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**Exploring The 'I' In Musician:
Investigating Musical Identities of
Professional Orchestral Musicians**

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Declaration

"I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis; that the following thesis is entirely my own work; and that no part of this thesis has been submitted for another degree or qualification".

Signed

Abstract

The lived experiences of professional orchestral musicians are under-researched by scholars in both music and psychology, who are interested in the world of the professional orchestra and the careers of classical musicians. Framed within a Social Constructionist paradigm, the research in this thesis is concerned with investigating the subjective meanings and individual experiences of a group of ten classical orchestral musicians. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was the methodological framework chosen to design and analyse a set of open-ended interviews with the musicians, which allowed reflexivity and flexibility throughout the research process. Three superordinate themes were identified from a close reading and IPA analysis of the interview data: 'Musical Foundations', 'Struggle: *"The Never Ending Quest"*' and 'Thank You For The Music'.

'Musical Foundations' examines the process of musical identity construction for the ten participants, from its early beginnings in childhood, through adolescence and their time in the professional orchestra. Different facets of musical identity construction are outlined and becoming an orchestral musician is viewed as essentially a social process shaped by social interactions, building on a sense of possessing certain 'innate' characteristics.

'Struggle: *"The Never Ending Quest"*' illustrates the challenges the musicians encountered within the profession and the impact that being a professional orchestral musician had on other aspects of their lives (e.g. personal and social).

The fear and conflict the ten musicians experienced is outlined and how the musicians coped and 'survived' within the professional orchestra is demonstrated. In addition, the central importance of the identity of 'orchestral musician' within the participants' lives is illustrated.

The last theme, 'Thank You For The Music' outlines why the musicians continued within the profession despite the struggles summarised by the previous theme. This chapter highlights the autonomy and control the musicians felt they gained within their orchestras and the physiological and emotional connections they experienced with both the profession and classic music itself.

Common to all three superordinate themes is their reported power struggle between the musicians and the orchestra, and between the individual and the collective. Another common issue was how central the identity of 'orchestral musician' was for all participants, impacting all aspects of their lives. The professional musicians constructed, negotiated and maintained their musical identities in accordance with both their own expectations and those of the classical music genre itself. The research in this thesis raises awareness of the importance of the orchestral musician identity in the musicians' lives and how an understanding of this can help gain an insight into other aspects of the participants' lives. Recommendations are made for further research regarding: the lived experiences of classical music students, investigation of current teaching practices in conservatoires and further exploration of the professional structures within an orchestra.

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Chapter One

Prelude

1.1 Introduction

This opening chapter introduces this thesis by setting out the context and background for the study. It continues by explaining how this exploratory study regarding the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians started. Finally, Chapter One outlines the structure of this thesis by giving an overview of each of the remaining chapters.

1.2 Why Study Musical Identities of Professional Orchestral Musicians?

This thesis investigates the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians. My initial inspiration for this study stemmed from being an undergraduate psychology student with a passion for music psychology, and the numerous diverse interactions I experienced with orchestral musicians; as I knew some orchestral musicians on a personal basis. In particular, six years ago I had a social encounter with a professional orchestral violinist, who (when I asked how her day was) proceeded to tell me how she was experiencing struggles within her career. She continued by revealing the troubled relationship she was having with her orchestra, describing the physical pain she encountered and how being a professional orchestral musician felt restrictive in nature; because she was constantly thinking about work. However, she

continued this conversation by explaining the passion she still felt towards her profession and towards classical music and was adamant that she could not live without either classical music or her performing career.

This sudden transition between her two positions and apparently contradictory attitudes confused me; it represented the complex and possibly problematic relationship orchestral musicians have with their careers. How could she hold such conflicting emotions about something that she clearly loved and had dedicated her entire life to? How could something that made her so unhappy at times be something she could not live without? After reading and investigating more about how constrained many classical musicians feel in their profession, I wanted to explore further why individuals might choose to become professional orchestral musicians and why they continued within this profession. The scholarly literature (which will be outlined in Chapter Two) revealed the struggle many musicians encounter in the profession and how musicians experience contrasting physical feelings (e.g. pain) and emotions (e.g. passion). In addition, there is a deep understanding of professional classical musicians in many areas such as their occupational environments (Driscoll, Ackermann & Kenny, 2011), injury and illnesses (Andersen, Roessler & Eichberg, 2013), health interventions (Chan, 2013), lifespan perspectives (Gembris & Heye, 2014), gender differences in the orchestra (Paarup, Baelum, Holm, Manniche & Wedderkopp, 2011) and personality (Langendorfer, Hodapp, Kreutz & Bongard, 2006). However, through an in-depth investigation of such research on classical musicians, it was apparent there was a dearth of literature with any direct reference to the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians.

However, musical identity research has been conducted in reference to other musical idioms, such as: opera singers (Oakland, 2010), jazz musicians (MacDonald & Wilson, 2012), rock musicians, (Gracyk, 2001), soloists (Juuti & Littleton, 2010) and gamelan ensembles (McIntosh, 2009).

Whilst there was some literature about the views of musicians in orchestras, the idiographic lived experiences of this group was under-researched and not explored in the scholarly literature. Further exploration of these idiographic experiences and the musical identities of orchestral musicians seemed necessary to understand more fully their lives and career choices. The research reported in this thesis adds to the growing body of research on both musical identities and orchestral musicians. The following section will give an overview of the remaining chapters within this thesis.

1.3 Chapter Outlines

Chapter Two provides an overview of the existing research on both the Western orchestra and professional classical musicians. Firstly, it is concerned with how classical musicians are defined and understood within the academic literature. It then continues by describing how classical musicians are distinct from other professionals and gives an overview of the organisational structure and development of the orchestra. Chapter Two then continues by outlining previous literature regarding the physical and psychological implications of being a classical musician.

Chapter Three defines the concepts of the self and identity and outlines theories related to these concepts. This chapter then defines musical identities and reviews the scholarly research and literature related to them. It describes the work that has been conducted, exploring musical identities in other musical idioms (e.g. jazz), whilst highlighting the dearth of work on musical identities in professional orchestral musicians. Chapter Three ends by outlining the research questions for the research reported in this thesis.

Chapter Four considers appropriate methodological approaches to studying the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians and outlines the chosen methodology for this study – Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). This chapter describes why this particular methodology was chosen and outlines previous IPA and Music Psychology literature, alongside, IPA and Identity literature. Chapter Five is concerned with outlining the research process undertaken in this study. This chapter discusses: reflexive issues, the importance of a research diary, sampling and ethical procedures, the interviews, data collection and analysis processes in order to address the research questions outlined in Chapter Three.

Chapters Six, Seven and Eight present the findings of this thesis. Each chapter defines a superordinate theme and the associated subordinate and emergent themes, and finishes with a discussion section that relates the findings back to previous research. Chapter Six ('Musical Foundations') is the first of three chapters that consider the findings of this thesis. This chapter investigates how the professional orchestral musicians constructed their musical identities in

childhood and adolescence and continued to do so within their professional lives. It focuses on how an 'orchestral musician' identity was formed in childhood and adolescence, through external influences and the impact of what were believed to be 'innate' characteristics. This chapter then continues by describing the foundational elements of musical identity construction within the professional orchestral environment, showing how a musical identity was formed in a collective sense with other members of the orchestra. The musicians described the deindividuation process they felt could occur within the orchestra and how they understood and described this through the use of metaphors. The musicians also reported the benefits and importance of membership within the orchestra and how a successful orchestral performance was based on the cohesiveness of the collective.

Chapter Seven ('Struggle: *"The Never Ending Quest"*') examines the struggle and challenge the musicians encountered within their chosen profession. This chapter explores the fear and conflict the musicians reported in multiple domains (performance, fear of change, relationships and emotionally). This chapter shows how the musicians coped with fear about performance; by forming a 'Professional Performance Identity'. It also demonstrates how the musicians could become 'reliant' on the orchestra and reported how they felt unable to undertake any other career, due to lack of skills and fear of the unknown. This chapter continues by showing the impact that the role of 'orchestral musician' had on other elements of the participants' lives (e.g. personal and social). They experienced conflicting relationships (e.g. with classical music itself) and emotions (e.g. having to manufacture emotions for

performance). This conflict was reported as being due to the centrality of the role of 'orchestral musician' within their lives and because they were unable to 'switch off' from this professional role.

Chapter Eight ('Thank You For The Music') presents evidence of why the musicians chose to continue in their career despite such challenges. This chapter is concerned with the psychological and physical sensations (e.g. the *'buzz'*) the musicians experienced in their work. The musicians also described how they viewed being a professional musician as a fundamental and crucial *'need'* they had to fulfil. This chapter also outlines the emotional connections the musicians felt towards both the profession and the music, and how they viewed the profession as an ongoing and never-ending journey of discovery. Chapter Nine concludes the thesis, outlining the limitations of this study, describing the contribution it makes to existing scholarly literature and outlining the next steps for and implications of this research.

This thesis reports an exploratory investigation that aims to add to the growing body of music psychology research examining musical identities, focusing in particular on orchestral musicians. It will aid professional orchestral musicians and those who train and support them, in clarifying the means by which they might maintain a positive approach to the range of challenges they face in their careers.

Chapter Two

Classical Musicians and The Orchestra

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews existing scholarly literature relating to classical musicians and the orchestra. This review is organised into the following topic areas: (1) how classical music and classical musicians are understood and defined within the literature, (2) what is distinctive about classical musicians in comparison to other professional vocations, (3) the organisational structure and development of the orchestra and (4) the physical and psychological implications of being a classical musician. The literature review is divided into organising principles that signify what is known regarding classical musicians and their identities. These organising principles are: the unique vocation, the orchestra, the physical and psychological implications of being a classical musician, identity, becoming a classical musician, health, classical musicians' relationships and performance.

This chapter not only gives an overview of existing literature but also indicates the lack of literature available in reference to the direct investigation of professional orchestral musicians' musical identities. This material underpins the current literature in relation to classical musicians and the orchestra showing the conflicting ideas surrounding classical musicians and how further research is required to clarify these opposing ideas. Chapter Two further outlines the unique characteristics of classical musicians and demonstrates the

importance of further investigating the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians.

2.2 Defining Classical Music and Classical Musicians

In this thesis, *'classical music'* is used to refer to Western Classical Music. The label *'classical music'* has been described by Johnson (2002) as problematic because it is often seen as *'old music'*. This is because the traditional view of this art form implies a lack of connection with current experiences and everyday life, because ultimately it is a representation of past times and past experiences. Classical music exists within contemporary society, presenting the previous values and views that are grounded within the traditions of the classical music idiom. In addition, it has been described as a profound and significant genre that represents Western cultural and social values (Johnson, 2002).

Cook (1998, pg. 4) suggested classical music: *"encodes maturity and, by extension, the demands of responsibility to family and society"*. This suggests that classical music signifies certain ideals and proposes one way in which it has been viewed; as a *'high art'* intertwined with social values and attitudes (Cook, 1998). Johnson (2002) underlined the view of classical music being *'high art'* by noting the widespread conventional assumption that it *"carried a greater value"* than other art forms. Johnson noted that privileged, serious and 'high-browed' individuals attended classical music recitals. Within modern society this exclusivity has brought classical music an increasingly negative reputation in contemporary

culture, due to this pattern of mainly elite social groups attending classical concerts in Western society (Johnson, 2002). O'Sullivan (2009) reported that classical music audiences are typically over fifty years old, professional or retired, educated and white middle class. Weber (1975) also described the classical music audience as high-status. He demonstrated, through writing a sociological and historical report on music and the middle class (in London, Paris and Vienna), that the traditional ethos of classical concerts reflected the attitudes and social positions of its audience members. Similarly, Small (2011) outlined the principal characteristics of Western classical music as being a symbol of the unspoken nature of Western culture, and claimed that classical music exists more with ideals of past cultures than present day. Subsequently, Mark and Madura (2013) discussed the view of Western classical music within education (in America) in the present day. They stated that Western classical music was considered by music teachers to be the best musical genre, as it represented '*high culture*' and reflected tastes of those from an upper economic class. Due to this the teachers aimed to '*elevate*' their students to a '*higher*' level of culture. These studies suggested that classical music carries a particular cultural and social meaning and shows that classical music is bound up in traditional Western social values and conventions.

Understanding how classical music is viewed gives an indication of the social realm in which the term '*classical musician*' is positioned. The words '*classical musician*' can suggest several diverse images and definitions. For example, classical musicians are viewed as a highly specialised set of individuals who have been practicing to perform this particular genre of music (solo or in an

orchestra) since childhood. Being and becoming a classical musician is widely believed to involve intense training, low financial returns, competition, having talent and needing financial support (Brodsky, 2006). However, on further investigation of the literature surrounding the subject of classical musicians, it can be seen that there is a significant ambiguity regarding how classical musicians are defined. The absence of “*musician*” within specialist musical dictionaries has been noted previously (Bennett, 2008a, pg. 1). However, although there is not a direct definition of a classical musician, the personalities, self-concepts, self-perceptions and identities of classical musicians have previously been explored.

Small (2011, pg. 87) described classical musicians as ‘*interchangeable*’. In saying this Small implied that the music musicians perform is not composed for the particular individual to execute but is composed for the instrument or group of instruments. Studies have suggested that musicians experience a lack of creative freedom, since the essence of classical music lies within the composition and not with the performer(s) themselves (Parasuraman & Purohit, 2000; Dobson, 2010a). However, it should be noted that musicians’ skills and personalities are not neglected in the academic literature (Kemp, 1996).

Brodsky (2006) believed an orchestral lifestyle can be misunderstood by individuals who do not work within this particular domain, as outsiders can look at full time performing orchestral musicians in admiration and view being a member of an orchestra as a highly respected occupation. By interviewing fifty-four British orchestral musicians, Brodsky (2006) concluded that the orchestra is

a competitive and challenging environment to work in and orchestral musicians often place their own personal health at risk to be successful within their careers. The opposing views outlined in Brodsky's study are supported by the beliefs of Bennett, "*little is known about the working lives of classical musicians: a lack of research acknowledged internationally*" (Bennett, 2008a, pg. 36). This lack of understanding regarding the working lives of classical musicians demonstrates that further exploration is required and this is the central focus for this thesis. An early and important study by Westby (1960) interviewed seventy professional orchestral musicians and concluded that the musicians often experienced conflict within their professions. Westby demonstrated that commitment to their art form often created personal unhappiness, lack of stability in a professional sense and low monetary rewards. In a recent study in a similar vein, professional orchestral musicians described their jobs as "*stressful, boring and lacking in artistic integrity*" (Abeles & Hafeli, 2014, pg. 35).

Similar to the findings of Abeles and Hafeli (2014), Kivimaki and Jokinen (1994) reported that orchestral musicians report a high level of job satisfaction. In contrast, Smith (1988) interviewed fourteen retired members of an American orchestra, who detailed an orchestra as more pleasant to work in than other professional occupations. Parasuraman and Nachman (1987) established through surveying sixty-five orchestral musicians regarding their commitment to the organisation and music profession, that love of music and commitment to music as a profession were not sufficient to make them want to remain within the orchestra. It was their experiences of their working environment in the

orchestra, such as status as a full-time musician, work ethic and the leadership style of the conductor that influenced the musicians' desires to stay as a member.

Although there are many studies establishing how professional classical musicians have high motivation, passion and commitment to their craft, other authors have reported how classical musicians tend to have very low job satisfaction (Allmendinger, Hackman & Lehman, 1996; Levine & Levine, 1996). These conflicting ideas accentuate the need for further research into the lived experience of professional orchestral musicians, which is the main focus of this thesis.

2.3 The Unique Vocation

Classical musicians are known for developing their musical skills through one to one tuition and practice of the technical elements of playing an instrument, often in an isolated setting (Benedek, Borovnjak, Neubauer & Kruse-Weber, 2014). Comparisons have been made between musicians from other musical idioms and classical musicians. Bezenak and Swindells (2009) reported through reviewing data collected as part of a past musical performance research project (Welch *et al.*, 2008), that classical musicians put great emphasis on technical proficiency; including the ability to sight-read and to produce a high quality of tone. In contrast, other professional musicians (e.g. jazz musicians) reported that they placed a greater emphasis on skills; such as improvisation and playing from memory. In addition, jazz musicians reported higher levels of intrinsic

motivation and they experienced *“more pleasure than classical musicians when listening to music from their own genres”* (Bezenak & Swindells, 2009, pg. 4). Furthermore, it was reported that popular, jazz and folk musicians *“experience more pleasure in musical activities than their classical counterparts”* (Bezenak & Swindells, 2009, pg. 1).

Creech *et al.* (2008) reported similarities between folk musicians and classical musicians in terms of the focus on musical theory expected from musicians of both genres. Classical musicians reported how they focused on achievements related to their solo performance work and had a higher commitment to practice than musicians from other musical genres. Their practice focused on achieving a flawless reproduction and technical mastery of the repertoire they are required to perform. Creech *et al.* (2008) claimed that the classical musicians' performance skills strongly aligned to the classical music genre, as they rated improvisation the least important skill for them to acquire since it is not expected or used in this idiom.

In addition, orchestral musicians encounter similar intensive and extensive training regimes as other sets of highly specialised individuals (e.g. surgeons) (Parasuraman & Nachman, 1987) yet they experience lower economic rewards. As Bennett claimed: *“Classical music performance is a specialist field that demands exceptionally high levels of skill and commitment in preparation for a career that is unlikely to offer participants rewards commensurate with effort”* (Bennett, 2008a, pg. 36). This demonstrates the pressure musicians often feel within their profession and highlights the difficulties they often encounter. Although

orchestral musicians are paid less than most occupations that require such intense training, it is the lack of autonomy and loss of artistic and professional values rather than financial problems that make some musicians leave the orchestra to venture into a new career path (Parasuraman & Nachman, 1987).

Gregg *et al.* (2008) analysed the responses to a questionnaire completed by 159 classical music students, which demonstrated the similarities existing between professional musicians and athletes. This comparison was made by comparing the classical music students' responses to past responses, reported by athletes in previous academic literature (Connolly & Williamon, 2004). Both groups experienced intense pressure to perform at consistently high levels and reported similar psychological reactions such as, employing imagery to limit distractions when performing. High levels of physical and psychological skills are required to succeed at elite levels in both sports and music (Kenny, Driscoll and Ackermann, 2014). However, professional athletes are not expected to continue training and performing until the age of sixty-five, which is the typical retirement age in professional orchestras (Levine & Levine, 1996). Also, professional musicians receive little or no health support within this occupation, despite it being physically demanding. This is contrasting to sporting professions where they receive high levels of physical and health support (Tubiana, 2000). Faulkner (1973) established how older musicians feel when they have been in the orchestra for a considerable period of time, it is not worth leaving the orchestra even if they want to. It would leave them at a disadvantage because they would have to learn a new set of skills while encountering an unfamiliar organisation with unfamiliar demands.

This sections has demonstrated comparisons between classical musicians and musicians from other genres, as well as comparisons to professional athletes. In contrast to other musicians, it has been shown in the literature that classical musicians place greater emphasis on technical proficiency than other musicians do. In addition, they appear to be more restricted within this genre because of the expectation for technical mastery. In comparison to other vocations, classical musicians perfect their musical skills from childhood and are performing until retirement age, making this vocation a lifelong process. Other vocations (e.g. athlete or surgeon) do not require the same amount of lifelong commitment because retirement is younger for athletes and surgeons are unable to train for their profession in childhood. Being a classical musician has been described as a unique vocation because of the lifelong commitment to this specific craft. This chapter continues with an overview of the literature surrounding the orchestra.

2.4 The Orchestra

“The symphony orchestra is arguably the most significant artistic organization in Western cultures today.”

(Brodsky, 2006, pg. 673).

The orchestra’s primary focus is to perform music that fits into the repertoire of the Western classical genre, which can range from traditional to contemporary orchestral repertoire. Orchestras in the Western world are important cultural institutions, representing their country’s identity through a musical lens (Glynn, 2000). Achieving a full time position within an orchestra is a sought after role by

classical musicians and in the UK most classical professional performers are freelance orchestral musicians (Harper, 2002).

An orchestra is a symbol, representing cultural values and cultural systems (O'Connor, 2000). Not only does an orchestral performance provide entertainment for audiences, the music performed signifies a certain period of time and acts as a particular cultural symbol (Green, 1999). Throughout the performance, musicians display commitment and group communication in a musical setting, even though many of them may be freelancers and play with several different orchestras. Allemediner, Hackman and Lehman (1996) claimed that the orchestra aims to be a source of pride to their nation and/or their community.

Allemendinger *et al.* (1996) stated that the professional orchestra is a unique workplace because it is "*a paradox*" (Allemendinger *et al.*, 1996, pg. 194). As the world's most highly skilled orchestral musicians practice their instruments alone, but are then required to play in unison with each other throughout orchestral performances; with a conductor directing them. To understand this paradox it is essential to further explore the literature surrounding the orchestra.

Economic challenges in Western societies generally, and in the music industry in particular, means there have been threats and real budgetary cuts to the performing arts and especially to the high cost orchestral sector (O'Connor, 2000). There has also been a decline in audience members going to watch orchestras perform, and less interest in classical music and concert attendance

amongst younger people. In addition, there has been competition between orchestras with some receiving more public funding than others and different levels of commercial success (Cottrell, 2003; Radbourne, 2007). It was reported by the New York Philharmonic that although people like classical music they do not always attend classical music concerts (Sommerich, 2013), as they prefer to listen to recorded music.

In 2012 the National Endowment for the Arts released a report analysing performance arts attendance, which showed that 20.7 million individuals attended at least one classical music event in the U.S. in 2012. The following figure (2.1) demonstrates the decline in classical music concert attendance over a ten-year period.

Figure 2.1 Decline In Classical Music Concert Attendance (2002-2012)

	2002	2008	2012
Classical Music	11.6%	9.3%	8.8%

Figure 2.2 represents the percentage of U.S. Adults who attended a classical music performance by age, in the years 2008 and 2012:

Figure 2.2 Adult Attendance of Classical Music Concerts (By Age)

Age	2008	2012
18-24	6.9%	6.7%

25-34	7.0%	7.3%
35-44	8.9%	6.4%
45-54	10.2%	8.2%
55-64	11.6%	11.0%
65-74	12.2%	13.9%
75 and over	9.7%	10.9%

Figures 2.1 and 2.2 signify the decline in classical music concert attendance over ten years (2002-2012). This represents the struggle classical music concerts have in attempting to retain attendees in a modern society, showing the decline of a younger demographic attending the concerts. Pitts, Dobson, Gee and Spencer (2013) conducted questionnaires with 105 participants and interviewed 20 classical music audience members who reported their concerns over the declining and ageing audiences within this musical domain.

There are also problems with the repertoire orchestras perform, as some believe the homogeneity of the musical interpretations can inhibit the development of classical music (Radbourne, 2007). Other factors such as competitions with other art and music forms (Lewis & Bridger, 2001) also restrict development of the orchestra. Alongside this is the lack of physicality and expressive movement in the performances (Amussen, 2005), which audiences (perhaps particularly young audiences) would like to see increased. This can cause conflict for the orchestral musicians as they experience a lack of creativity and individual expression due to the traditions and expectations of the classical music genre. Dobson (2010a) interviewed eighteen young musicians (nine classical string

players and nine jazz musicians) and concluded that lack of autonomy can often have a negative effect on the classical musicians. For example, it can stifle the production of a captivating performance due to the pressure the musicians feel (Dobson, 2010a).

The structure of an orchestra is distinctive in comparison to other musical genres as it has a rigid and multi-level hierarchical structure that other musical idioms do not adopt. Various researchers have studied the different roles musicians can adopt within the orchestra and have explored the distinct structure an orchestra affords its members. Firstly, it has been previously noted by Glynn (2000) that an orchestra's organisation and structure can impact a musician's identity. In order to understand a classical musician's identity it is important to understand the environment in which the individual is situated (Clayton, 2012). In-depth investigations of musicians' idiographic experiences within such an orchestral structure have not, however, been carried out as yet and the research reported in this thesis addresses and investigates this gap in the literature.

Allmendinger and Hackman (1995) expressed the view that orchestras are usually elite organisations consisting of more males than females. This was uncovered through analysis of historical data collected for a comparative study of seventy-eight orchestras across four nations, which was then compared to present day gender ratios within the same four nations. The notion that an orchestra is a male dominated organisation was echoed by Bennett (2008b), who established that men are more likely to apply for and gain musical leadership

positions than women, and women experience fewer opportunities in the musical world. In Bennett's (2008b) study, 152 instrumental musicians reflected upon their professional practice and career aspirations. The study showed how women were more likely to teach than perform and in addition, women often found it difficult to consider taking on leadership positions due to family commitments. Bennett (2008b) described an increase in the participation rates of women within the classical music profession, but found that women continued to have fewer opportunities to enhance their careers and did not apply for or gain leadership positions as often as men.

Others have researched professional participation and commitment, or what enables musicians to continue their careers within an orchestra despite the stresses and difficulties they face. Parasuraman and Nachman (1987) distributed questionnaires to sixty-five orchestral musicians asking them to indicate what factors they felt were influential in keeping them in the orchestra. The findings suggested that the opportunity to adopt multiple roles across their career was one reason individuals gave for being able to stay within the profession. Musicians often adopted the role of teacher to fund themselves financially throughout their orchestral career, highlighting the financial struggle professional musicians can encounter.

Abeles and Hafeli (2014) demonstrated the fulfilment US orchestral musicians can gain by taking on these other roles, such as teaching beyond the orchestra. Forty-seven professional orchestral musicians were interviewed and observed working with children in a school in the US. It was concluded that participating in

these activities allowed the musicians to feel free in an otherwise creatively restricting profession because in the school environment the musicians find a place for musical creativity. Bennett (2008a) also reported that orchestral musicians have many skills and abilities that they are often unable to demonstrate within their orchestral position due to restrictions and lack of freedom placed on them, thus underlining the opportunities that taking on other roles can offer these musicians.

Taking into consideration the work of Bennett (2008a), it can be questioned why individuals choose to continue within the orchestral performance profession when they seem to experience numerous personal and professional restrictions in terms of their artistic creativity and expression. Brodsky (2006) investigated motivations for a career as a professional orchestral musician and concluded (by interviewing fifty-four orchestral musicians) that alongside their lifelong commitment to the profession and their passion for music and performance, one key reason for continuing was the social aspect of being part of the orchestra community and the opportunity to share experiences with people of similar attitudes and beliefs. Brodsky also suggested they had no alternative career path to follow.

This section has outlined the orchestra's primary focus is to perform music adhering to the repertoire of the Western classical genre. An orchestra is a symbol of a nation, signifying cultural values and the classical musicians are there to represent these values and perform the repertoire. However, the studies outlined demonstrate the conflicting experiences the musicians encounter

because they belong to an orchestra. The traditions of the classical music genre can stifle creativity and individual expression for the musicians and because of this the musicians undertake roles beyond the orchestra (e.g. teaching) to seek fulfilment they do not find within their orchestras. In addition classical musicians are often seen as having 're-creative' roles meaning that being a classical musician is often perceived as a formulaic process of reproducing rather than interpreting or creating music (Dobson, 2010b).

The challenges the classical musicians encounter were highlighted. However, the musicians' commitment to their profession and to the repertoire were not neglected within the literature and suggestions as to why they continue within the profession were made. This shows the lack of clarity regarding the musician's professional experiences because of the paradoxes that can exist within an orchestra, therefore, illuminating the need for further research. The next section outlines the studies that give an insight into the physical and psychological implications of being a classical musician.

2.5 Classical Musicians: The Physical And Psychological Implications Of Being A Classical Musician

"The survival of all living things on this planet depends largely on their ability to adapt to environmental changes... Classical musicians are no different, and if they are to avoid extinction they need to develop the diverse skills required to survive in our present day multicultural, economic rationalist and computer dependent society"

(Stowasser, 2008, pg. 1)

The chapter will critically review previous literature to assess the contributions from existing research to the understanding of the physical and psychological implications of being a classical musician. The research discussed so far has given an insight into the lived experiences of classical musicians. This next section discusses work under several headings, covering aspects of the extensive body of literature about the world of classical musicians. Whilst there is a good deal of such work, Brodsky (2006) noted, only a handful of researchers have been able to break down the barriers and gain the trust of orchestra members. In doing this *“none of these have reported emotions and cognitions pertinent to occupational development, career aspirations, vocational motivations and performance experiences.”* (pg. 673). As a result there is scope for more work enabling this more personal ‘insider’ view of the world of professional orchestral musicians.

2.5.1 Identity

The concept of identity has received little attention within research on classical musicians and the world of the orchestra. A small body of research has been conducted in reference to classical musicians and identity - outlined within this section. Subsequently, Chapter Three will further explore the theoretical foundations of identity and demonstrate the literature that has been conducted in reference to identity, different musical idioms and within different contexts.

Levine and Levine (1996) reported discontent in the orchestral workplace despite the fact that orchestral musicians have spent most of their lives training and perfecting their skills to join the orchestra and become professional musicians. They highlighted the disadvantage of this commitment in that the musicians do not have the skills to switch into another profession. They also highlighted other disadvantages of being an orchestral musician: lack of control for the players, performance anxiety, the physical stressors of playing an instrument, indicating the fear of potential injury or disability and the frustration musicians feel when they do not acquire the technical skills they have set out to obtain and need. This is particularly significant for orchestral musicians due to the lifelong commitment they have made to this professional vocation. The authors reviewed an ICSOM survey of musicians' health (Fishbein, Middlestadt, Ottati, Straus, & Ellis, 1988) and reported the fear musicians may feel if they lost their musical skills, as being a musician had structured their lives and given them "*much of their identity*" (pg. 16). This quote from Levine and Levine (1996) implied the crucial importance that being an orchestral musician had on the professional musicians with reference to their identities, signifying the fundamental role of 'orchestral musician' within the performers' lives. However this statement has not been supported by any primary data or evidence, instead the authors' comments are an interpretation of previous literature – highlighting a need for more research in regards to this topic.

Bennett (2008a) surveyed 152 musicians and conducted two in-depth focus groups in order to develop an understanding of the classical music profession. Bennett reported how self-identity for a musician was often problematic for

many individuals who were not working directly as performers, as they struggled to reconcile the term 'musician' with their non-performance roles (e.g. teacher) because they saw that being a classical music 'performer' was the core of their identity.

Parasuraman and Purohit (2000) distributed questionnaires to sixty-three professional musicians in an orchestra to investigate the experience of occupational stressors on the musicians' sense of psychological health. The authors found that since being an orchestral musician requires coordinated teamwork to create a united sound, the musicians felt they had to submerge their individual identity and conform to the expectations and dynamics of the group. Parasuraman and Purohit (2000) demonstrated that a lack of artistic integrity (a lack of creative self-expression) could lead to stress and demonstrated how the musicians felt greater affiliation with their sections; more so than with the orchestra overall. However, this doesn't mean there was necessarily a shared social identity between the players within their own sections.

By contrast, Glynn (2000) proposed that an institutional identity can exist within an orchestra, which could be an example of a socially shared role. Glynn investigated this by interviewing thirteen professional orchestral musicians about the 1996 Atlanta Symphony Orchestra (ASO) strike. This study showed that an institutional identity was not always grounded within the organisation but could also be grounded within the dynamics of professional groups, such as string players. Therefore hybrid identities (a combination of two different identities) for example, utilitarian vs. expressive identities, can exist within an

orchestra setting. Glynn (2000) suggested that identity conflict (tension between two or more identities) is a common occurrence within orchestras, which can often lead to contrasting professional groups existing within one industry.

Westby conducted the first 'insider perspective' study of orchestral musicians in 1960 by interviewing seventy musicians from an orchestra in the U.S. about their career experiences. This study found that the musicians had an "*idealized self-image as a gifted and highly skilled artist*" Westby (1960, pg. 223) and this image had been constructed from a young age. The musicians had not been encouraged to consider or experience other occupational options during adolescence but instead were already practising intensely and focusing on a career in music (Westby, 1960). This demonstrates the impact of embedded identities (an individual's self-image constructed at a young age) and how an occupational identity as a '*classical musician*' can be formed in adolescence; becoming a near lifelong process. These studies have chosen to talk about the *group* or shared experience of being a professional orchestral musician, and have not specifically reported the *individual* encounters of classical musicians. Therefore, indicating the need for more idiographic exploration of their lived personal and social experiences.

Another example of the collective experiences of classical musicians was demonstrated by Dobson and Gaunt (2013). These authors interviewed twenty orchestral musicians based in London and discovered how they attempted to '*fit in*' with other members of the orchestra, while at the same time retaining and asserting their own identities (both musical and social). The authors highlighted

the necessity of having highly developed social and interpersonal skills in order to exist successfully within the orchestra. The musicians psychologically adapted and switched between identities to perform in a more effective manner, in order to achieve excellence on stage. Strong social and interpersonal skills were highlighted as crucial for orchestral work with an emphasis on retaining good social relationships within the orchestra.

Kemp (1982) synthesised past literature on the personality structure of classical instrumentalists, investigating what is necessary for musicians to have a professional music career. Kemp suggested that self-control and lack of independence is necessary at the early stage of a musician's career, because students are still developing their skills and are influenced by external factors. Gillespie and Myors (2000) suggested that once a musician has established their musical identity these traits mentioned above by Kemp (1982) become less important.

Another example of the influence of external factors is discussed by Griffiths (2009), who studied the effects of dress and appearance on perceptions of female classical musicians. This was done by showing thirty observers (who were also musicians) videos of violinists performing and recording the differences in their perceptions of the male and female performers. Observers' ratings revealed how they had an idealised image of the specific dress that was appropriate for specific genres of music such as: jeans and a top (folk), concert dress (classical) and casual attire (jazz). Additionally certain images can have a negative impact on views of the performers' musical abilities such as; tight fitting

dresses had detrimental effects on the views of the female violinists' musical skills and abilities. Wearing clothes that appear to be restrictive in nature (a tight fitting dress) indicated that the female performers are less capable of producing the musical repertoire expected of them and were noticed more for their gender than for their musical capabilities. This study demonstrated how external sources (observers) viewed professional musicians in certain attire and how the observers felt the musicians should present themselves in professional musical settings.

Personal attributes of what it takes to be a musician were outlined previously by Bennett (2008a) and included factors such as: confidence and inner strength, openness and adaptability to change, motivation and drive, resilience, determination and passion for the field. Buttsworth and Smith (1995) researched individual traits and instrument choice for Australian performing musicians and administered questionnaires to 255 musicians. The authors concluded there was a gender difference between players as male performers were more '*sensitive and shrewd*' in comparison to the female musicians. Instrumentalists were distinguished from each other by the instrument they played and this was recorded by the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire that was administered. This study highlighted the personality differences existing within performing ensembles due to gender and by instrument type.

Classical musicians have previously been described as introverts (Marchant-Haycox & Wilson, 1992; Kemp, 1996) who act in this manner due to the isolated practice regimes and the performance demands they have encountered.

Benedek *et al.* (2014) conducted psychometrics tests and administered questionnaires to 120 music students (classical, jazz and folk music). The authors reported that classical musicians are less open to new experiences. This was reflected in their unwillingness to partake in experimental creative practices (e.g. improvisation) implying an unwillingness to vary established musical practices.

The identities of classical musicians have been researched previously, mainly by examining their collective sense of being orchestral musicians rather than their personal experiences and idiographic identities as classical musicians. It has been reported that being a classical musician is '*much of their identity*' (Levine & Levine, 1996). However, this is a statement that requires further investigation and analysis to research this claim. The extent of group conformity and struggle the musicians encounter in their profession was also illustrated. Alongside, the multiple identities that can exist within an orchestra (e.g. section principal and trumpet player). This section has outlined the impact that being a classical musician has on an individual, alongside the complex nature of classical musicians' identities. Although aspects of the identity of classical musicians have been explored previously, there is a dearth of literature that directly investigates the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians.

The following section explores the literature on 'becoming a classical musician' and the implications this unique career has for individuals.

2.5.2 Becoming A Classical Musician

Research has been conducted on the process involved in becoming a classical musician. The internal and external influences that encourage individuals to continue on the journey to become classical musicians have also been highlighted. This section outlines literature that has explored these influences.

Davidson, Howe, Moore and Sloboda (1996) discussed the influence parents can have on their children's musical development. Davidson *et al.* interviewed 257 children and their parents about the role the parents played on their children's musical development. The most musically successful children (those who attended a prestigious music school) had a strong focus on music lessons and practice early on in their learning development. The parents' accounts of their own musical development were also recorded and the parents' reports of their music listening increased as their children's musical abilities developed. Davidson *et al.* concluded that the most musically successful children had experienced the highest levels of parental support. This study showed how the musical identities of both parent and child developed in tandem as the children's musical abilities developed.

Further research that explored the impact of parents on their children's musical development was conducted by Davidson and Borthwick (2002), who adopted a psychodynamic approach to their study. Davidson and Borthwick conducted a longitudinal study focusing on one particular family and interviewed each of the four family members about their experiences of musical engagement within the home. This study showed how expectations and support regarding musical

interaction governed the children's musical progress by aiding them in developing a positive self-image as a musician. Indicating how these parents had a crucial influence on the musical identity formation of their offspring throughout childhood and adolescence.

Creech *et al.* (2008) surveyed 244 classical and non-classical musicians (popular, jazz and Scottish traditional) to provide evidence of similarities and differences between these groups. Professional classical musicians reported how they started playing classical music at a younger age and were influenced by external factors (e.g. parental influence) more than musicians from other musical idioms (Creech *et al.*, 2008).

Jarvin and Subotnik (2010) focused on the required factors needed in order to become a successful classical musician, and suggested the key factors were: musicality, self – awareness and self-confidence. Interviews were conducted with twenty faculty members, fifty-nine students and eight gatekeepers (critics and artistic directors) all from the classical music world. Faculty and gatekeepers reported how social and personal factors played a key role in nurturing talent in the domain of classical music. They also claimed that learning from others' past experience was essential for potential professional musicians to become successful within this domain. In contrast to the work of Kemp (1982), the students in this study concluded that independence and self-knowledge were important for them to make the correct career decisions in the future. Alongside, being quick learners, having parental support, parental pressure, high quality of

student and teacher relationship, persistence, external rewards, intrinsic motivation, self-awareness, charisma and musicality.

Hallam (2013) also investigated levels of expertise, success and future musical aspirations for young classical players. One hundred and sixty three music students completed a questionnaire enquiring about factors, such as: their practice regimes, attitudes towards performing and learning, and the type of support they received from their teachers. This study uncovered many variables that can influence a musician's levels of expertise such as: attitudes towards learning and performing, relationship with music, musical enjoyment, self-confidence and practice. All of these factors were all related to more time being spent learning their musical instruments. Hallam (2013) demonstrated the significance of musical activities (listening to music, going to concerts, playing in musical groups and having a social life that included musical activities) in giving music students the opportunity to be able to socialise with like-minded individuals. Hallam also highlighted the importance of a sense of the collective on the formation of musical identities. Once individuals have become professional musicians the development process continues as they mature as musicians and develop their musicianship - this can be seen as a lifelong process (Brodsky, 2011).

This section outlined the impact of parental influence on individuals in becoming classical musicians and how musical identities can often flourish in tandem between parent and child. In comparison to other musical idioms it appeared that classical musicians started learning their instruments at a younger age and

were influenced by external factors more than ‘non-classical’ musicians (Creech *et al.*, 2008). The multiple aspects that are required at a young age to become a successful musician were outlined, with social and personal factors playing a key role in nurturing musical development. Finally, the importance of other individuals (e.g. parents) on the formation of musical identities was reported, again showing the lack of investigation into the idiographic lived experiences of classical musicians because becoming a classical musician is usually viewed as a social process. The following section outlines existing research concerning the connection between identity and classical musicians physical and psychological health.

2.5.3 Health

The subject of health in relation to classical musicians is an important topic that includes a good deal of scholarly literature and research. This subject describes the psychological and physical health issues classical musicians encounter. It has been previously demonstrated that there is a link between musical identities and health (Lonie, 2009). Lonie framed the connection between these two factors, which was the relationship between music and problematic health behaviours, and the psychological implications of different musical identities on health. However, Lonie believed that: *“It may be that in order to seek wide validation, studies linking music preference and health oversimplify the association because they do not have data on the key questions of strength with which musical identities feature in people’s biographies. A comprehensive approach to the*

question should consider association alongside experience.” (Pg.49). This quote demonstrated the necessity of exploring lived experiences in order to understand the link between musical identities and health. In the health literature the subject of identity is acknowledged but not directly investigated although it is stated, *“our musical bodies are engrained with our musical identities”* (Elliot & Silverman, 2012, pg. 33). In addition, Andersen *et al.* (2013) reported how professional orchestral musicians’ experiences of pain are inextricably linked to their musical identity due to the frequency of pain they experience.

A substantial body of research has been conducted to examine the health issues performing classical musicians encounter within and outwith the orchestral environment. The topic of health includes subjects such as: hearing disorders (Schink, Kreutz, Busch, Pigeot & Ahrens, 2014), performance anxiety (Biasutti & Concina, 2014), occupational stress (Yoshie, Kanazawa, Kudo, Ohtsuki & Nakazawa, 2011), drug and alcohol abuse (Miller & Quigley, 2011), musculoskeletal disorders (Paarup, Baelum, Holm, Manniche & Wedderkopp, 2011), stress, pain and depression (Dobson, 2010a). This section will give a brief overview of the findings of physical and mental health conditions experienced by classical musicians.

Dobson (2010b) interviewed both freelance classical string players and jazz musicians in her study and established that in both (very different) music contexts, negative drinking patterns were closely linked with the demands of high levels of musical performance. Such patterns of alcohol consumption were

not exclusive to either musical idiom but instead were reported by musicians working in both classical and jazz genres. This research proposed the notion of '*professional socializing*' as being core to both professional environments, which encouraged alcohol consumption. This alcohol consumption was reported as being closely linked to the demands of musical performance for the classical musicians. They often felt that in order to gain orchestral positions they must partake in drinking related socialising for career progression. Alcohol consumption in a group setting solidified a group identity for the classical musicians as well as being a means of relaxation.

The influence that music and stress can have on musicians' hearing (Kahari, Zachau, Eklof & Moller, 2004), the pain patterns amongst violinists (Ackermann & Adams, 2003) and the musculoskeletal disorders of performing classical musicians (Zaza, Charles & Muszynski, 1998) have all been investigated. Zaza *et al.* (1998) highlighted that further explorations of individual experience in relation to illness and musculoskeletal disorders are required in order to plan ways of preventing such problems. A further study by Crnivec (2004) found, in a sample of musicians from an orchestra, 47.1% suffered minor health impairments, 40% moderate health impairments and 12.9% had serious health issues. They concluded that the rate of disability retirement in musicians is high and suggested measures for improved health protection.

The ongoing process of physical stresses and strains impacted on the musicians' complex relationship with their instruments. Smith (1988) found the majority of orchestral players showed no desire to play their instrument after retirement,

which Smith interpreted as a reflection of the physical stresses experienced through playing. Kaufman – Cohnen and Ratzon (2011) investigated the experiences of fifty-nine classical musicians who filled out questionnaires providing information regarding their musculoskeletal symptoms, associated with their intensive playing, psychosocial factors (job control, perceived workload and job requirements) and demographics. This study highlighted some of the psychological factors within the work environment, such as their emotional investment in work and the expectations of the quality of performance, which can initiate such physical conditions. The musculoskeletal conditions occurred because the classical musicians disregarded the physical discomfort they experienced until the orchestral performance was over because of their commitment to the performance.

