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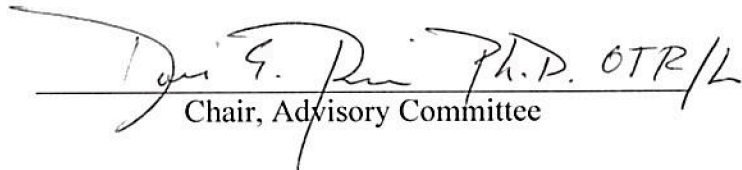
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EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG ADULT ROCK MUSICIANS
THROUGH AN OCCUPATIONAL LENS

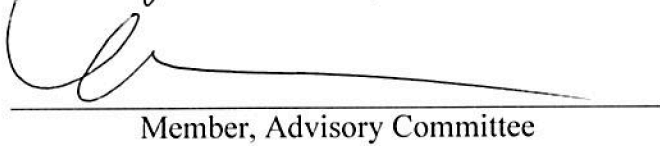
By


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THROUGH AN OCCUPATIONAL LENS

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Bachelor of Science
Eastern Kentucky University
Richmond, Kentucky
May 2015

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
Eastern Kentucky University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the participating musicians
whose generosity, candor, and friendliness
made this work a reality.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to extend a sincere thanks to everyone who supported me during this process. The members of my committee generously volunteered their time to help me construct and refine this manuscript, and I appreciate their contributions. I am especially grateful to my mentor, Dr. Pierce, who patiently guided me through this process and provided indispensable direction and encouragement. This final product is the result of months of intensive work, and I would be remiss if I did not extend thanks to my husband and friends who gave me the space and time I needed to dedicate to this project. Finally, thank you to the musicians who participated. It was a joy to record your stories, and I will always treasure the central roles you played in this work.

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study examined the occupational experiences of young adult rock musicians using first-hand accounts solicited through semi-structured interviews. Participants included 9 male rock musicians ages 19 to 35 who actively participated in an income-generating rock band. A grounded theory approach was used for data analysis and interpretation. Participation in a rock band was conceptualized as a dynamic process between identifying as a musician, facing challenges, and meeting challenges, which either led musicians to persevere or discontinue engagement in the band. Results challenge typical stereotypes associated with rock band participation and contribute to understanding the connection between occupational engagement and motivation. Also discussed are the relationships between occupation and identity, subjective conceptualizations of occupations, and rock music as a meaningful occupation.

Keywords: occupational science, grounded theory, rock musician, young adult

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CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

As Betty Hasselkus (2002) eloquently reflected, “Occupation is a powerful source of meaning in our lives; meaning arises from occupation and occupation arises from meaning” (p. 14). The discipline of occupational science has documented diverse ways that occupation takes form in individuals’ lives. Whether by exploring the intricacies of daily routines (Royeen, 2010) or the subjective meaning of a valued leisure pursuit (Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby, & Lane, 2004; Abrahams, 2008), occupational science inquiry has generated valuable information about the ways that humans structure and experience their time (Pierce, 2014). For dedicated student musicians, the occupation of playing music shapes much of their time, yet provides a level of intangible fulfillment that is highly motivating (Guptill, 2012; McCreedy & Reid, 2007; Park, Guptill, & Sumsion, 2007). By comparison, little is known about the experiences of young adult rock musicians and their highly valued occupation of playing rock music. This study aims to fill in a gap in occupational science literature by describing the subjective occupational experiences of young adult rock musicians, using a grounded theory approach in order to capture the most authentic picture of the musicians’ participation.

Occupation and Identity

Occupational science and occupational therapy literature documented the deep connection between occupation and identity (Abrahams, 2008; American Occupational

Therapy Association [AOTA], 2014; Pierce, 2014; Taylor & Kay, 2015). Popular occupational therapy theories such as the Model of Human Occupation (Kielhofner, 2008) and the Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) Model (Law et al., 1996) present the relationships between person and occupation as dynamic and interrelated. An individual's occupations are both a product of an individual's identity and a shaping force in one's life.

