4 THE ROLE OF FRIDAY FUNK SESSIONS IN THE PARTICIPANTS' MUSICAL LIVES

For the participants, the Friday funk sessions was where they could engage critically and creatively with all kinds of music, a space where expression, creativity, and sensitivity are accepted and welcomed. Thabo describes the absolute freedom of playing different kinds of music rather than western art music. Legend says how beautiful it was for him to see music students make music and have fun and be happy while doing it. In chapter one, I mention that I treat the Friday funk sessions as a community of musical engagement and,

by extension, a community music project. Community music emphasises inclusive music participation as a declaration of cultural democracy (Higgins & Willingham, 2017:1). Such a conception's practical concerns are collaborative music-making and creation for diverse people of varying ages and abilities (Silvermann, 2012:156). Community music projects incorporate community development and personal growth (Koopman, 2007:153), and are according to Bowman (2009:110) fluid, negotiated affairs that are set in and respond to local needs and values.

When the participants and a host of students of the school of music first clamoured into one of our jam sessions, they came out of pure curiosity. As the weeks passed and as the musical experiences became more involved and more exciting, the curiosity faded, and it seemed they were gathered for jam sessions out of a sense of pure need. Legend recounts how difficult it was for students to get their minds around jamming because for so long, students sang or played the prescribed music from their lecturers. For the participants to break the mould and get back to making music freely without any limitation was hard. Harrop-Allin (2011:156) asserts that even though music-making outside of formal institutions is commonplace among students, there is a disjunction between higher music education and the diverse music students listen to and play outside of the formal setting of the school of music. The Friday funk session allowed students to embrace diverse musical practices and transformational learning.

They engaged in a musical activity that acknowledged their unique musicality while validating their musical abilities. Legend says how wonderful it was to see Glory perform for the first time in front of an audience, and how she was easily in sync with the Friday funk sessions band and how beautiful she sounded in a space where she could flourish. Friday funk sessions represented respite for most of the participants, at very different levels. For Sephy and Thabo, the Friday funk sessions were a therapeutic time of engaging with music and connecting with others. For Legend, the Friday funk sessions represented an opportunity to collaborate creatively with others and be happy. Glory appreciated the Friday funk sessions because she could finally rediscover her voice. For Ruth they represented hope, for herself and for her friends, although she did not actively participate, she realised how important these sessions were. I will elaborate on the different aspects Friday funk sessions represented for the participants separately.

6.4.1 understanding the participants' experiences of Friday funk sessions through the lens of critical hope

My conception of critical hope helps my inquiry in three ways; it involves acknowledging injustice through a critical interrogation of the participants' voices, emphasizing critical consciousness, action and feeling and underpins a humanizing pedagogy. The critical component of the framework highlights the need to judge that which is right or wrong, just or unjust, thereby helping me approach my analysis of the participants' experiences from the viewpoint of what is deemed as unjust or in need of reconstruction or improvement.

The other component of the framework is its emphasis on humanization. Individual lived experience is subjective, and cannot be taken as universal truth; the humanizing component of critical hope helps me to avoid generalization. I place value on the experiences of a particular participant at a time, thereby helping me to give attention to issues that are ignored or not widely written or spoken about.

The framework of critical hope proposed in this study also helped me to think of music education practise as something to be questioned, changed and transformed. The more I read about the participants' experiences in the interview transcripts, the more curious I become over how much of the problems in the transcripts are new and yet to be studied. As I searched for literature and found it, I began to have hope. I began to have hope because my study did not bring about new information but it only reaffirms the seriousness of the problems and challenges of everyday higher music education practice. Moreover, I understood that the hope I have will continue to be naïve hope unless there are some actions that are taken to transform music education practice. Critical consciousness and feeling started to become tangible and a recurring practice in my every day, because I asked a question-what can we do about it?

6.4.1 Friday funk sessions: Therapy and connection with others

Being around more people. Hearing about people's musical background like: nna ketswa Saint John, another person coming from choirs and their stories. (Thabo, interview).

I met a lot of people through Friday funk session. For example, Kyle on sax; and I got closer to Eddy as well. So many awesome people... like Sarah, Sarah is so cute (Sephy, interview).