The link between psychological health and performance was also drawn by Brodsky (2006) as he claimed that musicians have an awareness that career achievement and success may come at the cost of their own health and wellbeing. Interviewing fifty-four orchestral musicians and investigating their orchestral lifestyle evidenced this. The musicians outlined the psychological stresses and physical strains they encountered frequently throughout their performances on stage and how career and performance frustrations were not what they had expected when they embarked on their career.

According to Sternbach (1993), who conducted a survey on major orchestras, professional musicians die 20-22% sooner than others in the general population. Sternbach reported that professional musicians' experiences of stress are due to

the pressures of performance and the expectations placed upon them. The musicians also assumed their pain was normal and encountered by all musicians. They masked the injuries experienced because they did not want to be perceived as an injured musician, which could then affect their reputation (and employment) within the professional musical world. This then brings into question why there might be such a significantly shorter life expectancy within this specific occupation. Kreutz, Ginsborg and Williamon (2009) surveyed 273 music students and suggested one possible reason for this could be, when classical music students are training within conservatoires they tend to regard their psychological health as more important than their physical health (Kreutz, *et al.*, 2009), which they often neglect. Another reason is the lack of physical autonomy musicians experience, as it was reported that the musicians neglected recreational physical activity (e.g. jogging) over musical practice. It was also demonstrated that the musicians neglected stress management but were more concerned with nutrition, spiritual growth and interpersonal relations.

A number of studies have directly investigated the psychological demands of the orchestral music profession. Kenny *et al.* (2014) investigated the psychological wellbeing of professional orchestral musicians by conducting a cross-sectional population survey of Australia's eight orchestras. Psychosocial analysis of responses to their questionnaire revealed that significant patterns of anxiety and depression were more prevalent in the female musicians than the males. Additionally, the younger musicians expressed more anxiety than the older musicians in the study. Papageorgi, Creech and Welch (2011) surveyed 244 musicians on how they perceived their performance anxiety. The musicians' self-

reports indicated higher levels of performance anxiety in comparison to non-classical musicians (Popular, Jazz and Scottish Traditional musicians). The findings indicated that solo performances induced higher levels of anxiety than group performances for all musicians from the different genres. This demonstrated how the performance environment impacts the musicians' anxiety levels and it was reported that the formality of the classical concert could also affect the classical musicians' levels of anxiety.

A study by Parasuraman and Purohit (2000) of sixty-three professional orchestral musicians in the Eastern United States explored the musicians' experience of social tensions and their perceptions of the (lack of) opportunities for creative input into performances. Parasuraman and Purohit suggested these factors were associated with heightened distress and feelings of boredom for the musicians. It appeared that performance anxiety occurred in a variety of settings, with solo performances causing the most anxiety for musicians (Papageorgi *et al.*, 2011; Nicholson, Cody & Beck, 2014).

Kenny *et al.* (2014) and other authors have highlighted how players are unprepared for the psychological and physical demands expected from them when entering a professional orchestra (Brodsky, 2006; Dobson & Gaunt, 2013). Kenny *et al.* (2014, pg. 230) suggested the application of positive coping strategies (e.g. deep breathing and mock performance practice) as being counter-productive for the musicians and could in turn demotivate highly motivated and successful performing musicians. This is because there is a lack of research investigating the '*underlying psychopathology*' of these valued

musicians and the psychological difficulties of the classical music profession must be addressed in an idiographic sense. The importance of positive coping strategies (regular self-assessments) are highlighted in the work of Clark *et al.* (2014) who demonstrated the psychological importance of self-reflection for professional classical musicians.

This section has given an overview of the substantial amount of health literature available in reference to classical musicians, demonstrating the prevalence of this subject area. It outlined the lack of support professional musicians receive in relation to managing their psychological health in the orchestral profession. Although anxiety, stress and physical strains are understood, there is a lack of comprehension relating to the coping mechanisms and strategies of professional classical musicians, which is necessary to explore further because classical musicians regard psychological health as more important than physical health. Although the link between psychological health and performance has been made, the literature still neglects to investigate the individual experiences and identities of these individuals. The next section illuminates classical musicians' relationships and the impact these have on their identities.

2.5.4 Classical Musicians' Relationships

Brodsky (2006) referred to the orchestra as a team and classical musicians have discussed the importance of maintaining good social relationships with fellow

musicians in order to create a comfortable environment, which will help to produce successful performances (Dobson & Gaunt, 2013).

Parasurman and Nachman, (1987) proposed that orchestral musicians' intense love of and relationship with music is not enough to ensure that musicians necessarily continue in the profession. However, Brodsky (2006) contested this and claimed the main reason why musicians continue within the orchestra is due to their love of the music profession and the emotional satisfaction they gain from classical music. Some musicians describe their instruments as a part of themselves (Veerle & Tervaniemi, 2013). This relationship is illustrated in the following quote by famous cello player Jaqueline Du Pre in describing her close relationship with her cello:

"...other children didn't like me. I was very introverted and desperately shy. Children are so quick to spot this. They knew of the existence of the cello and taunted me with it. That's when I went and talked to it, saying 'never mind'; they have no idea how to play it'. I loved the fact that no one could be so private with the cello and communicate one's innermost thoughts to it. It became a person, you could even say a love".

(Kemp, 1996, pg. 147).

This distinct relationship with a musician's instrument has been described as a positive element of professional wellbeing in musicians (Veerle & Tervaniemi, 2013). Feeling united with one's instrument has been reported as a rewarding and beneficial experience, as musicians who felt more connected with their instrument had lower music performance anxiety (Veerle & Tervaniemi, 2013). Being at one with the instrument has also been found to promote the subjective

experience of musical flow, which can lead to a better performance (Veerle & Tervaniemi, 2013).

It has been established through research that the intense emotional experiences musicians can encounter during performances (e.g. performance anxiety) can be associated with emotional problems in the musicians' personal lives (Juslin & Sloboda, 2010). This demonstrates the relationship between personal experiences and performance. Kemp (1996) noted that musicians in general have an '*anxious disposition*' but in particular anxiety appears to be more prevalent in classical musicians. Classical musicians utilise their own emotional experiences and personal relationships to project emotional performances in the orchestra (Kemp, 1996; Juslin & Sloboda, 2010).

This section has highlighted the multiple relationships that can exist between classical musicians and their instruments, classical music, the music profession and with each other. The following section discusses literature regarding performance experiences, anxiety and the physical impact of performance.

2.5.5 Performance

Bonneville-Roussy, Lavigne and Vallerand (2011) investigated the relationship between passion and elite performance, finding a significant link between the two. Their study involved analysing responses to questionnaires, completed by 202 classical musicians, investigating the musicians' perceptions of their performance aims and personal practice routines. Bonneville-Roussy *et al.*

(2011) found that an obsessive passion (an uncontrolled internalisation) towards their work had a negative impact on their performance achievement, as judged by the musicians themselves. Bonneville-Roussy *et al.* highlighted that harmonious passion (passion that promotes wellbeing in expert music performance) and commitment by contrast had a positive impact on the musician's health, wellbeing and performance. The authors concluded that understanding the nature of classical musicians' passions is important in understanding the subjective wellbeing of performing classical musicians.

There have been several studies referring to the large amount of time musicians put into practice (Sloboda, Davidson & Howe, 1996; Jorgensen, 2002). Sloboda *et al.* (1996) investigated 257 adolescents between the ages of eight and eighteen and interviewed them about their personal performance biography. The individuals kept a practice diary and recorded all their practice and performance activities over a forty-two week period. This study concluded there was a strong relationship between formal practice and musical achievement and weaker relationships were found between informal playing and musical achievement. Similarly Jorgensen (2002) focused on the relationship between amount of instrumental practice and instrumental achievement, also finding a strong positive correlation.

Another difficulty orchestral musicians can experience in performance relates to the physical pressure of instrumental playing. This has been described as "*fundamentally an unnatural act*", due to the way in which musicians have to alter their bodies for performance to fit with the physical actions required to

play a musical instrument in an orchestral environment (Levine & Levine, 1996, pg. 4). This can have a negative physical impact on the musicians during and after performance, for example, through experiencing performance anxiety and physical strains. Papageorgi, Hallam and Welch (2007) explored the different stages of performance anxiety and gave an overview of the development of musical performance anxiety research over the last twenty years, suggesting how performance anxiety was a concern for a majority of undergraduate and professional musicians. Performance anxiety that orchestral musicians experience appears to be a widespread and complicated phenomenon (Steptoe & Fidler, 1987) but is a topic researchers have been engaged with in order to find solutions (Swart, 2014).

One means of doing this has been through investigating musicians' thoughts and perceptions during performance. For example, Clark, Lisboa and Williamon (2014) interviewed twenty-nine professional and student classical musicians about what factors they felt impacted upon their personal performances. The authors concluded there was a multitude of thought processes that occurred during musical performances, such as: preparation for performance, positivity and setting self-challenges. These factors were reported as often conflicting with each other, but the findings of this study demonstrated how self-assessment and reflection were important tools in order to gain a sense of self-control and self-efficacy. The report stated how success meant something unique to each individual musician. Exploring these different individual meanings was highlighted as an area of research that needed further investigation.

In addition to performance literature, the effects of a lack of opportunity for creativity and expression have been investigated by Boerner, Krause and Gebert, (2004), who sampled 334 musicians from thirty German orchestras and surveyed their views on the leadership behaviour of conductors. Boerner *et al.* suggested that in order for orchestral musicians to become creative artists they require freedom and opportunities to be able to express themselves. However, the orchestral musicians are unable to do this within the traditional view of orchestral music because musicians are ultimately controlled by the conductor.

There have been several studies investigating the impact conductors can have on the musicians throughout performance within the orchestra. Parasuraman and Nachman (1987) demonstrated how the conductor plays a vital role in shaping the musicians' behaviours and attitudes and influences their commitment to the orchestra. This illustrates the important impact the conductor can have on the musicians' dedication and desire to remain within the orchestral environment. Boerner and Von Streith (2007) investigated the cooperation and relationship between conductor and orchestra by administering questionnaires to 208 musicians from twenty-two German orchestras. The authors discovered that a conductor's leadership style and a positive group mood in the orchestra could enhance orchestral performances and the artistic quality of the orchestra.

It has been previously found through recording performances of eighty-one classical music students how a conductor's gestural movements and expressiveness of emotions during performances have an impact on the instrumentalists' collective efficacy, self-efficacy and performance (Matthews &

Kitsantas, 2012). This study alongside several others have all stressed the influence conductors have on the performing musicians during performances, showing the importance of the power relations, formal organisation and structure of orchestras in affecting musicians' psychological health and performance levels. When there are difficulties with these aspects of the musicians' experiences this in turn can lead to stress, boredom and job dissatisfaction; something that was established in the research of Abeles and Hafeli (2014). They found through interviewing forty-seven musicians from two US orchestras that musicians often experienced a lack of enthusiasm for their work and psychological tension during their performances because they felt they were unable to exert creative control or use individual expressions in their performances.

A further study investigating creative control by Langer, Russell and Eisenkraft (2009) found that orchestral musicians prefer performing if they are able to add some creative input into their performances. The researchers designed two studies; the first study included sixty members of a professional orchestra. The participants performed particular pieces of music and then recorded their feelings on a scale, recording how much they enjoyed the performance, while also adding some qualitative descriptions to further express their feelings. The second study was a replica of study one, including seventy one members of a professional orchestra as well as eighty six trained musicians (members of a choir), similar data capture techniques were employed in this study. Overall the two studies concluded that the musicians who engaged in creative input with their performances enjoy their performance experiences more and rate their

overall experience higher. The results showed how creative interpretation had a desirable and positive effect on the individual musicians. This study highlighted the importance of emotional regulation and creative control in orchestral performances.

In contrast (Steptoe & Fidler, 1989) administered a questionnaire to sixty-five professional orchestra players, forty-one music students and forty amateur orchestra members. The authors suggested that mindfulness and emotional regulation during performances could be useful to counter stage fright, which is a problem that both amateur and professional musicians encounter. This is more acute in amateur groups, perhaps understandably as they have less performance experience. Stage fright can be experienced in different ways, and experienced performers have been found to suffer from less insecurity, better self regulation of their cortisol response and better working memory than less experienced performers (Killough, Thompson & Morgan, 2013). This was established by recording performances, conducting a working memory task, distributing questionnaires and conducting physiological assessments of forty participants with different musical backgrounds. It has been previously stated by Dobson and Gaunt (2013) there is little research that has investigated the skills needed in order to be a modern day performing orchestral musician.

More recent work by Buma, Frank and Oudejans (2014) investigated how musicians maintained their attention throughout orchestral performances. It was reported through concept mapping (placing together clusters of statements) and verbal reports that musicians focused on physical awareness, technical

aspects and positive thoughts while they were performing. Brodsky (2000) reported the effects that music generated vibration and whole-body acoustic stimulation can have on professional orchestral musicians and concluded that music and vibration stimulation can cause calming effects and increased awareness for the musicians. It has also been reported that professional classical musicians used imagery to minimise errors, avoid distractions, maintain focus, enhance confidence and overcome psychological and mental strains (Gregg, Clark & Hall, 2008). These findings suggest there is a link between cognitive and social dimensions within the rehearsal and performance setting (Biasutti, 2012).

This section has shown the multiple anxieties and strains classical musicians encounter, such as: performance anxiety and physical strains. Performing has been outlined; often as a problematic and multidimensional experience that can include numerous psychological processes (e.g. imagery) and performance impacts individuals in a variety of ways. There appears to be a tension between freedom of expression and lack of creativity within the performance literature and further exploration of these conflicting experiences are required to seek further clarity.

2.6 Summary Of Chapter Two

This chapter has outlined the existing body of research in reference to classical musicians' identity, becoming a classical musician, health, relationships and performance. The review demonstrated the multiple roles classical musicians adopt throughout their lives, however, there is a lack of research investigating the subjective idiographic experiences of individual classical musicians. This chapter shows the conflicting ideas that exist in relation to classical musicians within the professional world and lack of exploratory investigation of the professional orchestra. Existing research suggests a misconception regarding classical musicians because there is a lack of attention paid to the *individual* musician; instead researchers investigated orchestra members as a collective. Sloboda and Howe (1991) concluded that investigating the development of a musical performer is a complex matter and that further work needs to be conducted on musical and social communication in an orchestra. Nearly twenty five years later this was reiterated by Dobson and Gaunt (2013, pg. 1) who stated: "*studies have seldom used in-depth interviews to ask orchestral musicians to reflect on their own practice and have neglected to elicit musicians' perceptions of the processes involved in expert orchestral performance*".

Although the literature touched on the subject of identity for classical musicians there is small body of research investigating this topic in detail. The previous literature indicated the centrality of a musical identity within these individual's lives; however, there was a lack of exploratory research to further support this claim. It has also been demonstrated that elements of identity conflict exists for classical musicians, such as the tension between the need for some agency and

autonomy. Lack of control has been exerted by the tradition of the genre and enforced by the conductor and social norms of the orchestra. It has been highlighted throughout this chapter that identity is prevalent in all aspects of classical musicians' lives (e.g. relationships and health), suggesting the importance of studying identity in order to understand the orchestral musicians' lived experiences. This chapter has revealed some of the unique characteristics of classical musicians and the orchestra (e.g. the restrictions placed upon them) because of the unique structure of the orchestra. Despite the thorough research that has previously been conducted, there is a gap in the literature regarding the direct investigation of the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians. Nevertheless, the aforementioned studies are of value as they give an insight into components of classical musicians' personal and social identities that go beyond personal narratives and demonstrate the position classical musicians hold within a socially constructed reality. This thesis will focus on a direct investigation of the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians and an exploration of the lived experiences of these particular individuals. The following chapter (Chapter Three) contextualises the self and identity, defines musical identities and reviews the literature that has been previously conducted in relation to musical identities.

Chapter Three

Identity and Musical Identities

"I was born with music inside me. Music was one of my parts. Like my ribs, like my kidneys, my liver, my heart. Like my blood. It was a force already within me when I arrived on the scene. It was a necessity for me – like food or water"

(Ray Charles, 1978)

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter reviewed the background research and literature in relation to professional classical musicians and the orchestra. Chapter Three (1) defines the concepts of the self and identity (2) outlines theories of the self and identity that have been proposed, (3) defines what is meant by 'musical identities' and (4) reviews existing research and literature concerning musical identities in several contexts; childhood and adolescence, education, in professional settings, for amateur musicians and within a social context. This chapter demonstrates the gap in the identity and musical identities literature in relation to our understanding of professional orchestral musicians and highlights the importance of socialisation processes on self-definition.

3.2 Defining Self and Identity

"Who one is"

(Wetherell, 2010, pg. 14)

The self and identity have been researched within many academic disciplines such as: sociology (Jenkins, 2014), anthropology (Gutierrez, 2013), politics (Hague, 2011) and health (Jetten, Haslam, Haslam & Alexander, 2012). Within psychological research, identity and the self have been described as core psychological constructs (Clayton, 2012). Throughout the last six decades identity has been one of the most commonly used terms within the social sciences, particularly in the field of psychology, where identity has been researched from numerous different perspectives (Tesser, Suls & Felson, 2000).

There is limited agreement in defining the terms *'self'* and *'identity'*; this is due to the different schools of thought that exist. In an attempt to present a coherent lens through which identity and the self can be viewed in this thesis, it is essential to acknowledge the range of theoretical approaches that have been applied to these concepts. These different approaches can often cause confusion to a reader attempting to obtain a coherent definition because throughout the literature it can be seen that distinctions between these two terms are unclear and can often have multiple meanings depending on the approach that a theorist adopts. Even though these terms can often be complex, some common themes can be identified.

This section outlines the numerous attempts there are to define the concepts; identity and the self, illustrating the different and often opposing definitions

authors have suggested in relation to identity and the self. In reference to this thesis the terms identity and the self are viewed as interchangeable concepts that work together in defining the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians. A broad overview of the literature is given to demonstrate the changing nature of identities. This section will now outline a range of the discussions of these concepts.

Stets and Burke (2003) suggested that the self is positioned within social interactions and is organised into multiple parts all belonging to social structures such as, the class structure. Goffman (1959) claimed that the self is constructed through performance, interaction, ritual and self- management, and highlighted the communicative and semiotic practices through which social identities are signalled and maintained. However, it has been argued by Turner (1982) that the self is always defined in social situations and through social relationships. He suggested that individual group members actively seek out and react to information in reference to the hegemonic ideals they identify with in a particular group. Turner highlighted that a sense of self is a combination of experiences and social actions, which are also influenced by a sense of being and belonging to social groups. Steinberg and Morris (2001) further discussed the ways in which identity is influenced by social interactions and environmental factors.

Stets and Burke (2003) claimed that the self is divided and understood in multiple contexts, which they called identities. Additionally, Mercier De Shon (2012) suggested *“There must be a self for an identity to exist”*. Mead (1934)

viewed the self in terms of a social process, which, "*lies in the internalized conversation of gestures*". Mead further suggested that identity is seen as a construction, created through interactions between the self and society, highlighting language as a system for negotiating social interactions.

To broaden the understanding of identity, Mercier De Shon (2012) proposed that identity is created through the development of the self, meaning that it is influenced by aspects such as; family, society, experiences and includes ones sense of autonomy and coherence. These differing ideas demonstrate the numerous approaches there are to the ideas of self and identity, the different combinations of social influence and individual development are highlighted by the numerous authors.

Identity does not always apply to the individual alone but is seen as being developed within a social domain (Mead, 1934; Giddens, 1991; Wetherell, 2010). An important theory that outlines the impact of social influence is Tajfel and Turner's (1979) Social Identity Theory, which treats identity as a social construct and provides a link between individuals and the groups they belong to. Social identity theory introduces the importance of membership, belongingness, social status, intergroup relations and social disputes, which are all crucial to this theory, again demonstrating the significance of social influence on identity. Preceding Tajfel and Turner, Festinger (1954) demonstrated the idea of social influence by proposing the Social Comparison Theory that indicated the need to gain accurate self-evaluations from social situations. These evaluations are based on how individuals perceive who they are in comparison to others. Social

comparisons can be used as a source of motivation and are a vehicle in which to obtain a sense of self.

Erikson (1968) claimed that forming an identity was not an automatic activity but was in fact a difficult task that is never fully completed; instead it is an ongoing and fluid process. Erikson was one of the first theorists to combine the notion of the individual with social experiences, demonstrating how they react to each other, impacting on identity construction and development. Following on from Erikson's theory, Marcia (1994) illustrated the importance of commitment and choices that an individual makes throughout adolescence in regards to their identity, such as what roles they choose to adopt. Furthering Erikson's model of psychosocial development Marcia illustrated the importance of identity conflict throughout the lifespan. Marcia proposed that in order to achieve a well-developed identity and self-awareness individuals must be aware of their own personal strengths and weaknesses, which are realised throughout their daily lives. Identities develop and form through an interactive process because they are constructed through interactions and communications. Additionally, an identity is not only situated within personal discourse, experiences and emotions but it is also situated within social discourse, interactions and meaning making.

Drew (2005, pg. 74) claimed that it is through verbal communication that individuals construct their lives, build and maintain relationships and define "*who we are to one another*". This is also the approach taken by Potter and Wetherell (1987) who stated that identity is constructed, contested and negotiated through talk, but argued that talk only represents a fragment of social

life and identity. Talk is not simply how identity is expressed but rather how identity is constructed, enacted and performed through discourse. This shows that an individual is constantly participating in identity work as they create themselves and present who they are to the world through talk and expression of their experiences.

This thesis views both identity and the self as subjective concepts, and holds that identity is understood through examining both personal and social experiences, and considering individual narratives. Exploration of this combination of lived experiences through considering the narratives provided by individuals is an effective way in which to explore identity (McLean & Pratt, 2006).

This understanding of individual narratives has been previously investigated in order to understand identity within the family environment (Grotevant & Von Korff, 2011), school environment (Alisat, Norris, Pratt, Matsuba & McAdams, 2014) and work environment (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010) and to understand individual perspectives on identity formation and development (Bamberg, 2010) and in particular has been used to explore musical identities (Gardikiotis & Baltzis 2010; Wilson & MacDonald, 2012; Evans & McPherson, 2014).

3.2.1 Summary

As shown in Section 3.2 the self and identity are core psychological constructs that span multiple disciplinary and theoretical perspectives, because of the theoretical explanations of the self and identity they can often be viewed as complex and problematic. Through exploration of the literature it can be seen that it is difficult to treat the two terms as separate components as they are so interconnected. Furthermore, both constructs are subjective by nature and are best understood through the exploration of individual's reflections and accounts of personal experiences.

Recognising the importance of interaction in developing an identity, a social constructionist approach will be adopted throughout this thesis. This approach proposes that identities are created in the context of relating to and interacting with other people and that multiple identities can exist at any one time for a single person (Goffman, 1959). Language and dialogue are central to identity development and it is through the construction of a personal narrative that individuals develop and display their chosen identities to the world (Bamberg, 2010).

The next section will discuss what musical identities are and give an overview of the existing literature in relation to this topic. It will focus on musical identities in childhood and adolescence, educational context, professional context, in amateur musicians and throughout social contexts.

3.3 Musical Identities

“Music is a mirror that allows one to see one’s self”.

(DeNora, 2000, pg. 70)

It has been stated previously that music is a powerful vehicle through which individuals develop their personal and social identities (MacDonald, Hargreaves & Miell, 2002) suggesting that music can be an important means for understanding the multiple components of one’s identity. Music is also a form of communication and interaction, and as a result (like talk) it can be a medium within which individuals can formulate identities and alter existing ones (Hargreaves, Miell & MacDonald, 2002; Saarikallio, 2010). Music can be used as a means through which to construct, develop and express identities and a vehicle through which to present a desired identity within social contexts. Music also allows individuals to connect with others and helps them to understand and develop their own identity (Hays & Minichiello, 2005).

According to Frith (1998, pg. 109): *“Music, like identity, is both performance and story, describes the social in the individual and the individual in the social, the mind in the body and the body in the mind; identity, like music, is a matter of both ethics and aesthetics”*. Frith (1998) also reported that different musical activities may produce different types of musical identities (e.g. performer and listener). Frith (1998, pg. 276) claimed that: *“what makes music special for identity is that it defines a space without boundaries”*, as it gives an individual freedom, sense of self and flexibility to express who one is. Frith proposed that music and identity

can work together as fluid concepts, allowing an individual to express their identities through music in personal and social contexts.

In an attempt to unpack the concept of musical identities, the term can be divided into two separate facets. The first is *Identities In Music* (IIM), which signifies an individual's social roles, categories and musical practice. This includes such activities as performing, composing and teaching. The second is *Music In Identities* (MII) or the way in which individuals can use music as a resource with which to construct an identity, for example by the music they choose to listen to (MacDonald *et al.*, 2002). Musical identities are ever changing constructs that are continuously being constructed, negotiated and maintained in relation to the surrounding environment, interactions and experiences. Musical identities can be seen as being defined socially through cultural roles and in musical groups (e.g. belonging to a choir) (MacDonald *et al.*, 2002).

An extension of the definition of musical identities has recently been noted by Hargreaves, MacDonald and Miell (2015, pg.3), who claimed that musical identities are performative and social in that "*they represent something we do rather than something we have*". Hargreaves *et al.* implied that musical identities are understood through personal and social experiences and influences. Musical identities are actively constructed through talk and expression; through a multi-faceted process that is achieved through personal choices, behaviours and environmental factors (Juuti, 2012). They are negotiated in interaction; an agentic process that is shaped and anchored by social roles and through personal experiences (Juuti & Littleton, 2010). Finally, they are also worked at in order to

be maintained; talk can preserve one's identities and maintain certain traits that define an individual (MacDonald, Miell and Wilson, 2005). Wilson and MacDonald (2005) and Juuti and Littleton (2010) described how musical identities are both individual and social constructions, shaped by multiple experiences and dialogue. Music can help in developing other identities and can be a link that connects individuals to the social world (MacDonald *et al.* 2002). This is illustrated in the literature discussed in Section 3.4 below.

3.4 Musical Identities: Existing Literature

Music is a ubiquitous social phenomenon that allows individuals to demonstrate their own personal narrative and to construct identities. The following literature review in relation to musical identities will demonstrate how individuals have been seen to construct, negotiate, maintain and develop their musical identities in an ongoing process throughout life.

3.4.1 Musical Identities in Childhood and Adolescence

Music plays a vital part in identity construction, especially for adolescents, because adolescence is a crucial time for identity development and music can facilitate this development (Herbert, 2009). The importance of attempting to understand how musical identities are negotiated, maintained and constructed in adolescence was emphasised by Baggott (2008), who focussed on the social influence of rock and pop music. Baggott researched musical identities in the

lives of adolescents through conducting interviews, focus groups and questionnaires. Baggott concluded that underlying influences, such as external pressures placed upon them by societal and gender expectations (e.g. male stereotypes) had an impact on the participants' musical preferences and musical identity formation. An example of this being that the young men chose to listen to heavy metal because "*most goths and stuff are guys and girls usually only listen to softer things*" (Baggott, 2008, pg. 27), illustrating the social influences that impact the young people's decision-making.

Another study that investigated musical identities in adolescence was by Gardikiotis and Baltzis (2010), who focussed on the links between musical preferences, values and musical identities. In this study of 606 college students, the participants demonstrated the importance of music in representing their values and in order to evaluate who they felt they were through the music they listened to. Their responses demonstrated the link between music preferences and how individuals make decisions about what musical preferences they want to listen to, through an awareness of the social world to which certain music genres belong, for example, rock music being established as a rebellious genre. This study examined the process of self – definition, musical preferences and values in relation to musical identities and established that the adolescents' values were strongly related to their musical preferences.

Further research has been conducted regarding adolescents, such as Hoffman's (2012) case study that examined the wind band classroom and its impact on the formation of six pupils' musical identities within this specific musical

environment. Through observing class meetings, faculty meetings, concerts and conducting semi-structured interviews, Hoffman (2012) claimed that musical identities were constructed through social interactions (e.g. performing together). Although the six pupils belonged to the same group no two students constructed the same identity and all adopted different roles within the group. This showed that musical identities are evolving and can be dependent on the group situation that one enters.

More recently, Evans and McPherson (2014) investigated an individual's long-term engagement and motivation for playing an instrument. The authors conducted a 10-year longitudinal study investigating children's and young people's musical identities. Initially the children (aged around 7-9 years) completed a questionnaire predicting their involvement with music and attitudes towards playing musical instruments in the future. Those who expressed a long-term commitment to their instruments (e.g. by saying that they expected to still be playing their instrument when they were adults) demonstrated higher levels of musical achievement across the period of the study. Evans and McPherson (2014) concluded that individuals whose personal identity as a musician was linked to an enduring commitment to musical activity were more likely to achieve a high status as a musician.

Another example of the impact that social processes can have on musical identity formation is the influence that parents can have on a child's initial construction of their musical identity (McPherson, 2009). McPherson claimed this crucial role on musical development through evaluating parents' parenting goals, styles and

practices that help shape their children's musical identities and achievements. Through investigating children's psychological needs, such as self-regulation and self-beliefs (in order to become a musician) it was concluded that being successful at music and enjoying musical participation occurs because of the parental encouragement within the family environment (McPherson, 2009).

This section has demonstrated that musical identities are constructed and influenced by social interactions (e.g. parental influences), throughout childhood and adolescence and these social influences are likely to continue to have an impact on musical identities throughout the lifespan. The next section outlines musical identities within an educational context.

3.4.2 Musical Identities In Education

Hargreaves and Marshall (2003) reviewed preliminary findings from two of their previous research projects on pupils' attitudes towards music. Their examination of musical identities illustrated the importance of ownership on music making and how this can influence engagement and motivation in music, as being *perceived* as a musician is part of the process of *becoming* a musician. This study showed the importance of ownership in musical development, meaning that *viewing oneself* as a musician is a crucial step in *becoming* a musician.

Hargreaves, Purves, Welch and Marshall (2007) undertook a longitudinal comparison study on the development of identities and attitudes within a group

of intending specialist secondary music teachers. The authors sampled 29 trainee music teachers during the transition into their first teaching post and compared them to 29 final year undergraduate music students. Questionnaires gathered information about perceived self-efficacy in music and teaching, attitudes towards skills and how the individuals identified with professional groups (musician and teacher). The results showed a significant effect for professional group identifications in terms of attitudes towards careers in music and teaching, alongside perceptions of their skills. This study illustrated the impact that identity transitions can have on individuals at key transition points, such as, leaving education to undertake a role in a professional setting.

Welch *et al.* (2008) investigated the link between musical learning and musical identity formation through conducting 244 surveys and 27 interviews with undergraduate and postgraduate (Western classical, jazz, popular and Scottish traditional) music students. The authors investigated the effects of musicians' gender and chosen musical performance genre. It was found that skilled musicians across the genres had many aspects in common in terms of their musical identities and behaviours. Regardless of the musician's gender or type of music played, each participant recognised the importance and centrality of the '*musical self*' as a key element of his or her identity.

MacNamara, Holmes and Collins (2008) also investigated the challenges of key transitional stages in musical development such as, the transition into full time education and the entry into the music profession. Twelve world-class musicians were interviewed and an inductive content analysis (an identification of themes)

was employed to analyse the transcriptions. The findings of this study revealed identity transition processes and investigated the core features of the talent development process, which demonstrated the psychological attributes (e.g. commitment and focus) required to successfully negotiate identities throughout musical development (e.g. entry into the music profession). These psychological attributes emerged as key to negotiating identity because the musicians employed these attributes (e.g. commitment) to overcome challenges when encountering a transition. MacNamara *et al.* proposed that if musicians do not negotiate these key musical identity transitions successfully, when the individuals meet challenging situations (e.g. entering the profession), they may not be able to reach their professional potential as the pathway to excellence is complex and the musicians must negotiate their identities through the numerous stages of transition. MacNamara *et al.* (2008) suggested that if the psychological attributes (e.g. dedication and self-belief) are encouraged and supported then musicians would have both the psychological and musical skill to achieve success within their musical careers. This proposal highlights the need for more exploration into the lived experiences of professional orchestral musicians, in order to understand the challenges performing individuals encounter. Understanding these lived experiences is the central focus of this thesis and the research questions outlined in Section 3.5 aim to investigate these experiences.

Juuti and Littleton (2010) also investigated musical identities in transition (moving from education to the music profession) by interviewing the students' about their musical experiences and histories. Juuti and Littleton explored the transition between conservatoire training and becoming a professional musician.

They stated that becoming a classical musician does not only consist of individual development of technical skills but it is “*a complex, multifaceted, culturally and socially constituted process that also necessitates, amongst other things, cultivating an appreciation of musical traditions and conventions*” (Juuti & Littleton, 2010, pg. 1). The authors also described identity negotiation as an “*agentic process*” meaning that the musicians actively shaped their identities to adapt to their surrounding environments.

This section has illustrated the importance of ownership of musical identities when experiencing change and transitions in an educational setting. The process of self-definition has been highlighted as crucial to musical identities in a time of transition and the ‘*musical self*’ has been outlined as key to an individual’s identity. Identity negotiation is key to development and success within a musical domain. The next section outlines the research surrounding musical identities of professional musicians.

3.4.3 Musical Identities Of Professional Musicians

MacDonald and Wilson (2005) investigated professional jazz musicians’ views about jazz and their views about *being* a jazz musician. Focus group interviews were held with Scottish jazz professionals and analysed to gain access to their views about their musical identities. Their study illustrated the tension that can exist between individual and collective creativity, however, the musicians felt a need to be part of a group and of the larger jazz music community. The

participants' identity as a '*jazz musician*' was negotiated according to the group context that the musician was in and the social interactions with other musicians.

MacDonald and Wilson (2006) focused on how jazz musicians presented their collaborative practice. Becoming a jazz musician was constructed in reference to '*identity positions*' for the participants. The identity of '*jazz musician*' was negotiated in relation to all other identities for the musicians and the impact that hegemonic influences (how the musicians are expected to behave) have on the participants' roles were outlined. This demonstrated the influence that social ideals and expectations can have on jazz musicians' representations of themselves through talk. This study also highlighted how music allows individuals to adopt certain roles within a social situation, illuminating the musical identity development that occurs throughout everyday life within the music profession. This idea has been furthered by Munro (2005), who claimed that identity formation develops and forms through dialogue with other musicians.

Oakland *et al.* (2013) also highlighted that a musical identity can consist of several subjective sub-identities (e.g. the performance self), illustrating the importance of these sub-identities in entering the professional world of opera. Oakland *et al.* showed how opera singers adapt to their professional environments and how adaptation occurs when salience is given to these sub-identities. This study focused on the effect work can have on a musical identity and if more attention was given to subjective sub-identities during a professional

career as an opera singer, the singers may be able to adapt better to possible redundancy and career disruption. The formation of these sub-identities enabled the participants to cope with the unpredictability of the music career because they were able to commit to a particular role (opera singer) and not allow this change to affect the other domains of their lives. This is because the voice is an embodied instrument that offers the singers stability through this time of change. This illustrated the importance of a defined sense of self in a professional music setting.

This section has outlined how a musical identity can be negotiated depending on the group context that one is placed within. In addition, this section highlighted the gap in the literature regarding professional orchestral musicians' musical identities, by exploring the existing research on professional musicians there appeared to be a lack of literature addressing this specific topic. This thesis aims to address this subject and the exploratory research questions in Section 3.5 demonstrate how this topic will be investigated.

The following section will consider the literature surrounding amateur musicians to identify any differences in musical identity development processes between amateur and professional musicians.

3.4.4 Musical Identities For Amateur Musicians

Taylor (2010) interviewed 21 amateur keyboard performers and demonstrated how learning their instrument helped the participants in sustaining a musical

identity, drawing on both social (e.g. being a member of musical groups) and personal (e.g. self-fulfilment) aspects. This study established the importance and value of music learning in adulthood and highlighted the importance of developing a social and personal musical identity for fostering personal growth.

Lamont (2011) discussed the idea of a negative musical identity (a negative view of the individual in relation to musical activities) by conducting an online survey sampling 530 adult amateur music-makers. Their responses suggested that a negative musical identity could be constructed due to past negative musical experiences, such as being told as a child that they couldn't sing and therefore later avoiding the activity. These findings suggested the importance of developing a positive musical identity to enhance and encourage involvement in musical participation throughout the lifespan. This study showed the relationship between musical development and encouragement from external influences. Lamont demonstrated that aspiring musicians are influenced by more than just their own talent, and different factors must be taken into consideration, for example opportunities at school and critique from others. Lamont (2011) also explored the ideas surrounding '*talent*' and how suggestions that musical talent is a 'natural' ability can often inhibit an individual's musical development. Lamont concluded by stating, "*Developing a stable but flexible musical identity is essential to support lifelong involvement with music making, and finding opportunities to explore musical passions is absolutely vital*" (Lamont, 2011, pg. 385).

This section has demonstrated that musical activities help in sustaining a musical identity for amateur musicians. The literature surrounding amateur musicians highlighted the value and importance of music learning in adulthood and that musical identity development nurtures personal growth. This section also introduced the notion of a negative musical identity and stresses the importance of developing a positive musical identity to encourage lifelong music making. In addition, the relationship between musical development and encouragement from external sources was discussed. The following section presents literature regarding musical identities within a variety of social contexts.

3.4.5 Musical Identities In A Social Context

Authors have previously stated that music allows individuals to position themselves in a social context in relation to others (MacDonald *et al.*, 2005; Wetherell & Maybin, 1996). A study by Karlsen and Brandstrom (2008) explored the setting of a music festival as part of a music education project. The study investigated the impact that a music festival can have on identity development and was furthered by conducting surveys and observing festival audience members. The study showed that the music festival allowed for musical development by creating different social environments for musical activities and parallel musical identities (e.g. classical music fan and rock music fan) were maintained within the music festival environment.

More research has been conducted on the meaning of music across different generations, such as Connell's study (2012), which used an ethnographic approach to establish what music meant to a number of different participants. This project brought together 77 participants (born in the 1940's onwards) as Connell wanted to look at the impact that technologies and changing socialisation processes have had on these groups, whilst exploring what music meant to each participant. The study focused on the musical identities of the 48 older participants (aged 80+). Connell established that their perspectives on music had changed over time and there were certain genres (e.g. pop music) that these older participants did not like, establishing the potential for intergenerational conflicts about music. However, the author claimed that society might be returning to a state of generational continuity in reference to music, highlighting the influence of the older generations on younger people and a greater frequency of shared taste in music. Connell (2012) outlined the influence that parents can have on an individual's musical taste and concluded that more research is needed to uncover the relationship between age, identity formation and musical activities.

Wilson and MacDonald (2012) investigated improvisation in a group setting and highlighted how improvisation is a social interaction in which music is used as the vehicle of communication. The authors compared previous findings from observing jazz musicians' improvising, with jazz musicians' interview data. This study suggested that the participants utilised a specifically professional discourse to describe their musical improvisation. Social processes between musicians can be understood through group improvisation. The formation and

negotiation of a collective musical identity can be due to the extensive social practices of being a jazz improviser and the way in which music is used in collaborative environments. Wilson and MacDonald (2012) concluded that through talking about improvisation the musicians were able to express their collaborative jazz musician identities.

Aronoff and Gilboa (2014) reported the ways in which music was used by a group of gay men. Seven in-depth interviews were conducted and the men described the multiple roles that music played in their lives. Music was used as a companion and a way in which to *'fill a gap'* and as a source of emotional regulation. Music was also used as a way in which to conceal but also expose their sexuality depending on how the music they listened to was categorised by the participants. The categories the men placed music within was: music as a companion, music as a means for concealing and exposing, and music as a means of making change. This study is an example of how music can be used as a way in which to express an identity within a social context. Music was used as a vehicle in which to express their sexual identity, through engaging with 'gay music'.

This section has shown how music is also a way in which to express an identity within a social context. In this section parallel musical identities were introduced and the importance of collective musical identities were highlighted.

3.5 Research Questions

Chapters Two and Three have outlined the background literature in reference to classical musicians, the orchestra, self and identity and musical identities. The aim of the study reported in this thesis is to investigate the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians. In exploring the past literature, the overarching research questions that will be investigated in this study will enable the study of topics that have emerged as a gap in the literature. The research questions investigated in this study are:

- How do professional orchestral musicians construct, negotiate and maintain their musical identities?
- What are the lived experiences of professional orchestral musicians?

3.6 Summary

Chapter Three has outlined an overview of existing literature in reference to musical identities. This overview of the literature has demonstrated the research surrounding how musical identities are constructed, negotiated, maintained and developed and gave an insight into the nature of professional and multiple musical identities. The review has also indicated the lack of work on the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians. Starting with the construction of musical identities in childhood and adolescence, it can be seen that musical identities are formed through a combination of social influences and individual characteristics. This literature review also showed how musical identities are

both personal and social in nature and outlined musical identities in numerous educational, social and professional contexts. The common theme that exists within these sub-sections of musical identity literature is that musical identities are formed through social interactions and personal experiences and that music is a crucial form of self-definition. The following chapter (Chapter Four) will outline a detailed explanation of the research methodology utilised in this thesis.

Chapter Four

Theoretical Considerations

“The narrative constructs the identity of the character, what can be called his or her narrative identity, in constructing that of the story told. It is the identity of the story that makes the identity of the character.”

(Ricoeur, 1990)

4.1 Introduction

This thesis is a phenomenological study of the lived experiences of ten professional orchestral musicians, focusing specifically on their musical identities. This chapter addresses the methodological and theoretical underpinnings of the current investigation and outlines why Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was chosen as the most appropriate methodology for this thesis. Other qualitative approaches are considered: thematic analysis, grounded theory, narrative analysis and discourse analysis, and it is stated why these approaches were not chosen as an analytical framework for this thesis. Chapter Four also includes a critical review of IPA and Music Psychology Literature, alongside IPA and Identity Literature.

4.2 The Qualitative Approach

Qualitative research aims to understand specific experiences of individuals through a range of techniques, including: interviews, case studies and participant observations (Fossey, Harvey, McDermott & Davidson, 2002). A qualitative approach can offer a unique perspective of the phenomenon under exploration and gives researchers access to data that quantitative research does not, while investigating lived experiences at a deeper and more defined level (Willig, 2008).

Many researchers have discussed in-depth issues of validity and reliability within qualitative research (Krefting, 1991; Shenton, 2004). In relation to music psychology research, there has been an increase in qualitative methods being used to investigate topics such as: music listening (Lonsdale & North, 2011), engagement with music (Greasley & Lamont, 2011) and music and technology (Heye & Lamont, 2010). Qualitative research in particular is used to investigate the subject of musical identities (Lamont, 2011; Preti & Welch, 2012; Hart & Di Blasi, 2013; Morgan, MacDonald & Pitts, 2014)

Adopting a qualitative approach for the current research, allowed for flexibility in the data collection and analytical processes, while highlighting the subjective experiences of each participant in relation to their identity as a professional orchestral musician. Individuals use symbols (e.g. language) to communicate their sense of themselves and experiences in relation to others. It has been previously stated that analysing language is an effective means of investigating identity (Duranti, 2004). Language is also used as a way in which to construct, negotiate and maintain musical identities. This implies that the language

orchestral musicians employ communicates their musical identities, as the pleonasm symbols orchestral musicians utilise display their beliefs, attitudes and positions within their personal and social worlds. Language signifies the orchestral musicians' identity because it is seen as a vital way in which these particular individuals can reflect upon their own behaviours and the behaviours of others. It also plays a crucial role in developing identities within a social constructionist paradigm (Hargreaves, Miell & MacDonald, 2002) and is a vehicle for the emergence of the self (O'Neill, 2002).