Kielhofner (2008) conceptualized the connection through an open systems model, whereby an individual's volition, habituation, and performance capacity interact with the environment to produce occupational performance. Volition, the term used to describe a person's internal motivations and beliefs, is integral to the process, suggesting that an individual's sense of self is inextricable from the experience of occupation (Kielhofner, 2008). For example, in the case of Lutheran immigrants, volitional factors including religious beliefs motivated church participation, which in turn facilitated cultural assimilation (Adrian, 2013). Other factors that shape an individual's occupational choices include their roles and routines, which could include informal roles such as family member, friend, or more formal positions such as church member or choir director (Kielhofner, 2008). The final aspect of occupational performance is performance capacity, or the skills an individual possesses which enable or challenge participation (Kielhofner, 2008). Possessing an affinity for singing could contribute to an identity as a choir member, whereas someone who did not possess the same skill set may simply consider himself or herself to be a church-goer.

A person's identity is also a central component of the PEO Model. In this model, occupational performance is elicited where the affordances of the environment and attributes of the individual overlap (Law et al., 1996). To revisit the example of Lutheran

immigrants, intrinsic factors including spiritual desire to participate in church activities and the psychological need to connect with others played a role in the decision to partake in church services (Adrian, 2013; Law et al., 1996). Extrinsic, environmental factors such as the proximal location of the church and the inviting social context of the congregation further supported participation that aligned with the immigrants' wants and needs (Adrian, 2013; Law et al., 1996). As a result, the demands of church participation matched immigrants' existing skills, provided sufficient challenge to maintain interest, and as a whole embodied the immigrants' identities (Adrian, 2013).

The definition of the word occupation is another theoretical aspect that ties occupation to identity. While a variety of definitions for the term occupation have been generated through the history of occupational science, many delineations of the word engender a sense of identity (Hasselkus, 2002). Pierce (2001) reasons that occupation is a "personally constructed, nonrepeatable experience" (p. 139), unique to the moment in time when it occurs and, by nature, subject to an individual's own interpretation. Hasselkus (2002) goes one step further in linking occupation to identity, defining occupation as "a principal agent in the selfing process that helps forge identity" (p. 17). Whether occupations are envisioned on a more basic level of meeting an individual's needs (Law et al., 1996) or more complexly as actions that "bring meaning and purpose to life" (World Federation of Occupational Therapists, 2012, as cited in AOTA, 2014, p. S5), it is clear that occupations play an integral role in shaping a person's identity.

Individuals choose occupations that fit their perceived senses of self, and they are also molded by the occupations in which they partake (Sato, 1988; Taylor & Kay, 2015). For example, to a serious skateboarder, skating involves more than the action of wheels

against the ground; the occupation appeals to the individual's drive to take risks and experience freedom, while skating also provides an avenue for self-expression and bravery (Haines, Smith, & Baxter, 2010). Members of a Japanese motorcycle gang experienced a similar phenomenon, riding for both the physical heightening of alertness and the fulfilling sense of companionship with other gang members (Sato, 1988). In both of these risk-taking occupations, the individuals were motivated to partake by an intrinsic urge to pursue excitement, and they were subsequently influenced by the experience.

Occupations contribute to gender conceptualizations, as well (Abrahams, 2008; Beagan & Saunders, 2005). Much occupational science literature examines occupations of women (Pierce, 2014). Personally ascribed meaning behind such occupations as preparing holiday meals, enacting daily patterns of life, and participating in leisure supplement the understanding of women's occupations (Erlandsson & Eklund, 2006; Ludwig, Hattjar, Russell, & Winston, 2007; Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby, & Lane, 2004; Shordike & Pierce, 2005). However, masculine occupations have been studied less frequently (Pierce, 2014). For a sample of Canadian men, masculinity was closely linked with body image, with more muscular men being perceived as more masculine (Beagan & Saunders, 2005). While the concept of producing masculinity may not typically be classified as an occupation in and of itself, men spent concerted effort over periods of time with the goal of appearing more masculine, which suggests that identity construction was a valued occupation (Beagan & Saunders, 2005).