Music making is a creative activity that normally occurs in partnership with other musicians. Jam session such as Friday funk sessions, where musical ideas are produced and appraised in the act of performance itself, the centrality of musical collaboration and relationship building is paramount. Participants Thabo and Sephy are both social and love to be around people, they enjoyed how much the musical interactions and communications between the singers and instrumentalists facilitated relationship building. Through sharing ideas, listening to one another, and approaching music collectively, it was possible for participants to understand one another and know each other at a deeper level. Research shows that aside from creative collaboration, music making is an intensely social endeavour that brings joy and satisfaction (Berenson, 2008:4; Kennedy, 2007:25). Berenson (2008:5) states that collaborating with others is rewarding and it also helps in building self-esteem.

Both Thabo and Sephy note how the Friday funk sessions felt like a therapy session. Sephy describes one jam session in particular where she felt soothed by the music and collaboration. She talks about how lost she was in the music and how it felt like she could escape all the realities of her world. Bishop (2018:9) talks about the element of emergence in collaborative music making. She defines emergence as “the collective output the group amasses which is greater than the sum of their individual contributions” (Bishop, 2018:9). In simple terms, she describes a moment in the music making process when the collaborators are taken over by the music. When this happens, it is almost as if the musicians are locked in a trance-like state and easily slip into more spontaneous creative outputs. Emergence has also been shown to lead to group flow (Keller *et al.*, 2016). This occurs when the musicians experience a state of weighty immersion in the music.

In the interview I asked Sephy about one particular Friday funk session that stood out for her, Sephy described an event so very similar to group flow.

That day we were making music where I wasn't even aware that I was in that room, just thinking about and reflecting on everything and being grateful that I am still alive, that we are all still alive. (Sephy, interview).

Although the concept of flow was first investigated by focusing on individual experiences of flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988:15), a few studies have emerged which address group flow. The concept of group flow is widely characterised by group activities such as hot groups and music jam sessions (Csikszentmihalyi & Rich, 1997:48; Lipman & Leavitt, 1999:292). Hart and Di Blasi (2015:276) emphasise how vital comfortability and familiarity are to the experience of flow. Musicians jamming together must be comfortable with one another and have roles within the jam sessions that make them feel that they are valuable to the jamming situation. This is evident in Thabo's interview transcript, where he expresses that his role as pianist allowed him to steer the jam sessions forward and the connections he formed with singers and instrumentalist made it easy for him to understand the visual cues and other non-verbal communications that happened during the jam sessions.

I know what each person's strength is based on where they come from musically. (Thabo, interview).

Thabo notes that collaborating with singers and instrumentalists helped him learn their unique characteristics and the nuanced ways each of them approach performance. The intricacies that Thabo describes are similar to what the Network flow model (Gaggioli *et al.*, 2012:21) suggests are the three stages of group flow. The central component of this model is social presence, which speaks to how individuals connect with one another. These three stages involve (1) individuals having an awareness of each other's motor intentions (2) individuals recognising the intentions directed to them and (3) coming to a point of synchronicity (Gaggioli *et al.*, 2012:21). Intentions in the context of group flow I believe speaks to the structure of performance, changes in key, rhythm and melody and how these interactions must flow harmoniously to facilitate group flow. Thabo touches on this aspect when he explains the free atmosphere of Friday funk sessions. He says that his experiences of church worship and band playing prepared him for the spontaneous and often unexpected changes that would happen at the Friday funk jam sessions.

6.4.2 Friday funk sessions: creative collaboration & happiness

We had the skeleton of a band, it was a guitar, drums and the piano. Which I was happy about because we kind of always managed to arrange people to play. And as much as it wasn't our intention to do so, as the weeks went by people started coming willingly to play. (Legend, interview).

Creativity is the act of generating an idea, performance or object that is not only significant but also fresh (Deitrich, 2004:1011). Bishop (2018:2) argues that in music performance, creativity speaks to seeking a balance between originality and appropriateness and maintaining pliability within stylistic constraints. Legend's description of the Friday funk sessions set up speaks to how we were able to do a lot with the very little that we had in terms of instruments and all that we needed to make the jam sessions a worthwhile experience. Legend says he was amazed at the quality of music that was made with the little we had. Legend says the singers and instrumentalist uncovered their skills, capabilities and ideas as they collaborated. Skills such as improvisation, skating and spontaneous song creation that were acquired in out-of-school settings.