Qualitative research can access issues of a sensitive nature, personal lived experiences, attitudes and behaviours, which derive not only from past lived experiences but also from anticipated future actions and intentions. Although there are epistemological differences (which will be discussed later in this Chapter) between the various qualitative methods that are available, they all share the same concern with meaning and the contexts in which meaning is constructed (Willig, 2001).

Previous quantitative studies that researched aspects of the lives of professional orchestral musicians nevertheless provided useful data about their behaviour, such as, a study by the British Association of Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM) involving 1046 musicians. This study revealed that just over 48% of these musicians had been diagnosed with some form of mental illness (Wynn Parry, 2004). However, the study was not able to give an insight into the causes or the subjective experience of the individual musicians experiencing these challenges

(Silvermann, 2010), demonstrating the need for further exploration of these subjective experiences.

Qualitative research is focused on providing interpretations and subjective understanding of certain phenomena encountered by specific individuals (Elliot, Fischer & Rennie, 1999). Quantitative research in psychology does not seek to do this, instead is focused on establishing general patterns of behaviour. Since the current study is interested in researching an understanding of the subjective worlds and identities of professional orchestral musicians, it is clear that a qualitative approach will be more effective and congruent than a quantitative approach.

The next section of this chapter presents a detailed account of different forms of qualitative research methods that have been utilised in music research, outlining the differences between the following qualitative methods and IPA.

4.3 Qualitative Frameworks

“Language is a fundamental mode of our being in the world”

(Gadamer, 2006)

The subsequent sections present and critique other qualitative approaches that have been used within past qualitative music research: thematic analysis, grounded theory, narrative analysis and discourse analysis.

4.3.1 Thematic Analysis

Thematic Analysis (TA) is a qualitative approach that places emphasis on patterns of themes, seen within collected data. TA is a flexible approach that is well suited to large sample sizes and is data driven throughout the analytical process. TA is similar to IPA in that it uses the same approach to categorise data into emergent and recurring themes. However, TA does not have a particular and nuanced approach to the data like IPA does, instead it focuses on examining and recording themes within the data and does not move beyond this, like IPA does. TA is different from IPA because it does not focus specifically on the use of language. IPA focuses on language use in order to fully interpret individual's multiple realities and how they construct and understand their experiences through the discourse they adopt.

Flower (2014) explored musical relationships between a child, parent and therapist, investigating the fluid dynamics of these relationships. Flower utilised the framework of IPA to conduct this study, but was unable to conduct a full IPA study due to an inability to interview the child directly and record his experience because of his complex disabilities. Therefore, thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. In order to conduct an IPA study the experience of the individual under investigation must be directly reported by that specific individual. This study highlighted the difficulties in exploring complex disabilities in music therapy.

Judd and Pooley (2014) explored the psychological benefits of participation in group singing activities for members of the general public by interviewing ten

individual participants. The findings suggested that group singing promotes wellbeing and is a life enhancing activity. The participants' thoughts, feelings, attitudes and motivations were all analysed, and the study explored their feelings towards belonging to a group. Two themes (individual and group) emerged about the psychological benefits of belonging to a group and illustrated that the personal experience of belonging to a group was dependent on the ethos and dynamics of the group.

In comparison to IPA, which is a methodology that provides a framework for conducting research, TA is ultimately a method that does not provide a framework for analysis, instead it focuses on patterning themes across transcripts. TA does not focus on the unique characteristics of particular participants because it lacks an idiographic focus. Therefore, Thematic Analysis is not an appropriate qualitative approach for this present thesis.

4.3.2 Grounded Theory

An alternative qualitative approach to IPA is Grounded Theory (GT) (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded Theory is rooted in sociology and is also based on symbolic interactionism, although not in the same way that IPA is. GT is a more structured approach whose principal aim is theory generation, which is not IPA's central aim. GT reveals how individuals understand and view the world through their own social interactions within their worlds (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). Grounded Theory is a structured methodology because it undertakes a

systematic approach to research and aims to develop a theory in relation to the topic that is under exploration. GT was developed by Glaser & Strauss (1967), who aimed to explore phenomena through contextualising data to provide an insight into everyday reality and construct a theory for it. In contrast, IPA aims to capture the essence of a phenomenon by adopting an idiographic approach, while exploring psychological, cognitive, behavioural and social aspects (Willig, 2001).

Although GT is rooted in sociology, its use is not restricted to sociology alone and it can be utilised in the context of different disciplines. Grounded Theory uses a structured process to collect research data (Charmaz, 2006) and sampling participants is generally on a larger scale, sometimes interviewing up to as many as fifty participants (Sandelowski, 1995). In comparison, IPA can be based on one participant for an entire study (Oakland, MacDonald & Flowers, 2014). Both IPA and GT are inductive but GT continues gathering data until the sample has been saturated, meaning that all the properties and dimensions of the data have been explored and no other conceptual insights can be produced. IPA does not approach the data in this way. In comparison, IPA illustrates the differences and similarities between the participants and explores each individual participant's data; with an aim to explore idiographic lived experiences.

Previous music psychology studies have used grounded theory as an analytical methodology. Saarikallio and Erkkila (2007) conducted group interviews investigating how eight adolescents used music for mood regulation, concluding that musical activities satisfied the participants' mood related goals. This

research resulted in construction of a theoretical model of mood regulation in accordance to musical activities. Additionally, the role that music plays in the process of mood regulation was highlighted. Roberts and Farrugia (2013) investigated the meaning of music making for musicians from a Maltese band, outlining the crucial relationship between music making and surrounding environments. This relationship created a feeling of membership and wellbeing for the musicians, concluding the therapeutic benefits of belonging to and making music with a band. The findings demonstrated that making music in a band had significant meanings for the participants, however, they often found it difficult to express these personal meanings. Therefore, Roberts and Farrugia (2013) stated the need for further qualitative research to clarify this issue.

In a GT study by Baker (2013), the psychological impact songwriting could have in a music therapy setting was reported. This study concluded that personally composed songs could be beneficial in therapeutic music settings and performance possibilities must be considered in reference to specific patients health and wellbeing. Baker (2013) highlighted different methodological approaches that could have been used for this study and claimed that by utilising GT, the individual voices of the participants were not expressed. Baker illustrated that in order to fully understand the psychological impact songwriting can have in a music therapy setting, an in-depth exploration of each patient's individual perspectives and narratives are needed. This highlighted the limitations of GT when considering subjective lived experiences of individuals.

The present study focuses on the lived experience of professional orchestral musicians and does not aim to build a theory from the collected data. Therefore GT would not be a suitable methodology, as GT does not allow a participant to lead the interview process and allow for flexibility. IPA explores recurrent themes within and across transcripts instead of uncovering new themes until the point of saturation. It is because of the aforementioned reasons that Grounded Theory was not chosen as a suitable methodology for this thesis.

4.3.3 Narrative Analysis

Narrative Analysis (NA) assumes that human experience and behaviour are understood through language, and all the language individuals use is meaningful (Kohler Riessman, 1993). However, NA is distinguishable from Discourse Analysis because narrative analysis focuses specifically on the content or the structure of the narrative, not just the specific language that is utilised. An example of the way in which narrative analysis has been used in music psychology research is the study by Gehrke (2009), who explored how country music referred to the events of 9/11, patriotism and war, by conducting a narrative analysis of 30 country songs. This demonstrated how the music that was played since these events reinforced country music's norms, showing how they ran in tandem with a particular construction of the world. The songs analysed, demonstrated how country music often supported an idealistic politically conservative society. The songs were expressed from a well-known

individual's viewpoint, therefore, an idealistic society appeared achievable and realistic.

Austin and Berg (2006) studied motivation to practice for performance amongst sixth-grade instrumentalists; band and orchestra students were studied and comparisons were made between them. The participants constructed individual narratives describing a standard practice session, which involved when they performed a complex piece of music. It was concluded that there was no difference in practice regulation between the two groups. The written narratives demonstrated practice strategies the students employed and their emotional experiences of practicing. However, a thorough understanding of this emotional experience could not be explored due to the nature of narrative analysis and Austin and Berg (2006) stated that additional methodologies could explore how effective practice could be enhanced.

Barrett (2010) conducted a narrative analysis of young children's music making. This study was a three-year longitudinal project that investigated musical engagement for eighteen young children. Video and paper diaries were used to analyse the children's musical activities and expressed their music making through musical storytelling. The study concluded that the freedom of music making enhanced the children's communicative musicality.

IPA and narrative analysis are linked in how both methodologies view meaning-making through language construction. NA takes an objective approach to data

analysis, whereas IPA advocates subjectivity in reference to the collected data. Narrative analysis is based on the story telling involved in understanding an experience and NA researchers mainly investigate the content of the narrative or its structure. However, this often lacks a thorough interpretation of significant individual experiences because NA focuses on how an individual's life (studied chronologically) has led them to their current position. IPA explores how individuals perceive, organise and experience their daily lives and does not specifically focus on this in a chronological sense, illuminating the flexibility of IPA.

4.3.4 Discourse Analysis

Discourse Analysis (DA) is another qualitative approach used within psychology that is theoretically underpinned by social constructionism. DA can be divided into two different schools of thought, which are: Discursive Psychology (Potter & Wetherell, 1987) and Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (Foucault, 1970). Both schools of thoughts ultimately investigate the analysis of written and spoken forms of communication and how language is used to construct ideas within a social reality. DA explores the discursive world inhabited by a person and why people draw on certain discursive repertoires more than others. This gives an insight into how specific social worlds are constructed through discourse. Discourse Analysis has been used many times in order to investigate identity (Ainsworth & Hardy, 2004; McVittie & McKinlay, 2010; Pizzorno, Benozzo & Carey, 2015).

In addition, DA has been used previously in music psychology research, for example, Wilson and MacDonald (2012) investigated jazz musicians and the construction of musical identities through their chosen discourse. MacDonald and Wilson (2006) also investigated jazz musicians and their collaborative musical practice. Semi-structured interviews took place and the researchers used discourse analysis in order to explore how the jazz musicians negotiated their individual identities.

DA does not investigate the underlying cognitions and feelings of a participant, which is required by IPA when exploring the lived experience of an individual. DA's aim is to analyse an individual's use of language to describe their worlds (Foucault, 1970). However, DA can limit the researcher from gaining full access to the participants' worlds, as it does not focus specifically on psychological, cognitive, behavioural and social aspects of the participants' worlds that IPA does. DA does not focus on these because it is ultimately based on the social functions of language, and although DA is a viable alternative to IPA, it does not access underlying cognitions that are required to fulfill the aims of this research (Smith, 1996).

Figure 4.1 summarises some key differences between the aforementioned approaches:

Figure 4.1: Summary of Qualitative Approaches

	<i>IPA</i>	<i>Thematic Analysis</i>	<i>Grounded Theory</i>	<i>Narrative Analysis</i>	<i>Discourse Analysis</i>
<i>Sampling</i>	Case studies Small samples Occasional large studies Purposive sampling Homogenous	Small samples Large samples	Large samples Theoretical sampling Heterogeneous Stratified Sampling	Small samples Large samples	Any number Text based
<i>Interview Style</i>	Unstructured Semi-structured	Structured	Structured	Unstructured	Naturally occurring data
<i>Timing</i>	Simultaneous Stages	Simultaneous	Simultaneous collection and analysis	Simultaneous	Post data collection
<i>Transcription</i>	Verbatim	Verbatim	No recording of the interviews; If recorded a general transcription is made	Verbatim	Some data is detailed
<i>Analysis</i>	Detailed Idiographic	Identifying pattern across themes	Until saturation occurs	Thematic analysis	Linguistic analysis

The following sections will give an overview of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis and the theoretical underpinnings of this particular methodology. Previous identity and music psychology literature that have utilised IPA, will also be discussed.

4.4 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

“to understand a phrase is nothing else than to fully welcome it in its sonorous being, or, as we put it so well, to hear what it says”

(Merleau Ponty, 1968)

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was developed by Jonathan Smith in 1996 and is a qualitative methodology, focusing specifically on how individuals make sense of life experiences (Smith, 2011). IPA is theoretically underpinned by the philosophies of Husserl and Heidegger who both claimed that an experience is a subjective interpretation of an event and something that can only be explained in-depth by the specific individuals themselves, as they can give a valid account of a certain phenomenon (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Husserl stated that in order to understand an experience fully it was essential to “*go back to the things themselves*” (Smith *et al.*, 2009). This is a conscious action that one must conduct in order to reflect upon and understand an experience. Husserl focused specifically on consciousness and believed that awareness and perception are unique for every individual and that an experience is that person’s interpretation of what s/he has encountered. IPA draws on phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography. Although these three elements are often distinct, they unite in IPA to construct the founding elements of the methodology.

4.4.1 Phenomenology

Phenomenology is developed from the philosophy of Edmund Husserl and is concerned with how an individual perceives the world and the experiences they

have encountered. Phenomenology is a personal interpretation of an experience and focuses on symbolic interactionism; how individuals act towards situations based on the meanings certain things have for them. Additionally, claiming that meanings are constructed in social interactions and through dialogue with others; through remembering and thinking about such interactions and dialogue. It explores the essence of what being a human really means and is committed to understanding context and how exactly an experience has occurred while also exploring the meaning behind experiences. Husserl claimed that inquiry and phenomenological insight occurs in an individual's consciousness (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Husserl also suggested that by becoming detached from the life one encounters daily, individuals could view their experiences from different perspectives and have a greater awareness of these experiences and their impact.

Phenomenology is a qualitative approach that forms a crucial element in understanding IPA as a methodology. Phenomenology maintains that all experiences are different and multiple interpretations (multiple realities) can be uncovered when investigating the same experience. However, it is believed that the only person who can understand the phenomenon fully is the one who has experienced it.

Phenomenology is a philosophical approach that investigates experience, and a phenomenological researcher's task is to analyse the participant's relationship with intentional experiences and identify the essence of the phenomenon. Van Manen (1990) suggested "*phenomenology offers a description of lived experience,*

while hermeneutics aims at interpreting experience via a text". Husserl considered musical elements (e.g. melody) as a way in which to explore phenomenology (Clarke & Clarke, 2011).

4.4.2 Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics were first introduced within the social sciences by Dilthey (1976) as a theory of interpretation (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Previously Martin Heidegger, (who was a student of Husserl), was responsible for developing Husserl's work and described his philosophy as hermeneutics because he replaced the concept of knowing with that of understanding (Smith *et al.*, 2009). Hermeneutics were originally used to understand historical scripts and literary texts. They were also introduced to acknowledge the concept of context, which is required to interpret dialogue and text. Context being the placement of text within a transcript and how the surrounding discourse relates to it.

The hermeneutic circle was described by Heidegger as a framework for understanding experiences. Heidegger felt that achievement of a deeper understanding could be accomplished more effectively through a circular process between participant and researcher. By continuing this idea he developed the double hermeneutic. In other words, the researcher is trying to make sense of the lived experience of the participant, while the participant is making sense of their own lived experience.

Understanding of a phenomenon will increase as the researcher gains access to the phenomenon itself and this can be done through interviews and by entering the hermeneutic circle. It is important as an interviewer to create a hermeneutic circle in order to obtain rich and robust data that fully explores the phenomenon in question – in this case the musical identities of the professional orchestral musicians.

4.4.3 Idiography

Idiographic analysis focuses on the particulars of the phenomenon that is being explored. This emphasises the detailed approach IPA offers and how IPA is committed to understanding a particular phenomenon from a particular sample. This idiographic approach to research is well suited to conducting interviews and focus groups, as it is concerned with eliciting detailed accounts from the participants about the topic under investigation.

Although IPA is idiographic in nature, an experience cannot only be determined by an individual's personal experience but must account for the input by other external factors, such as social situations. Heterogeneity comes through the idiographic focus in IPA, as patterns and themes emerge throughout the interviews that take place. IPA highlights the common experiences the participants have encountered; whilst at the same time acknowledging the individual aspects of the participants' experiences. An example of this approach was illustrated by Gold and Clare (2012), who explored the accounts of eleven individuals and their relationship's with music listening while living with chronic

pain. The authors discussed the decline in involvement and enjoyment of music after the onset of this pain. However, music was still reported as being associated with positive benefits such as: improved mood, relaxation, a source of companionship and a distraction from the experienced pain. Music was able to link the participants' current sense of self to their past self and provoke memories of who they were before their chronic pain experiences, which gave the individuals a sense of freedom. IPA explored how these eleven individuals attributed meaning to their experiences and concluded that the benefits they experienced from listening to music might be seen as potential self-management strategies for those suffering from chronic pain.

4.4.4 The Subjective Experience

IPA investigates the participant's personal experiences, whilst developing an equal relationship between the researcher and the participant. IPA allows for flexibility and the participant is encouraged to lead the interview. IPA organises and interprets personal meaning making in particular contexts in order to understand the specific phenomenon that is under investigation.

IPA is the study of the flow of lived experiences for an individual. As Dilthey (1976) claimed, an experience is something that takes on a particular significance to an individual. It is a '*comprehensive unit*' when trying to understand a person's life and the significance it has to that person. For example, StGeorge, Holbrook and Cantwell (2014) explored the role of emotion in musical

instrument learning for sixty-six participants including: primary school students and young and older adults. Through conducting interviews with the participants, it was concluded that it is the subjective feeling of a connection to music that motivates individuals to continue learning the instrument. It is the significant placement of music within the participants' lives and their enjoyment of it, although often varying in different degrees of intensity, while sustaining overall musical engagement.

Allowing a participant to choose what experience they want to discuss within a research interview, illustrates the idiographic approach that IPA advocates. IPA is concerned with interpreting significant experiences one encounters in relation to a particular phenomenon. IPA is a detailed examination of experience, and individuals are encouraged to be reflexive about their experiences and the way these may have affected their lives. Subjectivity is an interpretation of an experience influenced by the individual's personal perspectives, attitudes and beliefs as it explores the experience of existence in social worlds.

4.5 IPA and Music Psychology: Existing Literature

IPA has been shown to be a useful method of analysis throughout a number of different topics, for example: experiences of motherhood (Seamark & Lings, 2004), anger management (Eatough & Smith, 2006), genetic counselling (Smith, Dancyger, Jacobs & Michie, 2011) and sexuality (Free, Ogden & Lee, 2005), as it

gives the researcher an *'insiders perspective'* into the topic under investigation (Conrad, 1987).

In reference to music psychology research, the positivist paradigm has been the most common methodology within this research area. Questionnaires and experiments are common methods utilised when investigating music psychology (DeLoach, 2003; Lundqvist, Carlsson, Hilmersson & Juslin, 2009; Spiro, 2010). Musical experiences have mainly been researched by a nomothetic approach (Creech, Hallam, McQueen & Varvarigou, 2013), but it has now become more common to explore a diverse range of music psychology topics with an idiographic approach to the research (Teixeira dos Santos & Hentschke, 2010; Leung & McPherson, 2011). This section will give an overview of previous literature that has been conducted using IPA in music psychology studies.

Davidson (1999) investigated students' motivations to start learning music and why they continued with this learning. Davidson (1999) focused on the construction of the individual student's musical identities, whilst exploring their sense of self. This study highlighted the importance of musical identities in relation to the construction of personal identities; the students viewed themselves as musicians and saw 'the self' in relation to their musical skills. Davidson (1999) adopted a social constructionist approach to investigate the student's musical identity construction and reported that the individuals develop 'the self', in such a way that music becomes an essential construct of their personal identities. In Davidson's research, IPA interviews were conducted with 156 school students and investigated topics such as: instrument choice and

family constructs in relation to music. The interviews found that the participants were mainly influenced by social constructs in developing their musical identities, such as being encouraged by their friends and peers to perform music. IPA allowed Davidson (1999) to investigate a topic area that had been explored previously, however, the methodological approaches used before had been described as being too simplistic for this certain topic. Through using IPA, Davidson utilised a more sophisticated and nuanced approach of analysis to explore this topic area, as IPA accessed details about self-belief, which previous studies could not access. This study showed that *“music becomes an essential construct for their personal identities”* (Davidson, 1999, pg. 30), which indicated the link between the ‘self’ and ‘the musicians’, working together as dualistic components because the participants viewed the ‘self’ in relation to music performance and activities.

Davidson and Borthwick (2002) also studied family constructs, through undertaking an IPA case study. They concluded that family dynamics and the close relationship between parent and child, influenced the children’s perspectives on how they viewed themselves as musicians. The study also showed that when the relationship between mother and son was close, the son developed a more positive self-image as a musician. How the children viewed their musical instruments was also affected by the parent and child dynamics. Sibling roles were also investigated and semi-structured interviews were used to interview each member of the family; to investigate the children’s musical progress. It was concluded that individual musical progress was dependent on the children’s parental involvement and metaphorical family *“scripts”* (the

definition of specific roles) were used to describe underlying reasons for family behaviour. These descriptions were also used (e.g. musician) to define specific roles within the family environment. IPA allowed the researchers to examine individual's approaches of engaging with music within the family setting and gave the researchers access to dynamic information regarding that environment. The authors highlighted how this phenomenological approach allowed the individuals to discuss their own narratives based on their experiences within the family environment.

Bailey and Davidson (2005) investigated performance, group singing and the impact that singing can have on different groups of individuals. There was a noticeable difference between perceptions for the distinct groups, as the middle class singers felt restrained by social expectations of musicianship. Sixteen semi-structured interviews took place (eight members from each choir) and it was concluded that group singing could be used as a therapeutic technique; which was often fulfilling for untrained vocalists. Overall, this study illustrated the positive aspects of group singing on the individuals' reported psychological health. IPA gave Bailey and Davidson (2005) access to investigate why the sixteen individuals chose to sing in a group setting. Additionally, because of the flexibility of IPA the individuals were able to discuss the cognitive, emotional and social benefits of group singing for them.

It is especially evident in Dobson's (2010a) research studying professional demands, personal work and life experiences of performing classical musicians and performing jazz musicians, that IPA is a useful methodology to utilise in

studies exploring lived experiences of professional musicians. Dobson (2010a) conducted eighteen individual semi-structured interviews and the musicians were interviewed about how much control they felt they had in their work environment, in freelancing and how being a musician has affected their wellbeing. This study enhanced the understanding of the experiences of classical and jazz musicians in professional settings and illustrated the difficulties they encountered in their professions, through highlighting their individual difficulties in separating work and life from each other. Dobson (2010a, pg. 56) stated that musicians must consider how the 'self' is expressed and treated within the performance world. Dobson also reported: *"the current nature of conservatoire training treats musicians as 'artists', encouraging them to develop a strong and individual musical identity"*. In contrast, the musicians are required to adopt a more professional role rather than an artistic one once they leave the conservatoire, emphasising their lack of autonomy rather than their individual freedom. Dobson (2010a) suggested that this study added to the growing body of literature about wellbeing in the professional music world. Placing interventions (e.g. providing guidance on managing a balanced work and life as a freelance musicians) into training institutions might encourage musicians to develop positive mental health and wellbeing within professional music environments. Dobson (2010a) also acknowledged IPA as a successful qualitative method and useful exploratory tool that could possibly access the different experiences other types of classical musician encounter in the professional classical music world.

In another study conducted by Dobson (2010b), eighteen young freelance musicians' perspectives on work and life in the music profession were

investigated. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with both classical string musicians and jazz musicians. The musicians' drinking habits and stressful occupational habits were common themes discussed throughout the interviews, indicating the demands performance placed on them. Social drinking represented an opportunity to feel part of the group for these musicians and IPA allowed Dobson to access the different ways in which alcohol was used for social cohesiveness but also as a means of coping. This demonstrated how IPA can give multiple interpretations of the same activity and explore what each individual participant believed about their own idiographic experiences of a freelance lifestyle.

Pothoulaki, MacDonald and Flowers (2012) investigated the impact of an improvisational music therapy programme on patients suffering from cancer. This study aimed to explore the processes involved when taking part in an improvisational music therapy programme. Numerous recurrent themes relating to social and psychological benefits were uncovered throughout the analysis of the interviews, such as: peer support and group interaction, increased self-confidence, relaxation, stress relief, social interactions and the importance of enhanced communication within therapeutic settings.

Oakland, MacDonald and Flowers (2012) conducted an IPA investigation of the significance that job loss had on seven choristers from an opera. Their individual views on loss and the impact this loss had on their definition of themselves was explored. Oakland *et al.* (2012, pg. 9) concluded that singers are distinct in the music world because of their embodied relationship with their voice, meaning that the singers viewed their voice as an embedded vocal instrument that cannot

be disregarded when “*re-defining the self*” after losing their jobs. IPA was useful for this study as it aided Oakland *et al.* (2012) in accessing personal and complex matters such as: the evaluation of the role of the embodied voice, the formation of the self, grieving experiences and the individual meaning of loss encountered due to redundancy. Oakland, MacDonald and Flowers (2014) conducted another study investigating career disruption, but in this study explored career disruption because of physical incapacity, which was centred around the re-negotiation of the self due to vocational transitions. IPA allowed the authors to highlight the individual accounts of and processes related to coping with loss and transition in different contexts.

Solli and Rolvsjord (2015) used IPA to analyse interviews with nine individuals who had been diagnosed with psychosis and undertook music therapy as a form of treatment. This study explored the patients’ life situations and emotional and mental states at the time of the semi-structured interviews. Four superordinate themes emerged from the analysis: freedom, contact, wellbeing and symptom reduction. The findings illustrated how music therapy could be used to help patients and the use of positive mental health techniques should be attempted, indicating that general and standardised procedures should not have such a strong focus. This study highlighted the need for further investigation into individual accounts of music therapy experiences for those with a wide range of mental illnesses.

Li and Southcott (2015) examined through a case study design, the meaning that learning the keyboard had in the lives of sixteen older Chinese people. IPA

allowed the researchers to examine the phenomena under investigation for the sixteen participants, as this analytic strategy explored how individuals felt about their personal experiences of learning the keyboard. Personal meanings around these experiences included: how learning the keyboard contributed to maintaining emotional and physical wellbeing, alongside, lifelong learning and realisation of achievement and potential through keyboard performance. It was concluded that learning the keyboard was a positive experience for the participants and enhanced their relationships with their family and surrounding communities.

All the aforementioned studies have investigated an element of music psychology with IPA as the analytical approach to the research. This demonstrates how IPA is an effective, robust and useful approach when investigating topics associated with music psychology. IPA interprets the subjective world of individuals and explores cognition, consciousness, meaning making and idiography for these individuals (Holmes & Holmes, 2012), which other qualitative paradigms fail to do in such a thorough manner. An experience cannot be fully investigated without regarding the personal perceptions and meanings that exist within it; IPA recognises these unique perceptions.

4.6 IPA and Identity: Existing Literature

IPA is a common analytical framework used when investigating the topic of identity, this section outlines the published literature in this area.

De Visser and Smith (2006) investigated the importance and impact that social

behaviours related to health can have on the construction of a masculine identity. This case study revealed the way in which the participants described their health behaviour related activities (e.g. drug use and physical activities), in relation to a socially constructed masculine identity. De Visser and Smith (2006) furthered the understanding of the topic of masculine identity through their idiographic approach to research, because IPA was able to access particular information regarding the participant's perceptions of discourse regarding masculinity within their social worlds.

Osborn and Smith (2006) illustrated, through interviewing six individuals, how these individuals discussed their chronic lower back pain and how their relationship between the body and the self had changed due to their experiences of pain. This left them feeling powerless and unable to achieve their preferred and desired identity. Semi-structured interviews were used in this study, similar to Lavalley and Robinson (2007) who also used semi-structured interviews to explore the subject of retirement in female gymnasts. This study showed the psychological impact that retiring can have on female gymnasts and how it can in turn affect their overall sense of self. Both studies demonstrated how IPA was a useful methodology for the topics under investigation, as they both explored the participants' unique viewpoints of their relationships with their bodies and the self. Due to the flexibility of IPA the researchers let the interviewees lead the interviews and discussed their experiences in an open manner, in which they could freely express their own individual feelings, attitudes and beliefs. IPA is particularly useful when the exploration is multi-dimensional, subjective and

novel, specifically where issues of identity, the self and *'sense-making'* are important (Osborn & Smith, 2006).

Eatough, Smith and Shaw (2008) investigated aggression and anger related behaviour in women, specifically focusing on the emotional lives of five individual women. The emergent themes (the subjective experience of anger, forms and contexts of aggression and anger as a moral judgment) showed the complex nature of women's aggression and anger related behaviour. This study demonstrated how the body is central to this personal and subjective experience and concluded that crying and the body were important in the subjective experience of anger. IPA was highlighted as a useful tool for this subject as individual accounts of this topic are often neglected and the complex nature of anger, aggression and identity in females is one that is best understood through examining idiographic experiences (Eatough *et al.*, 2008).

Harrigan, Dieter, Leinwohl and Marrin (2015) studied identity related experiences of members of donor-conceived families and investigated how they made sense of their experiences, alongside how they constructed and communicated their identities. IPA allowed the researchers to investigate first hand experiences of these participants, exploring a subject that is often difficult to access. Identity was divided into different themes (victims, wanted children, enigmatic, storytellers and processes) in this study in order to understand the complex experience of donor-conceived families. The conclusions pointed towards future practical implications for these families in order to support the families in understanding personal transitions and the process of becoming a

family.

Holland, Archer and Montague (2014) explored younger women's decisions against delayed breast reconstruction post-mastectomy, after they have experienced breast cancer. Multiple decision making processes were outlined in the results section and the authors illustrated how IPA was a useful tool to use when researching this specific sensitive topic.

The subject of young males recovering from addiction was investigated by Rodriquez and Smith (2014). IPA allowed the authors to gain insight into the nuanced and complex journeys individuals can encounter when attempting to recover from addiction. This in-depth investigation into the participants' identities enabled the researchers to better understand the lived experiences of the young men. Rodriquez and Smith suggested possible health interventions to aid the participants in recovering from addiction.

Mauritzson, Odby, Holmqvist and Nilsson (2014) researched individual experiences of females recovering from 'pathological dissociative disturbances'; as all six participants had a history of being sexually abused. IPA gave the researchers an opportunity to commit to an idiographic approach to conduct research on a vulnerable population. Within this study Mauritzson *et al.* (2014) found that for the participants, recovery came from both internal and external processes.

Having given an overview of previous IPA and identity research, it can be seen that IPA is as a useful analytical tool when investigating identity. IPA ensures there is a commitment to an idiographic approach to research and it gives access

to data from often vulnerable or hard to reach populations, giving the participants a voice. It investigates the subjective topic of identity in a structured manner and highlights the sometimes complex and multidimensional nature of identity.

4.7 Summary Of Chapter Four

Chapter Four has given an overview of qualitative research, the theoretical underpinnings of IPA and an overview of existing studies utilising IPA to explore issues in Music Psychology and to investigate identity issues. IPA is committed to an idiographic approach to research and is a useful qualitative approach when using interviews and case studies, as the methodology is concerned with approaching data in a flexible and subjective manner (Smith *et al.*, 1999). IPA *“is concerned with cognitions...with understanding what the particular respondent thinks or believes about the topic under investigation”* (Smith *et al.*, 1999, pg. 70). IPA consists of integrated elements of phenomenology, idiography and hermeneutics and is considered to be the most appropriate methodology when investigating the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians. In addition, IPA allows the exploration of the subjective lived experiences of individuals.

IPA has been chosen as the methodology for this current investigation because it specifically focuses on cognitions, attitudes, meaning making and what the participants believe about the phenomena under investigation in response to their own individual experiences. This is important in reference to professional

orchestral musicians because it gives the musicians the flexibility to discuss their own experiences in whatever way they wish. This is also crucial because it gives the musicians the options to describes their experiences across their lifespan and express the multiple realities and viewpoints that can exist in relation to this unique profession. IPA is grounded within the collected data and does not consider general assumptions but instead illuminates particular lived experiences. The following chapter (Chapter Five) will describe the research process in this study.

Chapter Five

Methods

5.1 Introduction

This study was designed to explore the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians. Chapter Five presents the research process undertaken and begins by discussing issues of reflexivity, describing the sampling procedures and introduces the professional orchestral musicians. Additionally, the ethical procedures are outlined, alongside the interview process that took place. This chapter then continues by outlining the stages of analysis undertaken and examples of analysis are illustrated.

5.2 Reflexive Issues

Qualitative research has a particular focus on the relationship between the participant and the researcher (Seidman, 2006). Qualitative research acknowledges that reality is a socially constructed concept and thus a person's account is influenced by the context in which it is produced. The research in this thesis adopted a social constructionist and interpretist paradigm. It was specifically interested in how individuals make sense of their involvement in music performance and of their personal development of becoming professional musicians.

IPA allows for flexibility and lets the participant lead the interview. Letting participants lead the interview allowed them to discuss what they felt was appropriate and important to them. Husserl (1927) introduced the process of *'bracketing'* or *'epoche'*, which is *'putting aside'* all the preconceived notions and perceptions a researcher may acknowledge about the nature of this phenomenon that is being explored. An example of these preconceived ideas about this particular study are outlined in the diary extract in this section. *'Bracketing'* preconceived ideas about the phenomenon under investigation defends the validity of the description of the experiences against the self-interest of the researcher (Smith *et al.*, 2009). However, it is essential to acknowledge the researcher's understanding prior to the investigation.

The interpretation used when analysing data from IPA interviews is a construct of the researcher's social world (Schwandt, 2007), rather than an objective process. Whilst I attempted to put my preconceived ideas and assumptions aside during the interview and throughout analysis, I had to acknowledge and reflect on the ways in which my own experiences will have influenced my approach. An example of a preconceived idea being that there are cultural expectations of orchestral musicians as *"hard working, ambitious, self-absorbed, introspective and introverted creative individuals"* (Brodsky, 2006, pg. 674) and I will also have my own particular expectations. However, it should be noted that a researcher cannot fully put aside their own *"social circumstances such as a web of beliefs, practices, standpoints and the like that he or she has learned as ways of living and grasping the world"* (Rouse, 1987), highlighting the need for reflexivity throughout the interview process.

IPA promotes the importance of reflexivity and encourages researchers to be transparent regarding data collection and analysis. Throughout the entire research process I had an awareness of my pre-conceived presumptions and expectations about orchestral musicians before, after and throughout the interviews (An example of this is given below). A research diary was kept throughout the research process and I noted down the interview experiences, and thoughts before and after each interview with each participant and recorded my own assumptions and expectations. The following extracts are examples of the reflective diary before and after Beth's interview:

Prior to the interview: *Before conducting the final interview I am aware that I have many preconceived ideas and expectations that have been influenced by the previous interviews. Such as, the intense relationship the musicians have with the orchestra and how they can even rely on the orchestra for survival. I must not disregard the previous interviews but instead develop from my interview experiences. The final participant told me on the phone that she was leaving the orchestra and had an interesting story to tell. I tried not to guess or presume why she was leaving the orchestra before I met her in person.*

Post interview: *This interview took a different pathway from the other interviews, as Beth is planning on leaving the orchestra and moving into a different vocation when I met her. This interview illustrated identity transition occurring before someone had left the orchestra and how this affected Beth. This interview gave me a different insight into the lived experiences of orchestral musicians, as Beth*

wanted to present herself as being detached from the orchestra. Why? This is something that will be explored in-depth throughout the analysis of her data.

This reflective research diary enabled me to record and understand any changes and developments that occurred. Throughout the interviews I was able to record ideas before and after each interview and acknowledge them. The diary helped place the interview in context and note down any potential influences on the interview that may have had an impact for example, the interview environment. It has been noted by Smith *et al.* (2009) that additional notes and observations can be useful for the “*subsequent contextualization and development of your analysis*” (Smith *et al.*, 2009, pg. 73). It gave the opportunity to revisit and re-examine my contemporaneous thoughts about the interview beyond the transcript itself.

Semi-structured interviews were chosen to interview the ten participants. Semi-structured interviews are the most common type of data collection in IPA (Smith *et al.*, 2009) and have been shown to be a successful method of interview technique (Griffiths, 2009). IPA aims to engage with the reflections of a significant experience and explores decision making, cognitions, emotions, behaviours and attitudes. A semi-structured interview gives participants an opportunity to structure their own autobiographical narrative and gives an opportunity for free exploration regarding identity, as discourse directly represents an individual’s identity (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006).

Kezar (2000) stated that in order for a researcher to develop understanding it is essential for the researcher to conduct pilot interviews. Two pilot interviews were conducted prior to the research interviews in order to practice my interview technique and by conducting a practical activity I was able to ground the research process I was going to undertake. Conducting pilot interviews also highlighted how reflection can help improve research practice.

Participant One in the pilot interviews was a fellow research student. Participant Two was a trained classical musician who also studied psychology and IPA. Therefore I was able to gain very constructive feedback on the interview technique. The interview topics and questions are represented in Figure 5.1:

Figure 5.1: Pilot Interview Details

Interview	Topic	Interview Question
1	Relationship with music	What does music mean to you?
2	Being a classical musician	Can you tell me about your life as a classical musician?

After conducting the pilot interviews it was important to review aspects of the interview process such as: 1) How did the participant react to the interview questions they were asked? 2) What will I do differently in the next interview? 3) Is the interview schedule appropriate? Although two different research topics were covered in the pilot interviews they still allowed for reflection on my technique as an interviewer because I was able to place myself in a 'real life' interview situation.

After each pilot interview the transcripts were reviewed and reflected on. It was important to ensure that the interviews allowed for flexibility, and that the participant had been given enough time to answer the questions. It was essential to ensure no points that could be crucial to the current investigation had been neglected. This was achieved by taking time during the interview and noting down any subjects I thought were necessary to return to later and ask the participants to expand on, but did not want to interrupt the participant whilst they were sharing their experiences. It was also crucial to ensure the participants were comfortable in the interview environment. The pilot interviews prepared me to conduct the research interviews and advanced my techniques as an interviewer, having a greater awareness of when to follow up a topic that required further exploration. An example of this awareness is shown in Figure 5.4.

5.3 Sampling

The orchestral musicians were recruited through personal contacts with professional orchestras and purposive sampling was used to recruit the musicians who matched the participant criteria outlined in Figure 5.2. It is important in IPA that the participants are experts in the field being investigated (Reid, Flowers & Larkin, 2005). Recruitment letters (Appendix A) were put in the musicians professional establishments by my personal contact and ten musicians emailed or telephoned me saying they would like to be interviewed. The participants who agreed to being interviewed, played professionally in

orchestras internationally at the time of the study. Participant inclusion criteria is outlined in Figure 5.2:

Figure 5.2: Participant Criteria

<p>Current Status: The participants should currently be professional classical musicians playing in orchestras within Europe</p> <p>Experience: All participants should be a performing orchestral musician at the time of the interviews</p> <p>Other Criteria: No participant will be interviewed with whom I have a personal relationship</p>

IPA is idiographic and smaller sample sizes can be viewed as beneficial as the analysis will be more rigorous and will in turn produce a richer analysis. This has been emphasised by Reid *et al.* (2005) who claimed that “*less is more*” in terms of sample size, suggesting that through having fewer participants a more in-depth analysis can be conducted. Previous IPA studies have used as little as one participant, when conducting case studies (Eatough & Smith, 2006), whereas other studies have used as many as forty participants (Holt & Slade, 2003). This study interviewed ten participants. Smith, Osbourne and Jarman (1999) reported that ten participants appeared to be the average number of participants interviewed in IPA studies. Previous IPA studies that have conducted research with ten participants (Hall, 2006; Millward, 2006; Maguire, Stoddart, Flowers,

McPhelim & Kearney, 2014) have demonstrated how this is a suitable sample size to use for an IPA study.

Hall (2006) conducted a study of mothers' experiences of postnatal depression. This study invited mothers to express thoughts and opinions on this subject and identified the individual's expectations of motherhood as different from their lived experiences of motherhood, which was associated with their experience of postnatal depression. Having ten participants in this study allowed Hall (2006) to adopt an idiographic approach to the participants' personal reflections of their lived experience of postnatal depression. Maguire *et al.* (2014) studied the lived experience of lung cancer patients and concluded that breathlessness and coughing were of particular salience to participants as they were associated with death, visibility and public embarrassment. By interviewing ten participants, combined with a rigorous IPA approach, the experiences of the patients' symptoms were explored fully.

Another study investigating motherhood was conducted by Millward (2006), who specifically investigated the transition to motherhood amongst women in a particular organisation. This study showed the struggle that the mothers encountered in maintaining their identities when re-entering the workplace after maternity leave. Millward (2006) stated that IPA's intention is not to collect general accounts of meanings but instead to produce an authentic theoretical analysis for the sample under investigation. Interviewing ten mothers, combined with a robust IPA approach, allowed Millward (2006) to find relevant and varied perspectives of the same phenomena.

All of the aforementioned studies demonstrated that by interviewing ten participants about the phenomena under investigation, it could be explored in a detailed manner, allowing researchers to analyse idiographic accounts of the participant’s lived experiences. The participants were given a voice and were able to tell their own individual narratives and personal accounts. An IPA study should “*represent a perspective rather than a population*” (Smith *et al.*, 2009, pg. 49) and sampling ten participants in the current study should allow for a robust investigation of the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians.

5.4 The Professional Orchestral Musicians

Each participant that was interviewed was given a pseudonym in order to protect anonymity and any information that could identify the participants has been anonymised. The participants came from three different orchestras in Europe. The instruments the musicians played were important factors to consider since they may give a further insight into the participants’ musical identities. Figure 5.3 below gives information about the interviewees:

Figure 5.3: Participant Details

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Instrument</u>
Angela	Bassoon
Kathryn	Oboe/Cor Anglais
Jack	French Horn
Michael	Cello

Henry	Cello
Alexander	Cello
Nathan	Trumpet
Andrew	Violin
Jenni	Violin
Beth	Viola

5.5 Ethics

In February 2011, ethical approval was granted from the Glasgow Caledonian University Ethics Committee. In any type of research there are many ethical factors that must be taken into consideration before conducting the study (Miller, Birch, Mauthner & Jessop, 2012). Due to the sensitive and personal nature of issues often investigated through qualitative research it is essential to consider all ethical issues that may arise before, during and after the interviews (Miller *et al.*, 2012).

After consent was given and recruitment was underway, the participants were each given an information sheet (Appendix B) and consent form (Appendix C), which they read and signed before the interviews took place. Each participant was informed that they did not have to discuss anything throughout the interviews they were uncomfortable with and they could withdraw from the interview at anytime without explanation. The participants were also told they could withdraw their data from the study at any point, even after the interview

had taken place. They were all informed that although their discourse may potentially be used verbatim they would be anonymised and would only be referred to using pseudonyms.

Throughout the interview, I revisited what had been stated previously to the participants and told them that if they did not want to discuss a topic further they did not have to. During the first interview with Angela she discussed a very sensitive issue and this topic was not explored further with her as I felt she may have got distressed because she stated: *"I don't know why I'm telling you this"* (Angela), because of Angela's reaction this subject was not investigated further.