Another study examined musicians in a college music scene who demonstrated masculinity through participation in bands (Ramirez, 2012). For some men, participating in a band was considered a challenge to traditional masculine identity, as men felt a

pressure to financially provide for themselves and others but struggled to make money through band participation (Ramirez, 2012). Additionally, participation in a band contributed to a unique conceptualization of masculinity, with slightly different norms due to the artistic influences on the musicians' actions. For example, some men performed wearing makeup or feminine clothing in an effort to fit in with images of influential rock stars (Ramirez, 2012). Occupations not only help individuals shape their gender identities but, at times, also propagate gender role portrayals that are specific to the occupation.

Occupations even serve as personal identifiers, supplementing an individual's identity with personally constructed and culturally ascribed connotations (Unruh, 2004). For example, terms such as musician link occupation to the person's identity through nomenclature; identifying with an occupational term often influences the choices one makes as the individual seeks continuity of occupational identity (Ramirez, 2012; Unruh, 2004). For a musician, shaping one's occupational identity may involve making changes in physical appearance or social participation habits (Ramirez, 2012).

Because individuals are sometimes classified by their occupations, the type of productive occupation in which an individual partakes for paid work affects not only self-perceptions but also public perceptions of a person. Consider the occupation of banking compared to playing music. A banker's job is presumably stable, which, to an outsider, may reflect that the person engaging in the job is responsible. Participating in a work occupation that is perceived as unstable may be perceived as reflecting that an individual is unestablished or flighty (Unruh, 2004).

As a field of study that supports the practice of occupational therapy, occupational science has produced an abundance of literature about the occupational experiences of

individuals with disabilities (Eidevall & Leufstadius, 2014; Guptill, 2012; Pierce, 2014). While these studies play an important role in giving voice to physically disabled individuals, it is equally important to study the occupational experiences of individuals without disability (Pierce, 2014). Producing descriptive knowledge about occupations enhances the understanding of occupational participation, lays a foundation for broader occupation-based research, and informs practitioners who work with these populations (Pierce, 2014).

Serious Leisure Occupations

Work and leisure are typically conceptualized as distinct from one another. In the *Occupational Therapy Practice Framework*, work is defined as “committed occupations that are performed with or without financial reward” (Christensen & Townsend, 2010, p. 242, as cited in AOTA, 2014, p. S20) while leisure is “nonobligatory activity that is intrinsically motivated and engaged in during . . . time not committed to obligatory occupations such as work” (Parham & Fazio, 1997, p. 250, as cited in AOTA, 2014, p. S21). The definitions themselves are mutually exclusive. However, sometimes work and leisure overlap significantly, and the result is an occupation that does not fit neatly into either category.

To address this issue, some occupational scientists emphasize the subjective meaning of occupations over functionality (Taylor & Kay, 2015; Whalley Hammell, 2009). Adherence to firm categories of occupations that separate actions from the way those actions are experienced limit the extent to which occupations can be understood (Whalley Hammell, 2009). For instance, consider the act of playing music. For an orchestral student

who experiences great joy from playing her instrument, music is simultaneously an act of self-expression, an educational endeavor, and a step toward a career (Park, Guptill, & Sumsion, 2007). For this student, playing music functionally constitutes leisure, education, and work. However, examining the occupation from these sharp angles would omit valuable information about the experience and the individual. Aspects such as the student's level of dedication and her attitude towards playing in a particular moment provide a more whole picture of her actions. In instances such as this, function-based categories of occupation lack the depth necessary to form a well-rounded perspective.

“Serious leisure” is a term associated with this school of thought, which unifies occupations that are committed and intrinsically motivated into a single idea (Lamont, Kennelly, & Moyle, 2014; Taylor & Kay, 2015). The term originated in the field of sociology and has since been used in recreational science and occupational science literature (Lamont, Kennelly, & Moyle, 2014). To be considered a serious leisure occupation, the pursuit should entail career engagement or aspirations, evoke perseverance despite obstacles, necessitate significant effort, afford intrinsic benefits, and develop strong identification with the associated culture (Lamont, Kennelly, & Moyle, 2014). Differentiated from casual leisure, serious leisure entails a higher level of involvement with a dedicated commitment of time, skills, and attention across an extended period of time (Taylor & Kay, 2015). So, while portraying an orchestral student's occupation as leisure, work, and/or education paints single-dimensional images of her participation, using the term serious leisure evokes a more dynamic understanding of her participation and the multifaceted connotations of the phrase.