Research suggests that the intensely social aspect of music making opens up an avenue where collaborators use their personal experiences to create new meanings (Hargreaves & North, 1997:21; Jaffurs, 2004:195). Legend supports these views when he speaks about how rewarding it was for him to actively engage, adapt and extend musical ideas that created new learning opportunities. Music performance is known to be a positive emotional experience, with the potential of improving the everyday quality of life (Clift *et al.*, 2010:20). Legend has always said his motivation for starting the Friday funk sessions was also about having fun and bringing back the joy of making music.

6.4.3 Friday funk sessions: Rediscovering the voice and hope

Glory carried unarticulated fantasies and romanticised thoughts and ideas about what studying music would be like. When she found she was not going to be a voice major, she experienced a drop in her confidence in her voice. Although she did not major in voice, she was required to sing in the school choir. Glory says her experiences with the choir have not always been positive, with the exception of the performances the choir has had. She recounts the unpleasantness she experienced during choir rehearsals and what she describes as the worship of music at the expense of the people. O'Toole (2005:2)

relates a similar experience in her time spent in choirs; she maintains that the conventions of choral pedagogy create passive and self-satisfied singers who are subject to the music more than the labourers. O'Toole (1994:7) mentions that in her experiences in choirs, a teacher-directed approach antagonises the members and silences the talent and experience that may exist in the choir. When the motivation in choir rehearsals is getting the most music out of the singers and placing an emphasis on the best quality of voices, the rest of the people may feel alienated and isolated from the choir experience.

I didn't understand how people could then judge others according to their own perceptions of how good enough or how talented they think the others are. There was almost an invisible contract at the conserve between the students that are considered good and the lecturers; that they are going to disregard the other students that are not so good and not treat them like human beings. (Glory, interview).

In explaining this dynamic, O'Toole (1994:7) uses Foucault's critique on modern society, which argues that the rise of institutionalism and the new conventions of political freedom has created a society that values productivity and efficiency over the constituents within the institution that actually do the work. Foucault (1979:138) asserts that this new discipline in society is concerned with regulating and standardising every movement and output of any institutional body e.g. schools, hospitals, prisons and factories. Foucault's critique can be applied to Glory's sentiments in that the choir as an institution practice disciplinary constraints in the activity of making music, which means that the best talents are prioritised and rest of the choir members are treated as fillers and not as important. In Glory's case, the way she experienced the choir rehearsals was compounded by having been denied a place as a voice major.

I expected when I came here that I'm going to perform all the time, people are going to like my voice and so forth. But it was the complete opposite and I was so shocked, it was almost like I was thrown in a pit you know, left there to stink, with no one checking up on me or offering me some lessons. It was just like you can't sing, that's it there's nothing we can do about it. (Glory, interview).

Friday funk sessions signified hope for Glory in more ways than one; it was a safe space where she could perform and not be afraid. Friday funk sessions was a place where she could just be herself and not worry about being judged too harshly. She was also able to

step out of the boundaries and limitations of classical singing. She realised through amplified Fridays that she could move easily between CCM and classical singing and how much of an asset that was for her. She had mastered versatility and she had also developed a song writing skill. Ruth like Glory says that it is a place of safety, creativity and freedom of expression, where they were able to share themselves, tell their stories and experiment with their talents freely, without judgement.

6.5 CONCLUSION

This arts-based instrumental case study explored the student participation in Friday funk sessions as a site of critical hope within a South African context. An important part of this exploration is understanding the potential of a community of musical engagement (Kenny, 2016:12), such as Friday funk sessions, in achieving critical hope. By employing arts-informed practices such as monologue writing, this study explored the student experiences of Friday funk sessions through the lens of critical hope. Another concern of this study was to give voice to the students' experiences of the higher music education institution in question, as pertaining to its socio-cultural context (Spruce, 2015:88).