The telephone numbers of the supervisory team were offered to the participants in case they had any further questions after the interviews and a counselling service phone number was also offered to them if required. After all the interviews were completed no further contact was required by any of the participants and none of the participants requested any further information. However, some participants have requested to read this thesis once it is completed and an electronic copy of the thesis will be emailed to those particular participants.

5.6 The Interviews

Angela was interviewed in her own home, Henry, Alexander, Beth and Kathryn were interviewed at a university and the remaining participants were interviewed in their place of work. Before the interviews, a conversation with the participants took place to assure them about the confidentiality and anonymity of the study. A brief informal conversation with each participant beforehand built an initial rapport with them. The aim of the study was explained and the participants were told they were free to discuss anything they wanted to about their lived experiences of being classical musicians and if there was something they did not want to discuss they were free to stop at any point. It was explained at the beginning that I was interested in *their own* experiences of being professional orchestral musicians. The interviews were recorded through Garage Band, on a MacBook Pro and through using a MP3 voice recorder. The interviews lasted between 35 minutes and 1 hour 4 minutes. Each interview was transcribed verbatim using a transcription key (Appendix D).

Each participant was thanked for meeting and giving their time at the beginning of each interview and then the participants were asked the initial question. Using open-ended questions at the start of the interview process such as, '*Can you tell me about your experience of being a classical musician?*' encouraged the individual to recall personal experiences about their musical life. This technique helped build a rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee. This method has been emphasised by Sloboda (1989), who stated that through using recall, notable emotional responses to music experiences can be interpreted. In saying this, it is implied that through personal reflection on important musical

experiences, emotional connections to these specific experiences are highlighted. By starting the interview with open-ended questions, it allowed the participant to choose their own starting point to discuss whatever experiences they wished to. After asking the initial question, the following questions were asked throughout the interviews:

- What instrument do you play and why?
- What does classical music mean to you?
- What music do you listen to?
- What does being a classical musician mean to you?

It is important in an IPA interview that the participant leads the interview, as it gives a truer account of their experience of the topic in question. Having this open structure to the interview allows the researcher to highlight and explore topics further without being restricted to asking specific detailed questions. The general interview questions provided a basic framework for the interview but as the interviewer I allowed for unexpected topics to arise and for the participants to steer the development of the interviews.

Figure 5.4 is an example of interview development and further exploration of the lived experience of Jack.

Figure 5.4: Interview Extract (Jack)

J: *And I I connected with it in a way that I never did with pop music. My brother, my mum and dad listened to pop music when my brother was growing up and I I think that influenced his listening cause he pretty much only listened to pop music when he was growing up. And I pretty much only listened to classical music. And I remember em (.) watching Top Of The Pops and stuff like that and and watching it and just (.) I dunno just didn't get it, I just didn't get it. Stuff like em (.) groups like Madness, fantastic group but a bit off the wall, a bit crazy and I remember watching it going I I I just didn't understand and it's only now that if I look at a video of their or something like that I just think, it's fun. It's supposed to be fun, this music is fun and I just didn't relate to it at all. I didn't understand it. So em (.) yeah so it's just more comfortable with classical music so it's just I dunno I dunno why that should be or where it came from. Maybe because mum and dad were listening to it as a when I was growing up so it's just something I felt more at ease with so.*

C: *And you said there's pieces of music you that you connect with, what do you mean connect with?*

J: *Em (.) eh (.) I don't, I don't mean I had a real sort of identification with it uh I just I suppose I mean I I understood it. In a way that I didn't understand pop music. Sort of straight away I I sort of um (.) I could see where where the composer was coming from, what they were trying to say, you know.*

This extract illustrates how questioning certain terminologies and language could clarify what the participant was talking about – ‘connect with’ was an important term to explore further, as my definition and meaning could have been very different to Jack’s. Another example of this interview development can be seen in Figure 5.5.

Figure 5.5: Interview Extract (Andrew)

A: You've gotta keep this you've gotta completely sort your head out. So to me (.) it it's a it's it's playing in a symphony orchestra is about (.) it's just a (.) it's about a life of it's own you know em.

C: That's a lovely term you used there can you tell me what you mean by that?

A: Well a life of it's own I mean I don't a a em I keep saying I do what I do (.) I think of it as this hugely wonderful circle of life really. Where (.) you start playing the violin when you're seven years old and you you've had you're lessons through school and if you go to music college and then you get a job, if you're really fortunate. Em (.) I mean dear God getting into Music College is hard enough never mind getting a job you know? And so you get that and then you and then this wonderful thing and (.) I play the violin very differently now than the way I did twenty years ago because I've I've my body's adjusted, em (.) my brains adjusted. Certain things I don't get worked up about because I know how to cope with it. Em (.) and so I won't spend hours and hours and hours practicing or some horrendously difficult contemporary music piece but I know when the time comes I I can see the bits in a piece that that's written yesterday. I can see the bits where you're just not going to matter what happens and I can see the bits where you are going to have to look at it. And that's experience that kicks in.

This approach to develop the interviews was adopted throughout the entire process in order to fully explore the individuals unique narratives. However, if at any point I touched on a sensitive topic and the participant did not want to discuss it further, the direction of the interview was changed. Figure 5.6 shows how Henry stopped himself from continuing his discussion regarding his wife. This was noticed and the discussion was not encouraged any further.

Figure 5.6: Interview Extract (Henry)

H: *And that's quite a it's a sort of it's a it's a it's quite a (.) it's quite a bond between people when they're they're on stage together and feeling nervous together and trying to produce a performance or something together and they go and have a drink afterwards together and have a laugh and a carry on and you know. An emotional kind of response and support to each other. So I think if you come as an outsider part of that it's very difficult to feel part of it. That's that's what I say to my wife when she asks if she can come on tour. No she can't she can't because she's working anyway so but eh. I think she knows that. I think at first she she kind of (.) anyways yeah that's fine yeah.*

After each interview the participants were debriefed and ensured they left the room feeling comfortable about their interview experience and received all the information they required. The next section of this chapter discusses how the data was organised and analysed, showing examples of the stages of analysis.

5.7 Analysis

Analysis in an IPA study is concerned with engaging with the transcript in a flexible, creative and innovative manner. Analysis is an iterative process that involves a fluid description of the data and investigates a participant's experience in their own words. An interview is a symbolic account of an individual's experience they have demonstrated through discourse. The interview analysis is a representation of how the researcher thinks the participant is thinking: it is a joint account between researcher and the participant. Ultimately, IPA involves a double hermeneutic (Giddens, 1987) as the researcher is attempting to make sense of the participant's experience at the same time the participant is making sense of their own experience.

The analysis is placed in the context of stages to represent the structured and step-by-step methods used to manage the data. Analysis starts with a focus on each transcript individually, representing the idiographic nature of IPA. After each transcript had been analysed individually, in-depth comparisons were made across the transcripts identifying similar themes, phrases and expressions.

Although analysis guidelines are offered by Smith *et al.* (2009), there is no prescribed way in which to analyse the collected data. However, structure is required in order to undertake a rigorous and robust analysis of the transcripts (Smith *et al.*, 2009). It is essential to organise the data in a manageable way and represent the findings in a transparent and coherent manner. The stages of analysis will now be outlined and examples of the transcripts will be given.

5.7.1 Stages Of Analysis

Stage 1: After transcribing the interviews verbatim, analysis involved being fully immersed in the interview data through reading and re-reading of the transcripts. Repeatedly listening to the data allowed me to understand the participant's flow, language and rhythm throughout the interview process and helped the researcher to engage personally with the participants' narratives.

Stage 2: Explored the language and content through initial coding of the transcripts. This was done by marking down comments, ideas and thoughts in

the right hand margin of the transcripts. Recurring and prominent language was highlighted and noted for potential discussion. On the right hand side of the analysis sheet there was a column for initial coding and exploratory comments in which I would state their exploratory, linguistic and conceptual coding. An example of this is shown in Figure 5.7.

Figure 5.7: Exploratory Analysis Comments

Original Transcript	Exploratory Comments
<p>C: Ok so thanks very much for meeting with me today and if we just start and you can tell me about your experience of being a classical musician.</p> <p>A: Right ok. Em (.) the the what's my experience of being a musician? Well it's em (.) I never think it as being a classical musician I think of it as being a musician. Em (.) and if I had to qualify it even more I would say I'm an orchestral musician. Em (.) and I love it and it's (.) the most fulfilling thing (.) I can possibly imagine. And em I think its (.) I think well actually I <u>know</u> we're utterly privileged to do it. I mean it's a real privilege to be able to do this for a living. Its em I mean the number of people who've got jobs in this profession is is tiny compared to the I mean there's thirty for example there's thirty thousand people in the musicians union (.) you know. And the the numbers that've got jobs will will be em well it wont be more than it wont be many more than a thousand. Em (.) you know it's there's so (.) in fact it it there probably isn't much more than that. Em (.) you you've got you know full time playing jobs and that's what I've got. I've got a full time playing job in an orchestra. I get to play the most <u>amazing</u> music. One of the joys about working for the (states the name of his orchestra) is that we em we just do a <u>huge</u> variety of repertoire. We just do a huge variety of repertoire so em (.)</p>	<p>Takes ownership of the interview</p> <p>What's the different between the 2 types of musician to Andrew?</p> <p>Feels he has to qualify the definition more-identity development</p> <p>Love, passion, connection, fulfilment</p> <p>Unity, luck, special, thankful</p> <p>Respect for the job, appreciation, grateful</p> <p>Feels like he is one of the selected few, disregards his talent</p> <p>Pride, status, defining role</p> <p>Allowed to play this music</p> <p>Importance of variety</p> <p>Freedom of expression in the variety of music-psychological</p>

<p>that's what I love about it. I love the freedom (.) to sort of express myself. Some people say we are sort of musical prostitutes really because we sit in an orchestra and we get told what to do but I don't really see it like that. I see it as being a you know being able to interpret and communicate these great composers like Mahler and Brahms and Beethoven and all that (.) Mozart. And I just think it's great. I get to go all over the world. I get to work with <u>amazing</u> people. I get to meet and become friendly and close to people like (name) and (name) and you know who (.) frankly changed my life cause they're just so wonderful and em you know it's just. So my experience is a hugely positive one. It's hard work and the dedication and the discipline required are huge. Em (.) you know I'm in the holidays now and em I did you know played the violin before I came out. Em (.) so it doesn't really stop. Em (.) its somebody said to me the other day and I never thought of it like this actually but it's not a career choice it's a lifestyle choice.</p>	<p>freedom Awareness of others, conflict: social& individual views Lack of physical movements Freedom to interpret Representing Positive language being used Social relationships Awareness of what is required of him Does he choose to do this or does he have to do this?-does this represent other emotions, ie. Fear? Has become his life</p>
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Stage 3: This stage involved developing the initial coding notes that had been made in the right hand column into emergent themes. These developed notes were recorded in the left hand column. Identifying emergent themes involved dividing the narrative flow of the interview into thematic chunks that represent a dualistic combination of description and interpretation of the discourse. This involved developing the exploratory comments in the right hand margin to more concise terminology that would lead to an emergent theme.

Figure 5.8: Developing Emergent Themes

Emergent Themes	Original Transcript	Exploratory Comments
<p>Self Reflection</p> <p>Self Definition</p> <p>Agency</p> <p>Fulfilment</p> <p>Pride</p> <p>Luck</p> <p>Struggle</p> <p>Luck</p> <p>Competition</p> <p>Appreciation</p> <p>Relationship with Music</p> <p>Freedom</p> <p>Emotions</p> <p>Lack of Freedom</p> <p>Freedom</p> <p>Social Aspects</p> <p>Commitment</p> <p>Lack of</p>	<p>C: Ok so thanks very much for meeting with me today and if we just start and you can tell me about your experience of being a classical musician.</p> <p>A: Right ok. Em (.) the the what's my experience of being a musician? Well it's em (.) I never think it as being a classical musician I think of it as being a musician. Em (.) and if I had to qualify it even more I would say I'm an orchestral musician. Em (.) and I love it and it's (.) the most fulfilling thing (.) I can possibly imagine. And em I think its (.) I think well actually I <u>know</u> we're utterly privileged to do it. I mean it's a real privilege to be able to do this for a living. Its em I mean the number of people who've got jobs in this profession is is tiny compared to the I mean there's thirty for example there's thirty thousand people in the musicians union (.) you know. And the the numbers that've got jobs will will be em well it wont be more than it wont be many more than a thousand. Em (.) you know it's there's so (.) in fact it it there probably isn't much more than that. Em (.) you you've got you know full time playing jobs and that's what I've got. I've got a full time playing job in an orchestra. I get to play the most <u>amazing</u> music. One of the joys about working for the (name of orchestra) is that we em we just do a <u>huge</u> variety of repertoire. We just do a huge variety of repertoire so em (.) that's what I love about it. I love thee freedom (.) to sort of express myself. Some people say we are sort of musical prostitutes really because we sit in an orchestra and we get told what to do but I don't really see it like that. I see it as being a you know being able to interpret and communicate these great composers like Mahler and Brahms and Beethoven and all that (.) Mozart. And I just think it's great. I get to go all over the world. I get to work with <u>amazing</u> people. I get to meet and become friendly and close to people like (name) and (name) and you know who (.) frankly changed my life cause they're just so wonderful and em you know it's just. So my experience is a hugely positive one. It's hard work and the dedication and the discipline required are huge. Em (.) you know I'm in the holidays now and em I did you know played the violin before I came out. Em (.) so it</p>	<p>Takes ownership of the interview</p> <p>What's the difference between the 2 types of musician to Andrew?</p> <p>Feels he has to qualify the definition</p> <p>more-identity development</p> <p>Love, passion, connection, fulfilment</p> <p>Unity, luck, special, thankful</p> <p>Respect for the job, appreciation, grateful</p> <p>Feels like he is one of the selected few, disregards his talent</p> <p>Pride, status, defining role</p> <p>Allowed to play this music</p> <p>Importance of variety</p> <p>Freedom of expression in the variety of music-psychological freedom</p> <p>Awareness of others, conflict: social& individual views</p> <p>Lack of physical movements</p> <p>Freedom to interpret</p> <p>Representing</p> <p>Positive language being used</p> <p>Social relationships</p> <p>Awareness of what is required of him</p> <p>Does he choose to do this or does he</p>

Freedom Commitment	doesn't really stop. Em (.) its, somebody said to me the other day and I never thought of it like this actually but it's not a career choice it's a lifestyle choice.	have to do this?-does this represent other emotions, ie. Fear? Has become his life
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Stage 4: Once established emergent themes had been developed, connections between the themes were identified. This was achieved by printing all the themes and placing them onto individual pieces of paper. Themes were moved around and placed into different groups that shared similarities. This technique also enabled identification of differences throughout the transcript. A group of similar themes were clustered together and called subordinate themes. Clusters of subordinate themes were given a title, known as a superordinate theme.

Stage 5: The final stage of analysis consisted of matching the themes to the corresponding subordinate and superordinate themes. Once these themes had been identified within the transcripts the next step was identifying patterns across transcripts. This was done by looking for similarities and differences across transcripts but also being aware of the idiographic nature of IPA and not disregarding any vital data that did not fit into a theme or cluster.

Figure 5.9 shows a brief example of the emergent themes from the data analysis. The table represents the frequency with which a theme is supported. Smith *et al.* (2009) named this technique '*numeration*'.

Figure 5.9: Frequencies Of Emergent Themes

Theme	Angela	Kathryn	Jack	Michael	Henry	Alexander	Nathan	Andrew	Jenni	Beth	Total
Age	5				1			7	1		14
Agency	8	5	23	11	13	1	11	16	1	5	103
Anger		1									1
Appreciation								1			1
Attachment										2	2
Audience Impact									4		4
Awareness							4				4
Captured			3	1							4
Challenge	16		1	6	1		6	1			85
Change		1		1	1			7	1	8	19
Changing Self				1							1
Comfort			6	1				1	1		9
Commitment		1		2		1	1	3		1	9
Communication				2							2
Community	1										1
Competition								3	3	2	8
Confidence				1							1
Conflict	5	2	5	6	4	5		3	3	5	38
Constant				1			2				3
Consumed				5			2	8		4	19
Coping					1						1

Numeration is one way of indicating the importance of shared themes, by recognising their frequency throughout the interviews. This is a technique utilised to organise the data and find patterns across transcripts. Figure 5.10 is an extract of Beth’s interview, illustrating how the data was organised for each participant.

Figure 5.10 Emergent Themes With Corresponding Dialogue

Emergent Themes	Page of interview transcript	Dialogue
Consuming	1 13/14 53 56	<i>"I feel like I've been, I have been doing it all (.) my life (laughs). All my adult life you know you start when you're in primary school."</i> <i>"I can really see the sort of differences between them and some of the people in the orchestra really (.) live in a bubble. Em but they never need to get out of that bubble cause they only talk to each other and other people, who are musicians."</i> <i>"Life was orchestral life."</i> <i>"it is more than a job."</i>
Innate Musicality	1 2 42	<i>"it's something em it came naturally to me. I didn't I didn't have to work hard at it."</i> <i>"I did well (.) em (.) without having to you know spend hours and hours and hours at it"</i> <i>"I was naturally musical"</i>
External Influences	1 2	<i>"I think mine were slightly (.) pushy"</i> <i>"I always really enjoyed it and it was a very sociable thing. But I did have a very structured life at school cause my dad is a teacher. My mum's nurse, em (.) and it runs in the family and my mum used to play when she was younger. So my experience of being a classical musician you have youth orchestras when you are growing up and it's always really good fun."</i>
Self Definition	1 43 48	<i>"I was a sort of music and languages person"</i> <i>"I am a very <u>driven</u> person"</i> <i>"I was still structured and this is just the type of person I am."</i>
Regrets	2 3 48 55	<i>"I could have practiced harder"</i> <i>"I was always going to be an orchestral musician I was never going to be a soloist or anything like that"</i> <i>"I should have maybe gone to university but you cant say that now cause I didn't."</i> <i>"but I think it's my role within the orchestra isn't a good one either. I mean but I do respect what we do and it <u>and</u> you know you have to (.) train for longer than doctors, do you know what I mean? But that's the thing about it you know you start when you're so young (.) and you have to."</i>
Natural	2	<i>"always it was always a natural progression to go to music college and first of all music school."</i>

Wants	3	<i>"I was wanting to go to London to music college"</i>
	3	<i>"I was always wanting to play and I didn't think I wanted to do the academic bit of it"</i>
	6	<i>"I didn't want to, I didn't I wanted the ... represented (.) stability."</i>
	6	<i>"I was at the stage where I wanted the schedules (laughs) for the whole year to write in my diary"</i>
	45/46	<i>"I want to wear work clothes. Like all I have to wear ever is these (points at own clothes)"</i>
	46	<i>"I want to as part of my upbringing I want to have the structure back (.) (laughs)."</i>
	50/51	<i>"just do all those regular things and that's just a personal thing because millions of folk are perfectly it just depends what you want doesn't it"</i> <i>"I want to be there for them em (.) yeah. I don't want them to be affected by I mean you know I have you know I will always have to work but I want to be there evenings and weekends and school holidays. And I want them to feel stable."</i>
Detachment	4	<i>"I didn't really enjoy music college that that much em (.) it was just you know you have to sort of em practice and go to orchestra rehearsals and lessons. It wasn't structured enough for me."</i>
	9/10	<i>"when I was on maternity leave with my first I didn't miss the playing job at all. I didn't get the viola out (.) em (.) and I came back and (.) it was straight back into it I haven't I didn't practice but its not like I don't em respect the job anymore it's just it doesn't do anything for me anymore. Em (.) cause I think it's a fantastic job but it has to be right for you in everyway"</i>
	60	<i>"I think I'll have more of a love of it when I'm not doing it. I know that already."</i>
Self Reflection	4	<i>"I realised, like sort of looking back"</i>
Pressure	4	<i>"they were always thinking oh you know she's going to be like Vanessa May or Nigel Kennedy cause that's what people think"</i>
	5	<i>"I was on trial for a year cause they had loads of folk on trial."</i>
Lack of Individuality	4	<i>"I am a viola player and you know you're one of many."</i>
	16/17	<i>"it doesn't matter if I'm there or if someone else is there."</i>
	18	<i>"I'm one of nine it should be ten I'm one of nine at the moment"</i>
Uncertainty	6	<i>"I realised during that year if I <u>didn't</u> get the job I wasn't going to carry on freelancing."</i>
	6	<i>"my other passion is teaching but not to teach not teaching the viola to hundreds of (.) kids actually classroom teaching."</i>
	8	<i>"I knew I didn't want to carry on doing what I was doing if I didn't have the job with the ..."</i>

	8 37 53 63 69	<p><i>"I thought right I'll take it and I'll see how I get on for a year."</i></p> <p><i>"not everybody thinks about it like I do. Em (1) it's a really difficult job to get as well (.) and (.) em (.) something that you take on when you get a job in an orchestra is that it em could be axed as well. It's also it's all down to budgets"</i></p> <p><i>"I had always thought of it before I got the job. So it's always been there in (.) me (.) to to maybe not do it forever."</i></p> <p><i>"what job is safe these days either?"</i></p> <p><i>"It's always been there the whole thing about not wanting to do it forever. It's always been there."</i></p>
Conflict	6/7 7 14/15 35/36 51/52	<p><i>"I had this boyfriend who wasn't a musician. That's the thing, I was beginning to sort of turn my back on the whole sort of em (.) lifestyle that came with it."</i></p> <p><i>"I started turning my back on the sort of musician side of things so I had this boyfriend who was <u>totally</u> em <u>totally</u> the other way"</i></p> <p><i>"but you know it is a fantastic job but em I'm <u>really</u> looking to the future em. Still doing you know it's still music eh that I'm doing and em (.) I really feel despite the fact that you know it it didn't work out eh with the marriage I really still feel like I'd be doing this at this point anyway."</i></p> <p><i>"I think (.) I'll really enjoy (.) you know paying to go and see a concert and get the the pleasure out of it you know cause all em (.) all I've done is just (.) played the notes. But it sounds like I don't respect what I do or what everyone else does but I do."</i></p> <p><i>"then if you do like something else like that if you've got young children when you know when are you going to see them? Cause if you if you're rehearsing for something like that in your free time but that's the time you've been with your children"</i></p>

Documents (Figure 5.10) were constructed for each participant and allowed the data to be organised in a systematic manner. Figure 5.11 shows the discourse related to the subordinate themes for each participant and makes comparisons across transcripts. Figure 5.11 represents these comparisons for the theme 'Fear':

Figure 5.11: Similarities Across Transcripts

Participant	Dialogue	Page
Beth	<i>"What if I'm not good enough?"</i>	67
Nathan	<i>"there's a certain (.) element of well (.) it'll go wrong at some point and everyone will know (.) and that's terrifying."</i>	43
Kathryn	<i>"you come away and you think well I've, everyone's heard that and they must think I can't play very well anymore"</i>	10
Nathan	<i>"you feel like you let yourself down and people in the audience had this expectation of you"</i>	47
Jack	<i>"your brain thinks you're in a terrible situation and it goes all out of control."</i>	31
Andrew	<i>"we don't get rid of people because somebody else comes along that because they're better but we do get rid of people because they're not good enough anymore"</i>	40

This technique identifies similarities and differences across transcripts.

Three superordinate themes and six subordinate themes were identified from the data, these can be seen in Figure 5.12 below. These themes will be discussed in detail in Chapters Six, Seven and Eight.

Figure 5.12: Superordinate and Subordinate Themes

Chapter Six	Chapter Seven	Chapter Eight
Musical Foundations	Struggle: <i>"The Never Ending Quest"</i>	Thank You For The Music
Becoming An Orchestral Musician	Fear	<i>"Essentially Being Human"</i>
The Collective	Conflict	Finding Inner Harmony

5.8 Summary Of Chapter Five

Chapter Five has provided a detailed description of the research process that was undertaken and how the analysis was conducted, according to IPA techniques. This chapter has outlined the importance of reflexivity, highlighted the use of bracketing and the importance of a personal reflective diary throughout the research process. Pilot interviews undertaken were outlined and the significance of this process was outlined. Participant criteria, ethical considerations and participants' pseudonyms with their corresponding instruments were outlined. In addition, examples of interview techniques and the need to recognise individual differences throughout the interview process were also illustrated. The step-by-step overview of the analysis was outlined alongside the development of exploratory comments to emergent themes. The superordinate and subordinate themes were introduced in this chapter and will now be discussed in detail in the following three results chapters.

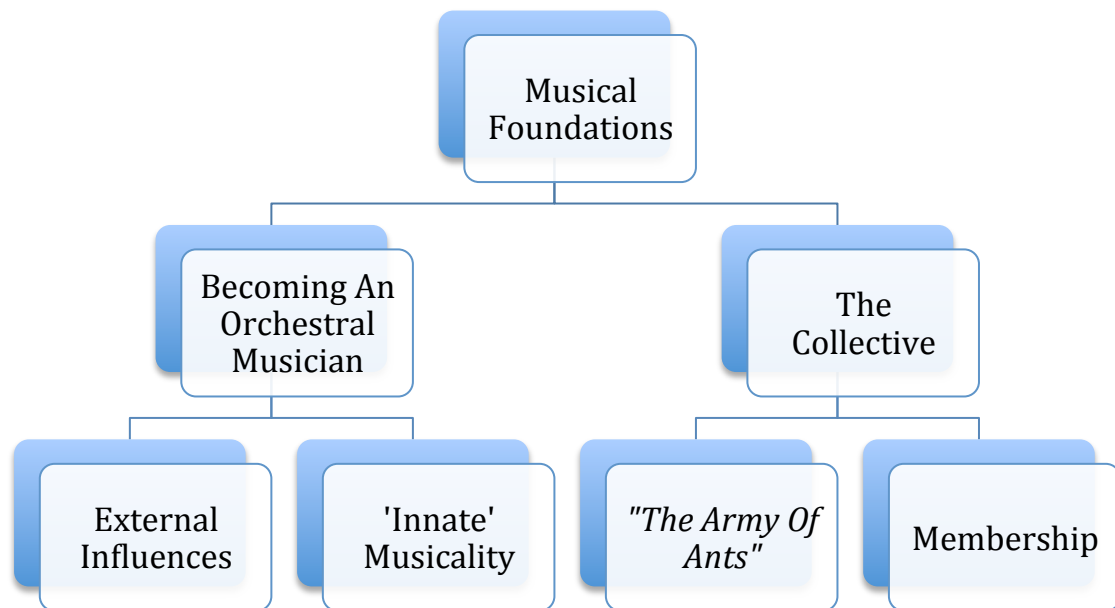
Chapter Six

Musical Foundations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the first superordinate theme of this study. *Musical Foundations* exhibits the ways in which the musicians constructed their musical identities through childhood, adolescence and when in the orchestra. The ten participants' musical identities were constructed through; social influences (parents, friends, teachers and colleagues), environmental processes (school, family home and orchestral) and group processes (personal, social and professional relationships). The two subordinate themes (Becoming An Orchestral Musicians and The Collective) presented in this chapter represent different and crucial facets of musical identity construction for the professional orchestral musicians. These two themes demonstrated that becoming a professional musician was essentially seen as a social process and highlighted how the social interactions experienced in childhood, adolescence and within the music profession were fundamental to the musicians' journey towards self-definition as professional orchestral musicians. Central to this chapter are the participants' experiences encountered with other individuals in surrounding environments such as: home, school, work, and other social contexts. The two subordinate themes and their emergent themes are represented in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1: Superordinate, Subordinate and Emergent Themes (Chapter Six)



(i) **Becoming An Orchestral Musician** is concerned with the foundational elements of what influenced the individuals to become musicians during their childhood and adolescence, influences such as; feeling a natural connection to classical music and to their instruments, interactions with family, friends and the encouragement within the school environment. These influences overlapped to build the foundations of the musicians' professional development that began in childhood and adolescence, and were experiences the musicians have carried with them throughout their lives. The musicians described that when they first started playing classical music it was anticipated by parents and teachers that the individuals would become professional orchestral musicians; due to the expectations and traditions of the classical musical idiom, because the level of technical aptitude required to play the classical musical repertoire must be developed from a young age in order for the player to be successful within the

classical music profession. The musicians' reflective narratives regarding their initial experiences of becoming musicians indicated uncertainty and a lack of control over the initial decision-making processes about engaging with classical music in childhood and adolescence. This indicated the dominance of external influences on the musicians. However, the musicians also spoke about their 'innate' musicality and the impact this had on their decision-making.

(ii) The Collective demonstrates the deindividuation processes that occur within the orchestral environment, such as: being institutionalised, viewed as a sound and not as an individual, and being seen as a member of the orchestra and not as a separate person. This theme illustrates the multiple group dynamics that exist in an orchestra and shows the reliance the musicians have on their membership, belonging and *'fitting in'* within this environment. This is demonstrated through the musicians describing a feeling of 'normality' in belonging to an institution and to the orchestra. This reliance and feeling of normality was illuminated through describing social and professional connections to other orchestra members. The musicians communicated their relationships and collective roles in the orchestra through the use of metaphors, such as comparisons to groups of animals and by describing the shared experiences of being in a professional orchestra.

These two subordinate themes will now be explored in detail and the importance of social processes, social environments and internal characteristics on musical identity construction and self-definition will be discussed throughout.

6.2 Becoming An Orchestral Musician

This theme represents the data that described the start of the musicians' journey towards becoming professional orchestral musicians. The participants explained the founding constructs and experiences that had influenced their professional career choices including how they had been influenced by external environments, and by the individuals that surrounded them throughout adolescence and childhood. Discussion of this theme continues by exploring the 'innate' musicality the musicians explained they felt they had, alongside what they perceived as the instantaneous connection they felt towards both their chosen instruments and classical music.

The first question asked at the start of each interview was:

"Can you tell me about your experience of being a classical musician?"

The responses included: *"its all I ever wanted to do"* (Jack) *"I kind of realised I was going to be a professional musician cause music was just taking over"* (Michael) *"it's been my whole life"* (Alexander) *"I love it and it's (.) the most fulfilling thing (.) I can possibly imagine."* (Andrew) *"I have been doing it all (.) my life".* (Beth)

Such quotes indicated how the identity of 'classical musician' has been a crucial perceived element throughout the lives of the participants and they were committed to their current roles as orchestral musicians. These quotes also demonstrated the lifelong commitment the musicians have to this role and the

overall impact this professional role has on them. Every participant discussed why they became a professional musician, why they chose the instrument that they played and why they want to continue being a professional orchestral musician.

Each participant began the interview by discussing their autobiographical narrative from childhood or adolescence, except for Kathryn, who started her narrative by describing the struggle in her present work situation "*it's quite hectic*". Kathryn started the interview at this point because there had been recent career disruption in regards to her work life that was outwith her control. This disruption represented a shift in terms of her professional role, as her contract had been changed from full to part time in her orchestra. Instead of beginning by describing her past experiences when considering her lived experience, she was initially focused on her current work situation; due to the stresses she was encountering and her current struggles. Kathryn was the only participant who started the interview with a negative account of her experience of being an orchestral musician. In doing so, Kathryn demonstrated the link between reflecting on her past experiences with present influences and professional changes.

This subordinate theme is titled 'Becoming An Orchestral Musician' because this theme illustrates the professional process for the musicians and how it has been rooted since childhood and adolescence. For example, when Jenni was asked the initial interview question she reflected on when she felt she became a classical musician, explicitly separating the identities of 'musician' and 'classical

musician'. She explained the importance of participating in the orchestral environment for her to be able to access the identity of 'classical musician':

"well I started playing the violin when I was eight (.) and em (.) I dunno what point you can describe yourself as a (laughs) as a classical musician. I suppose when I started playing in the orchestras when I was about ten and (.) I suppose as early as that that's when you get introduced to the the sort of music that well that orchestra play. Youth orchestras' play is really just the same as the music we play now so it it all starts pretty early really."

(Jenni)

Jenni explained how the music she played in youth orchestras was the same repertoire she played in her professional orchestra. She made an explicit connection between her current professional role and her involvement with classical music in orchestras at a young age, emphasising the importance of the classical repertoire on past and current experiences. She demonstrated how this professional identity is introduced to the musicians at a young age due to the classical repertoire they play, as though they are already in preparation for the professional orchestra. Similarly, when Andrew was asked about his experience of being a classical musician he responded:

"I never think it as being a classical musician I think of it as being a musician. Em (.) and if I had to qualify it even more I would say I'm an orchestral musician."

(Andrew)

Andrew demonstrated how he categorised himself as a musician and he defined his role in a professional sense and not in regards to the genre he belongs to. This shows the professional perspective in which he viewed his role. Similar to the

other participants when asked about their ‘classical’ experience they all responded by viewing their experiences through a professional lens. This showed the prominent placement of ‘orchestral musician’ within their autobiographical narratives. The multiple influences that have impacted these personal narratives will now be discussed in the subsequent section.

6.2.1 External Influences

All ten participants discussed how external influences encouraged them to become musicians and/or influenced them to engage with music throughout their childhood and adolescence. In the following extract, Nathan was asked what being a classical musician means to him. He automatically related the question back to the external influences on him, particularly his relationships with his family and previous teachers:

“What does being a classical musician mean to me? Em immediately I’m looking back so to my first teacher that I mentioned earlier... Looking at my at my parents as well cause they were very much of course very much influenced me terribly. How things would go for me and always supportive in influence in that way. Em (.) so therefore (.) things like respect for my parents(.) you know respect for yourself of course but but wanting to (.) for them to be proud of me I guess you know? And it’s all these things come back from from very far back.”

(Nathan)

In this extract Nathan demonstrated the significant impact his teacher and his parents had (and still have) on him in terms of why he became a professional musician. In mentioning them it is not so much their musical preferences or

engagement that he highlights, but the importance of their pride and respect for him (and, through this, his self-respect) as a musician. Nathan reflected on his past relationships throughout the interview, for example: *“my dad taught me the trumpet”*, highlighting his father’s impact on his personal narrative of being a professional musician. He drew on these memories and past experiences in a way that emphasised how fundamental they were to the basis of his career as an orchestral musician and how these reflections influenced his present behaviour. Nathan explained the importance of his past experiences and how they impacted his present thoughts and considerations. Although Nathan’s teacher and dad had passed away he still felt they influenced him and his decisions, showing the lifelong impact these external influences still had on his professional career and how his profession connects him to family members and teachers who have passed.

When Kathryn was asked why she played the oboe, she instantly responded by referring to her family and how they affected her instrument choice (see following extract). Kathryn established commonality with her sister as she explained that they both played the piano and she followed her sister’s example of taking up a second instrument as well. As she put it, *“it was sort of expected that I would have a second instrument”*. However, she established some individuality through choosing to play a different second instrument (an oboe rather than the flute that her sister played). The extract below signifies the expectations of her family and the social dynamics of the family environment:

“I always I couldn’t exactly tell you exactly why but the usual sort of family thing. I’ve got an older sister she played the flute. We

*both played the piano, she played the flute (.) so I suppose I it was s
sort of expected that I would have a second instrument and I quite
liked the sound of the oboe that the (.) girl at school was making
and I thought oh I'll have a go at that not realising how difficult it
is (laughs). So yes (cough) I think that was it really. Um my mother
well both parents were sort of musically minded. My mother
pardon me (coughs) was a singer (.) em (.) and played the piano as
well and my father was very into classical music and was a radio
(.) broadcaster, announcer on the world service. She was in
Australia doing that and then came back to Scotland and then
down to London so eh it was very much in the in the background
and my mother my mothers parents were also classical musicians
so that's that's probably why I've ended up doing it. And also I
couldn't do anything else (laughs)"*

(Kathryn)

Kathryn stated how her experience was the “*usual sort of family thing*” implying that it is obvious that family experiences ‘shape’ later interests and choices- such as the close association with classical music (as not only an interest but also as a career for both her mother and grandparents). This implied there was an inevitability to study not just one but two instruments, as this is an expected skill within most musical conservatoires. Although Kathryn implied that this was usual, expected and somehow woven into the background of family life, there was also some uncertainty and regret in Kathryn’s language here “*not realising how difficult it is (laughs)*” and throughout her interview, for example: “*I wish maybe I'd (.) done an extra job some somewhere before when I was younger maybe.*”, “*A skill that (.) is (.) limited being a musician*”, which may have been reflective of her current situation at the time of the interview as she was encountering insecurity in her job. This demonstrated again how current

situations could be reflecting the past, alongside pointing to future considerations as she expressed that *“the future doesn’t look too good”*.

Kathryn’s extract ended with a brief sentence *“And also I couldn’t do anything else (laughs)”*, which seemed to undercut her previous descriptions of the importance of her own agency (e.g. choosing the oboe). This could be an example of her presenting an external locus of control (Rotter, 1954). Locus of control refers to the extent that individuals feel they can control events that are affecting them. External locus of control is the belief that external factors (environmental, chance or fate) are controlling, or more influential on their decisions and life choices than personal agency. Kathryn seemed to adopt this external locus of control both by describing the family influences on her choices and her suggestion that she would not have been very good at doing anything else. It is as though becoming a musician was a default option and she did not really have a choice in this matter. Such a proposal may again have been related to her job insecurity at the time of the interview.

Similar to Nathan and Kathryn, Michael talked about why he was ‘naturally’ drawn towards classical music. It was so pervasive in his family environment when he was growing up that he presented this as the reason why he felt connected to it as a career:

“I think I was drawn to it because it was there in my house....it was there in the house and I was I was introduced to it”

(Michael)

Michael stated that his family “introduced” classical music to him. He echoed this further by saying; “my parents’, my father’s musical”. This again signified the importance of the family environment, as was seen with Kathryn’s account, that she too felt a certain inevitability about her future career choice because of her early immersion in classical music in the family environment. After asking Michael about his experience of being a classical musician, he started his answer by suggesting that the main reason for him liking classical music and choosing it as a career choice was simply because it surrounded him in the family environment initially and that “music was just taking over”. Again, adopting an external locus of control (Rotter, 1954) Michael implied that he had no choice about entering this career path. Alexander echoed similar experiences to Michael:

“If you’re brought up where there’s a lot of music around. My father died when I was nine and he was a musician so a lot of my earliest memories were actually sitting under the piano when he was playing. So there was music around me in the house. He wasn’t going to have me learn music at all cause I was the third child and I don’t think there was a great deal of money. My elder brother and sister he fought with my mother no end and said he’s not going to. Eh the minute he died my mother sent me for lessons.”

(Alexander)

Alexander had a similar experience as Michael did when describing the placement of music within his home environment. Taking up an instrument allowed him to identify with his father’s profession and be involved with music in the same way as his brother and sister, encouraged by his mother. For Alexander this was a complex process, because although his father was a

professional musician, he had certainly not encouraged Alexander to take lessons and so the messages he received about becoming part of what others in his family did were rather mixed and conflicted. By saying that the minute his father died his mother sent him for lessons, Alexander emphasised the conflicting messages he received from his parents with regards to learning an instrument. Although these conflicting views were evident, Alexander still continued towards a career as a professional musician and related his involvement with music back to his father and his experiences of sitting beneath the piano as his father played. The following extracts also indicate the importance of external influences:

"I think they knew I was musical"

(Michael)

*"my mother well both my parents were sort of musically minded.
My mother was a singer (.) em (.) and played the piano as well and
my father was very into classical music."*

(Kathryn)

*"when I went to secondary school he said to me 'they need cellos in
the orchestra, why don't you have a go?' So that's what I did"*

(Henry)

*"I suppose a lot of us come from musical families or families who
are also (.) involved in musical things."*

(Jenni)

The above extracts underline the importance of the encouragement and influence of others, as being important factors in the musicians' lives from a young age. Within these quotes, there is also a sense that the musicians started playing their instruments through a chance opportunity, again reiterating that this was not an agentic choice for the musicians. As referred to in Chapter Two,

Davidson *et al.* (1996) discussed the influence parents can have on their children's development in musical performance. The authors described how the most musically able children were given the highest level of support from their families. This suggested that families are taking account of the children's abilities in providing encouragement, as opposed to the view of these participants in the current study who felt that their family's encouragement was indiscriminate because they seemed to describe an early family environment where they '*couldn't help but be involved*' in classical music. However, Davidson *et al.*'s (1996) work suggested there are other explanations for parents' behaviour.

This section has shown the external influences the musicians experienced in childhood and adolescence, impacting their current behaviours and decisions. This section has also demonstrated how music is a way in which the musicians identify and connect with family members and surrounding others. This subordinate theme (External Influences) highlighted the centrality of classical music for the participants in past environments and showed the encouragement from parents and teachers to enter into the professional world of classical music from a young age. The following section will now discuss the internal characteristics that impacted the musicians' professional choices.

6.2.2 'Innate' Musicality

This section describes the internal characteristics that have impacted the musicians' decisions to become professional orchestral musicians. This particular section is intentionally small to demonstrate the lack of discussion

there was surrounding ‘innate’ musicality and to highlight the prominence of external influences on the musicians’ journey in becoming professional orchestral musicians. The expression of these internal characteristic should not be neglected, however, as they demonstrate the musicians’ agency in their occupational decisions and are crucial elements in the musicians’ journey of self-definition.

As discussed in Section 6.2.1 the participants often talked about the impact others had (in the family or at school) on their choices to become musicians, to play classical music and on their instrument choice. However, the participants also talked about having a ‘natural’ connection towards their instruments and classical music. Jack, Henry, Alexander and Beth all discussed their personal sense of having a talent and how their musicality came from within:

“I wanted to do it and then I found that I could do it.”
(Jack)

“I started the cello and obviously took to it and em was reasonably good at it”
(Henry)

“I got quite quickly discovered that I had a talent for it.”
(Alexander)

“it’s something em it came naturally to me. I didn’t I didn’t have to work hard at it.”
(Beth)

These musicians claimed that playing an instrument came “*naturally*” to them and they “*found*” they could “do it”, as though it was something that was already

within them waiting to be discovered. These claims created positive self-images as musicians because they provided an explanation based on the participants' own abilities about their decisions to become professional orchestral musicians. Such explanations showed their personal discovery process and how the ability to play an instrument was a natural talent for the individuals. Describing this narrative enabled the musicians to establish an identity built on a consistency between their abilities and career choices. It established the very early foundations of their musical identity and underpinned their choice to become professional orchestral musicians with a sense of their musical abilities. Discussing their natural abilities did not mean that they ignored the influence of others, however, but this was seen as something that enabled rather than triggered their interest and abilities.

6.2.3 Summary

The musicians attributed their initial experience of becoming orchestral musicians as mainly due to external experiences (e.g. parental influence), whilst still recognising the influence of internal characteristics (e.g. 'innate' musicality). 'Becoming An Orchestral Musician' illustrated the importance of influential relationships in adolescence and childhood on musical identity construction. Previous qualitative studies have demonstrated the influence that family dynamics can have on an individual's musical development, such as the role of parental influence (Davidson & Borthwick, 2002). For some of the individuals their musical progress was encouraged by other family members, highlighting

crucial influences within the family unit on musical identity construction. This subordinate theme also furthers the work of Davidson *et al.* (1996) as they stated that children who were viewed by family members as being musically talented were encouraged to partake in musical activities to a high standard. For the participants in this current study, this could show how the idea of an 'innate' musicality and external influences intertwined to produce highly skilled orchestral musicians.