For young adult rock musicians in income-generating bands, participation in a band may align more closely with serious leisure than with a more function-based category. When playing music, band members may experience similarities to work such as a high level of commitment and generation of income. However, the occupation is simultaneously nonobligatory, occurring outside of work rather than as part of it. While little formal evidence describes participation in a rock band, studies on other populations of musicians suggest that playing music involves many of the characteristics associated with serious leisure (Guptill, 2012; McCready & Reid, 2007; Park, Guptill, & Sumsion, 2007). To an onlooker, playing in a band may appear to be a leisure occupation, but to a serious musician, the occupation could embody a more complex composition of labor and recreation.

Rock Music as a Meaningful Occupation

As one of the most basic human occupations, musical performance has been studied innumerable times for its history, cultural significance, and even restorative qualities. The broad scope of contemporary occupational science and occupational therapy literature on the topic illustrates music's versatility. Studies involving musical occupations cover their therapeutic potential, health implications, and social functions for populations spanning from individuals with disabilities to Lutheran immigrants (Earley, Herlache, & Skelton, 2010; Adrian, 2013).

Researchers who examined the occupation of playing music in populations with physical and neurological disabilities found that music was a restorative and motivational tool to use in therapy (Earley, Herlache, & Skelton, 2010; Eidevall & Leufstadius, 2014;

Tsai et al., 2013). For example, in a case study focused on a violin player who was no longer able to participate in this meaningful occupation after a stroke, integrating the valued occupation of violin playing into the goals and methods of modified constraint-induced movement therapy was an effective intervention which produced a high level of client satisfaction (Earley, Herlache, & Skelton, 2010). The therapeutic effects of music span beyond its physical demands. For a sample of adults with physical disabilities, participating in a weekly music group at a rehabilitation center provided not only relaxation and an outlet for self-expression, but also a level of emotional healing that other groups at the rehabilitation center did not generate (Eidevall & Leufstadius, 2014). Even the act of listening to music has produced measurable therapeutic outcomes. Specifically, listening to music was found to increase visual attention in adults experiencing unilateral neglect secondary to strokes (Tsai et al., 2013). The restorative qualities of music encompassed a range of applications, from physical to psychological.

For student musicians, music played a different role. Studies on orchestral music students found that participants spent long periods of time playing an instrument without a break, which put them at risk for repetitive strain injuries (Guptill, 2012; McCready & Reid, 2007). Some students actively experienced pain as a result of playing instruments, but continued to practice due to external and internalized pressures to improve (Guptill, 2008; McCready & Reid, 2007). In addition to physical health effects, student musicians experienced occupational disruption, as they focused so intently on musical performance that other occupational pursuits were overlooked (McCready & Reid, 2007). In these instances, while music was an enjoyable occupation, it also caused disruptions to students' physical and occupational health.

Outside of its scholarly practice, music performance plays meaningful societal roles. For Lutheran immigrants, participating in religious musical performances served as a conduit for cultural assimilation, helping participants embrace American culture with a spiritual support (Adrian, 2013). For marginalized populations, music offers expressive outlets (Pyatak & Muccitelli, 2011). The occupation of playing music has multidimensional effects; it inspires and unites, yet in certain contexts it can also disrupt.

Despite the fact that a variety of studies have examined the way music is performed and experienced, there is a noticeable gap in the literature. Little to no peer-reviewed evidence exists about the lived experiences of rock musicians, although some peer-reviewed studies have documented their characteristics. For instance, a psychological report found that rock musicians shared personality traits of high neuroticism and openness to experience, which differentiated them from classical musicians (Gillespie & Myors, 2000). While rock musicians may be culturally perceived as carefree or irresponsible, this finding suggests that rock musicians possess a heightened level of anxiety, which could be linked to the unpredictable nature of their careers.