The findings of this study elucidated the importance of student experiences at the Koinonia University school in understanding the student experiences at the Friday funk sessions. It is clear that the experiences of the participants in Koinonia University school of music have an implication on the ways critical hope can be achieved through the Friday funk sessions. It is still unclear whether an undertaking such as Friday funk sessions is the best tool for achieving critical hope. However, there is still hope as the findings speak to the advantage of creative collaboration for transformation in the context of Koinonia university school of music. Much of the exploration shed light on harmful pedagogical practices in the school of music, and the need for them to be renegotiated, rethought and possibly restructured. Further affirming the assertion that the group experience of musicing together leads to healthy relationships and contributes to collaborative problem-solving and mutual understanding (Hirsche, 2011:167)

My aim with this study is to express the importance of understanding the multi-layered nature of students experiences within a higher music education institution. I do this first by presenting a literature review that is aimed at highlighting the structural shortfalls in higher education and higher music education. The first part of my literature review deals

with problems that are seen as 'wicked problems' (Rittel & Webber, 1973:55). These problems are 'wicked' not in the sense of them being evil, but in that they are complex, often carrying unintended effects on all constituents affected by them (Ritchey, 2013:2). The issue with wicked problems is that they "bleed into one another" and one problem is usually a symptom of a much larger one (Ritchey, 2013:3). For example, the problem of disparities in the enrolment of members of diverse ethnicities into the university is a problem seated in racism and difficulty with access to education.

The problems I outlined in the first part of the literature review are 'wicked' because they have no definitive construction, for instance talking about racism in higher education in the South African and North American context could expose very similar manifestations of racist behavior but there will still be some subtle differences in each of these contexts. There are no one-size fits all approaches to 'wicked' problems, thus making it very hard to accurately measure the degree of success that can be achieved in solving 'wicked problems.' Moreover, every 'wicked' problem is a symptom of another problem, which become a chain of intersecting problems that are difficult to address.

There is no comfortable way to talk about these problems, which is why my approach to them is strong and subjective to some degree. The nature of qualitative research places me as the instrument of data collection, as such my beliefs, cultural background and lived experiences are variables that affect the research process of this study (Bourke, 2014:2). Therefore, what may be perceived as partiality in my approach is really a product of my positionality within the locus of this study. Positionality theory acknowledges that individuals have many overlapping identities which influence the meaning they ascribe to situations and lived experiences (Kezar, 2002:96). Bourke (2014:1) states that "research presents a shared space, shaped by both researcher and the participants", as such my identity and that of the participants shaped the research process in equal proportion. As a black heterosexual, cis-gender female postgraduate student in a predominantly white institution of higher education and music study, I have had experiences with either one or all of these 'wicked' problems at one point or another.

Over the past six years, I have transitioned from undergraduate to postgraduate student and I have had to exist and thrive in an environment that historically was not built for a person who looked like me. I struggled with chronic tensions within my musical and

academic identity. The burden of negotiating my place in the school of music, along with pressure to succeed even with the odds substantially stacked up against me gave rise to these chronic tensions. I experienced my academic self as torn asunder by paradox and subsequently found myself vacillating between fatalism and hope. Fatalistic about an institution of music study that seemed averse to transforming the way things had always been done; while at the same time hopeful that a new crop of students and educators would rally up together and bring about real and tangible change.

As the researcher, I drew so much from my own lived experiences and those of the participants and other students I've had the opportunity to dialogue with. In these conversations, I realized the difficulty of voicing out a problem, when you cannot articulate or substantiate it so that the person on the receiving end can understand fully. Boler and Zembylas (2003:107) recognize the discomfort that confronting harmful practices in schools and spaces of education can be. Especially in educational environments, such as Koinonia University, where unchallenged norms, structures and practices informed by colonial values and epistemologies have thrived and persisted (Meyer & Land, 2005:54; Boler & Zembylas, 2003:108).

After watching so many people in academia and other platforms have so many conversations about these issues that went nowhere – or more troubling caused harm – I wanted to engage with the literature in an explicit and direct manner. Bradley (2006:1) and Castagno (2014:3) speak directly to the euphemised language that mask the social issues that confront music education. For example, Bradley (2006:3) names fear and discomfort as the driving force for avoiding the use of direct language to talk about race. While Castagno (2014:3) points to the tendency of music education scholarship to clothe pertinent social issues in what she refers to as neutral concepts, so as not to offend or suggest something unpleasant.

The manner in which I engage with the literature responds to the concerns Castagno (2014:3) highlights. I know what it is to experience discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, academic ability and not have the words to intellectually engage in a discussion about it and being afraid to even try. So I wrote this literature review as a tool for myself and others like myself to use, and turn to whenever the need arises and if these matters came up in conversation at some point in their lives.