The chosen extracts in this section demonstrated the narratives that the musicians had constructed of how their journey began. The initial question in the interviews requested them to reflect on their lifelong relationship with music, and the musicians gave accounts of their musical identity formation and how they have defined their musical identities from a young age. It also showed how the musicians viewed their personal experiences through a professional lens demonstrating the centrality of 'orchestral musician' within the participants past, present and future narratives: as they are continuously considering their professional position when reflecting on these narratives. External influences are something that most of the musicians reflected upon when describing what classical music meant to them. This emphasised how their musical identities had been influenced by their surrounding environment, and by their relationships with significant others in the family, school and other social contexts. In reference to 'innate' musicality, the musicians did consider the impact that internal characteristics had on their decision-making processes, highlighting an element of control over their professional journey. However, greater emphasis was placed upon the reported external influences. The following subordinate

themes further the superordinate theme 'Musical Foundations' by describing the group dynamics between the musicians, whilst introducing the concept of membership and the deindividuation process that can occur within an orchestra.

6.3 The Collective

This subordinate theme explores the way in which the musicians discussed the importance of feeling part of a collective (within the orchestra), in describing their sense of themselves as professional orchestral musicians. Although individuality does exist within the orchestral context, the participants emphasised the way in which they often experience deindividuation within this professional environment. However, most of the participants reported their experience of this positively, saying that as orchestra members they share a collective identity with a common purpose, and this shared identity was a very important influence on their overall sense of musical identities.

Group mentality, unity, membership, and belonging (of both the section and the entire orchestra) were apparent throughout the interview responses. This theme was also built from the different roles the musicians had within the orchestra (e.g. section principal and violinist), showing how the musicians can belong to different subgroups within the orchestra. A common identity was influenced by the dynamics of the group and from group properties (e.g. being a string player). The musicians identified themselves both by the instrument they played and by the role they had within the orchestra. The musicians reported how they must work together as a group, with music being the main priority to the performing

individuals as the orchestra is founded on performing classical music to the best of their ability. Belonging and group membership are influential factors in the formation of the musicians' musical identities in a professional context. This subordinate theme will now be explored and the two corresponding emergent themes (*"The Army Of Ants"* and Membership) will be discussed.

6.3.1 *"The Army Of Ants"*

The title of this emergent theme was a phrase used by Andrew and echoed by others in the interviews to describe the experience of being a member of an orchestra. Throughout the interviews the majority of the participants compared their experiences in the orchestra to being a group of animals, invoking a form of 'herding' when they described their coming together as a group. This theme will demonstrate how the musicians expressed and understood their positions within the orchestra through the use of metaphors. They reported (by utilising these metaphors) that the orchestra and their experiences within it, elicited a team mentality, shared interests, common goals but in particular deindividuation:

"we're just the sort of you know like the army of ants"

(Andrew)

"anything really that might help us play together more unanimously. Cause you want these eight cellos to sound like one (.) one beast rather than eight beasts"

(Michael)

As a principal of his section, Michael emphasised his attempts to encourage all the players in the section to play as one. By describing the cellos as “*beasts*”, suggested the struggle needed to pull these powerful instruments together and emphasised their unity rather than their individual sounds. Using this term also indicated that the players are indistinguishable from each other, and that they all share similar characteristics. Andrew’s quote also implied this by describing the orchestral musicians as being a collection of animals, while creating an image of them all working together to achieve the same goals. Michael also used the word “*cellos*” instead of ‘musicians’ to refer to his section, which again emphasised the deindividuation in a professional orchestra. This relates to the work of Parasuraman and Purohit (2000) who found that being an orchestral musician required teamwork to create a united sound and that a submergence of one’s identity (lack of individuality) was necessary to match the dynamics of the group. As Smith (2011) reported, classical music is written for instruments rather than for individuals, and this might be why it is considered appropriate to represent the cello section in the way Michael did, adhering to the traditions of the classical music idiom. Henry also used the metaphor of musicians being like animals in the following extract:

“a string section is a bigger (.) herd (laughs). So you feel more part of a group, safety in numbers sort of thing.”

(Henry)

In using this idea of the “*herd*”, Henry emphasised the idea of deindividuation but put it in the context of the comfort and safety of working as a team. Interestingly, all of the string players compared themselves to an animal collective. This could be because this is the largest section, and the need for team coordination is more

essential than in other sections. The string players in the study interpreted this sense of the “herd”, and particularly with working together as a single unit within the collective, as reassuring and positive. As Andrew put it:

“Personally I think it’s wonderful because I I’ve no interest in playing the violin on me own particularly. It’s not really my thing I’d love I love the sound of the symphony orchestra and I love being part of a team. I think it’s, see for some people they feel very claustrophobic em (.) they don’t like the fact they cant be an individual. Em for me it’s the opposite. I love the team spirit. I love the ensemble thing. I love the fact that I am part of this big entity. See I see a symphony orchestra as one being. You know em it’s like one animal you know.”

(Andrew)

Andrew does not want to play alone – he explained clearly that his passion is for the experience and sound of the collective. His repetition and emphasis of the word “love” demonstrated the emotional connection Andrew felt with the others in the orchestra. Andrew spent a large amount of the interview discussing how he loved being in a team and indeed how he did not want to and should not be seen as an individual within the orchestra and being an “ensemble” was important to him. In discussing the sense of working closely together in the orchestra, Alexander continued the metaphor of a group of animals (in this case birds):

“one of the one of the most magical things about an orchestralike the flock of birds experience When you see a flock of birds whirling in the sky how do they do that? Some information is going through and between them quicker than the speed of light they say and its not (laughs) how on earth they measure I don’t know. But the point is that it’s virtually instantaneous. And I you

know experience that and I see that with a sense of wonder... Some players will be on their smart phones, other players have got a magazine hidden behind their desk and the conductor says something and then suddenly just like that within a mili second the whole orchestra plays very specifically absolutely together. Eh (.) I mean you know there's a posh word entrainment for it but it's a mystery...."

(Alexander)

In this extract, Alexander described the connection between the players as “*instantaneous*”, which implied that their musical connection was natural and not something that had to be constructed or worked at. It showed the mystery that can exist within an orchestra in a physical and emotional sense. By using the word “*whirling*” showed the closeness of the orchestra members and the social dynamics that exist, as he described an unconscious connection between the musicians. Alexander also introduced the idea of creativity and described it as a “*a mystery*” and “*miraculous*”. This echoes the work of Sawyer (2006) and his discussion of creativity within a group of musicians, who stated that a talented group of musicians often display interactional synchrony. Sawyer described how performing in this way was an open communicative channel amongst the musicians and how parallel processing occurred during ‘*group flow*’ performances, as musicians listened to their surroundings while playing highly skilled repertoire. By using the word “*magical*” (which could have connotations of mystery) Alexander linked together the concepts of mastery and mystery; mastery being the high level of expertise with which the musicians can play their instruments, and mystery being the way that the entire orchestra instantaneously came together at a certain moment in time.

The metaphor of the flock of birds used by Alexander was a figurative term in literal representation of the way in which the orchestral musicians behaved. Collaboration, cooperation and conformity were all introduced here as well as defining unity and a shared identity. The orchestral structure was described and based on the orchestra working together as a collective and in '*group flow*'. This extract highlighted Alexander's view that the musicians in the orchestra had shared priorities and viewed themselves as a collective unit.

Each of the musicians that referred to the orchestra as some form of animal collective used the metaphor to highlight positive aspects of their collective identity, except Beth, who used the flock metaphor to explain how being in the orchestra restricted her sense of individuality:

"I mean you don't have to think for yourself a lot of the time. You get led around you know everyone makes a joke of it it's like you know baa (makes the noise of a sheep) walking through airports you know you just like all walk through in a group"

(Beth)

This statement could have been influenced by her current occupational stress and career disruption within the orchestra, but was certainly strikingly different to the others using this metaphor. As previously mentioned, Beth was planning on leaving the orchestra when her interview was conducted. By describing the musicians as a group of sheep she implied that they all followed the actions of each other and did not make independent decisions, stressing the sense of deindividuation that exists within the orchestra rather than the positive aspects of being part of a close knit team.

This section has shown the deindividuation that the musicians feel within the orchestra and how they understand and represent this process through the use of animal metaphors. The following section moves away from the use of these metaphors and shows how the individuals, although experiencing deindividuation, recognise their positions positively within the orchestra as being members of an orchestra and belonging to a specialised group.

6.3.2 Membership

The following extracts discuss other aspects of “*fitting in*” (Jack) and interpersonal relationships, beyond using metaphors to describe their positions in the orchestra. The importance of the musicians relating closely to each other is described, and how these relationships are essential foundations of a successful orchestral performance:

“you have to listen to what people are doing and say if some, a clarinet were playing a solo and you’ve got one following straight afterwards you should be (.) able to em join onto that seamlessly or responsively. Rather than just being (.) looking after yourself and being me me me all the time and not taking any notice of what’s going on around you. Which does happen I have to say, there are certain people with that self interest that don’t uh care about anyone else but it doesn’t work it just doesn’t work”

(Kathryn)

Kathryn highlighted the importance of social awareness and coordination when playing within the orchestra. She explained how important she felt it was to establish and maintain a high level of mutual awareness between members of

the orchestra in order to blend together musically. She felt that it was important to put the aims of the orchestra first and have an awareness of the other members in order for the music to be performed to the required standard. Dobson and Gaunt (2013) discussed the importance of musical and social communication in performances and how these elements were both required to produce highly skilled orchestral performances and to exist successfully within the orchestra. Strong social and interpersonal skills were highlighted as being essential skills to orchestral work. The authors also reported that fitting in with the orchestra was crucial but that it was also essential to assert and retain individual identities (both musical and social). The main aspect that was emphasised in Dobson and Gaunt's (2013) work was to retain good social relationships within the orchestra. Kathryn's account strongly reinforces these points from Dobson and Gaunt's work, describing the crucial role that a conducive social environment and a focus on the collective, played in eliciting the highest quality performances. Membership and belonging were also important to Jenni:

"it's like understanding a special language"

(Jenni)

Jenni implied that there was a bond between the orchestra members that others may not understand, which demonstrated that being in an orchestra not only created cohesion amongst the members but could also mark them out from others. They were part of a special group and all shared a *"special language"*, giving them a sense of achievement that they alone could understand this

language. Jenni emphasised the communication between the players and how it was again something that could be described as mysterious and special.

Henry emphasised that this mutual awareness extended beyond the playing environment and indeed often amounted to establishing a real social 'bond' between members of the orchestra, which offered them both emotional and personal support:

"there would be quite a few people you feel close to and you can have a good laugh with them and you support each other and eh (.) it's it's difficult for somebody who's not part of that group to come in and be part of it.....it's quite a bond between people when they're they're on stage together and feeling nervous together and trying to produce a performance or something together and they go and have a drink afterwards together and have a laugh and a carry on and you know. An emotional kind of response and support to each other. So I think if you come as an outsider part of that it's very difficult to feel part of it."

(Henry)

Henry described the social support, membership, feeling of belonging and positive social aspects that being in an orchestra has provided to him, as he explained, not everyone was immediately included in this broader supportive social group. He stressed the multidimensional connections that occurred within the orchestra across both professional and personal spheres. Henry also expressed the importance of the close social life that the orchestral musicians had together and the emotional connections that existed between players. He also emphasised the importance of how these connections could not be taken for granted by new members and differentiated the existing orchestra members

from an “outsider” (those who do not belong to the orchestra). This highlighted the feelings of togetherness amongst those inside the group, emphasising his experiences of the strength of the group and its unity, separate from other social groups. Unity was further illustrated by Andrew in the extract below:

*“My point is with us is we have twelve of us have to sound like one
(.) you know?”*

(Andrew)

As a string player, Andrew felt it was essential to play absolutely together with his section for the expected repertoire of the orchestra. The language Andrew used in this extract showed the connection between the players within his section, as the words he used implied how important he felt it was that they communicated and performed as one. Kathryn enhanced this idea by describing the cohesiveness she feels when the orchestra performs and how she feels united through sound:

“you feel part of a homogeneous sound”

(Kathryn)

However, this also indicated a lack of individuality experienced by Kathryn, as she is unable to stand out from the other members of the orchestra as the nature of the music denotes this unity. Andrew then continued by saying what is expected of him from the orchestra and how he should be represented through sound alone:

"I'm never supposed to sound like an individual. I'm supposed to sound, you're not suppose to notice me it's just suppose to be a sound."

(Andrew)

Using the word "never" showed his sense of the consistent expectations of the orchestra and the required lack of individuality needed to perform the repertoire. He also stated that he should be represented as a sound, echoing the points made by Smith (2011) about classical music being written for instruments and not individuals. Andrew showed the conflict that can exist between individuality and the collective within the orchestra:

"there's room for individuality but (.) you know you have to work as a team as well. And that's what the symphony orchestra is."

(Andrew)

In the two aforementioned extracts, whilst Andrew said there is "room for individuality" in the orchestra, it was clear that his predominant feeling was that he was not supposed to be noticed. He was part of the team and emphasised how much he liked to fit into that team; demonstrating the positivity of membership. Andrew then went on to explain more about his need to feel membership and belonging in the orchestra:

"it goes back to the team thing. I wanted to feel part of something"

(Andrew)

"I didn't wanna do it as a freelancer I wanted to be doing it as a member. I wanted to feel that, feel valued like that."

(Andrew)

These extracts show the importance of membership and belonging for Andrew - being a member of the orchestra made Andrew feel valued and appreciated. It has been reported previously that the psychological impact of belonging to a music group is important for the members, as being socially accepted as a member of the team is a source of motivation for musicians (Pitts, 2013). Supporting the work of Pitts, the aforementioned extract showed Andrew's want for stability and social acceptance by being able to state that he is a member of an established group rather than a freelancer. However, Beth did not share the same views as Andrew:

"it doesn't matter if I'm there or if someone else is there."

(Beth)

In this quotation Beth emphasised how she does not feel personally important within the orchestra. Beth referred to herself as a *"rank and file"* player and felt unfulfilled in this role:

"what I do for a job I just I sit on a chair and (.) I don't say anything all day, I just you know I practice music and there's still like hierarchy's where you're not suppose you know you're not suppose to talk to the conductor. You know if you're a rank and file viola player you don't talk to the conductor or (.) there's a lot of sort of archaic stuff."

(Beth)

At the time of the interview Beth was leaving the orchestra to move into a new career. Perhaps her expression of her sense of being personally unnecessary in the orchestra was related to this situation – she had no reason to maintain an identification with her orchestra, therefore was not motivated to mark the

importance or value of her membership in this professional context. Beth introduced the notion that being a rank and file player was not a positive role to adopt due to the lack of individuality that occurs within this role. It emphasised the lack of freedom to communicate with the conductor and the values and hierarchies existing within the orchestral environment. This extract by Beth also showed a lack of autonomy and agency that she experienced because of her orchestral role. She felt undervalued as a “rank and file viola player” and expressed this as one of her reasons for leaving the orchestra. In contrast, Jack highlighted the positive elements of being a member of a professional orchestra:

“I suppose people want to make connections with each other and with you know it gives us a (.) feeling of being (.) sort of normal”

(Jack)

Jack stressed the importance of social acceptance and linked it to the concept of normality. Jack felt that being a musician allowed him to connect with other people and to become part of a group of individuals with common interests. The idea of being “normal” is important to Jack- he referred to “fitting in” throughout the interview and suggested that this feeling allowed him to make connections with others and, by having a shared identity, enabled Jack to feel at ease with himself. Jack’s account supported the findings of Brodsky (2006) who had previously reported why individuals wish to have a career as a professional orchestral musician. One of the reasons Brodsky claimed for motivating this choice were the social aspects of the career and the opportunity to share experiences with individuals with similar beliefs and attitudes, again reiterating the importance of fitting in and feeling a “normal” part of the group. Jack

discussed the emotional importance that “fitting in” had on him in psychological, physical and professional respects:

“when I say buzz I think that that can be something different. Em I’ve done concerts where everything’s come together. Where the conductor you just the orchestra and the conductor are completely unanimous and everything is working together. Everything’s playing the same way. It’s just everything (.) it just fits at that point in time and that hasn’t happened very often for me but when it has its been its been electric. It’s been an amazing experience. The concerts have been fantastic and that’s I suppose it’s a little bit like (.) when you when I was saying I am I feel I’ve done a great when I’m playing really well, everything’s great. It’s like that but it’s everybody’s like that, you feel that you’re part of a bigger thing that everybody’s at that time connected together……. That makes everything worthwhile, when that happens.”

(Jack)

A sense of unity with the group and connecting with the other players was not only an emotional response but also a physical one. This can be seen by his use of the word “buzz” to describe his reactions and the concept of group flow within this quote. Flow theory signifies a state of consciousness for an individual performance. However, group flow represents consciousness of an entire group, performing as a collective entity (Sawyer, 2006). In the aforementioned quote, Jack implied the synchronised state the musicians can encounter and how the performers can often anticipate how their fellow performers will act and react throughout the performance, showing the presence of group flow. This extract also emphasises the link between the conductor and the orchestra and how this is important for fitting together and experiencing this “buzz”. Jack stated that this does not always happen for him but when it does it has a real impact on him

personally as he reported how it *“makes everything worthwhile”*. Again echoing Brodsky (2006), and the importance of interpersonal relationships on why the musicians continue within the profession. This extract represented his own personal standards, uniting with others and the combination of the two elements is what is important to Jack, signifying the importance of cohesions between individual and group. Music is seen as a connection and a channel of communication between the orchestra members, as their main priority is the music:

“I sort of see it very much as eh eh eh as being a team player. Um (.) you know you’re part of a big a big group of people who are all aiming to the same end.”

(Jack)

“my part is to is to (.) fit in with the section and to particularly with the first horn eh listen to the first horn and try and match them in in in lots of ways.

(Jack)

“the orchestra is very much a team.... It’s just about being part of a (.) a team and eh (1) wanting to be as wanting it to be as good as it can be, for you know, for everybody”

(Jenni)

Jack and Jenni highlighted in the above extracts that music – the collective sound - is the main priority for the musicians. When Jack discussed *“fitting in”* with the first horn he implied how he gets most satisfaction from being able to coordinate and blend with another player. This often means there is a lack of personal expression and individuality for Jack, however, these features are less important

than the coordination and coming together. This is a further example of the importance of a shared identity within a section. This reflects the professional structure of the orchestra but opens up a certain potential conflict between fitting in – the shared identity – and the opportunities for expressing a level of autonomy and personal musical identity within the orchestra.

6.3.3 Summary

The second subordinate theme (The Collective) has demonstrated the collective reliance, membership and belonging that the musicians encounter with the orchestra. The musicians understood the process of deindividuation through the use of metaphors and saw collective identity through a positive lens. One exception was Beth, who did not enjoy the deindividuation that can occur within an orchestra as she was unfulfilled in her profession and was planning on leaving the orchestra. There are many positive psychological implications of being members of this highly specialised group of individuals, such as the feeling of normality and membership. These social processes have been highlighted as crucial in the process of self-definition and musical identity construction.

6.4 Discussion

This chapter has explored how the professional orchestral musicians constructed their musical identities in personal, social and professional settings and how they described their personal narratives (regarding career development) from childhood and adolescence. Central to this chapter is the overall impact of external influences and social relationships on musical identity

formation and development for the ten orchestral musicians. It is important to note that the musicians are forming professional orchestral identities throughout their adolescence and childhood due to the nature of the training they receive. A certain inevitability was implied by the musicians - they would become professional musicians due to the early immersion of classical music within their surrounding environments and the specialised training they received.

They are being trained at a young age for their future jobs because it is crucial this training starts at a young age for the individuals to acquire the technical skills necessary to gain a position within a professional orchestra. This shows how the role of 'Orchestral Musician' has been rooted since childhood and adolescence. All of the participants had been working towards becoming professional musicians most of their lives.

This subordinate theme was concerned with how the individuals initially began to form their identities as professional orchestral musicians and how external influences impacted on their musical identity formation - such as: interactions with family, friends and in the school environment, alongside internal characteristics. This theme highlighted the prominent impact the described external influences had on the musicians and how these influences shape later interest and choices. This subordinate theme also showed the imbalance there was in the expression of 'innate' musicality over external influences. However, these two aspects work together as a process of self-definition for the orchestral musicians. This theme also illuminated the centrality of classical music within the participants' processes of musical identity construction and how classical

music acted (and still acts) as a link and a form of identification between musician and family members/ teachers. These relationships could possibly be seen as an initial shared identity and could have been the starting point for the participants' needs for group identification (e.g. membership). Classical music could also be viewed as a way in which to establish commonality with others, such as; Alexander taking up the cello allowed him to identify with his father's profession.

Kathryn's responses throughout her interview illustrated how her current career disruptions and transitions affected her narrative of the formation of her musical identity. Additionally, Beth displayed how career transitions can alter perceptions of current orchestral roles; indicating a possible external locus of control over her professional choices in adolescence. The frustration that appeared within Kathryn's discourse could indicate the lack of control Kathryn felt over her career situation at the time of the research interview. External locus of control was also demonstrated by both Michael and Henry, who discussed the crucial influence that environment, school and parents have on musical identity construction. Michael and Henry also highlighted how the aforementioned influences affected their decisions to start their professional musical journeys. Although this was illustrated, the musicians also claimed agency over their professional career choice by showing the '*natural*' connection with their instruments and with classical music. By stating these internal characteristics (e.g. talent), the musicians were able to create a positive self-image and perceived confidence as a musician (Lamont, 2011), establishing their early foundations of their musical identities.

The second subordinate theme (The Collective) demonstrated the social nature of the orchestra and the importance this had on the musicians' musical identity construction. This security in feeling part of a collective could have stemmed from childhood experiences because their musical identities have been formed originally through social processes; with classical music being the foundation of these relationships. The musicians belonged to different subgroups within the orchestra, however, it was highlighted that deindividuation occurs within this professional environment. Deindividuation was discussed as a positive process for the musicians, except for Beth, who was planning on leaving the orchestra at the time of the interview. Throughout her interview, Beth positioned herself more as an observer commenting on the dynamics of the orchestra; indicating detachment from the other musicians and the orchestra overall.

'The Collective' explored the deindividuation process that occurs within an orchestra and was represented in the emergent theme "*The Army Of Ants*". By comparing the orchestra to groups of animals, represented images of the musicians working together with strength and flow (Sawyer, 2006). This implied a mystery in how the musicians connect and work together with minimal verbal communication. These comparisons illustrated group dynamics that can exist within an orchestra and in accordance with the findings of Parasuraman and Purhoit (2000) a submergence of one's identity was necessary to match the dynamics of the group. The animal comparisons also illuminated the emotional connection the members of the orchestra can have with each other but could also signified how the group may have to metaphorically fight against each other if the profession denoted it – similar to a group of animals.

This subordinate theme also outlined the importance of membership within the orchestra and the essentialness of *'fitting in'*. A commonality for all the participants was the importance of interpersonal relationships and membership within the orchestra. This emergent theme can be linked to the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which acknowledges the importance of social group membership for individuals. This theory outlines how individuals strive to maintain a positive collective identity in order to ensure membership within a particular group. The orchestral musicians in this particular study outlined the essentialness of membership on the performance of the musical repertoire. The majority of the ten musicians outlined the significance of cohesiveness within an orchestral setting and how belonging is important to the musician's sense of value. Dobson and Gaunt (2013) reported the necessity of having highly developed social and interpersonal skills to exist successfully within an orchestra. The authors emphasised the importance of retaining good social relationships within the orchestra, which is also supported by Chapter Six. It was outlined that membership is key in orchestral performance and gives a feeling of normality for the participants. This could be linked to the work of Brodsky (2006), who highlighted social aspects within an orchestra as one of the main reasons why musicians continue within this profession; despite all the struggles and challenges they can encounter. The importance of membership for the musicians could also have stemmed from childhood and adolescence, as Hallam (2013) outlined the importance of a collective as a key aspect in the formation of musical identities.

Dobson and Gaunt (2013) outlined how it is essential to assert and retain individual identities (both musical and social) within an orchestra. This current study acknowledges the importance of fitting in and membership within an orchestra. However, the difficulty of asserting and retaining individuality is highlighted, by discussing the deindividuation processes that take place within an orchestra. It is viewed that deindividuation is indeed crucial to *'fitting in'* and in order for the musicians to perform the repertoire to the required standard, individuality cannot be prominent because the musicians must work together as one unit.

This chapter supports how identity construction occurs through social situations and interactions (McIntosh, 2009; Hoffman, 2012). In addition, the responses to the interviews have shown how the process of constructing a musical identity involves both individual and social processes and relates back to key ideas and thoughts in reference to identity (Mead, 1934; Marcia, 1993; Walker & Lynn, 2013). The interviews demonstrated the importance of the collective musical identity established within the home and orchestra, alongside group dynamics and processes influencing the musicians' identity construction and development.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined musical identity construction for the ten professional orchestral musicians. The key points that can be extrapolated from this chapter are: the role of orchestral musician has been rooted since childhood for the ten

participants due to the nature and requirements of the classical music profession and the expectations placed upon them by teachers and parents. External influences are expressed as more persuasive than 'innate' characteristics on the musicians' decisions to become professional performers, showing the crucial impact of social processes on musical identity formation. Deindividuation occurs within the professional orchestra and is seen as principally a positive process, expressed and understood through metaphors. Belonging and group membership are crucial factors in the formation of musical identities in a professional context and a collective musical identity is apparent within an orchestral setting because the musicians shared priority is producing a collective sound. The following chapter (Chapter Seven) will outline the struggles and challenges the ten participants encountered because they are professional orchestral musicians.

Chapter Seven

Struggle: “*The Never Ending Quest*”

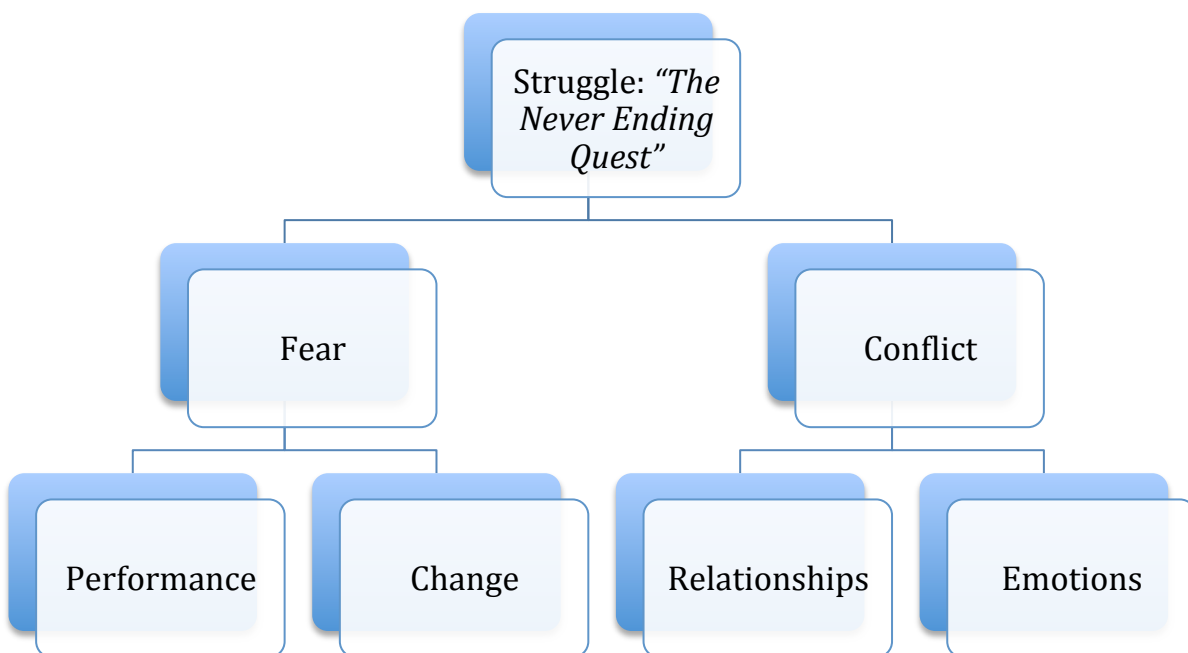
7.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explored the foundational elements of becoming an orchestral musician for the ten participants, demonstrating the influence social processes and ‘innate’ characteristics had on their musical identity construction. Chapter Seven discusses the second superordinate theme in this study. “*The Never Ending Quest*” was a phrase used by Michael in describing the challenges and struggles he encountered in numerous aspects of his life as a professional orchestral musician. By using this specific term, Michael emphasised the continuous struggle he encounters because of the profession and it signified his attempts to improve as a musician. Chapter Seven is concerned with the fear the musicians encounter (in performance and fear of change) and how they cope with this performance fear; by forming a Professional Performance Identity. The formation of this identity is a way of coping and ‘survival’ within this demanding profession. This chapter continues by highlighting the conflicting relationships (e.g. with classical music) and emotions (e.g. manufacturing emotions in performance) the musicians experience due to the centrality of ‘orchestral musician’ within their lives. The musicians explain how they are unable to ‘switch off’ from this specific identity; demonstrating the overall impact this identity has on other aspects of the individuals’ lives.

Two subordinate themes emerged from the data and are represented in Figure 7.1.

Figure 7.1

Superordinate, Subordinate and Emergent Themes (Chapter Seven)



(i) **Fear** represents the complex and often problematic relationships the musicians could have with their orchestras and with the audience, for example: fear of failure, not being good enough, and a discrepancy between how they think they are perceived and how they want to be perceived. This subordinate theme also demonstrates the opposing feelings of uncertainty and stability that often occur because the participants belong to an orchestra. These opposing feelings demonstrate how power relations exist between the musicians and their orchestra because the musicians often altered their behaviours to adhere to the

expectations of the orchestra and audience. For example, the musicians experience dissociation during performance (a form of detachment from the self, surroundings or activity) and form a Professional Performance Identity as a means of survival. This theme also shows the overall commitment and emphasis the individuals have placed on being professional orchestral musicians. They claim they are often unable to do any other jobs due to a lack of skills for other professions or through fear of embarking on a new pathway.

(ii) Conflict demonstrates the different roles the individuals adopt (e.g. performer and spectator). However, being a professional orchestral musician can cause conflict between these roles. The musicians prioritise the role of 'orchestral musician' over other roles within their lives, showing the consuming nature and central placement of this identity, and how it impacts other aspects of the participants' lives. This subordinate theme also demonstrates how the musicians place themselves in identity confirming situations to validate and enhance their roles as professional orchestral musicians (e.g. choosing to socialise with other orchestral musicians).

The two subordinate themes ('Fear' and 'Conflict') will now be explored and the struggles and challenges the professional orchestral musicians encounter are demonstrated.

7.2 Fear

This subordinate theme explores expectations, performance fears and fear of change. This theme demonstrates the lack of freedom and loss of agency the musicians can experience and their coping in regards to this. In order to cope, the musicians formed a Professional Performance Identity. The corresponding emergent themes ('Performance' and 'Change') will now be explored.

7.2.1 Performance

This section illustrates the fear of failure, not being "*good enough*" (Jack) and a discrepancy between how the musicians think they are perceived at certain times and how they want to be perceived: demonstrating the perceptions of themselves in the orchestra. This section relates to the idea of the expectations the musicians had of themselves and how these were influenced by the expectations they thought others had of them - as professional orchestral musicians. A person's self-evaluation is often based on social interactions and perceptions of how others view them rather than something more objective (Shrauger & Schoeneman, 1979). In this study the musicians' self-evaluations were clearly influenced by their perceptions of others in their environment. This was reflected in how they evaluated their performances and the insecurities they often expressed, such as their playing not being "*good enough*" (Jack). This section shows how the professional orchestral musicians form a Professional Performance Identity in order to overcome any performance fears and their coping is done on an individual level away from the collective of the orchestra.

Most of the musicians described the pressure and stress they felt in the orchestra, saying these feelings were because of the expectations others had of them and the expectations they placed upon themselves. In explaining these expectations, there was a striking lack of confidence and insecurity that was apparent throughout the interviews. For example, Michael described the insecurity and pressure he often felt from the audience and his fellow musicians when performing:

“there’s a certain (.) element of well (.) it’ll go wrong at some point and everyone will know (.) and that’s terrifying.”

(Michael)

Michael demonstrated the lack of confidence he encountered and his fears of what others might think of him. He described performing as “*terrifying*”, which was a strongly negative expression of one of the core aspects of his profession. This extract also suggested how Michael had low expectations of himself and his performing ability. For Michael, it was the anticipation of others’ evaluations of him as a player that created these feelings of self-doubt. Kathryn also shared her experience of this:

“Well because you’re (.) well you’re not playing (.) even if it’s not actually your own fault. I mean there’s lots, especially with the oboe and reed instruments, you’ve got this, the reed that can be. Which a different reed is a different reed, you know, it’s a piece of nature. So its not always your total responsibility that things aren’t going well but you come away and you think well I’ve, everyone’s heard that and they must think I can’t play very well anymore”

(Kathryn)

Kathryn highlighted the lack of agency and insecurity she experienced in the quality of her performance. The language she used indicated a separation between herself and her colleagues, using the word “they” signified a division between herself and other members of the orchestra. By changing her language, from the general term “you” to a more individualistic term, “I”, Kathryn moved from saying that any reed instrument player could experience difficulties, to suggesting that others would judge her as personally responsible for a poor performance and would no longer view her as a strong player. Using this language transition and differentiating oboe and other reed instruments from the rest of the orchestra, Kathryn separated herself from the collective identity she shared with the other musicians. This implied that Kathryn was experiencing an unstable situation and felt pressure on an individual level.

Although Kathryn was a highly trained professional orchestral musician, her lack of satisfaction with this performance impacted negatively on her experiences and the beliefs she had formed previously about herself. This example illustrated the process the musicians encountered in relation to their orchestral performances, as they aimed to meet the expectations others had of them and when they did not achieve this it impacted negatively on their self-beliefs. Nathan exemplified this point by illustrating the social pressures he felt if he made a mistake while performing, demonstrating the important role that audience expectations played in increasing performance pressures and how he felt he should be in control of the audiences’ experiences:

“Risk, fear (.) again fear, tension, pain (laughs). It’s a fear of em (.) I dunno. Failing I guess or (.) s sounding stupid or eh making a mistake. Which harks back to playing in the orchestra doesn’t it?”

Em, fear of playing something wrong in public and being laughed at and being thought badly of you know? Terrible isn't it? Yeah. It's awful though that we put ourselves through that."

(Nathan)

Using the word "we" Nathan expressed the shared feeling between the players, presenting the orchestra as a single unit. Nathan demonstrated how he took responsibility for these feelings and thought the musicians chose to enter environments where they risked having these experiences. Nathan questioned why he and his fellow musicians chose to encounter these challenges. Swann and Bosson (2010) believed that individuals choose to place themselves in certain situations that enable them to negotiate their identities (negotiation is an agentic process, shaped and anchored by social roles and through personal experiences). Swann and Bosson (2010) also highlighted how the 'survival' of individual's identities mainly lie in the hands of others. In relation to Nathan's aforementioned quote, this identity 'survival' being in others hands is outlined by Nathan showing how he placed himself in situations that could impact his professional identity and where he was vulnerable to mistakes in front of others, which could have negative repercussions; such as affecting his reputation as a musician. However, he placed himself in this situation in order to be able to retain his identity as a professional orchestral musician. This was furthered by Alexander:

"this mood of fighting against an overwhelming force. Maintaining your identity, your sense of your own value"

(Alexander)

The previous extract by Alexander showed the struggle orchestral musicians can encounter and stated an element of what is required to sustain a professional career in the classical music world. He implied that the musicians fight to feel valued and to maintain “*your identity*”. In claiming this Alexander created a link between playing in an orchestra with heroic and masculine identities. This echoes the readings by Wetherell and Edley (1999). By giving connotations of fighting, Alexander identified himself as having masculine traits within the orchestra such as: strength, toughness and boldness. This showed how Alexander positioned himself within the orchestra as a gendered being, and by using fighting metaphors he constructed himself as a masculine individual with heroic traits, that is “*fighting*” against the orchestra to maintain a feeling of significance. This showed the competitive nature of the profession and the orchestra, as it is an occupation in which individuals can experience deindividuation. They often encounter difficulties in being identified as an individual (Section 6.4.1). By stating they are “*fighting against an overwhelming force*” implied the power and strength of the orchestra and the struggle the orchestral musicians can experience due to this imbalance. This quote suggested the musicians must battle against the orchestra to maintain an “*identity*”, alongside their own significance and importance. The orchestral expectations were furthered by Nathan, who described how the musical repertoire he was asked to play, alongside some of the rituals of classical orchestral performances, could make him feel restricted and limited:

“I think there is a certain amount of restriction in in an orchestra. Em (.) I think partly to do with tradition. Like you know the idea of wearing the tails and the (.) which we’ve happily have got away from a little bit more. We do more sort of (.) black suit and long

ties as suppose to the tails and the dickey bow. It looks a little bit traditionalist and old fashioned."

(Nathan)

Nathan suggested the lack of opportunity to express his creativity and personal expressions. He described the expectations placed on him (e.g. to dress in a certain way) due to the standards of this musical genre and highlighted the expectations that exist due to the traditions of the classical music idiom. This echoed the work of Dobson (2010a), who outlined the negative impact that traditional views could have on orchestral musicians, such as stifling the musical production, by not allowing the musicians to express individual creativity, of what would otherwise be a captivating performance. Nathan stated how he hoped for a change:

"maybe it's (.) time for a bit more of a change em (.) to allow us a bit more (.) freedom to express yourself."

(Nathan)

Nathan felt these expectations placed a stress on him. However, in contrast Nathan also explained that when he was free to create his own music through improvisation this also made him nervous and he felt he was not able to do it properly:

"I don't improvise very well for example em just very very loosely on (.) but I'm not a far from being (.) I wouldn't really do it in public eh eh a jazz improvisation thing with a band you know? I would be embarrassed kind of stand up and oh right what note comes next? I think I prefer to have it written down."

(Nathan)

This illustrated the multiple stresses Nathan encountered in his musical life due to the classical musical genre and the musical training he has received. Although Nathan stated how he hoped for more creative freedom in his performance, when given the opportunity he lacked confidence, demonstrating a conflict between his expectations and reality. By saying he would “*prefer to have it written down*”, he indicated his commitment to and security within the traditions of classical music. Nathan described how he experienced these fears as intrusive thoughts whilst performing. He expressed how his perceptions of what others may think, influenced his own thoughts:

“they might think badly of you. They probably don’t but you your imagination I think is that and that would be nice to let go of.”

(Nathan)

Nathan reported how he could not let go of the feeling that others might have a negative view of him, perhaps because as a member of the orchestra he lacked individualised feedback from the audience or conductor. He wanted others to validate his performance but did not always achieve this due to the boundaries that exist between audience and orchestra members or between orchestral musicians and the conductor in the traditional classical orchestral setting. Beth demonstrated that stage fright is a common feeling for musicians:

“when I first got my job em I started getting panicky. Em I think everyone at some stage has had some kind of (.) stage fright to some extent. Em and for me it happened when I first got the job.”

(Beth)

By stating that this is a common feeling Beth may be justifying her feelings of fear, by placing it in general terms, but is still retaining her identity as a professional musician by claiming that this has a feeling that many musicians experience.

Throughout the interviews, the participants often described themselves as “*not good enough*” (Jack), claiming how they had not achieved their personal goals as professional orchestral musicians. Jack described an example of the level of musical skill he wished to achieve:

“I’ll sit in a chair and shut my eyes and think I’m doing a concert but and and I don’t think that’s really right I think this is probably more effective actually just sort of having a little day dream about being a great horn player so yeah (laughs) (maybe its just become a reality?) Ehhhhhh well no (both laugh). Not the way not the way I dream it no, I’m a really good at what I do (both laugh)”

(Jack)

Jack described a situation in which he reflected on what he aimed for as a professional French Horn player. Saying, this was a “*dream*” implied he thought it was an unrealistic goal to achieve and describing how he took time out of his day to dream about this scenario signified the important place it had in his mind. In addition, Jack reported detachment from his feelings and emotions while performing through the process of dissociation (a form of detachment from the self, surroundings or activity) (Herbert, 2011). The following extract demonstrates an example of dissociation from personal emotions during professional orchestral performances:

"You have to completely switch off emotionally cause you're performing, you're doing a job. You're not there to enjoy it."

(Jack)

This shows how Jack's orchestral role maintenance is an individual process influenced by external factors (such as the orchestra he belongs to). Jack also demonstrates that his musical abilities must be maintained in tandem with the orchestra he performs with. Jack showed the struggles, challenges and adaptation he often encounters. In order for the musicians to remain within the orchestra they have to adapt to their orchestral environment, meaning that the musicians adjust to new information and experiences throughout their professional experiences. Jack expressed the detachment he adopts within his performances by saying *"you have to switch off emotionally"* and *"I just had to focus"*, demonstrating how conscious he was of having to separate how he felt emotionally from what was expected of him. Henry echoed this further:

"I think you kind of have to almost be outside yourself and sit back a little bit (.) and try and maintain a certain amount of em (.) cool and sort of eh (.) em (.) not get too carried away physically. And I always find that that leads to a better sound. Produced sound. Now if you're too tense you know and too eh worked up. You can actually push the sound into an instrument rather than let it release, let the sound blossom (.) you know? It's just like having too much tension."

(Henry)

Henry described how music often distracts him from his job and to prevent this distraction happening he had to 'step back' from his emotional connection with the music. He also implied how a level of detachment was necessary in order to not feel any physical stresses and strains. The extracts from Jack and Henry demonstrated how the musicians formed a Professional Performance Identity by

detaching themselves from their personal feelings and emotions when engaged in a professional performance; since their main focus was performing the repertoire. A Professional Performance Identity allowed the musicians to view the performance through a professional lens and deter themselves from experiencing any emotions that may impact the performance in a negative way. The previous extracts illustrated how the musicians' behaviour potentially conflicted with their emotions and the musicians maintained agency in their professional performances; by not allowing these personal feelings to interfere. This highlights the pressures and struggles the musicians experienced during performances. Kathryn suggested the implications of this professional pressure:

"it can eat away at you in your head and and musicians have fallen off before and (.) had to stop because they (.) it it gets the better of them you know."

(Kathryn)

In saying *"eat away at you in your head"* signifies the internal conflict that the professional musicians can encounter. Andrew further demonstrated the pressure of performance:

"they're putting their life they're putting their career on the line every time they put the bow on the string"

(Andrew)

Andrew highlighted the demands and unstable nature of the profession. Given the instability of employment in this specific profession, he was aware that he and other musicians' livelihoods depended on their continued high standards in performance. Andrew did not express this as a personal reflection – he

consistently used *'they'* rather than *'I'* – although he played the violin himself, this could be because he did not want to admit how he himself had such doubts and worries. By switching from saying *"life"* to *"career"*, Andrew implied the strong connection between a musician's career and their whole life, and how the two are intrinsically connected. The way he chose to express the challenge of a musician's career – they are *"putting their career on the line every time they put the bow on the string"*, is very dramatic, and indeed the choice of words *"the bow on the string"* raises an image of a bow and arrow; alongside notions of survival and fighting. This echoes the previous points made by Wetherell and Edley (1999) about heroic masculine personas and imagery, in which they reported how men constructed a masculine version of themselves through their use of symbolic discourse; such as references to strength, boldness, winning challenges and toughness. By using the fighting metaphor, Andrew identified string players as having masculine connotations, which could signify the competition that exists within this particular section. This could also represent how Andrew detached himself from this experience, by using a metaphor and third person speech rather than a first person account.