From the dramatically constructed one-person narratives/ monologues, we are able to understand and build knowledge about the positive and negative aspects of higher music education in light of their correction and adjustment. Which makes this study a small step in the right direction, because if we can recognise that which is harmful and oppressive we can work collectively towards transforming the situation.

The second part of the literature review deals explicitly with the framework of critical hope and its implications for music education. Freire's conception of critical hope involves acknowledging injustice and oppression through interrogation of our educational environments, and opening up the possibility of transforming present conditions –and also setting a goal-directed, action-oriented response to the injustice and oppression. In this study, the lens of critical hope facilitated the creation of spaces of reflexivity and dialogue by the power of music-making, thereby educating students minds to work towards justice and the transformation of music education which will benefit music students of the future.

LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

The spread of COVID-19 and the subsequent countermeasures such as school closure, social distancing and restricted entry into certain spaces and places, placed grievous limitations on the progress of the study. The weekly Friday funk sessions had to be put on hold for a long time during the earlier national hard lockdown in South Africa. By the time COVID-19 restrictions were lifted slightly, the time of my submission was nearing, as a result I relied more on the semi-structured interviews and the participants' reflections than my observation notes.

School closures and social distancing restrictions forced me to re-evaluate the number of participants I was to include in my study. The restrictions required a different approach to participant sampling than I was used to, hence my use of maximum variation sampling. Maximum variation sampling is a form of purposive sampling, and it involves the identification and selection of individuals that are adept and well-informed with the specific topic or research interest (Etikan *et al.*, 2015:2). The participant selection was not random, but deliberate in that I had to select individuals that would be able to express their experiences and opinions in an articulate and reflective way. The idea behind purposive sampling is to select individuals with the relevant characteristics, who would be better adept at assisting with the relevant research process. The participant characteristics that

are specific to my study are the following: (1) They must be students at the Koinonia University (2) They must have either been a part of the planning of the Friday funk sessions or must have performed one or more items during the sessions (3) They must be music students in the second to third year of study.

Another limitation to consider is that the views shared in this study from the data collected might not factor in the experiences of all the students of Koinonia University school of music. Not every student of the school attended the Friday funk sessions and some probably did not even know what they were or why they were started in the first place. The validity of my research is predicated upon the fact that I did the very level best to measure or understand what I initially sought to understand and measure. My intention with this study was to explore the experiences of those students that took part in the Friday funk sessions through the lens of critical hope. From what I have gathered it is still to be decided whether or not a community of musical engagement such as Friday funk session can indeed foster critical hope.

IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY ON MUSIC EDUCATION

While music is praised for its galvanising ability to cross social boundaries, it can be both exclusive and excluding (Bourdieu, 1984:18), often perpetuating a climate of privilege, where factors such as class, socio-economic status, race and ethnicity reflect the distributive inequalities within higher music education. Applying the critical hope framework to music education creates a unique situation where the dominant discourse and culture in music education practice can be deconstructed and renegotiated. This process of deconstruction and renegotiation demands confronting the truth about the colonially influenced ways in which our learning environments engage with students. The focus of such a music education will not only be on musical syntax and stringent learning outcomes but also on the development of a musical human.

The practical implications of such an undertaking is that the educator ceases to be merely a technician, focused solely on outcomes (Schmidt, 2005:5). The educator is challenged to develop his/her own inquiry which will be targeted at cultivating the musical abilities and aptitudes of their students (Folkestad, 2006:139). Creating an educational space where music becomes action, characterised by students having a bigger influence on the

curriculum content, resulting in the use of popular music, and teaching strategies that draw from informal music playing contexts. This is a teaching model that not only focuses on set instructional objectives and outcomes, but also on musical experiences that honor the world of the students (Abrahams, 2005:10). Critical hope in music education changes the culture and practices of both music educators and their students. For one, music education will be less commodified eradicating the thinking that the value of a student is measured by his/her performance and technical proficiency – and the educators by the talent they produce through one-to-one instrumental/vocal tuition (Bozalek et al., 2013:20).

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APPENDICES

ETHICS CERTIFICATE



Private Bag X1290, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Fax: 018 299-4910
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Research Ethics Regulatory Committee
Tel: 018 299-4849
Email: nkosinathi.machine@nwu.ac.za

12 June 2020

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Arts Research Ethics Committee (AREC)** on 12/06/2020, the Arts Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-RERC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: Exploring student experiences of musicing at Friday funk sessions through the lens of critical hope																																
Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Dr J. Morelli																																
Student: S.S. Shongwe																																
Ethics number:	<table border="1"><tr><td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>1</td><td>0</td><td>2</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>0</td><td>-</td><td>A</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td colspan="3">Institution</td><td colspan="5">Study Number</td><td colspan="2">Year</td><td colspan="4">Status</td></tr></table>			N	W	U	-	0	1	0	2	5	-	2	0	-	A	7	Institution			Study Number					Year		Status			
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Status: S = Submission; R = Re-Submission; P = Provisional Authorisation; A = Authorisation																																
Application Type: Single Study																																
Commencement date: 12/06/2020																																
Expiry date: 12/06/2021																																
Risk Category: <table border="1"><tr><td>Low</td></tr></table>															Low																	
Low																																
Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.																																

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

- Translation of the informed consent document to the languages applicable to the study participants should be submitted to the AREC (if applicable).
- Any research at governmental or private institutions, permission must still be obtained from relevant authorities and provided to the AREC. Ethics approval is required BEFORE approval can be obtained from these authorities.

General conditions: <i>While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:</i>

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT:

Exploring student experiences of musicing at Friday funk sessions through the lens of critical hope

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Sibusiso Sihle Shongwe

ADDRESS: 15 Meyer street, Potchefstroom, 2531

CONTACT NUMBER: 0762503172

You are being invited to take part in a research project that forms part of my MMus degree. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this project. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this project that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you could be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to decline to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part. Prior to publication of the study's results (or the point that publication is in process), you may also withdraw the data you generate.

This study has been approved by the **Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (IRERC)**, the **Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Arts (REC)** and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of the international Declaration of Helsinki and the ethical guidelines of the National Health Research Ethics Council. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or relevant authorities to inspect the research records to make sure that we (the researchers) are conducting research in an ethical manner.

What is this research study all about?

- *The purpose of this arts-based instrumental case study is to explore the student experiences of musicing at Friday funk sessions through the lens of critical hope. In this study, critical hope will be defined as an insight into the possible and appropriate actions*

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Glory: Semi-structured interview transcript

- ✦ The interview took place on the 17 October 2020
- ✦ The venue for the interview was my place or residence TMM Lofts

I would like to thank you for your willingness to be a participant in my study. As I have already mentioned to you before, the purpose of this study is to find out about the student experiences of the 'Amplified Friday's' jam sessions; which I have changed to Friday Funk sessions for ethical reasons. An important part of this exploration is to try and understand the potential of a community of musical engagement such as, Friday funk sessions, in achieving critical hope. In this study, critical hope will be defined as an insight into the possible and appropriate actions needed to address unjust conditions in higher music education. Our interview today will last for an hour; and in that hour I will be asking you about your background, your time studying at the NWU School of music and conservatory and your involvement in and attendance of the Amplified Fridays. Relax and feel free. I'm interested in finding out how you see things and in your personal experiences, there is no right or wrong answer. I just want to understand things from your perspective.

Sihle: I would like to ask you questions about yourself and how you came to be interested in music?

Kgalalelo: well, at first I did not like music. Because my parents were musicians and now I would have to be a musician as well I wanted to be something else. Because growing up I was a very versatile person, a versatile young woman. I was always interested in doing more than I could do uhm my journey started in...because the choir in primary didn't have the space for me, so I decided that I would go to the academy of music. Which is

Declaration by participant

By signing below, I agree to take part in a research study entitled:

I declare that:

- I have read and understood this information and consent form and it is written in a language with which I am fluent and comfortable.
- I have had a chance to ask questions to both the person obtaining consent, as well as the researcher (if this is a different person), and all my questions have been adequately answered.
- I understand that taking part in this study is **voluntary** and I have not been pressurised to take part.
- I understand that what I contribute (what I report/say/write/draw/produce visually) could be reproduced publically and/or quoted, but without reference to my personal identity.
- I may choose to leave the study at any time and will not be penalised or prejudiced in any way.
- I may be asked to leave the study before it has finished, if the researcher feels it is in my best interests, or if I do not follow the study plan, as agreed to.

Signed at (*place*) on (*date*) 20....