This quote highlighted how developing a professional performance identity is crucial to the individuals so they can perform to the standard that is required of them. This identity enabled them to view their performance through a professional lens and step away from the personal implications of a bad performance. The formation of this identity was necessary to obtain emotional regulation within the performance environment because most of the musicians

reported how personal/emotional connections to the music could deter them from giving a sufficiently professional orchestral performance.

The formation of this identity introduced the idea of coping for the musicians and how they transformed negative emotions (e.g. anxiety) into positive processes (e.g. motivation). In order to maintain confidence in their playing, they must deploy control in their performance and this is achieved through practice. Practice and being musically prepared are seen as a way in which to exert agency. Kathryn highlighted the importance of practice:

“You can only do what you can do, keep keep yourself in practice”

(Kathryn)

Jack further demonstrated an example of this:

“It was a bit limiting in that em the parts that I had to play weren’t really very challenging and I discovered that was a real danger that eh I could let my (.) own personal standard drop down and down and still manage to play these parts regularly. And I thought this is this is eh this is a dangerous situation to be in because something’s gonna come along and where I have to sit up I have to play something really hard and I’m not going to be able to do it. Or it’s going to be much harder to to get there.”

(Jack)

Jack outlined the necessity of challenge and by explaining what he needed to do to “*get there*” he indicated how he viewed being a musician as a journey. This journey could be symbolic for Jack, suggesting he was on a journey to becoming an outstanding musician. This also illustrated Jack’s self-awareness and understanding of the competition and struggles he could encounter, alongside

the professional goals he hoped to achieve. Exerting agency over the music he may be asked to perform enabled Jack to maintain a stable view of himself as a professional orchestral musician. Jack discussed the challenge he felt in attempting to maintain his playing to the required level:

“a constant battle really to to maintain a standard where I felt comfortable that I could play everything that would be coming up.”

(Jack)

In this extract Jack illustrated the importance of establishing confidence and comfort he felt was needed for his playing. By using the words “*constant battle*” he implied he was continuously involved in a fight and struggle in his playing. Jack linked together a sense of comfort with his own agency in this extract, suggesting that in order for him to perform effectively in the orchestra, he had to have a sense of comfort. In the following extract Jack further developed the idea of his “*constant battle*” by discussing the panic attacks he had experienced previously and how these affected him and his performances:

“I do know that I wanted to run off the stage and I but I’m very pleased that I didn’t because just something told me if that I if I went it I would probably really not be able to come back. It was like a sort of line getting up to this line and if I crossed that line it’s pretty much game over. I felt it would pretty much be game over it would be almost I didn’t wouldn’t see I wouldn’t be able to come back from it.”

(Jack)

Jack demonstrated how he experienced dissociation (detachment from immediate surroundings), which is a common defence mechanism used to escape anxiety and stress. He experienced a discrepancy between a

representation of himself and his ideal self (i.e. as not performing to the standard that he wanted) and this caused him emotional discomfort. Jack approached this subject by describing it as a game or a race, highlighting the competitive nature of the profession. Perhaps by describing it as a game he could give the competitive career some playful connotations in a way that could be perceived as a method of coping with his stress. Throughout this panic attack, he described his thought processes and was able to reason the consequences of his actions. In stating that he *“wouldn't be able to come back from it”* perhaps Jack meant this action would not just make a significant change in his career but also have a crucial impact on how he perceived himself as a musician.

Jack further explained his panic attack and continued with the subject of dissociation. He spoke of the potential loss he could have encountered if he had left the stage at that point. This extract showed the multiple selves (personal and professional) Jack was juggling, how they interacted with each other and how professional 'orchestral musician' became the most salient identity in times of stress and anxiety:

“I survived another day and so I I sort of I do eh eh I'm quite I feel quite em proud isn't quite the right word but quite pleased that I am able to s have sort of survived this long.”

(Jack)

Jack's dialogue showed how he approached the profession in an unstable and insecure manner and likened being in an orchestra to an incessant battle. This showed how Jack felt about constantly completing tasks in order to maintain his place within the orchestra. This quote represents the orchestra as something

that challenges him, highlighting this challenge as an ongoing process. In stating “I” Jack showed that this attempt to survive is an individualistic process, and the aforementioned extract also demonstrated how he achieved personal satisfaction over this process by using the word “*pleased*”. However, in saying “*sort of*”, this showed a lack of confidence in his language and that Jack hasn’t truly “*survived*” this experience, signified by some afterthoughts. After Angela described a traumatic event that she encountered and how she still managed to continue with her work she stated:

“I dunno how I managed to do it all”

(Angela)

Angela also demonstrated afterthoughts and uncertainty from this experience, similar to Jack, by stating “*I dunno*”. The following extract shows how success in performance is crucially important to the musicians, as Michael described the severity of his performance fears:

*“But again it’s never the whole concert hasn’t flopped luckily.
Otherwise you would go and kill yourself (laughs)”*

(Michael)

Michael presented the consequences of a poor performance (not in a literal sense), nevertheless emphasising how badly he felt about potential mistakes. By saying “*luckily*” Michael implied he didn’t feel fully in control of how well the performance went - this could be an example of external locus of control. Although this appeared to be a negative reflection from Michael, fear and protection motivations (coping responses) have been linked previously (Maddux & Rogers, 1983). It has been shown how fear encourages individuals to become

motivated to protect themselves and alter their behaviours, depending on the fearful experience they encounter. This is also linked to the idea of survival, highlighted by Andrew earlier in this chapter, suggesting that individuals must gratify certain psychological needs such as identity related goals (e.g. being a skilled performer) to achieve a coherent sense of self (Swann & Bosson, 2010). If these processes are disturbed then intrusive thoughts and psychological incoherence can occur. This suggested that the musicians' embedded identity (i.e. the identity rooted in an individual since childhood and adolescence) (Walker & Lynn, 2013) had been threatened because the musicians base their sense of self on being an orchestral musician. If this is jeopardised it appears to be a dangerous situation because it is an identity that so underpins their lives.

The aforementioned quote by Michael also demonstrated the fears associated with potential social shame from a poor performance. Similar to Kathryn, whilst there appeared to be support from other players in the orchestra, when the musicians experienced fear and insecurity, it was something that was experienced in a very individualistic way by the players. Coping with these struggles appeared to be something each individual felt they had to manage alone away from the collective:

"everybody has to find their own way to survive"

(Andrew)

This seemed to make them more prone to unstable and negative self-beliefs, such as not being *"good enough"* (Jack). To survive within this environment the musicians altered their ways of thinking. They had to adapt in order to maintain

their careers as orchestral musicians, such as the formation of a professional performance identity.

The next section demonstrates another aspect of fear and apprehension encountered by the musicians. This description of fear of change exists in terms of changing career because the musicians have gone so far in this specific career direction that they often feel unable to do anything else.

7.2.2 Change

In this section the musicians described the fear they encountered in thinking about changing their career path or if they found themselves unable to perform or play their instruments. The musicians expressed a sense of feeling trapped and expressed that they had come so far in this vocational journey changing direction would be difficult. This feeling was based on perceived and expected experiences not necessarily actual experiences. In the extract below, Andrew described how he is frightened to stop playing the violin and often has to make himself “stop” before he caused any injuries to himself:

“I’ll tell you one thing if we’re going to be completely honest. Sometimes I’m frightened to stop. Sometimes (.) I make myself stop playing the violin sometimes and I deliberately had last week off cause I think it’s important.... You have to stop sometimes. You just because otherwise otherwise it’ll make you stop you know.”

(Andrew)

Andrew showed how he took control of playing the violin before it took control of him. He continued to describe his intense relationship with the violin and the

emotional pain he would feel if he couldn't play the violin anymore. Andrew continued this idea by saying:

"it would be awful. I mean make no mistake, if I couldn't play the violin again it would be absolutely awful and it would be agony and it would be like a stake through my heart turning everyday. But I would like to think it wouldn't be life threatening."

(Andrew)

The two aforementioned extracts represented the intense relationship Andrew had with his violin. He described the struggle he encountered because he played the violin in an intense manner and also reported the loss and pain he would feel if he could no longer play the violin. This demonstrated the potential impact of being unable to perform would have on him, whilst also giving insight into the significant impact performing already had on him; showing the conflicting position that playing the violin has in his life. Beth emphasised this point further as she described why she believed musicians don't change their careers - either because they don't think they could do anything else or because they are scared to change their career path:

"a lot of people are scared I think to em (.) it's to do with if you've done it for this long it's too scared to change and em what if I don't get another job? Or like the fear of the unknown?"

(Beth)

Beth spoke in a very detached manner in this extract, perhaps because at the time of the interview she was planning on leaving the orchestra rather than talking hypothetically as the others had done. She claimed that most musicians had committed to this role for so long because they were unsure of what else

they could do professionally. She stressed their fears about not finding another career or leaping into the dark – perhaps described in the third person because she had already moved beyond this stage herself and had made the decision to leap. The sense of reluctance to change was also echoed by Kathryn:

“I think because it’s such a what’s the word? A skill that (.) is (.) limited being a musician just the instrument and you don’t have. I mean if I were to try and get another job in music, it’s so impossible probably for me at my age. But to get another job elsewhere doing something else, I don’t have any skills in an office eh (.) computer skills (.) managing teams, anything like that so I you know, cause you just deal with your own thing, you sit behind your music stand and you play your notes”

(Kathryn)

The musicians implied that being a musician was an essential part of who they are and they have not acquired additional skills, therefore, feel they couldn’t do anything else. They reported an emotional, social and personal involvement in this vocation and in addition felt that because of their age (the participants ranged in age from 32 to 65) it would be too late to change careers. Michael also stated how he didn’t think he could do anything else:

“I can’t imagine suddenly changing careers and have that depth of understanding in anything else. Um (.) even if I wanted to (.) eh yeah, I’ve just gone too far in this direction”

(Michael)

This extract again highlighted the representation of becoming and being a musician as ‘a journey’. This was linked to Michael’s interpretation of going in a certain direction, as though he is on a pathway to a destination. Michael felt in control of the vocation he was in and (due to his extensive knowledge of that

vocation) he felt if he entered into another career he wouldn't have as much knowledge and control as he does in his current profession. Beth described why some may find it difficult to leave the professional orchestra:

"it's just something that has ended up being engrained from like an early age"

(Beth)

Beth signifies the crucial placement that this profession has had on her since adolescence, demonstrating her intense relationship with the orchestra. Similarly, Jenni stated:

"I'm too old to completely embark on a new career"

(Jenni)

Jenni indicated age as an issue as to why she could not undertake another professional role. Andrew furthered this idea and demonstrated how individuals could sometimes become reliant on the orchestra:

"I'd never want to feel dependent on somebody else again. Cause I've come this far and (.) I don't want to be frightened anymore. Em my mother always used to say one of the worst places to be in life is out of control. Em (.) but then sometimes you know I don't know. I can never work out, going back to the insecurity thing (.) all sorts of people you see some people can't survive without the orchestra and maybe I'm one I dunno. I dunno, I genuinely don't know."

(Andrew)

Andrew described how some people cannot "survive" without the orchestra. He reflected upon whether or not he was also like this. This raised the question of

why some individuals felt they could not survive without the orchestra. Andrew's sense of self had been built upon his relationships within the orchestra (that had previously confirmed his views of himself) as he had often encountered validation from the orchestra. Andrew spoke of his relationship with the orchestra:

"I've given the orchestra a lot but the orchestra's given me a lot and the orchestra. I think if you treat the orchestra right the orchestra will look after you. I mean you my mum died well both my parents have died, my first child died em you know I'm separated and (.) if you the orchestra will look after you. And it's a constant you know."

(Andrew)

In this extract, Andrew described his relationship with the orchestra, giving the orchestra human characteristics as though there was an intimate relationship between the orchestra and Andrew. The orchestra signified stability and since it was a constant, it helped him cope with major losses in his life. Nathan used the metaphor below to describe why he continued being an orchestral musician after having experienced stress and anxiety in the profession:

"going through a tunnel (.) you start at the beginning. It's kind of like holding your breath like you know did you ever do the thing (yeah) hold your breath going through the Clyde Tunnel? It's kind of a bit, maybe it's not like this but it's it's it just comes to mind so I'll say it anyway. It's eh you know you begin at A and you know (.) C or D or Z or whatever it is is is at the other side of the tunnel. And you you go for it and you once there's no there's no turning back or no stopping you know you have to go to the end. You know you have to get to the Z em (.) otherwise you'll die kind of thing. You you'll run out of air."

(Nathan)

The above metaphor demonstrated how Nathan expressed his professional journey as a musician. Demonstrating the competitive and challenging nature of the profession and once starting on this journey there was no turning back. Some felt they couldn't survive without the orchestra due to the centrality of 'orchestral musician' in their lives and because they had invested so much into this vocation they would find it difficult to see a way out of it. However, the musicians were unable to feel a sense of stability in their career due to the insecure nature of most employment in the orchestral environment.

7.2.3 Summary

This subordinate theme illustrated the fear (of performance and fear of change) the musicians experienced within the profession and the adaptation they had to make in order to maintain their professional musical identities. The fear of failure, expectations placed upon them (by the orchestra and themselves) and the lack of stability in performance were outlined. In reaction to these unstable experiences, the musicians detached themselves from situations and formed a professional performance identity in an attempt to regain a stable sense of self. Social pressures, how they often feel restricted within the orchestra and a discrepancy between how they think they are perceived and how they want to be perceived were outlined. This theme also showed that the musicians felt it was often too late for them to embark on a new career path, due to various reasons such as; not being skilled at anything else, reliance on the orchestra and having

gone too far within the classical music profession to then change their career direction.

7.3 Conflict

This subordinate theme is concerned with the centrality of 'orchestral musician' and the impact this has in other aspects on the musicians' lives (e.g. social relationships). The musicians prioritise 'orchestral musician' over other identities (e.g. personal) and are unable to detach from this role even if they want to. The negative impact this professional identity has on relationships (with classical music and interpersonal relationships) will be outlined. This subordinate theme then continues by demonstrating the emotional conflict the musicians encounter (within the orchestra and in their personal lives), due to the salient placement of 'professional orchestral musician' within the participants lives.

7.3.1 Relationships

This subordinate theme outlines the impact that being a professional orchestral musician has on other aspects of the musicians' lives for example, being a professional performer negatively impacts on being a spectator at a classical music concert. This section continues by investigating the influence that being a professional orchestral musician has on the individuals' personal and social relationships. The musicians have a strong connection with classical music that was formed in childhood and adolescence and they enjoyed listening to it. However, they often found it difficult to listen to classical music outside a work

context. For example, Jack described his complicated relationship with classical music:

"I wouldn't say that I have sort of listened to classical music that much for pleasure now. But eh it's what gives me the most ultimately the most pleasure really, yeah classical music. A piece of music a a really fantastic piece of classical music would probably give me the most pleasure to listen to. Although I hate going to concerts, never never liked it. I get quite twitchy."

(Jack)

Although he reported classical music as giving him the most pleasure and he enjoyed listening to it, he did not enjoy seeing it performed live when he was not part of the orchestra. This might be seen as an example of a conflict between personal enjoyment and a professional identity as an orchestral musician. Whilst he was clear about having personal commitment and passion for the music, his personal feelings about the music were complicated by his professional identity as an orchestral musician. Jack appeared not to be able to remove his professional identity from his personal identity as a music fan. He felt uncomfortable being a spectator because he did not have any control over what was happening on stage. Angela further explained a conflicting relationship with classical music and how she no longer felt that listening to classical music was a hobby because by being trained as an orchestral musician, she was unable to listen to it without viewing it through a professional lens:

"the problem is that listening to it, you listen to it too well actually cause I've been so well trained at college and then over the years you listen for your own part, you listen for something being out of tune or not together. You can't help it in a way that spoils it, it does spoil it"

(Angela)

This extract by Angela also illustrated how the entrenched aspects of her musical identity (e.g. professional musical training) can negatively influence her daily activities, because being a professional musician “spoils” her enjoyment of listening to music. Beth (who was going to be leaving the orchestra) also discussed how she thought she would feel towards watching live classical music when she would no longer be a professional performing musician:

“I think (.) I’ll really enjoy (.) you know paying to go and see a concert and get the pleasure out of it you know cause all em (.) all I’ve done is just (.) play the notes.”

(Beth)

She reported her performing as ‘*just playing the notes*’, which implied a lack of emotional connection with the music during performances. This represented the impact Beth felt a career transition would have on her view, and her relationship with classical music. It also showed how Beth would change her relationship with the music after she stopped performing professionally, whilst not leaving classical music behind as it has made a crucial impact on who she is and she could not disregard this, implying the deep connection that Beth has with classical music. This depth of connection was echoed by Michael, who described music as a constant he would sometimes like to detach himself from:

“sometimes I want to switch off from it you know? I want to do something else, obviously but but you know it’s there through a large part of everyday”

(Michael)

These extracts showed the core placement of classical music within Michael’s life and how he was unable to “switch off” from music while attempting to do daily

activities, demonstrating the consuming nature of music to him. This also implied a struggle for Michael, he wanted to separate from classical music, but felt unable to do this.

The next part of this section outlines the conflicts the musicians had encountered between their musical lives and their personal and social relationships. Kathryn described how being a professional orchestral musician restricted her socially and she was often unable to achieve a healthy work-life balance, showing the central role of orchestral musician in her life and the impact this had on other aspects of her life:

“Limiting (.) because you don’t see people out with (.) and the hours that we work are not sociable (.). Cause we’re working when people are going out to see things so we’re working in the evening. So you do tend to only really have mainly (.) orchestral musicians as friends (coughs). And probably the only people that would talk to you, probably everyone else would find it boring (laughs). I dunno (.) yeah I mean that is it is quite restricting.”

(Kathryn)

Kathryn suggested that orchestral musicians tend to socialise mainly with other orchestral musicians. She explained this as being the result of the musicians having a lack of time to socialise when others are free, due to the demands of the profession. In this extract Kathryn also highlighted how others might choose not to spend time with her because she was an orchestral musician (*“everyone else would find it boring”*). However, Beth gave other reasons for this:

“some of the people in the orchestra really (.) live in a bubble. Em but they never need to get out of that bubble cause they only talk to each other and other people who are musicians.”

(Beth)

Beth thought musicians *chose* only to socialise with people who were musicians, rather than others avoidance through lack of time. Making such a choice could be due to the musicians giving selective attention to relationships within the orchestra as they are attempting to construct ‘identity confirming situations’. Identity confirming situations are when an individual surrounds themselves with people who confirm and enhance specific roles (Swann & Read, 1981) – in this case, being a professional orchestral musician. Relationships with similar individuals ensure the musicians maintain a consistent identity, since they are surrounded by individuals who confirm and enhance their musical roles. For others, personal relationships can be problematic:

“I’m very lucky in the sense that this is a daft thing to say I’m very lucky cause I live on me own. Em it’s more complicated. I was married for twelve years and that is more complicated trying to fit in two children, a wife or husband or whatever.”

(Andrew)

Andrew described living on his own as “*lucky*”. He felt this gave him more freedom to focus on his career and he could give his full attention to being a professional orchestral musician. The following extract shows how the musicians viewed their own personal relationships and the surrounding relationships within the orchestra:

“some people are married to non musicians. Em it’s rare, most people marry somebody or live with somebody that at least

understands it. You need to understand it cause of the lifestyle and the practice and the obsession and the insecurity.”

(Andrew)

This extract echoed Kathryn’s dialogue previously mentioned in this section, regarding the restrictions the profession can have in a social sense. The musicians placed themselves in identity confirming situations by choosing to marry others who understand their lifestyle and the profession; showing the impact and centrality of ‘professional orchestral musician’ on personal relationships. Andrew demonstrated the central placement of this role within his life:

“I would say that em if you chop my head off it just says (named the orchestra that he belongs to) all the way through like a stick of rock. So I’ve grown to love it.”

(Andrew)

In the above extract, Andrew expressed how he felt about belonging to an orchestra making it central to who he is. By comparing himself to a stick of rock (with writing inside stating where it has been produced), showed how he felt the orchestra was what defined him - giving him a sense of place and belonging. Saying he has “*grown to love*” the orchestra, indicated a progression in his relationship with the orchestra; it implied that he did not love it previously. These two statements are contradictory and indicate that Andrew did not have a choice but to “*love*” the orchestra because it essentially created who he is, which relates back to the foundational elements of musical identities (discussed in detail in Chapter Six). Michael, showed that being a musician was overtaking his life, further demonstrating this overall consumption:

“Often I wake up and I’m thinking about (.) I think pretty soon after I wake up about something I’m playing. Something (.) either something that’s worrying me a bit or something that’s I’m excited about that’s going to happen. Eh (.) usually when I’m brushing my teeth there’s some aspect of of it is going through my head you know? Its its and my wife would probably say I’m a bit too obsessed with it (.) you know I’m sure that’s a criticism of a lot of musicians. I mean she’s a musician too but she manages to be a bit a bit less obsessed by it but eh (.) Eh (.) yeah its pretty much all consuming.”

(Michael)

Michael demonstrated how being an orchestral musician is a consuming process because when he is conducting daily activities he is thinking about something to do with playing the cello. He placed this in general terms so not to feel alone in this process. He also mentioned how his wife felt about his obsession and how she was able to not be “*obsessed*”. Implying he had no choice in regards to these thought processes, as he is not able to ‘*manage*’ his feelings. Michael illustrated this further with a virus analogy:

“it’s a bug that once you get it you get a bit em obsessed with it or you’re obsessed with learning more about it.”

(Michael)

Michael described becoming an orchestral musician as similar to catching a virus. It is as though there is no way to avoid it without medicated help and this could be a symbol of a loss of agency; due to the obsession occurring alongside Michael’s relationship with classical music. By describing this consuming process, it could imply an unhealthy relationship with their careers as orchestral

musicians for some of the participants. Andrew and Beth also described the overwhelming nature and obsession of the profession:

"it's not a career choice it's a lifestyle choice."

(Andrew)

"it is more than a job"

(Beth)

Andrew and Beth demonstrated how in choosing a career as a musician, one must accept the consuming role of 'orchestral musician' in order to become successful within this domain. These extracts showed the absorbed experiences the musicians encountered. Previous research investigated how social ties shape identity salience (Walker & Lynn, 2013). In stating that it becomes a *"lifestyle"*, the musicians are restructuring their social worlds and personal views in order to surround themselves with identity confirming statements. Demonstrating that the musicians alter their behaviours in order to prioritise being an orchestral musician. Stryker (1987) stated that identities generating positive feelings will be focused on more and will move up in the identity salience hierarchy, meaning these identities will be prioritised over other existing identities. Identities causing negative feelings are less likely to be focused on and will move down the salience hierarchy (Stets, 2005). It has been previously stated that for professional performing musicians a musical identity is expected to be central to the musician's sense of self (Madiot, 1996). However, there has been no research demonstrating an all consuming and entrenched musical identity that dominates the individual's multiple identities. In reference to this study, Michael showed the prominent placement of orchestral musician within his daily life:

"I just cant seen anything else being such a (.) a central part of my life really"

(Michael)

This section has demonstrated the impact the role of orchestral musician can have on all other aspects of the musician's lives, often causing conflict due to the salient placement of professional orchestral musician. The next section will focus on the conflicting emotional messages the musicians can experience within the orchestra. It outlines the lack of emotional freedom the musicians can experience due to their professional roles and how they prioritise the profession over their physical health and personal emotions.

7.3.2 Emotions

This section represents the emotional conflict the musicians encountered such as: manufacturing feelings for a performance, choosing emotional connections over physical health, and how they attempt to regulate their emotions because of the emotional struggles they experienced in their professional roles; highlighting the lack of emotional freedom the musicians can encounter. Jenni explained, if she was having some personal difficulties it could affect her performance, however, the orchestral performance must be the priority:

"I suppose just if you're having a particularly hard time and (.) it can it can affect your performance and you can't sort of say oh well I don't feel great or go and have a cup of coffee or a walk round the park and I'll come back later (laughs) it's got to be very it's very very concentrated and focused."

(Jenni)

Jenni explained the lack of emotional freedom she experienced in the orchestra. She implied if she was experiencing any personal difficulties these could not be her priority due to the “concentrated” nature of the orchestra; signifying a possible lack of emotional freedom. Alexander furthered how this focus is required in the orchestra and a lack of emotional freedom can be experienced. This was represented by stating how he had to fabricate feelings that were demanded from him by the musical repertoire and from the conductor in front of him:

“If a conductor is telling us to play with (.) with a sense of freedom or a sense of torture and struggle then you know I’ve got to engage myself with that. But you know playing music everyday of your life I’m not quite sure realistically how much you can really do that to a large extent”

(Alexander)

In these quotes Alexander explained how the musicians were asked to project emotions beyond those they genuinely felt in a performance. He suggested he had to produce emotions on demand according to the conductor’s interpretation of the musical repertoire. Although the musicians encountered a level of conflict between their own emotions and those they had to display (through their playing) they still persevered with their career and conformed to what was required of them. When they were asked why they continued in this profession they answered with responses such as:

“because we love doing it because it gives you satisfaction, a challenge and you get the adrenaline rush (.) yeah. I guess that’s it. I don’t know what do you do it for? (.) Cause it can be horrible at times, you know, if you don’t get (.) the right note or a note

squeaks, bumps, then you feel dreadful for days afterwards, I dunno. But eh the highs sort of well knock that out."

(Kathryn)

Kathryn spoke of her emotional attachment and love of being a musician, despite the psychological and physical impact being a professional orchestral musician had on her. In this extract, Kathryn described the negative experiences a musician could encounter, such as playing the wrong notes or playing poorly. However, she also described the ways in which the highs could "knock that out", and in saying this she conjured up the sense of an internal battle she had encountered, suggesting a fight and a struggle. Jenni described another emotional struggle she encountered within the orchestra when she experienced difficult times in her personal life:

"I know if any if you've had a sort of hard emotional experience when when my father died and I had to come in and play music, that was really (.) hard because eh (1) it sort of just brings up this sort of emotions bubble up when you're trying to concentrate and play and do your job (.) at the same time. So I know (.) eh everybody that's had any relative that's died the hardest thing is to come in and play music"

(Jenni)

In discussing the death of her father, Jenni demonstrated the very strong emotional connection she had with her music and how the music she played linked Jenni to her loved ones and to her personal relationships. However, although she had experienced loss (which impacted on her playing) she was still continuing with her job and giving music a prominent place within her life.

This section continues by exploring the physical restrictions the musicians encountered and the emotional conflict this often caused. Jack described the physical problems he had previously with his instrument:

"I discovered that I had developed a an allergy to the nickel on the mouthpiece. So every time I put the things on my face it it everything would just sort of seize up and all my muscles would become so sore and I couldn't couldn't produce notes and everything was this effort, terrible. And I struggled and I struggled and I struggled and I tried everything."

(Jack)

This extract from Jack signified a struggle between physical feelings (e.g. being allergic to the mouthpiece) and psychological wants (e.g. wanting to play the French Horn). This showed the emotional connection Jack had to the French Horn and his determination to continue playing despite the physical struggle he went through. Showing how his priority was playing the French Horn, which was prioritised over his physical experiences. Jack spoke of other struggles throughout the interview:

"ironically I I've never liked loud noises. Which can be slightly unfortunate because considering I wanted to be a musician."

(Jack)

Jack felt he had to go through these struggles in order to become a professional musician. He committed to becoming a musician even though he experienced these physical difficulties. This showed the essential role that becoming and being a professional orchestral musician played in Jack's life and the importance of emotional connections over physical feelings. He resisted taking beta-blockers

to overcome his panic attacks, since he said he would rather experience physical discomfort than be emotionally disconnected from the music he was playing:

"I would rather have panic attacks than to be dislocated from what I'm doing"

(Jack)

Jack would rather have physical discomfort than be disconnected from the orchestra. There may also be an element of Jack disguising his difficulties from his colleagues in the orchestra, in line with the findings of Zaza *et al.* (1998) who found that musicians feared the way in which their colleagues would respond to them if they were diagnosed with having a disorder.

This section has demonstrated the lack of emotional freedom the musicians can experience within the orchestra. It also showed how the musicians prioritise the profession over their physical health and personal emotions, signifying the fundamental placement of 'orchestral musician' within the individual's lives.

7.3.3 Summary

This subordinate theme has shown the crucial role of 'orchestral musician' within the participants' lives. The musicians' relationships, emotions, physical restrictions and lack of freedom are all elements that demonstrated the salient and fundamental placement of 'orchestral musician' and how this impacts other aspects of the musicians' lives.

7.4 Discussion

Chapter Seven presented two subordinate themes: Fear and Conflict. Fear represented the musicians' fear of failure within the performance environment and the discrepancy between how they think they are perceived and how they want to be perceived. This subordinate theme outlined the expectations the professional musicians have of themselves and the anticipations placed upon them by others. 'Fear' also outlined the discrepancy between the ideal representations of themselves as musicians and real life self-perceptions. Westby (1960) found that orchestral musicians have "*an idealised self-image as a gifted and highly skilled artist*" and this image has been constructed at a young age. If the musicians do not achieve this "*idealised self image*" in performance it can negatively impact their self-evaluations.

Insecurities were expressed throughout the interviews by explaining individual self-evaluations and the perceptions others may have of them within the performance environment. To overcome these insecurities, the musicians formed a 'professional performance identity' and experienced dissociation from performance. This is a form of protection motivation when the individuals are experiencing fear (Stets, 2005) – it can also be seen as a form of survival. This dissociation was expressed through the descriptions of detachment throughout performance and speaking in third person accounts. The descriptions of fearful experiences in performance also represented that when the individuals experienced fear this was done on an individual level – separated from the collective identity (outlined in Chapter Six). The formation of a professional performance identity was an attempt to overcome fear but also to retain a stable

identity as a professional musician. Additionally, showing the power imbalance that exists between musicians and the orchestra, and how the musicians adapted to the orchestral environment. Previously, Kenny *et al.* (2014) highlighted how players are unprepared for the demands (both psychological and physical) placed upon them when entering a professional orchestra. This subordinate theme supported the findings of Kenny *et al.*, demonstrating the identity related goals (being a skilled performer) the musicians work towards despite the demands placed upon them. Most of the musicians also outlined the restrictions they encountered within their orchestras. They often felt constrained due to the classical music genre and expectations placed upon them by audience members because they belong to this specific idiom.

This subordinate theme (Fear) continued by describing how the musicians fear change within their lives. Westby (1960) reported how orchestral musicians had not been encouraged to consider or experience other occupations during adolescence, as they were intensely practising and focused on a career in music. Similarly, Levine and Levine (1996) reported discontent in the workplace and highlighted the disadvantage of this commitment; as the musicians do not have the skills to switch to another profession. This study supports the findings by Westby (1960) and Levine and Levine (1996). However, the musicians' emotional connections with the profession should not be neglected as a reason to why the musicians continue within this specific profession. This thesis described how the musicians often become reliant on this unique vocation, demonstrating the emotional investment the professional musicians have towards their profession.

Chapter Seven continued by outlining the conflicts the musicians encountered due to their professional roles. This subordinate theme consisted of two emergent themes: Relationships and Emotions. 'Relationships' represented the negative impact being a professional orchestral musician can have on relationships, such as: the musicians' contradictory relationships with classical music. The conflict between personal enjoyment and professional identity was outlined, as the musicians were unable to stop viewing personal enjoyment through a professional lens. The consuming nature of the profession was highlighted and social restrictions (e.g. not having time with others who were not orchestral musicians) were outlined. However, it is suggested that the musicians placed themselves in identity confirming situations (e.g. socialising with other professional orchestral musicians) to help the musicians retain a consistent identity as a professional musician. The musicians expressed the '*obsession*' that was often required to become successful within this domain and expressed the centrality of 'orchestral musician' within their lives. Although, they sometimes expressed how they did not have a choice in this matter and they had "*grown to love it*" (Andrew). However, Stets (2005) reported how positive feeling towards a certain identity enabled that specific identity to 'move up' the salience hierarchy. This signified the positive placement of orchestral musicians within the musicians' lives and although they described struggles and challenges – they have positive feelings towards this identity, allowing it to have a prominent place within the salience hierarchy.

The subordinate theme (Conflict) continued by describing the tension between the emotional messages experienced in the orchestra. The musicians are often

required to express emotions they do not genuinely feel, only because the performance denotes it. This showed how the musicians conformed to the expectations placed upon them by conductors and the power imbalance there was between musicians and the orchestra. It was also demonstrated how the musicians prioritised their love of the profession over their own physical health. Brodsky (2006) claimed musicians are aware that success within their careers may come at the cost of their own health and wellbeing.

Additionally, this chapter has demonstrated how the professional orchestral musicians 'switch off' from their personal identity and emotions when performing. However, they are unable to avoid viewing experiences through a professional lens when they are experiencing activities away from the profession. This showed the prominent placement of 'orchestral musician' within the participants' lives.

7.5 Conclusion

This Chapter has examined the challenges and struggles the ten professional orchestral musicians experience within personal and professional domains. The key points to extrapolate from this chapter are: the musicians experience fear within performance due to the expectations placed upon them by themselves, the orchestra and audience members. The musicians felt they were unable to change their career path due to lack of skills in other professions and possible

reliance on the orchestra. The professional 'orchestral musician' identity can have a negative impact on the individual's relationships with classical music and with interpersonal relationships; highlighting the consuming nature of the profession. The chapter also highlighted how the musicians place themselves within identity confirming situations to enhance their roles as professional musicians; enabling the individuals to retain a consistent identity as an orchestral musician. The musicians encountered emotional conflict within the profession due to the performance expectations placed on them and chose to encounter these struggles to retain their identity as a highly skilled orchestral musician. This indicated the fundamental and central role of 'orchestral musician' within the individuals' lives, illustrating the salience of this identity. The following chapter (Chapter Eight) will outline why the musicians continue within this profession despite the numerous struggles outlined in Chapter Seven.

Chapter Eight

Thank You For The Music

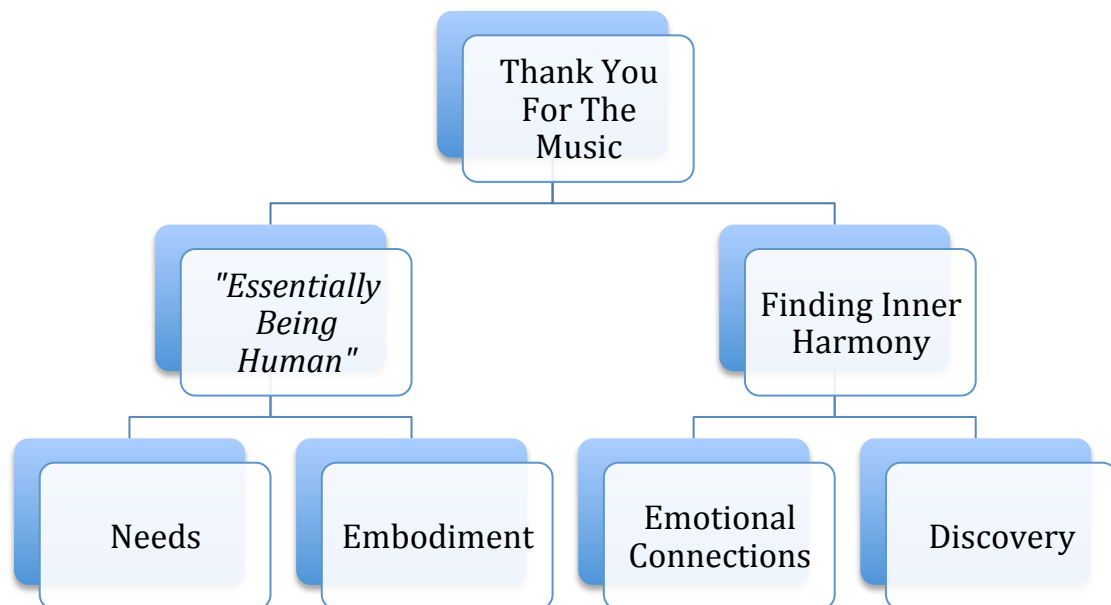
8.1 Introduction

The previous chapter explored the struggles, fear and conflict encountered by the ten professional orchestral musicians. Chapter Seven outlined the ongoing challenges and pressures the musicians encountered and the ways in which the musicians cope with these challenges. Chapter Seven illustrated the salience of the 'orchestral musician' identity for the ten participants and how this specific identity impacted the musicians throughout other aspects of their lives (e.g. social aspects).

Chapter Eight (Thank You For The Music) is concerned with the third and final superordinate theme in this study. 'Thank You For The Music' represents why the musicians continue within the professional orchestra despite the challenges and struggles they have encountered. This chapter highlights how the orchestral musicians gain a level of autonomy and control within the orchestral environment and the fundamental reasons why they continue to perform with their orchestras (for those who were not planning on leaving the orchestra). This is done by exploring the fundamental needs (e.g physical sensations), emotional connections and personal development the musicians felt with classical music and within the classical music profession.

Two subordinate themes emerged from the data and are represented in Figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1: Superordinate, Subordinate and Emergent Themes (Chapter Eight)



(i) ***“Essentially Being Human”*** was a phrase used by Alexander to signify the importance of playing an instrument. This subordinate theme demonstrates how the participants view being a musician as a fundamental human construct and as fulfilling a core psychological need. This was done through comparing engagement with musical activities to basic physiological processes, such as eating. This subordinate theme also shows how the musicians view their musical engagements (e.g. listening to classical music) through a positive lens. This theme indicates how the musicians want playing their instruments and performing music to be an automatic process (e.g. like walking). The musicians

also expressed performing as an embodied, natural and healthy activity to undertake, as they discussed the physical sensations and psychological benefits of performance.

(ii) Finding Inner Harmony is concerned with how the music the musicians performed and listened to enable them to obtain emotional regulation and emotional connections to their professions; including a sense of freedom and discovery which allowed them to feel purpose and fulfilment within their professions. Discovering music (understanding and finding new music) and the emotional connections with music were ongoing processes for the musicians. In addition, music is viewed as a maintenance activity that addresses issues of autonomy and identity.

8.2 “Essentially Being Human”

This subordinate theme focuses on how the musicians represented their relationships with classical music and with the profession - as being a core psychological need. This was done through using food as a metaphor, which signified how the musicians view the aforementioned relationships as physiological processes as well as a psychological need. The musicians also expressed how they felt being a musician was fundamental to who they are, highlighting the positive elements of being a professional orchestral musician despite the struggles and challenges outlined throughout the ten individual interviews.

This subordinate continues and demonstrates the physical sensations the musicians experienced throughout performances and the physical relationships they encountered in regards to their instruments and performance. This subordinate theme demonstrates the physical implications of being a professional orchestral musician and shows the perspectives required to maintain orchestral roles. It has been previously stated by MacDonald (2002) and Welch (2005) *“we are all musical”*. Welch continued this by saying *“our basic neuropsychobiological design enables us to make sense of, and find significance in, the patterns of sound that are organized as music within our culture”* (Welch, 2005, pg. 117). This implied how musical engagement can be seen as a foundational element of *“essentially being human”*.

The two corresponding emergent themes (Needs and Embodiment) will now be discussed below.

8.2.1 Needs

This emergent theme demonstrates how the musicians used language throughout the interviews that were related to food and eating. These culinary representations symbolise the orchestral musicians' professional journeys, and described their relationships with classical music and their experiences of being orchestral musicians. Alongside, their relationships with music in terms that stressed how they fulfilled a basic human need, much like food. By using these culinary terms, the orchestral musicians signified the biological links they had with 'needs' related to music and the profession, indicating how it was

something they relied on and they could not live without. In doing this they showed the biological need they felt towards being professional orchestral musicians and to listen to and work within the world of classical music. These food references were used throughout the professional musicians' personal journeys. Jack described how he felt when he first discovered classical music:

"I just went on to sort of devour the whole symphony and then the whole opera and then lots of other stuff and it just I just had this huge appetite for listening and discovering music."

(Jack)

In saying he 'devoured the entire symphony', Jack signified how he listened to music in a consuming manner as it created an image of Jack ingesting the symphony and the opera in an intense fashion. In addition, Jack used the past tense in this extract, by using the word "had" this could imply there had been a change in his relationship with listening to and "discovering music". This raises a question of why Jack no longer has "this huge appetite". Michael also used food to represent his relationship with discovering music:

"it's like eating something when you taste it and it's got an amazing taste to it. It's kind of unexpected. There's a bit of a (.) surprise element to it"

(Michael)

Michael highlighted the "surprise element" in music, linking to the senses and physical sensations when one tries food and it has a surprising taste that impacts all the senses. Michael then developed this image of taste by relating a sense of hunger to how he felt towards other musicians previously:

"I think I was very hungry to learn from people. I I still am, definitely, but there's less time to do it than perhaps now and (.) em maybe I'm

not quite as hungry as I used to be about it but so I was constantly trying to steal ideas from everywhere”

(Michael)

Michael represented a change in himself as a musician, using the symbol of hunger to demonstrate this transition, as he stated that he was not as “*hungry*” as he has been previously. This showed a loss of desire and interest for discovering classical music. However, the professional role has impacted his relationship with music, as he didn’t have time to learn new skills. Michael saw music as a way in which to connect with others and to gain skills from other musicians however, the professional stance had impacted his relationship with music. By stating he wanted to “*steal*” ideas showed that this was an attempt for him to develop his playing through gathering the skills of others. In the following extract Alexander also described his zest for music:

“I’ve always had an appetite to hear new things in music”

(Alexander)

In using the word “*appetite*”, Alexander indicated the ongoing desire he had to listen to new music. Alexander furthered this by relating this term to the different forms of music he wanted to listen to:

“Have a very strong appetite eh for variety.”

(Alexander)

Describing his desire for music in this manner, Alexander highlighted the physiological feelings he had towards different forms of classical music and indicated the biological ‘needs’ he related to music. This difference between Michael and Alexander (with Michael suggesting he no longer had the hunger he adopted previously), could be because of their different roles and responsibilities

within the orchestra. Michael may have had less time to discover music because he was a section principal, whereas Alexander had more freedom to research musical repertoire because he had a secondary position. Alexander continued using these food related images by stating:

"the actual musical diet has been has always suited me in a (states the name of his orchestra) orchestra."

(Alexander)

The term "*musical diet*" for Alexander perhaps hinted at the restrictive nature of the music he was able to perform with the orchestra, as it sometimes offered limited musical repertoire. Nathan illustrated the lack of freedom he encountered in the orchestra and described what he thought the music making process should be like:

"Cause music making and that's the thing (.) em (.) it's not about music em (.) regurgitation it's eh music making. You're you're making something like a cake. Which should taste differently every time you make it."

(Nathan)

In this extract, Nathan demonstrated his desire for individuality in making music and illustrated the creative aspect of it. This could demonstrate the pressure Nathan felt to create something unique every time he performed, which Nathan felt he didn't have the freedom to do in his orchestra. Nathan described how he felt stuck behind a music stand when he was performing and this restricted his creativity and made him nervous. Through using the word "*regurgitation*", Nathan created a negative image, which he related to performing music in the orchestra. He thought beforehand that music making should instead be a unique creative process, however he was unable to do this in the orchestra and this

extract presented the lack of creativity Nathan felt in typical orchestral performances. In the following two extracts Andrew and Beth used the symbols of taste and hunger to represent a need to move away from performing in the orchestra:

"She's worked out exactly what she can achieve comfortably (.) and I've done that on the fiddle. The other side on my life I've got a taste now of actually I could really do something"

(Andrew)

Andrew was undergoing a transition in his life as he may be leaving the performance aspect of the orchestra to undertake another orchestral role. By saying the word *"taste"*, Andrew indicated how he had only viewed a little bit of what it could be like in a different role. In addition, by calling the violin a *"fiddle"* indicated a sense of detachment from the classical music genre, as the word *"fiddle"* is a colloquial term for the violin, which can be related to different genres not just classical. He felt that in another role he could achieve something and make more of an impact. Similar to Andrew, Beth showed detachment and used hunger as a symbol for this change:

"I just I mean I'm just eh hungry for more. And that's nothing to do with the failed marriage either if that's em I definitely would have been doing this at this stage."

(Beth)

Beth showed how her priorities have changed as she was looking *"for more"*, following the period of transition Beth had encountered previously. Beth's priorities had changed and she no longer felt she needed to maintain her position as a professional orchestral musician. This is seen by her use of the phrase

“hungry for more”, which highlighted her desire and indeed need for something else, beyond the orchestra.

In the following extract Jack described his relationship with performing:

“I’ve kind of on a fundamental level I’m always enjoying it.”

(Jack)

Despite Jack’s reported panic attacks and performance anxiety (discussed in Chapter 7, Section 7.2.1), he claimed he was always in some way taking pleasure from playing the French Horn. Nevertheless, in using the words *“kind of”* Jack again displayed some uncertainty in his narrative. In contrast, Jack did not demonstrate uncertainty when he described his early *“ambition”* to be a professional orchestral musician, instead it was as though it was an all-consuming need that Jack was driven by:

“That was just my ambition to play in an orchestra it’s all I wanted to do.”

(Jack)

This extract showed Jack’s needs and wants since early childhood to play in an orchestra - it has been a desire engrained in him since his childhood. In the following extract Alexander illustrates the idea of being a musician as an engrained act; showing how instrumental practice was a natural process:

“the discipline of practice is a natural human condition.”

(Alexander)

“why did I sit in a room for hours on end practicing? If you turn it round you know, why not? Cause it’s less natural not to”

(Alexander)

Alexander viewed practice as an essential activity to undertake to develop as a human being. He enhanced this notion by saying not only was it essential but it was a “*natural*” activity to undertake. Alexander emphasised how he viewed playing an instrument as a fundamental human need:

“I don’t want to overplay it and say we should all be you know hunter gatherers facing famine or anything. But it’s part of our human make-up. Eh and that we are keying into these feelings which were programmed into our neuronal processes and our genes and our hormones”

(Alexander)

Alexander discussed specifically how music has a biological influence on human beings by relating it to “*genes and our hormones*”. In doing this he highlighted the psychological and physical benefits of playing an instrument. Alexander possibly described this in this way to justify why he had committed his whole life to being an orchestral musician and to mastering the cello. Using this discourse was justification for his own life choices; he was confirming his musical role through representing the need for music in this specific way, as the language he used was a form of confirmation and confidence. Alexander related practice to how playing an instrument impacts certain brain processes, and Michael furthered this idea by saying:

“I imagine that using all those different aspects of our brain (.) sort of combining them must be a positive thing for a human being”

(Michael)

Michael explored issues relating to wellbeing, such as learning and positivity. This showed for Michael, how being a professional orchestral musician helped him to maintain his health and wellbeing in a variety of ways, such as providing a

positive activity for his brain. This could encourage Michael to want to continue within the profession despite all the stress and pressure he reported previously. By using the phrase *"human being"*, illustrated how he suggested how this benefit could be experienced by everyone, not just by professional orchestral musicians. Michael further underlined this point by stating:

"I sort of think there must be something healthy about what we're doing you know?"

(Michael)

Using words such as *"I imagine"* and *"I sort of think"* in these two extracts he avoided claiming knowledge he might not have had the authority to, but his position allowed him to report these physical effects on himself. Through stating the positive aspects of what being a musician could do to one's brain and by using the words *"we're doing"*, Michael again emphasised the commonalities amongst the members of the orchestra. This relates back to the idea of the collective identity (introduced in Chapter Six, Section 6.3.2) and underlines how this collective is introduced when positive elements of musical engagement are being referred to. Alexander also invoked the sense of community by saying how musicians attempted to become better through practice:

"And we're trying to get you know, tiny fractions of a millimetre of accuracy into the way we hold the bow and the way we place our left hand going over and over again. Eh (.) that obviously meets a deep need"

(Alexander)

Alexander described this repetition of actions in attempting to achieve perfection as a core human need:

"infinite patience in skill is a very deep human thing. And I think the people are the poorer who don't discover that. Not everyone has to have the same skill in the same things but it's just as I say overall this need for the absolute best skill. There's a very profound human need so I think it keys into that."

(Alexander)

By using the word "poorer", Alexander made a division between those who have experienced this skill development and those who haven't. Alexander felt learning an instrument was a way in which to develop as a human:

"it's a fundamental way of becoming more fully human I think."

(Alexander)

Alexander described playing an instrument as a way to become "more fully human". Similar to Jack, Alexander used the word "fundamental", showing the central importance of being a musician for them both. Alexander illustrated this further by saying:

"that's what we are made of, that's what we're made of"

(Alexander)

This extract shows the centrality of musicality for the musicians, by proposing they were actually 'built' of their music. Jenni further this notion by claiming:

"it's just sort of who I am really"

(Jenni)

In claiming this Jenni, also indicated that this make up who she is and it has a crucial central place within her life and in building who she is.

Alexander thought musicians had to maintain this relationship with music and their instruments in order to ensure positive health and wellbeing. Alexander was emphatic about the benefits of playing an instrument:

“it’s keying into something very deep eh so as I say I I think that is essentially being human”

(Alexander)

Alexander implied that playing an instrument was what made him “*human*”. This could be because this is all he has known throughout his professional career and he had built his life around music and playing an instrument. In the interview he stated this had been “*his whole life*” and he had been in the orchestra for forty-three years. He then continued by stating what was required to maintain this lifestyle as a professional orchestral musician:

“just being aware of the body, just keeping the pace and watching my breath for hours at a time. And why’s that fulfilling? But it’s to me well it keys in because that’s that was life we used to be like that.”

(Alexander)

He described being in control of his physical body in order to perform to the best of his ability. In doing this Alexander felt it linked him to the basic early development of humans, highlighting playing an instrument as a fundamental activity because he found the natural processes he encountered through performing music (e.g. controlling his breathing) “*fulfilling*”.

Through the use of food metaphors and describing the fundamental impact classical music and playing an instrument had on the participants, they signified the crucial ‘need’ to engage with classical music. The next section will outline the

physical relationship the musicians had with classical music and describes how the musicians wanted the process of playing an instrument to become an automatic process.

8.2.2 Embodiment

This section demonstrates how the musicians hope to be able to play their instruments as though it was a natural process and something that happens automatically:

“you’ve gotta be able to do it like cleaning your teeth so when the orchestra gets better you can get better”

(Andrew)

Andrew demonstrated how he wanted playing an instrument to be similar to a simple daily activity. In comparing it to *“cleaning your teeth”* Andrew showed how he wanted playing the violin to be a daily activity conducted to maintain his health and wellbeing. However, by making this comparison to a simple daily activity it perhaps rather undermined the mastery element of playing an instrument. Saying *“you’ve gotta”* suggested how he experienced this as something he (and other musicians) had no choice in. Jenni gave an example of this automatic process in reference to playing the violin:

“you can find yourself on automatic pilot sometimes”

(Jenni)

Michael furthered this idea by stating how he wanted his body to respond naturally to the cello:

"I want to feel like I'm the muscles are (.) doing what I want them to do (.) easily. Eh (.) I want to feel like I can play well in tune (.) naturally without thinking about it you know?"

(Michael)

Michael wanted playing an instrument to become a natural process, having his body operate in an almost automatic, easy manner. This emphasised the extent to which Michael identified with the embodied elements of playing his cello and showed Michael wanting to gain control of his body, which could be prompted by the constant awareness of the repetitive injuries musicians could encounter.

Michael emphasised this embodiment:

"I would hope that people got that from me that all those things, emotional, projecting something emotional but with a sense of the intellectual (.) structure of a piece or of the you know, that side of it. And (.) physically natural with what I was doing you know?"

(Michael)

This extract illustrated how Michael connected with his body when playing the cello. This showed the emotional elements of the music through his embodied performances. These connections were emphasised further when he said:

"such an (.) emotional and intellectual thing at the same time. Em (.) seems to me things are usually one or the other. Eh (.) so it feels a very em (.) sort of holistic thing to be doing a very healthy thing to be doing in some ways because (.) you're hoping I imagine in the brain you're connecting all those different (.) aspects together."

(Michael)

Whilst he wanted this to become a natural physical process, he also stressed that it was an *"emotional and intellectual thing"* - demonstrating the rather different elements Michael felt he should be in control of. He felt music helped him link

together all these elements and hoped all these aspects would connect together. This posed a possible struggle for Michael as he faced challenges in the profession that could often be detrimental to his health but he continued to hope that it was ultimately a healthy activity to undertake. Jack also described how he aimed to make playing an instrument a natural process:

“that’s the key thing is just feel really easy and other times I’ve got that it’s been through a hard slog of preparation. Em and doing it and doing it and doing it to such an extent that em (.) it really is like walking or something we do everyday because you’ve practiced it so much em (.) you know so it’s a bit like that.”

(Jack)

Jack hoped practicing an instrument would become a completely natural process and he would gain full control over the instrument and his playing. By wanting playing the French Horn to become like “walking”, suggested he hoped for his instrument to become a natural extension of himself; achieving an element of freedom to playing as it would become almost automatic. Jack wanted to gain the benefits of all the hard work he had put in and emphasised this hard work by describing the repetitive nature of practice.

Through using multiple comparisons to drugs and addiction, the musicians implied they were reliant on being orchestral musicians. The musicians used specific terms relating to drugs when they were explaining why they continued within the profession and when describing performance. Kathryn expressed how she felt when she gave a successful performance:

“it’s when you achieve something it’s a high”

(Kathryn)

In this extract Kathryn described fulfilment and saying “*it’s a high*” created images of drug taking and a euphoric feeling, linking together achievement with psychological and physical feelings. Michael also linked these emotional feelings of achievement to physical feelings:

“it’s that great feeling that buzz you get that thrill from (.) from doing it. The (.) feeling of satisfaction”

(Michael)

Positive physical feelings encouraged Michael to continue within the orchestra as Michael gained a feeling of “*satisfaction*” from performing. He continued this by implying that he had become reliant on (even addicted to) these feelings, which made him want to continue with the orchestra:

“It’s a physical sensation, which feels great and that’s kind of what (.) eh urges you to (.) to work at it, keep doing it I think. Uh (.) and sometimes I get that sort of real buzz from just hearing a piece of music”

(Michael)

It was not just playing a piece of music that made Michael experience these feelings, he also encountered this sensation from hearing classical music. This physical feeling encouraged Michael to want to continue a career in the orchestra. This represented his intense relationship with classical music, which Jack also described:

“I got a real buzz out of (.) particularly discovering music. I remember in my teens eh just finding out listening for the first time a Beethoven’s Symphony and playing it over and over and over again and just really getting to know it”

(Jack)

Jack described music almost as an addiction and did this by showing how he approached listening to a new piece repetitively and almost obsessively in order to fully understand it. This was a feeling he carried with him throughout his entire life, *“getting to know it”* showed the way Jack wanted to become familiar with the music as though it was another human. Jack highlighted how it was the action of *“discovering”* music that he enjoyed and which gave him the *“buzz”*. To further this idea of music being a drug, all of the musicians repeatedly used the word *“buzz”* to demonstrate how music and performing made them feel physically. Michael expanded on this feeling:

“I could feel I’ve got kind of goose bumps cause of the of the thrill of it actually doing it from the adrenaline. And em (.) eh (.) there’s just an electricity in in you at that moment”

(Michael)

By using the word *“electricity”*, this term connected this extract to feelings of energy and physical sensations through feeling certain emotions. When asked about his relationship with classical music Alexander stated:

“You can’t explain it in words. You can talk about it and put up sign posts but you can’t actually I can’t I can’t explain you know why why I get such a thrill and a you know and exciting buzz from from certain music. Eh (.) it music to keying into some deep non verbal emotional thing.”

(Alexander)

This question reached a side of Alexander that he felt he could not explain through words alone and explained how although he cannot explain it in an emotional sense he can identify the physical feelings he encountered. Similar to

Alexander, Michael is unable to directly evaluate his relationship with classical music:

*"I'm so close to it I can't, it's hard to answer that question you know?
It's kind of, you can't put it over there to evaluate it."*

(Michael)

Michael showed that he could not separate himself from classical music to discuss what it meant to him, showing the intrinsic connection between Michael and classical music. Andrew also found it difficult to describe how music made him feel emotionally and he could not directly explain his relationship with it. He explained this relationship through physical descriptions and comparing it to a symbolic image of drug use:

"I mean it's like em I've never taken drugs but it's like (.) you know it's just that if when you're in the middle of all that sound"

(Andrew)

Andrew compared being in the orchestra to his idea of what taking drugs would be like. He felt consumed by the sound and being "*in the middle* of it in the orchestra" created a sense of being engulfed by music. Andrew explained the consequences of such immersion by stating:

"it's like a shot in the arm"

(Andrew)

Andrew compared performing classical music in a live setting to taking drugs. This again linked music to addiction and obsession, it also demonstrated an addiction to performance and as if performance was used as a means of escapism from the pressure of the profession.

8.2.3 Summary

This section explored the food and eating metaphors the musicians utilised to describe their experiences of being professional orchestral musicians. Through comparing their relationships with performance and classical music in terms of basic needs such as food and by comparing it to taking drugs, highlighted the 'needs' and wants the musicians felt to be involved in performance and how they had become almost dependent on these feelings. This section illustrated how being an orchestral musician was a fundamental human construct for the ten individuals. Being a musician and performing was so essential to the musicians that it had become like a physical dependence for them. The participants also described the strongly positive physical sensations they encountered when hearing classical music and how they wanted playing their instruments to be an embodied and automatic activity. This showed the importance of autonomy and physical sensations to the musicians – giving them a sense of freedom and fulfilment. The final section of this chapter is concerned with the musicians' emotional connections with classical music and how the musicians utilise music as an identity maintenance activity.

8.3 Finding Inner Harmony

This subordinate theme demonstrates how the orchestral musicians use music as a vehicle of emotional regulation. This allowed the musicians to respond to the ongoing demands and realities of the orchestral profession, using music as Sloboda (2001, pg. 247) suggested, as a 'maintenance' activity to address issues

of personal autonomy and identity. In other words it can be used as an everyday life routine that one undertakes to reinforce one's personal "psychological agenda". This subordinate theme 'Finding Inner Harmony' is also concerned with the ways in which the musicians described their ongoing journeys and sense of discovery they experienced throughout their professional and personal journeys.

8.3.1 Emotional Connections

This section shows the emotional connections (e.g. feeling fulfilled) the musicians reported they had with music and the central importance classical music had in their lives. This connection was highlighted as one of the reasons for why they continued in the profession, despite their reported struggles and challenges. Throughout the interviews the musicians explained how their role within the orchestra was to be of service to the musical repertoire. In the following extract Andrew showed the need for an emotional connection with music in order to "survive" in the orchestra:

"that's why I keep loving it (.) because my theory if you keep loving it (.) you'll survive"

(Andrew)

By saying you need to "keep loving it" Andrew suggested how essential it was for him to maintain an emotional connection with the musical repertoire and demonstrated that classical music was more than simply a musical preference. In the following extract, Jack described his emotional relationship with music:

"I understood if this was serious or happy or sad or fun eh eh and I just I got it you know so I could listen to it and I could understand it. I think that's suppose that's more what I mean when I say I connected with it, yeah I could see where it was all coming from and that excited me."

(Jack)

Jack reported that when he was younger he found he could emotionally connect to a piece of classical music and fully understand it – this easy connection led him to become more involved in the world of classical music. He illustrated how he understood the emotions of the music and was able to feel comfortable with classical music. Jack furthered his discussion about his initial relationship with classical music:

"I do remember the pieces that when I discovered them that I liked them that they really they really got hold of me and I just absolutely loved it."

(Jack)

By Jack stating, the pieces *"got hold"* of him implied how he got trapped or captured by classical music. It suggested a switch of control, from Jack originally having control by discovering music to then giving control to the music once it had *"got hold"* of him. He implied that he had no choice in this intense emotional connection with music. Similarly, Jenni also described an intense unexplained emotion connection with classical music:

"I mean it was Beethoven but it was quite a late Beethoven but I suppose it was quite a sort of intricate and I was just I thought wow. And I cant really explain why... it's just a sort of impact which is very hard to describe really."

(Jenni)

Jenni described her relationship with Beethoven's repertoire but was unable to describe why she felt so connected to it. This could be because she is so close to the music that she is unable to detach herself from it to explain her connection to it. Jack demonstrated that he understood the music and Michael also did this by describing his role in the orchestra:

"they don't just hear (.) three C's and a D, you know? They hear the the feeling of that bit of music em (.) and if you've if you feel you've passed that message on that emotional message um you feel then that's the job you're suppose to be doing you've done it well."

(Michael)

Michael expressed how he must pass on an *"emotional message"* to the audience, in doing this he felt he was sharing what the composer wanted. This showed how the *"emotional message"* of the music was Michael's priority and in doing this he was doing his job, through performing the musical repertoire in its intended manner. In the next extract, Michael demonstrated the link between physical behaviour and emotions:

"for us physical gestures relate to sound which relates to an emotion which relates to a a conception of a form you know? Its all coming together and I think that's fantastic."

(Michael)

Michael showed how it was important to express the emotions of the repertoire. In doing this he combined physical movements with emotions and with the *"conception"* of music. Alexander also showed how emotions were linked to physical acts:

"I think you have to be open to a lot of the emotions that are going on. The place I always felt safe with Tchaikovsky or Shostakovich. You have to bleed a bit to bring it to life. And if you don't it'll be boring."

(Alexander)

By saying the musicians must *"bleed a bit"* showed the physicality and emotional expression he felt the musicians had to invest in their performance. Alexander claimed if they didn't do this then the performance would lack excitement, showing the human, emotional and expressive elements required for an outstanding performance. Alexander also suggested that being open minded and having self-awareness were essential for a performing orchestral musician. He specifically stated his relationship with certain composers showing how he *'felt safe'* with Tchaikovsky or Shostakovich, again highlighting the importance of comfort and familiarity with music in performance. The certain style of music had an impact on Alexander and Andrew furthered this emotional relationship with music:

"It's the music that makes it. You know and I love all that."

(Andrew)

For Andrew, music was the priority and a dominating source that *"makes"* his performance. It is the music that made Andrew feel comfortable because he was so familiar with it. Beth described how she uses music as a vehicle of self-expression:

"I mean it's a wonderful way to express yourself and you know you get really (.) excited or really sad you know (.) if the music is. That's wonderful."

(Beth)

Beth explained how music can make her feel a range of emotions and gave it praise for being able to do this, demonstrating her positive connection to classical music. Jenni also discussed her relationship and emotional connection with classical music:

"I'm not sure whether it's you sort of realise how much (1) eh (.) how much music sort of means to you"

(Jenni)

Jenni illustrated the emotional connection she had with classical music and how it meant more to her than she had realised. It could be that she wasn't always aware of this connection because it was so natural for her to feel this way. However, in saying "sort of" again shows uncertainty in Jenni's language. Jenni discussed this connection further:

"I was just sort of (.) bowled over by it and I just thought I've never heard this. I mean it was Beethoven but it was quite a late Beethoven"

(Jenni)

By Jenni saying that she was "bowled over" she suggested the overwhelming nature of her emotional response to the music. In claiming she had "never heard this", showed the surprise Jenni felt when she first heard Beethoven; outlining the emotional impact it had on her. Throughout the interviews the musicians highlighted their emotional connections with classical music. For example, at the beginning of the interview with Andrew he spoke in a very positive emotional manner about classical music and about the profession overall:

"I love it and it's the most fulfilling thing (.) I can possibly imagine"

(Andrew)

Andrew couldn't imagine doing something else because he was so connected to classical music and the orchestra, also because he may have never tried anything else in a professional sense. He spoke further about his emotional attachment to and appreciation of the orchestra by saying:

"as I say I don't see it as a job I see I just love it so much"

(Andrew)

This quote echoed how other musicians have referred to the profession as a "job" before. A "job" implies a focus of obtaining money for work however, Andrew viewed it less as a "job" because he viewed it with an emotional connection. Comparisons can be made with Beth, who saw the profession as a "job", perhaps as a result of Beth's loss of emotional connection to the profession due to her being about to leave the orchestra. Nathan also stated that being a musician was ultimately a "job", however, he also claimed that even if he won the lottery he wouldn't give up being a musician due to his emotional connection with the work:

"I spoke to my wife about this you know. What would you do if we won the lottery? We don't even do the lottery so there's not much chance of that (both laugh) (you never know) and would you want to still work and we both said yeah. We would actually."

(Nathan)

Nathan showed that being a professional musician was about more than securing monetary rewards. He would still want to continue his work even if he didn't have to, indicating the emotional connection Nathan had to his profession.

This section continues by discussing the emotional connection that the musicians reported towards the composers of the performance repertoire; such as the way in which Michael and Alexander described their emotional connections to specific composers. Michael did this when he was describing his role in the orchestra:

"I think the job is to (.) em see what's in the part in the score and bring it to life and (.) you've gotta understand what the composer meant when he wrote those dots"

(Michael)

Michael tried to understand the composer's meanings and intent for the music when he was performing. By stating that his job is to *"bring (the score) to life"* Michael showed how the musicians must give the music meaning to reflect what the composers intended by the music. Similarly to Michael, Alexander also described performing music as embodying the composer's intentions and bringing the score to life:

"my role is is to embody the emotions that the composer (.) I mean one phrase I've used is breathing life back into the bones of old dead composers, you know? It's trying to bring something to life, what they were trying to say what they wanted to do."

(Alexander)

Alexander also discussed his role in the orchestra and used a similar metaphor to describe his aims; *"bring something to life"*. He was recreating the emotions of past composers and giving them life again, it is as though he was a conduit between composer and listener - a vehicle for the music.

This section has demonstrated the vital need for emotional connections to music and to composers' intentions for the musicians. The final section is concerned with the ways the musicians described their ongoing personal and professional journeys and the sense of discovery they experienced.

8.3.2 Discovery

This final section will discuss the participants' views of being an orchestral musician and how they saw playing music in terms of being on a 'journey'. It was an ongoing process and one where they were constantly discovering new elements in the music they performed and listened to. Jack described the first time he heard classical music:

"it just absolutely captivated me em I think it was eh I suppose it was sort of discovery of it as much as the sound itself"

(Jack)

Jack explained how it was not just the sound of the music that "*captivated*" him but it was also the process of discovery and learning the musical repertoire that mesmerised him, this showed how learning and development were crucial for Jack's satisfaction and involvement with music. Michael continued this further by saying:

"and developing yourself to be able to do it better. Uh there's no there's no end you know? There's no right answer there's always working towards (.) some (.) rainbow that that you never quite reach you know (laughs)"

(Michael)

In this extract Michael described the learning and personal development that was important to him, by talking about his need to always be *“developing yourself”*. Through Michael using the image of a *“rainbow”* suggests a constantly shifting destination – perhaps with a pot of gold at the end of the *“rainbow”*, as in he is aiming for an end goal that he can’t ever quite reach. Michael emphasised this point:

“there is no finishing line, there’s no (.) there’s no right answer”

(Michael)

In the above quote Michael suggested a race by using the words *“finishing line”*. In doing this he is highlighted the competitive nature of being a professional musician and also emphasised the distance to be travelled; highlighting the journey that he was on:

“I think (.) they’re doing it because if you can do it better you want to go there you don’t want to be satisfied where you are now”

(Michael)

This extract again highlighted the desire for constant self-improvement because by stating he wouldn’t be satisfied by, *“where you are now”*, he continued the idea of a metaphorical journey, of never standing still. Michael continued this point further:

“If you felt you’d arrived at it meaning if you felt, I think if you felt you’d arrived at (.) a way of playing a piece that that is the perfect way of playing it. You’ve already kind of (.) lost the point somehow”

(Michael)

Michael showed that discovery of music needed to always be an ongoing process in order to maintain his relationship with classical music. There had to be a sense

of discovery with music in order for him to feel positively connected to the profession. Henry continued with the story of the journey, as he described what he thought music was:

“it’s like riding a wave. I mean its sometimes I think of music is the is something that’s there existing and you’re just kind of joining in and then you jump on. It’s like (.) em the conveyer belt or a something going down the river. You know music’s there it’s happening (.) in time and space and you’re joining in, you jump onto this raft, join in for the duration of the piece of the music and then you jump off again but it continues. It’s something which is there all the time, it continues.”

(Henry)

The reference to riding a wave was a metaphor designed to show the mystery that Henry associated with music. This quote related to how he saw music as a natural process, as Henry described how music surrounded him and he was creating his own opportunities by joining in with this process. This extract used sport analogies with music compared to surfing and white water rafting, representing again the physically demanding and even competitive elements of the profession. Jenni further this idea by discussing what being a professional orchestral musician means to her:

“its just another sort of (.) hmmm (.) aspect of life”

(Jenni)

By stating that it is an *“aspect of life”* Jenni indicates that music gives her access to a part of life that she may not be able to access otherwise. In continuing this journey metaphor Alexander described the journey he felt he had encountered as a professional orchestral musician:

"The individual journey."

(Alexander)

Alexander described this journey as *"individual"* separating himself from the collective. This extract showed that adventure and discovery are important to Alexander. This continuum of the journey shows a shift between individual and collective journeys. Ultimately it is the music and the musical story that combines everyone together:

"it's a retelling of that story and all sharing the emotional journey of that story."

(Alexander)

This section showed the importance of discovery, learning and development for the professional orchestral musicians.

8.3.3 Summary

This subordinate theme has discussed the emotional connections the professional orchestral musicians encountered in regards to classical music and music is utilised as a maintenance activity. The musicians are aware of the sense of mystery surrounding the music they play and treat it as a sense of discovery and learning. It is as though they need to keep encountering this mystery and

discovery in order to maintain their relationship with the classical music profession.

8.4 Discussion

Chapter Eight has explored the way in which the professional orchestral musicians gain a level of autonomy and control within their orchestras. It explored why the musicians continue in the classical music world despite the challenges and struggles that were discussed in Chapter Seven.

The first subordinate theme "*Essentially Being Human*" demonstrated that the musicians view being a musician as a 'fundamental' human element, as it is essential in a biological, emotional, physical and psychological sense. The language the musicians used related to food and eating, signifying the physiological needs the musicians felt towards music and playing their musical instruments. This showed the reliance the musicians felt towards music and being a musician. These culinary terms also signified the changes the participants experienced in a professional sense and the 'surprise elements' they experienced with music. The use of this language also signified the restrictive nature of the profession by using words such as '*diet*', demonstrating the power imbalance that exists between individual musician and orchestra.

The musicians also outlined how playing an instrument and the discipline of practice and playing is a 'natural' process. The musicians described the positive

health benefits of being a professional musician and how it impacts wellbeing, positivity and learning. The musicians used identity-confirming statements when describing these elements of being a musician – possibly to demonstrate that they have made the correct decision in becoming an orchestral musician. The musicians also demonstrated the centrality of music within their lives by stating what they are “*made of*” – they highlighted the importance of maintaining these relationships and the importance of engaging with classical music

This theme also introduced the notion of embodiment in reference to the musicians and their instruments. Embodiment refers to a tangible or visible form of an idea, quality or feeling, “*our musical bodies are engrained with our musical identities*” (Elliot & Silverman, 2012, pg. 33). The musicians describe wanting to approach playing their instruments as though it was a simple daily activity (e.g. walking). This gives an indication of freedom that the musicians hope to experience with their instruments and as though this becomes an automatic process. It shows how they hope to gain control of their bodies and connect physical and emotional aspects together.

By comparing playing music and being in an orchestra to drugs, the musicians showed the physical feelings they experienced and it also indicated how the musicians can become reliant on these feelings. It also indicated addiction, obsession and reliance. The musicians are able to acknowledge how they feel towards classical music through describing physical feelings. However, when the musicians were asked about what ‘classical music means to them’ they were unable to answer through words alone. Through experiencing these physical

sensations – the musicians felt autonomy, freedom and a sense of fulfilment in the orchestra. The relationships with their instruments give them a sense of autonomy and control.

The second subordinate theme 'Finding Inner Harmony' showed how the musicians used music as a vehicle of emotional regulation and how music is used as a maintenance activity. Music addresses issues of personal autonomy and identity for the musicians. This subordinate theme emphasised the central importance of music on musical identity maintenance and how the musicians' emotional connections gave them a sense of purpose. The musicians stated how they felt fulfilment by passing on the '*emotional message*' of the music to the audience. However, this again illustrated a power dynamic between individual and music – as the musicians are a vehicle for the musical repertoire. This theme showed how being a musician was more than just a job to them and it is the emotional connection that encouraged them to continue within this profession.

'Finding Inner Harmony' also demonstrated how being a musician was '*a journey*' and a never-ending process. This subordinate theme demonstrated how music discovery is a fluid process – similar to identity (Frith, 1998). This journey is essential for the musicians to feel positively connected to the profession. Additionally, this subordinate theme signified the mystery of the journey for the musicians

Although the musicians obtain '*freedom*' through the music, the musicians reported how they lose their autonomy due to the orchestra and the

restrictions the conductors place upon them. They all adapted to their orchestra environments in order to cope and it was outlined that their relationships with their instruments are important to maintain both their personal and social musical identities (Taylor, 2010). This chapter has shown that a positive relationship with music is required for the musicians to maintain their musical identities, as music is outlined as a fundamental human need.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined why the musicians continue within the profession despite the struggles and challenges that were outlined previously. 'Thank You For The Music' demonstrated the autonomy and control the musicians feel they have within the orchestra through their relationships with their instruments and with classical music. The psychological and physical benefits of playing an instrument were outlined and how this fulfilled a core fundamental 'need'. The importance of discovering music was outlined as an essential reason as to why the musicians continue within this unique profession.

Chapter Nine

Cadence

9.1 Introduction

This thesis has provided an insight into the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians and their idiographic lived experiences. It has adopted a Social Constructionist paradigm and has been the first study to directly explore the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians, whilst outlining key insights into the idiographic lived experiences of the ten participants.

This research initially aimed to illustrate the range of existing literature reporting investigations of the work and lives of classical musicians. This previous research has acknowledged the difficulties of the profession and the physical and psychological effects it can have on individuals.

The research reported in this thesis focused specifically on professional classical musicians because of my personal experiences with this group – outlined in Chapter One. I was interested in exploring more about their lives, reasons for entering and staying in the profession and developing a sense of themselves as professional musicians – their musical identities. After conducting an in-depth literature review (reported in Chapters 2 and 3), it was apparent there was a gap in the existing literature directly focusing on the lived experiences and musical identities of professional orchestral musicians.

This chapter will continue by giving an overview of all the chapters included in this thesis. Chapter Nine also reflects on the research reported in the thesis, identifying the original contributions to knowledge, considering how the study might have been improved, and making recommendations for future research.

9.2 The Chapters

Chapter Two (Classical Musicians and The Orchestra) provided an overview of the literature reporting research on the orchestra and classical musicians and highlighted the social positioning of classical musicians and the orchestra. Chapter Two outlined the existing body of research regarding classical musicians' identities, becoming a classical musician, their health, relationships and experiences of performance. This chapter demonstrated the range of findings about classical musicians in the scholarly literature and the contradictory findings that can exist about these individuals. It illustrated that the topic of classical musicians' identities is an underrepresented one within the literature. However, it was outlined that it is crucial to understand classical musicians' identities to explore their lived experiences further.

Chapter Three (Identity and Musical Identities) defined the concepts of self and identity and outlined the theories related to these concepts. Musical identities were defined and divided into two categories: identities in music and music in identities. This chapter gave an overview of the literature surrounding musical identities and illustrated the gap in the musical identity literature; focused on

professional orchestral musicians. Musical identities were viewed as built through a combination of social influences and individual characteristics. Chapter Three also outlined the research questions for this thesis and an evaluation of these research questions will be revisited in Section 9.3.

Chapter Four (Theoretical Considerations) explained why Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was chosen as the methodological approach for this study by reviewing a range of possible qualitative methodologies. This chapter outlined previous IPA and Music Psychology literature, highlighting the usefulness of IPA in investigating lived experiences and identity.

Chapter Five (Methods) provided a detailed description of the research process undertaken and the analysis conducted according to IPA techniques. It illustrated the reflexive issues, the importance of a research diary, sampling and ethical procedures, the process for conducting the interviews and analysis in order to address the research questions outlined in Chapter Three.

Chapter Six (Musical Foundations) was the first of three chapters that considered the findings of the research reported in this thesis. This chapter investigated how the professional orchestral musicians constructed and developed their musical identities in childhood and adolescence and within their professional lives. It outlined how an 'orchestral musician' identity was formed in childhood and adolescence, through external influences and the influence of 'innate' characteristics. This chapter also described how the musicians formed their

musical identities within an orchestral setting – highlighting the importance of the cohesiveness of the collective nature of the orchestra.

Chapter Seven (Struggle: *“The Never Ending Quest”*) examined the struggles and challenges the musicians encountered within the orchestral profession. The musicians reported the fear and conflict they experienced in different aspects of their lives (e.g. during performances). The musicians also demonstrated how they coped within this setting; through forming a Professional Performance Identity. The centrality of the identity of ‘orchestral musician’ to the participants’ lives was also highlighted; indicating the overall impact it had on both the musicians’ lives and on their other identities.

Chapter Eight (Thank You For The Music) explored why the participants continued being professional orchestral musicians (and indeed the reflections of those who were planning on leaving the orchestra) despite the struggles and challenges they encountered. Chapter Eight highlighted the autonomy and control the musicians experienced within the profession because of their relationships with both the music and their instruments. The musicians described being a professional musician as a fundamental ‘need’, highlighting the emotional and physiological importance of playing an instrument at that level.

The following section revisits the themes outlined in the results chapters.

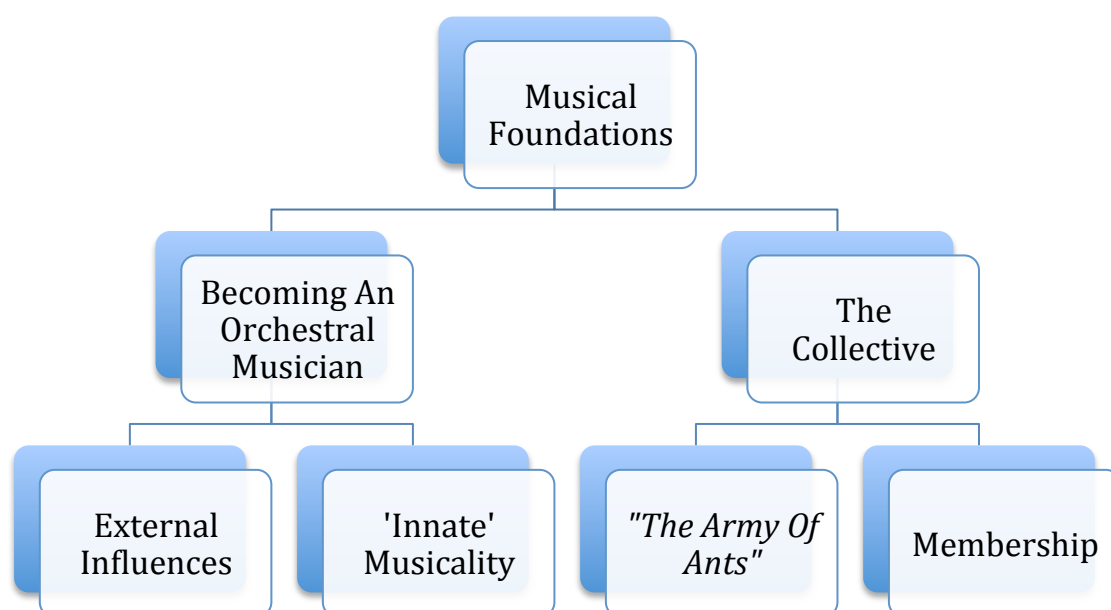
9.3 Results Revisited

This section revisits the three results chapters and draws out the relationships between the themes (across the thematic structure) that emerged from the findings. This is done by giving illustrative examples from the interviews with both Jack and Beth and describes how these themes directly relate to their individual stories. The discussion is supported by critical reference to the literature outlined previously in Chapter Two.

9.3.1 Chapter Six Revisited

Figure 9.1: Superordinate, Subordinate and Emergent Themes

(Chapter Six)



The 'Musical Foundations' theme explored the ways in which the musicians formed their musical identities in childhood, adolescence and when they were in

the professional orchestra. This chapter identified several themes that explained this musical identity construction for the professional orchestral musicians.

The theme 'Becoming An Orchestral Musician' was concerned with what influenced the individuals during their childhood and adolescence to become professional orchestral musicians. There were a number of people and factors that seemed to have been important such as; connecting to music and to their instruments, friends, family and the school environment - all influenced the individuals' decisions to become professional orchestral musicians. The musicians also described how it was often anticipated that they would become orchestral musicians because it is commonly expected that in order to become successful in this domain, they must start training at any early age and they had all done this. The musicians also talked about a sense of having an 'innate' musicality that they also felt influenced their career decisions.

The theme 'The Collective' outlined the deindividuation processes that the individuals reported could occur within the orchestral environment. They described this by using animal metaphors, such as "*army of ants*" and "*flock of sheep*". This theme also highlighted the feeling of normality the musicians experienced by belonging to a group of 'similar' individuals.

The following table outlines some of the key differences and similarities between the themes in Chapter Six.

Figure 9.2: Similarities and Difference Between Themes (Chapter Six)

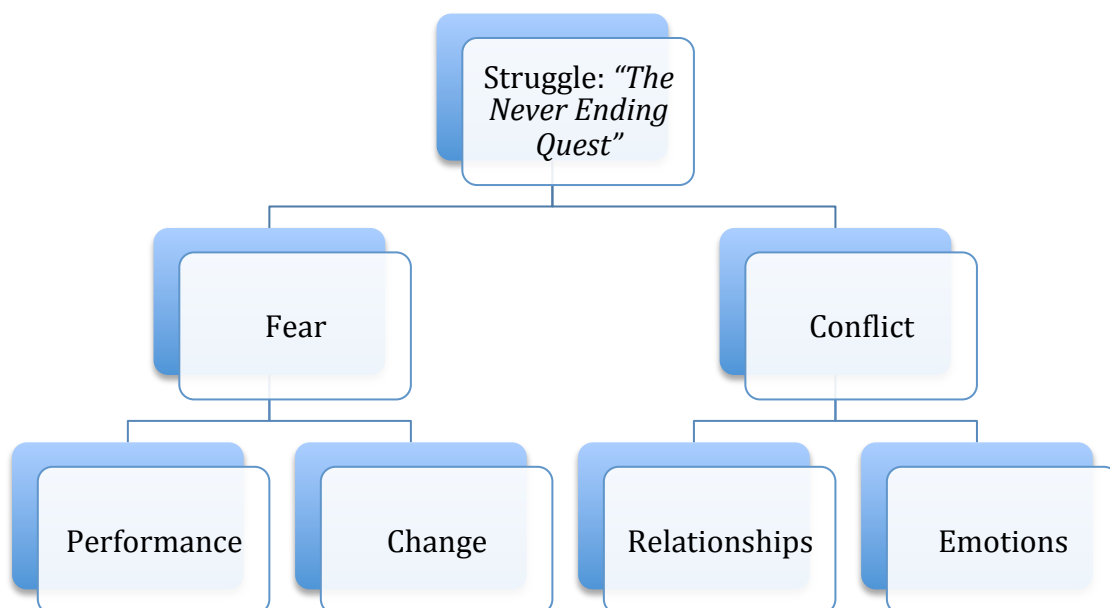
	Becoming An Orchestral Musician	The Collective
<i>Similarities</i>	Both indicated musical identity construction for the musicians, highlighting the importance of social processes on musical identity formation	
<i>Differences</i>	This theme described musical identity formation in childhood and adolescence	This theme explored musical identity construction in a professional setting
	External Influence	'Innate' Musicality
<i>Similarities</i>	Both themes explored the joint processes that encouraged the individuals to become professional orchestral musicians	
<i>Differences</i>	This theme described the social processes and environment that encouraged the individuals to become professional orchestral musicians	This theme looked at the personal impact the individuals' perception of their 'innate' musicality had on their decision to become professional orchestral musicians
	"The Army Of Ants"	Membership
<i>Similarities</i>	Both demonstrated the sense of normality and belonging that was important to the individuals –	

	these aspects formed their collective musical identities and underlined the importance of the shared experiences they had.	
<i>Differences</i>	This theme explored the deindividuation that the musicians encountered and how they expressed this feeling through the use of animal metaphors	This theme described the importance of belonging to an orchestra and retaining a collective identity as one unit

9.3.2 Chapter Seven Revisited

Figure 9.3: Superordinate, Subordinate and Emergent Themes

(Chapter Seven)



The theme 'Struggle: *"The Never Ending Quest"*' investigated the fear the participants felt (in performance and in terms of change) and how they coped with these perceived fears. Chapter Seven then continued by highlighting the conflicting relationships that the musicians often reported having with classical music and how it could have a negative emotional impact on them.

Fear represented the often complex relationships the musicians could have with their orchestras and with audiences. Analysis of the interviews concluded that there was a conflict between the musicians' perceived ideas and the actual events that they experienced (eg. perceiving that they had performed badly but had actually played extremely well). This theme explored the conflicting feelings that the musicians reported experiencing (eg. both uncertainty and stability), signifying the power relationship that existed between orchestra and musician.

In the theme 'Conflict' the musicians' explored the different roles that they could adopt (e.g. performer and spectator). The accounts in this theme demonstrated how the individuals prioritised the role of 'orchestral musician' over other roles within their lives, showing the prominent placement of this role within every aspect of their lives. The theme of 'Conflict' also showed how the musicians placed themselves in identity-confirming situations to reinforce their 'orchestral musician' role.

These two themes demonstrated the overall commitment of the musicians to being professional orchestral musicians. The following table outlines the differences and similarities of the themes in Chapter Seven.