.....
Signature of participant

.....
Signature of witness

- | | |
|---|--|
| • You may contact me again | ☐ Yes ☐ No |
| • I would like a summary of the findings of this research | ☐ Yes ☐ No |

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

**Interview Protocol: Exploring student experiences of
musicing at Friday Funk sessions through the lens of critical
hope**

❖ **Opening script to build rapport**

I would like to thank you for your willingness to be a participant in my study. As I have already mentioned to you before, the purpose of this study is to find out about the student experiences of the 'Amplified Friday's' jam sessions; which I have changed to Friday Funk sessions for ethical reasons. An important part of this exploration is to try and understand the potential of a community of musical engagement such as, Friday funk sessions, in achieving critical hope. In this study, critical hope will be defined as an insight into the possible and appropriate actions needed to address unjust conditions in higher music education. Our interview today will last for an hour; and in that hour I will be asking you about your background, your time studying at the NWU School of music and conservatory and your involvement in and attendance of the Amplified Fridays. Relax and feel free. I'm interested in finding out how you see things and in your personal experiences, there is no right or wrong answer. I just want to understand things from your perspective.

❖ **A brief review of the aspects of the informed consent form**

- You have the choice of remaining anonymous, in which case you will have the right to a pseudonym of your choosing

I would like to know if I have your permission to record our interview. If your answer is yes, Thank you! Kindly let me know if at any point you want me to turn off the recorder or keep something you said off the record. If your answer is no, thank you for letting me know; I will only take notes of our conversation. Before we begin the interview, do you have any questions? [Discuss questions] If any questions arise at any point in this study, you can feel free to ask them at any time. I would be more than happy to answer your questions.

❖ First set of Questions: Background

To begin this interview, I would like to ask you questions about yourself and your journey in music.

1. Could you tell me a bit about yourself please; where you are from and how you came to be interested in music?
2. When did you know that you wanted to pursue a career in (singing/ specific instrument/ conducting/ teaching)?
3. Is there anything in particular that you like about in (singing/ specific instrument/ conducting/ teaching)?
4. In your decision to study (singing/ specific instrument/ conducting/ teaching), were you specific about the university that you wanted to attend?
5. What about the NWU School of music convinced you that it was the right fit for you?
6. Could you tell me about your very first time at the school of music? What was that like?

❖ **Fourth set of questions: connect the participant to their experience with Friday funk sessions (Amplified Fridays)**

1. So the main reason you were picked out as a participant was that you had at some or other point been a part of Amplified Fridays, can you tell me what that experience was like for you?
2. What were your first thoughts when you heard about a jam session like Amplified Fridays was happening at the NWU School of music?
3. As you know, I along with a friend of mine came up with the concept of Amplified Fridays and it was for us personally a way of escape and almost a place of safety. Would you say it was the same for you being a part of Amplified Fridays?
4. Could you share with me a memory of a session that you attended or performed at
5. *Follow up: (if they had performed)* What was it like giving yourself over to people like that and performing in such a setting?
6. Would you say that you enjoyed either attending or performing at Amplified Fridays?

Before we conclude this interview, I would like you to take a moment of reflection for me; looking back at your time at the NWU School of music so far, what can you say has been the most eye-opening thing you have learned?

GATEKEEPER CONSENT APPROVAL

NWU RDGC PERMISSION GRANTED / DENIED LETTER

Based on the documentation provided by the researcher specified below, on 06/11/2020 the NWU Research Data Gatekeeper Committee (NWU-RDGC) hereby grants permission for the specific project (as indicated below) to be conducted at the North-West University (NWU):

Project title: Exploring student experiences of musicing at Friday funk sessions through the lens of critical hope.

Project leader: Dr J. Morelli

Researcher/Project Team: S.S. Shongwe

Ethics reference no: NWU-01025-20-A7

NWU RDGC reference no: NWU-GK-2020-062

Specific Conditions:

- Due the COVID-19 pandemics the Committee would like to advice the researcher to practice the necessary caution and adhere to the National Covid-19 Guidelines when conducting research with participants.
- Prospective participants may only participate on a voluntary bases and providing consent to the researcher.
- No personal information of prospective participants may be provided to the researcher without the consent for the participant.

Approval date: 06/11/2020

Expiry date: 05/11/2021

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 A table showing the participants' pre-university musical experiences