Figure 9.4: Similarities and Difference Between Themes (Chapter Seven)

	Fear	Conflict
<i>Similarities</i>	These themes explored the personal and professional struggles that the professional musicians encountered	
<i>Differences</i>	The theme demonstrated the perceived fears that the musicians encountered and demonstrates why the individuals often formed a Professional Performance Identity during a performance	This theme described how the professional orchestral musicians were sometimes unable to achieve a healthy work and life balance
	Performance	Change
<i>Similarities</i>	Both these themes explored the musicians' perceptions that they had of their performances and what it would be like if they changed careers.	
<i>Differences</i>	This theme represented the fear that the musicians often felt of possibly not being able to 'survive' in the orchestra	This theme was contradictory to the 'Performance' theme as the musicians reported that although they

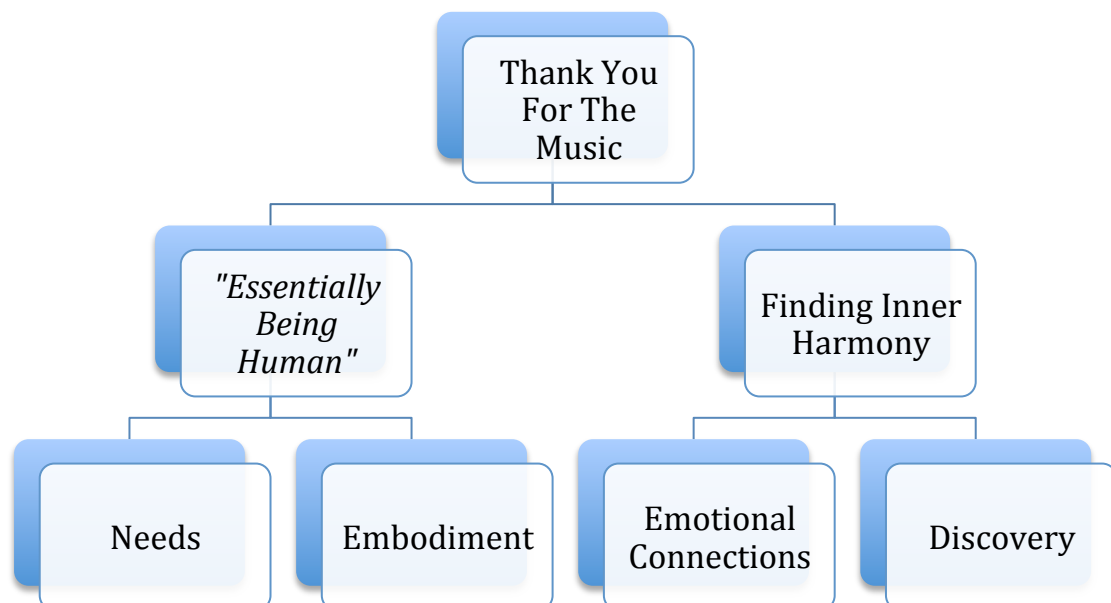
	and perform to the standard that was expected of them	sometimes felt that they might not 'survive' the orchestra they were unable to leave it due to a fear of professional change and not having the skills to do another job
	Relationships	Emotions
<i>Similarities</i>	Both themes represented an imbalance in the life of the musicians due to the salient placement of their professional orchestral musical identity	
<i>Differences</i>	This theme indicated the problematic relationship that the individuals could have with classical music as they sometimes were unable to view it through anything other than a professional lens, or to 'switch off' from it and sometimes felt they had to manufacture emotions to perform convincingly	The theme explored the physical and psychological conflict that the musicians can experience because they prioritise their professional orchestral musician identity over the negative physical experiences that they sometimes encounter

	in the orchestra	
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9.3.3 Chapter Eight Revisited

Figure 9.5: Superordinate, Subordinate and Emergent Themes

(Chapter Eight)



The theme ‘Thank You For The Music’ represented the reasons why the musicians chose to continue in their profession and explored the fundamental needs, emotional connections and personal development they felt in their relationships with both classical music and the profession.

The theme *“Essentially Being Human”* explored the importance of playing an instrument and how being a musician was experienced as a core psychological

need by the interviewees. The participants expressed the view that playing an instrument was a natural and healthy activity to undertake in both physical and psychological ways.

In the theme ‘Finding Inner Harmony’ the participants were concerned with how the classical repertoire enabled them to gain emotional regulation, emotional connections and a sense of fulfilment in their profession. Music was viewed as a maintenance activity that addressed issues of autonomy and identity.

These two themes demonstrated how the individuals viewed being an orchestral musician through a positive lens. The following table outlines the differences and similarities of the themes in Chapter Eight.

Figure 9.6: Similarities and Difference Between Themes (Chapter Eight)

	<i>“Essentially Being Human”</i>	Finding Inner Harmony
<i>Similarities</i>	These two themes explored why the musicians continued within and progressed with the profession	
<i>Differences</i>	This theme focused in particular on how the musicians described their relationships with classical music – as meeting a core need.	This theme focused on the emotional connections, emotional regulation and sense of freedom that classical music gave to the

	They often did this by comparing the relationship to physiological processes	musicians. Music was viewed as a maintenance activity that addressed issues of autonomy and identity
	Needs	Embodiment
<i>Similarities</i>	These two themes indicated a sense of completion for the musicians. They outlined the physical responses to the music that they felt and how being a professional orchestral musician was a physical process as well as a psychological one	
<i>Differences</i>	This theme described how the musicians often expressed their relationships with music as a biological need – comparing it to food	This theme investigated how the musicians wanted playing and performing to become a natural and automatic process
	Emotional Connections	Discovery
<i>Similarities</i>	These themes both represent the past, present and future journeys for the individuals	
<i>Differences</i>	This theme explored the crucial importance that classical music had for the musicians in terms of	This theme described how it was not only the music that encouraged the musicians to stay in

	why they continued within the profession or continued playing their instruments	the profession but it was also the overall journey and experience that influenced them
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The following tables outline Jack and Beth’s stories in turn, as they relate to the emergent themes. This is done to show how the emergent themes relate to the participants individual stories. This is achieved by giving extracts of dialogue from the interviews with Jack and Beth corresponding to the previously outlined emergent themes, and explaining how these themes directly relate to their individual accounts.

Figure 9.7: Jack’s Story

Emergent Theme	Dialogue
External Influences	<i>“my parents uh listened to classical music and I just <u>loved</u> (.) the sound of a symphony orchestra”</i>
‘Innate’ Musicality	<i>“I wanted to do it and <u>then</u> I found that I could do it”</i>
<i>“The Army Of Ants”</i>	<i>“you can so easily and quickly get <u>completely</u> institutionalised.”</i>
Membership	<i>“I suppose people want to make connections with each other and with you know it it gives us a (.) feeling of being (.) sort of normal”</i>
Performance	<i>“I survived another day and so I I sort of I do eh eh I’m quite I feel quite em proud isn’t quite the right word but quite pleased</i>

	<i>that I am able to have sort of survived this long”</i>
Change	<i>“if I have to do something on my own or something its like, oh right I’ve got to I’ve got to do this myself and its eh.”</i>
Relationships	<i>“I wouldn’t say that I have sort of listened to classical music that much for pleasure now. But eh it’s what gives me the most pleasure really, yeah classical music. A piece of music a a really fantastic piece of classical music would probably give me the most pleasure to listen to. Although I hate going to concerts, never liked it. I get quite twitchy.”</i>
Emotions	<i>“I discovered that I had developed an allergy to the nickel on the mouthpiece. So everytime I put the thing on my face it it everything would just sort of sieze up and all my muscles would become so sore and I couldn’t couldn’t produce notes and everything was this effort, terrible. And I struggled and I struggled and I struggled and I tried everything.”</i> <i>“I would rather have panic attacks than be dislocated from what I’m doing”</i>
Needs	<i>“I just went on to sort of devour the whole symphony and then the whole opera and then lots of other stuff and it just I just had this huge appetite for listening and discovering music.”</i>
Embodiment	<i>“that’s the key thing is just feel really easy and other times I’ve got that it’s been through a hard slog of preparation. Em and doing it and doing it and doing it to such an extent that em (.) it</i>

	<i>really is like walking or something we do everyday because you've practiced it so much em (.) you know so it's a bit like that"</i>
Emotional Connections	<i>"I do remember the pieces that when I discovered them that I liked them that they really they really got hold of me and I absolutely loved it."</i>
Discovery	<i>"it just <u>absolutely</u> captivated me em I think it was eh I suppose it was sort of discovery of it as much as the sound itself"</i>

Figure 9.8: Beth's Story

Emergent Theme	Dialogue
External Influences	<i>"it runs in the family and my mum used to play when she was younger. So my experience of being a classical musician you have youth orchestras when you are growing up and it's always really good fun."</i>
'Innate' Musicality	<i>"it's something em it came naturally to me. I didn't I didn't have to work hard at it."</i>
<i>"The Army Of Ants"</i>	<i>"I mean you don't have to think for yourself a lot of the time. You get led around you know everyone makes a joke of it it's like you know baa (makes the noise of a sheep) walking through airports you know just like all walk through in a group"</i>
Membership	<i>"it doesn't matter if I'm there or if someone else is there"</i>
Performance	<i>"when I first got my job em I started getting panicky. Em I think everyone at some stage has had some kind of (.) stage fright to some extent. Em and for me it happened whn I first got the"</i>

	<i>job.”</i>
Change	<i>“a lot of people are scared I think to em (.) it’s to do with if you’ve done it for this long it’s too scared to change and em what if I don’t get another job? Or like the fear of the unknown?”</i>
Relationships	<i>“some of the people in the orchestra really (.) live in a bubble. Em but they never need to get out of that bubble cause they only talk to each other and other people who are musicians.”</i>
Emotions	<i>“I think (.) I’ll really enjoy (.) you know paying to go and see a concert and get the the pleasure out of it you know cause all em (.) all I’ve done is just (.) played the notes.”</i>
Needs	<i>“I just I mean I’m just eh hungry for more. And that’s nothing to do with the failed marriage either, if that’s em I definitely would have been doing this at this stage.”</i>
Embodiment	<i>“as musicians you have to not mind the performing cause that’s what you do, you like it. People look at you but you don’t have to communicate with them. You just have to communicate through your instruments.”</i>
Emotional Connections	<i>“I mean it’s a wonderful way to express yourself and you know you get really (.) excited or really sad you know (.) if the music is. That’s wonderful.”</i>
Discovery	<i>“I got a real buzz out of (.) particularly <u>discovering</u> music.”</i>

The accounts from each participant were reflections on their lived experiences of being professional orchestral musicians. For Jack and Beth being a professional

orchestral musician has been engrained in their lives since childhood and adolescence as they were both encouraged to consider this career by external influences (highlighted by the theme of 'innate' musicality). The extracts from Jack and Beth represent the impact that being a professional orchestral musician has had on all aspects of their lives. The accounts given by Jack and Beth were reflective of their current professional positions at the time of the interview. For example Beth had a very detached perspective on being a professional musician because she was planning on leaving the orchestra when she was being interviewed. Belonging to an orchestra was vitally important to Jack however and the unity with the orchestra was something that had a crucial importance on the formation of his musical identity.

Beth often felt underappreciated by her orchestra due to her position within it. Parasuraman and Prohit (2000) demonstrated classical musicians' lack of opportunities for creative input, which was linked to their feelings of distress, anxiety and boredom. Beth explained how she often felt restricted because she was unable to express her own feelings in performances due to the hierarchy that can exist within the orchestra and her relative lack of power. This was one of the struggles that Beth described in detail throughout her interview. Beth also described the stage fright she encountered when she entered the profession. Jack also discussed in depth the panic attacks that he had frequently experienced in the orchestra. Zaza *et al.* (1998) suggested that further explorations of individual experiences are required to plan how to prevent illness and musculoskeletal disorders amongst musicians. Jack felt that discussing his lived experience of being a performing orchestral musician helped him overcome his panic attacks

as it was a way in which to make sense of the conflict and struggles that he had encountered. Jack also described how he often adopted a 'Professional Performance Identity' in order to overcome his panic attacks, and how visualisation techniques aided him in overcoming these attacks and maintaining his professional position. Crnivec (2004) had previously suggested measures for improved health protection such as, mindfulness. Jack spoke about the conflict that he encountered as a professional orchestral musician and how it impacted on other areas in his life, however he prioritised his orchestral musician identity over his physical health. The psychological need to perform the French Horn was prioritised over the physical pains that he felt when he was allergic to his mouthpiece. Kaufman – Cohnen and Ratzon (2011) stated that negative health implications occur because the classical musicians disregard the physical discomfort they experience until their orchestral performances are over because of their commitment to their performance and to the profession. Brodsky (2006) suggested that career advancement may come at the cost of musicians' own health and wellbeing. Jack in particular supported the findings of Kreutz *et al.* (2009) who claimed that professional classical musicians' regard their psychological health as more important than their physical health. When Beth spoke of the conflict she experienced she described it using second person accounts, which again highlighted her detachment from the orchestra at the time of the interview.

Although Jack and Beth gave very different and unique accounts of their lived experiences of being professional orchestral musicians, central to both these accounts was the salient placement of the orchestral musician identity and the

crucial importance of their emotional connection to classical music. Jack and Beth maintained their relationships with classical music through practice and exerted agency in their playing through this. They both demonstrated a desire and a need to perform classical music and saw it as a core element of their lives. Beth and Jack both encountered different struggles but still valued their relationship with music. Although Beth was planning on leaving the orchestra she never set aside her strong association with classical music and stated that she planned on maintaining this relationship even after she left the orchestra. Smith (1988) found that musicians showed no desire to play their instruments after retirement. This could suggest an unhealthy relationship with one's instrument, although there was slight resentment towards it when Smith's participants were unable to play it.

Beth and Jack's stories raised important issues regarding the lived experiences of professional orchestral musicians, which have wider implications for such musicians generally. In particular Chapter Two outlined the serious health issues that classical musicians reported frequently. Brodsky (2006) and Dobson and Gaunt (2013) highlighted how players are often unprepared for the demands of the profession. Clark *et al.* (2014) demonstrated the psychological importance of self – reflection for professional classical musicians. Coping strategies and methods need to be revisited in the orchestral setting to help more musicians overcome the type of struggles that have been demonstrated throughout this thesis. This thesis has raised a number of important issues in reference to the health implications of being a professional orchestral musician. This may have

wider implications for professional musicians in the future and is something that should be revisited in future studies.

The following section revisits the research questions and outlines how the findings of the research reported in this thesis relate to the original research questions.

9.4 Research Questions Revisited

This section revisits the initial research questions, outlined in Chapter Three, describing the main findings relevant to each.

9.4.1 How do professional orchestral musicians construct, negotiate and maintain their musical identities?

This first research question is separated out into each of the following three components purely to explore the relationships between the subthemes and processes. This does not imply that construction, negotiation and maintenance are separate elements that operate alone but instead they can be seen to work alongside each other over time.

9.4.2 Musical Identity Construction

The following figure demonstrates the three subordinate themes that were found to influence the participants' construction of their musical identities: 'Becoming An Orchestral Musician', 'The Collective' and 'Finding Inner Harmony'. Identity

construction can be defined as a multi-faceted process achieved through personal choices, behaviours and environmental factors (Juuti, 2012). The ten participants explained in their interviews how these themes were the foundations of their musical identity construction. Analysis of the ten individual narratives led to the conclusion that musical identities are predominantly constructed through external influences and experiences. The basis of the ten participants' musical identities were influenced by the subthemes outlined in Figure 9.9 The subthemes in the figure signify the founding elements of the formation of their 'orchestral musician' identity.

Figure 9.9: Musical Identity Construction

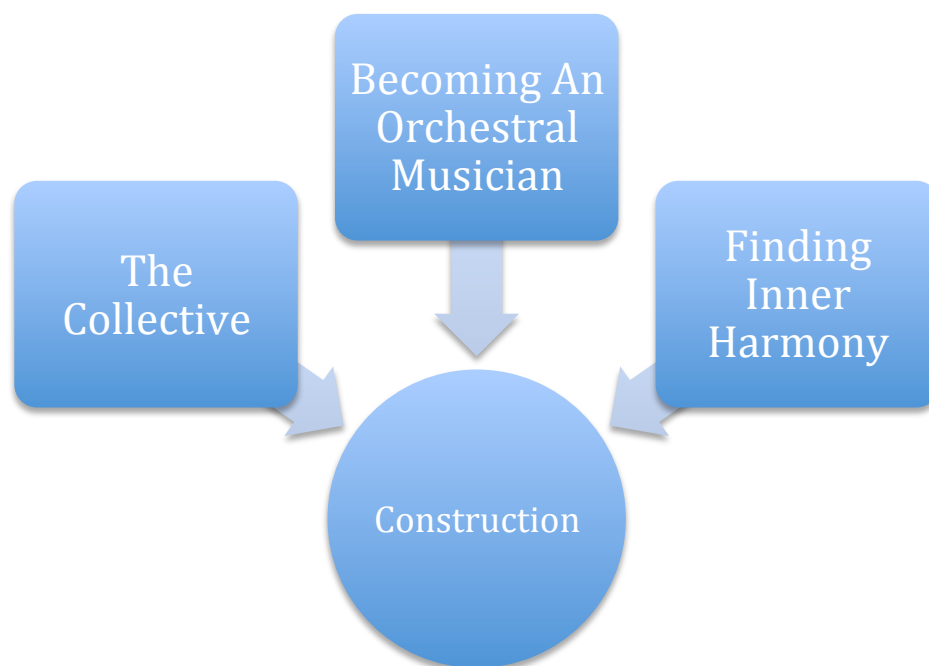


Figure 9.9 indicates how a particular identity (orchestral musician) was constructed through a combination of personal experiences and social actions. The current findings support the conclusions of Turner (1982), who emphasised the importance for identity construction of membership and belonging. The

current findings also illustrate how the construction of a musical identity is originally a subjective concept based on self-reflections and experiences.

9.4.3 Musical Identity Negotiation

This figure represents the four subordinate themes that influence musical identity negotiation; 'Fear', 'Conflict', 'Finding Inner Harmony' and 'The Collective'. Identity negotiation can be defined as an agentic process, shaped and anchored by social roles and through personal experiences (Juuti & Littleton, 2010) – occurring after musical identity foundations have initially taken place. This figure represents how the ten participants mediated and shaped their orchestral musician identities through the social and personal experiences they encountered – represented in the subthemes. For example, when Jack experienced performance anxiety he shaped his initial 'orchestral musician' identity to form a Professional Performance Identity as a means of 'survival'.

Figure 9.10: Musical Identity Negotiation



Figure 9.10 represents the subthemes that can impact musical identity negotiation - due to social influences and self-concepts. This figure represents the experiences the musicians encountered that encouraged them to negotiate their initial 'orchestral musician' identity to adhere to their surrounding experiences and environments.

9.4.4 Musical Identity Maintenance

This figure illustrates the three subordinate themes that influence musical identity maintenance: 'Fear', 'Finding Inner Harmony' and "*Essentially Being Human*". Identity maintenance can be described as how talk and actions can preserve one's identities and reinforce certain traits that define an individual

(MacDonald *et al.*, 2005). The musicians attempted to preserve their identity as an orchestral musician and emphasised certain traits that helped define this identity. For example, experiencing fear within their professional work gave the musicians a motivation that encouraged them to play to the best of their abilities and help them preserve a positive and 'ideal image' of themselves as orchestral musicians.

Figure 9.11: Musical Identity Maintenance

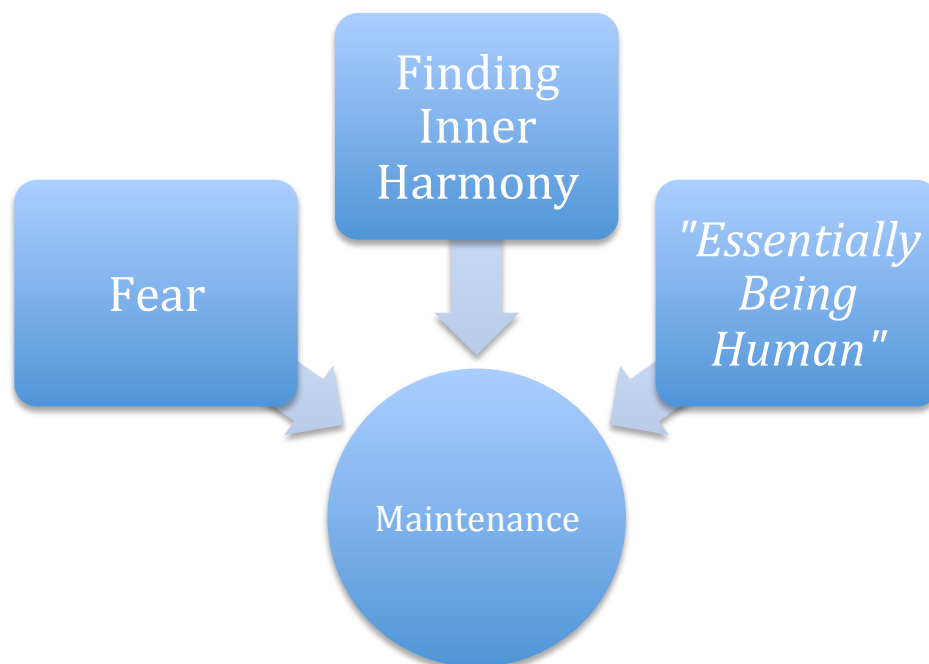


Figure 9.11 demonstrates how the musicians maintain their idealised image as an orchestral musician as the musicians show agency and autonomy over this particular process.

9.4.5 The Temporal Process

Figure 9.12 illustrates how the musical identities of orchestral musicians could be described as temporal and performative processes; echoing the recent definition of musical identities by Hargreaves *et al.* (2015, pg.3) as “*something we do rather than something we have*”. The elements of construction, negotiation and maintenance could be seen as elements that intertwined and ran alongside each other as ongoing processes.

Figure 9.12: The Temporal Process

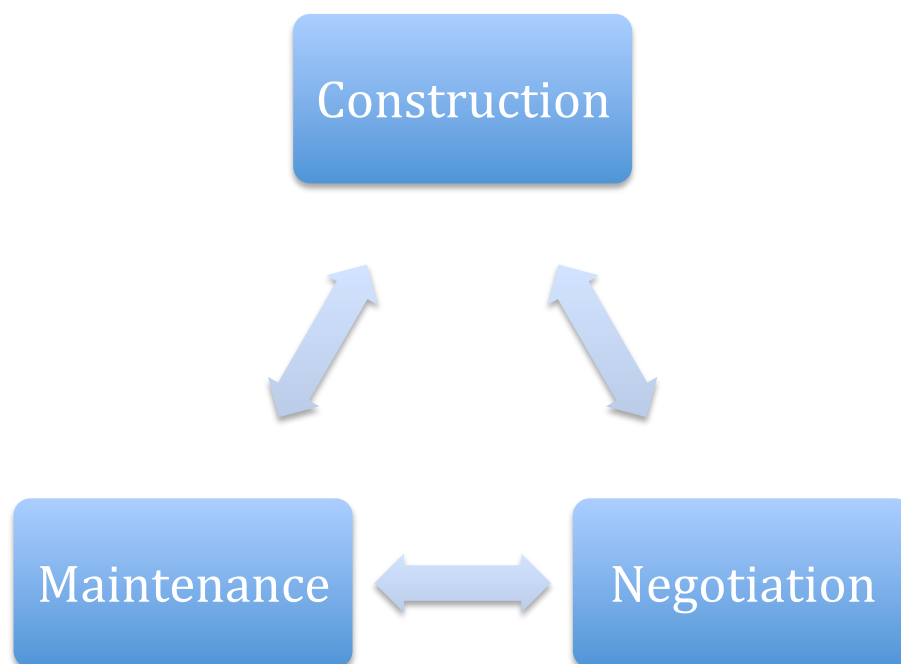


Figure 9.12 outlines how musical identities for the participants are comprised of ongoing, temporal and performative processes. The findings of this study support Erikson’s (1968) model of psychosocial development that viewed identity as a fluid and ever changing process, that is never fully completed. This

process was also described by Potter and Wetherell (1987) who proposed that individuals are constantly participating in identity work and representing, and indeed creating, who they are through their talk and experiences. The interviews demonstrated how the musicians in this study were constantly participating in identity work to negotiate and maintain who they wished to be perceived as (ie. as orchestral musicians).

To conclude, the musical identities of the participants were based on a combination of personal, social and cultural expectations. The aim to attain an 'idealised self' was often disrupted by the realities of the profession. However, the strongly positive emotional and physical connections with both the music and their instruments encouraged the musicians to continue on their journey of discovery and self-fulfilment as professional musicians.

9.4.6 What are the lived experiences of professional orchestral musicians?

The centrality of the 'orchestral musician' identity was echoed by all ten participants. It was demonstrated how the musicians prioritised this particular identity over their other identities (e.g. physical). For some of the participants (e.g. Michael) they even reported being unable to '*switch off*' from this professional role, which often caused identity conflict. The musicians organised their lives in line with their identity as an orchestral performer because it is an identity that so underpins their lives. The data demonstrated how the musicians altered their behaviours, and place themselves within identity conforming

situations to prioritise their identity of 'orchestral musician'. It was shown that if this identity salience process is disturbed, then psychological incoherence can occur – suggesting the embedded nature of the orchestral musician identity (formed in childhood and adolescence) and the crucial placement it has within the participants lives.

9.5 Methodological Considerations

IPA has been an effective analytical framework for the work reported in this thesis. Through its reflexivity and flexibility, IPA allowed me to produce a rich and robust account of the lived experiences of the professional orchestral musicians. The richness of this data could not have been gathered through utilising another methodology.

IPA allowed the participants to express their individual experiences of being professional orchestral musicians and enabled the musicians to give a reflexive account of their lived experiences due to the flexibility of IPA. In addition, IPA is an iterative process that allowed me to develop my interview technique from each interview. It introduced some subject areas the musicians wanted to explore that were not initially outlined as interview questions because IPA allowed the participants to share their unique experiences and lead the interviews.

IPA also highlighted the importance of *'bracketing'*, which gives the methodology validity and authenticity. Bracketing allowed me to set aside any preconceived ideas and assumptions, which could have impacted the research process. Therefore, I was able to explore the participants' experiences through a clear lens. Through the flexibility of IPA and by using semi-structured interviews I could explore any emotional reactions the participants might indicate and fully consider any topics they introduced.

This study has shown that an intensive study with a small sample size has yielded rich accounts of the professional musicians' experiences. The small sample size is justified by the quality of data and time for analysis that was possible. Having a small sample allowed me to spend considerable time on data collection and analysis, which produced rich and robust results. Throughout the analysis procedure I transcribed the interviews myself and conducted analysis through repeated readings of the data, which allowed me to form a connection with the data. Chapter Five gave a step-by-step account of the analytical procedure that was undertaken in this study, which illustrated the transparency and clarity of the collected data. This reflexive process outlined in Chapter Five demonstrated how this analysis has been conducted in a formulaic and logical manner.

9.6 Contribution To The Literature

This research relates to the discipline of Music Psychology and builds on the existing literature on musical identities, by investigating a previously under-researched topic – the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians. An overview of the contribution this thesis makes to the existing literature will be outlined in the following sections.

9.6.1 Identities

A small body of research has been carried out exploring the musical identities of classical musicians. Levine and Levine (1996) highlighted the disadvantage of commitment to the classical music profession such as: lack of control for the players, performance anxiety and the physical stressors of playing an instrument. Their study emphasised the fear of potential injury or disability and the frustration musicians feel when they do not acquire the technical skills they have set out to obtain and need for performance. The musicians interviewed in the current research also reported these challenges and explained the struggles they experienced in committing to this professional role. Levine and Levine (1996) asserted that being a professional musician gives performing individuals “*much of their identity*” (pg. 16). This statement had not been supported by any primary evidence but was an interpretation of previous literature. Bennett (2008a) has since investigated 152 musicians and found that being a classical music performer was indeed their ‘core identity’. The current study supported these findings and Levine and Levine’s proposals, with analysis of primary data from the professional musicians interviewed. In particular, findings reported in

Chapter Seven illustrated the centrality of the 'orchestral musician' identity and in Chapter Six the musicians reported how this particular identity had begun to be formed in childhood and adolescence, emphasising how long established this identity was for them.

Parasuraman and Purhoit (2000) indicated how musicians had previously felt they must submerge their individual identity to conform to the expectations of the orchestral group. This was again highlighted in Chapter Six through the subordinate theme 'The Collective', as the deindividuation that occurred within the orchestra was highlighted, alongside the benefits of membership. Parasuraman and Purhoit outlined the potential stressors professional musicians can experience due to these expectations, however analysis reported in this thesis outlined the benefits of this submersion; as the musicians obtained a feeling of being 'normal' by being surrounded by similar others and experienced a sense of unity.

Westby (1960, pg. 223) outlined the "*idealized self-image as a gifted and highly skilled artist*" and reported that this image had been constructed from a young age. He also suggested that the musicians he spoke to had not been encouraged to consider other occupational options during adolescence. In addition, Benedek *et al.* (2014) reported that classical musicians may be less open to new experiences. The research reported in this thesis demonstrated the implications of this lack of consideration of other occupations and new experiences. In particular, in Chapter Seven ('Fear of Change') the interview analysis indicated the negative outcomes of this lack of consideration of alternative occupations

and how the participants often felt they lacked any skills that could be applicable to other professions.

9.6.2 Becoming A Classical Musician

Davidson *et al.* (1996) and Davidson and Borthwick (2002) reported the influence parents have on their children's musical development. The analysis reported in Chapter Six demonstrated the 'External Influences' that impacted on the participants' decisions to become orchestral musicians. Supporting Davidson and Borthwick's findings, this current study demonstrated the importance of parental support and influence on the musicians' decision-making processes when they were younger. In particular, it has shown the importance of external influences on the decision to become a professional orchestral musician. 'Innate' characteristics were however not neglected but were viewed as less important than the external influences.

Hallam (2013) reported the crucial importance of the collective on the formation of musical identities. This present study also acknowledges the fundamental importance of the collective on musical identity formation in a number of different domains: home, school and within the orchestral environment. This study also outlined the continual process of becoming an orchestral musician; as this study has shown it is an ongoing and performative process that is never fully completed.

9.6.3 Health

Lonie (2009) previously framed the connection between playing music professionally and ill health. The current study reported in this thesis has outlined the negative health implications for orchestral musicians and how the participants often chose their emotional connections with classical music over their physical health. This supported the notion that “*our musical bodies are engrained with our musical identities*” (Elliot & Silverman, 2012, pg. 33), implying that pain and fear are the inevitable side effects of a career as a professional musician. Orchestral musicians are aware that success and achievement may come at the cost of their own health and wellbeing (Brodsky, 2006). The analysis of the interviews with the musicians here supported this claim but did however outline how they often attempted to avoid ill health. Kreutz *et al.* (2009) surveyed 273 music students and suggested one possible reason for professional musicians encountering pain and ill health could be because classical music students tended to regard their psychological health as more important than their physical health. The physical aspects of performing and professional role conflict outlined here in Chapter Seven (Section 7.3) similarly demonstrated how the musicians prioritised their orchestral roles over their physical health.

Kenny *et al.* (2014) highlighted how classical music students are unprepared for the demands of the orchestral profession. The authors suggested that the application of positive coping strategies (e.g. mock performance practice) could demotivate successful musicians. However, in the present study Jack reported the importance of using a range of coping strategies (e.g. visualisation techniques) and found them helpful, unlike what Kenny *et al.* proposed.

9.6.4 Classical Musicians' Relationships

Parasurman and Nachman (1987) reported how musicians' intense relationship with music is not enough on its own for them to continue within the profession. Brodsky (2006) contested this claim and reported the main reason why musicians continued in the profession was due to the emotional satisfaction they experienced. The current study reported in this thesis supports Brodsky's analysis, seen particularly in the findings presented in Chapter Eight ('Finding Inner Harmony') and demonstrates the central importance of music in maintaining the musicians' musical identities and ensuring that they continue in the profession. However, for those who were planning on leaving the orchestra the centrality of music within these musicians' lives was still acknowledged.

The importance of interpersonal relationships within the orchestra was outlined by Dobson and Gaunt (2013) and the current study supported this by demonstrating the importance of membership within the orchestra, throughout Chapter Six. In reference to the relationship between musician and instrument, Veerle and Tervaniemi (2013) reported that those who feel more connected to their instruments have lower performance anxiety. The notion of embodiment was outlined in this thesis and was shown to be a positive agentic process for the musicians, as they felt by having control over their instruments they were able to produce better performances.

9.6.5 Performance

Levine and Levine (1996) described playing an instrument as “*fundamentally an unnatural act*”, due to the physical strains of playing an instrument. However, whilst the musicians in this current study did report a number of physical stresses and indeed pain from playing, they also claimed that playing an instrument was “*essentially being human*”; in a psychological and physical sense. Boerner *et al.* (2004) reported the lack of creative freedom classical musicians experience due to the traditions of the classical music genre. The present study also highlighted the restrictions placed upon the orchestral musicians as they belong to the classical music genre. Langer *et al.* (2009) reported how orchestral musicians preferred performing if they were able to add some creative input into their performances. This was also suggested by participants within the present study. However, when the musicians were given the opportunity to include more freedom in their performance (e.g. Nathan trying to improvise) he felt unable to do so because it was not something he had been trained in.

This section has outlined the contribution this thesis adds to the existing literature surrounding classical musicians and the orchestra, demonstrating how this thesis supports but also contradicts past findings.

9.7 Research Limitations

In this study it may have been beneficial to interview musicians who play a wider range of instruments, as there were some instruments that were not represented in this sample. Kemp (1996) reported personality differences in a range of

instrumentalists and it would be interesting to explore if there are any differences in regards to identities and instrument type. This could highlight a limitation of obtaining participants through a snowball sampling technique. Additionally, it may have also been beneficial to investigate in-depth if there was a specific difference between 'rank and file' players' musical identities and section principal players' musical identities, or indeed if there were any overall musical identity differences between the numerous orchestral sections.

It would have been interesting to contact Beth when she had left the orchestra and revisit how her new situation affected her reflections of previously being a professional orchestral musician. It would also have been interesting to investigate her relationship with classical music once she had left and if there were any changes. Exploring the identities of participants who had left a professional career in music would be an interesting future direction for research.

In this study the impact and difference of the different orchestras that the participants were from was not investigated fully. Due to the small size of the sample from each orchestra it was difficult to make evaluations of the impact that the context may have had.

9.8 Wider Implications and Future Recommendations

After an in-depth investigation of the musical identities of professional orchestral musicians, possible areas that require further investigation will be

highlighted in this section. Referring back to the quote by Stowasser (2008, pg.1) in Chapter Two: *“The survival of all living things on this planet depends largely on their ability to adapt to environmental changes... Classical musicians are no different, and if they are to avoid extinction they need to develop the diverse skills required to survive in our present day multicultural, economic rationalist and computer dependent society”*. This quote showed the necessity for classical musicians to adapt to an ever-changing environment - a modern society. The findings of this thesis outlined the lived experiences of orchestral musicians within modern society and showed their existence within a genre that is often viewed as *“old music”* (Johnson, 2002). Throughout the interviews it was apparent how the musicians experienced struggle due to a range of factors, including genre expectations, placed upon them and the professional demands they encountered. This struggle needs to be addressed in a practical sense, as this thesis has outlined the fear, conflict and negative implications the musicians experienced because of these reported expectations and demands. However, the musicians may experience less struggle and fewer challenges if their voices were heard and their individual lived experiences were acknowledged. In the following sections, suggestions are made for future recommendations, while outlining the wider implications of these recommendations.

9.8.1 Becoming An Orchestral Musician

This section suggests possible changes towards the expectations and pressures placed upon aspiring professional musicians in childhood and adolescence. This

thesis has shown how a professional orchestral musician identity is formed; beginning in childhood and adolescence. The musicians reported that they did not consider other career paths, as they were constantly focused on practising for their career in the classical music profession (echoing the findings of Westby, 1960). Although this prepared individuals for the technical mastery required for the orchestral profession it placed pressure and restrictions upon these individuals as they expected to obtain professional roles in adulthood. However, this is not always realistic as not all individuals can gain these positions due to the highly competitive nature of the profession and demand for orchestral positions. Therefore, other career options could usefully be explored in childhood and adolescence – not to deter them from the orchestral profession but to encourage them to experience other professional alternatives. This prepares the individuals by giving alternative occupational opportunities to explore if they want or need to change their pathway towards being professional musicians.

9.8.2 Health And Wellbeing

This thesis has demonstrated how there is a need for more investigations into the coping strategies of professional orchestral musicians, such as individuals attempting to manage the demands and expectations of the profession. The current study has explored the meaning of music in the musicians' lives – demonstrating the central placement and crucial importance music has as a means of coping for the individuals. The musicians viewed music as a source of emotional regulation and a core reason as to why they continued within the

orchestra. However, it is important to investigate other coping mechanisms the musicians can and do use for emotional regulation. An investigation of other methods of expression, coping strategies and vehicles of emotional regulation would give a better insight into health maintenance strategies of professional musicians. In particular, Jack demonstrated the positive impact he experienced from self-reflection (as a coping strategy) when he was attempting to overcome his panic attacks and was undergoing counselling. The benefits of self-reflective assessments could be researched further by interviewing musicians who have used these and other techniques as a therapeutic intervention.

It is also important to address the musicians' difficulties in maintaining a healthy work/life balance given the pressures of performance. All ten of the musicians in this current study addressed the need to maintain a healthy work and life balance, but they also reported the detrimental effects of their 'all consuming' profession. It would be interesting to explore the means of maintaining a work/life balance through further interviews.

The possibility of not being able to play their instruments due to various physical and psychological disorders was described by some of the musicians. This was not explored in-depth and it would be interesting to interview musicians who have left the profession through ill-health and investigate their coping strategies, alongside the psychological and physical implications of this.

9.8.3 Performance

For the ten musicians in this study, being able to perform at consistently high levels was their priority. However, the physical and psychological restrictions of performance were described by many of them (e.g. performance fears). Papageorgi *et al.* (2007) suggested that performance anxiety was a concern for both undergraduate students and professional musicians. However, this appears to be a concern that is often neglected within educational and professional contexts. This claim could be explored further by exploring the support and structures placed within training institutions and professional orchestras.

It was shown in this study that the musicians often formed a Professional Performance Identity in order to approach their performance through a professional lens and distract themselves from any personal and social elements that could affect their performance. The formation of this identity appeared to be a successful coping method and is something that could be further investigated. In addition, the concept of mindfulness, as well as visualisation techniques that some participants described in the interviews, could be explored further to enable performing musicians to focus on the task at hand and deter them from experiencing any performance anxiety and fear within performance. It might also be interesting to compare orchestral musicians' coping techniques in performance to those adopted by musicians from other genres.

9.8.4 Music Education

As Dobson (2012) and Oakland (2014) have previously suggested, interventions might be explored within conservatoires to promote a healthier lifestyle for the musicians in their future careers. This current study supported these future recommendations and suggests different ways of coping that could be promoted both within conservatoires and professional settings. Kenny *et al.* (2014) and other authors have highlighted how players are unprepared for the psychological and physical demands expected from them when entering a professional orchestra. Current conservatoire practice could be explored to investigate what (if any) support is in place to prepare the students for these professional demands. Students within conservatoires could be interviewed or focus groups could be held to explore their expectations of the profession and the support systems they feel are in place for them or that they would like. It could also be useful for professional orchestral musicians to mentor students and allow the students to get more of an insight into the realities of the profession. Musicians who have encountered difficulties (e.g. performance anxiety) could give talks to students in educational environments and describe their coping techniques, while highlighting the challenges they encountered.

Teaching techniques within music education contexts could be investigated and evaluated to explore whether or not they are suitable in terms of professional training for the future professionals. A study exploring the students' views about the profession, their expectations for a career in music and how their training could be improved would be an interesting area to consider for future research.

9.8.5 Professional Structures

Discontent in the orchestral workplace was highlighted in this present study and in previous scholarly literature (Levine & Levine, 1996). More research into the professional structures within an orchestra could be explored, such as the professional development support opportunities (if any) that are available for musicians. A focus group study could be conducted with professional musicians discussing the support they feel they have or would like within the orchestral environment. This could examine both the formal support (e.g. training courses) and informal support from colleagues that musicians both receive and would like in orchestral environments.

To further this topic, conducting another study but with a larger sample in order to gather enough information to offer a proposal to music companies in regards to their musicians' health and wellbeing could be useful.

9.9 Conclusion

This investigation has developed an understanding of the lived experiences and musical identities of professional orchestral musicians, outlining the complex and often problematic nature of musical identities for the participants. Analysis revealed a number of key themes as being important to the professional orchestral musicians and their musical identities. 'Musical Foundations' outlined the fundamental elements that influence musical identity construction, formed within different social contexts. 'Struggle *"The Never Ending Quest"*' signified the challenges experienced by the musicians when they encountered the

professional world of the orchestra and highlighted the coping techniques the musicians adopted to 'survive' within the orchestral environment. Finally, 'Thank You For The Music' signified why the musicians continue within the profession and highlighted how classical music and the participants' musical instruments are utilised as a form of musical identity maintenance. Further research will aid professional orchestral musicians in terms of clarifying the means by which they can maintain a positive approach to the range of challenges they face in their careers

Appendices

Appendix A: Recruitment Letter

Mary Claire Renfrew
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Dear

My name is Claire Renfrew and I am a PhD research student at Glasgow Caledonian University. My PhD involves research in the field of Music Psychology with a specific interest regarding classical musicians. I was given your name by (contact name) as my research involves interviewing professional classical musicians and discussing their experience of being in a professional orchestra. The research would involve taking part in a one - hour interview, which would be held at your place of work or at Glasgow Caledonian University at a time that suits you. Attached is an information sheet with more details about the research and a consent form for the interview. If you require any more information please feel free to contact me at the above email address or telephone number.

Thank you very much for your time and I look forward to meeting you.

Kind regards

Mary Claire Renfrew

Appendix B: Information Sheet

Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a Music Psychology research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Contact me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

My name is Claire Renfrew. I am a postgraduate student at Glasgow Caledonian University, and I am conducting this study in order to fulfill the requirements of my PhD. The purpose of the study is to explore the life of a professional classical musician.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been asked to take part because the research requires ten classical musicians to take part in individual interviews to discuss what it is like to be a classical musician, all the participants will be professional classical musicians.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to provide consent. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect you in any way.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you consent to taking part, you will be asked to attend a one-hour interview. During the interview, questions will be asked with regards to the topic of being a classical musician, this will include: what it means to you to be a classical musician, your experience of being in an orchestra and will focus on the creating, performing, listening and appraising aspects of being a classical musician. All sessions will be recorded for further analysis.

Will the information I provide be kept confidential?

Yes. No one (but myself) will have access to any information that could identify you.

What will happen to the results?

The results will be written up in my PhD thesis. It is necessary for me to regain all original data until July 2021.

Who is supervising the research?

My Director of studies is Professor Raymond MacDonald and supervisor is Dr Barbara Duncan, who will be happy to provide further information if necessary.

Contact for further information:

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Appendix C: Participant Consent Form

Mary Claire Renfrew

Glasgow Caledonian University, Psychology Department

Investigating Musical Identities Of Professional Classical Musicians

Please initial boxes

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, without giving any reason, and without my treatment or any help that I receive being affected.

3. I agree to take part in the above study with the understanding that there will be no monetary remuneration.

Participants name

Date

Signature

Researchers name

Date

Signature

Appendix D: Guide to Data Transcription

(.) – Pause

(1) – Long pause

(C) – Researcher's Dialogue

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