While student musicians are at risk of incurring repetitive strain injuries, professional rock musicians have been found to experience another occupational hazard: significant levels of hearing loss due to noise exposure (Halevi-Katz, Yaakobi, & Putter-Katz, 2015). Contextual factors such as the performance location and instrument volume play a significant role in the way a person experiences performing music (Kielhofner, 2008; Law et al., 1996). Because rock musicians perform in radically different social and physical environments than orchestral musicians, more research is needed to understand their unique perspectives.

Another unique aspect of rock music is the fact that playing in a band is a co-occupation, naturally occurring as part of an interaction with others while performing closely-coordinated musical parts (Pierce, 2009). However, studies on musicians in other genres suggest that the amount of collaboration involved extends beyond the interactions between band members (Balaji, 2012; Brown, 2012). For example, rap musicians strategically develop relationships in order to market their brand, schedule shows at important venues, and establish connections with large music corporations (Balaji, 2012). Furthermore, Brown (2012) describes the importance of making connections with venue owners and other bands in order to procure shows and attract fans. These studies suggest that participating in a rock band is not only meaningful on an individual level but also provides a meaningful way of interacting with others who share similar interests.

No matter what the context is, playing music can be a powerful occupation. Dave Grohl (2012), the lead singer of Foo Fighters and former Nirvana drummer, reflected on the importance of music during his 2012 Grammy acceptance speech:

Singing into a microphone and learning to play an instrument and learning to do your craft, that's the most important thing for people to do. It's not about being perfect. . . . It's about what goes on in here [your heart] and what goes on in here [your head].

From the perspective of an experienced rock musician, playing music is a valuable occupation that involves not only emotion but also thought.

Grounded Theory in Occupational Science

Grounded theory is a qualitative methodology that is widely used to generate theories that are “grounded” in data, utilizing inductive reasoning to identify relationships between abstract concepts (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Since its inception in 1965, the concept of grounded theory has grown to encompass multiple methodological variations, with individual researchers elaborating on the aspects they find most salient (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Hood (2007) provides an outline of seven characteristics of grounded theory research:

1. Data collection and analysis occur simultaneously;
2. Coding utilizes a constant comparative method;
3. Sampling is purposeful and based in theory;
4. Data is collected until theoretical saturation is reached;
5. A theory is developed inductively rather than deduced from prior theories;
6. Codes are not predetermined but instead arise from the data; and
7. The product is analytical, not purely descriptive. (p. 154)

While grounded theory is similar to traditional sociological qualitative methodology, multiple distinguishing characteristics exist. First, grounded theory primarily examines processes, while generic inductive reasoning may generate descriptions (Hood, 2007). The process of grounded theory is always iterative, with the researcher oscillating between data collection and analysis, generating interpretive memos throughout (Hood, 2007). Finally, a characteristic feature of grounded research is the generation of a theory presenting analytical findings about the data rather than a description of the data (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Hood, 2007).

Simultaneous Data Collection and Analysis

A distinguishing facet of grounded theory is the simultaneous processes of data collection and analysis, which is reflected in the processes of interviewing, coding, and memoing (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Hood, 2007). In grounded theory, interviewing is the most common vehicle for data collection, although observations and documents can be used as well (Stern, 2007). Because analysis occurs alongside data collection, the processes interact and shape one another. The interview schedule changes over time, developing to solicit the most salient information as the theory takes form (Hood, 2007).

Another key component of grounded theory is the use of constant comparison during coding. Constant comparison entails returning to previously coded data consistently through the coding process to compare the use of codes across data points (Creswell, 2014; Hood, 2007). As Glaser and Strauss (1967) explained, constant comparison provides the researcher insight into the properties of a category, which assists with theme development (as cited in Hood, 2007, p. 160).

As data are collected, the researcher develops memos summarizing aspects of the emerging theory and thus aid in theory construction (Stern, 2007). Memos, which capture a researcher's thoughts about categories and the way they fit together, are created throughout the entire research process (Hood, 2007; Stern, 2007). Grounded theory memos are more often theoretical than descriptive, reflecting the overall nature of the theory itself (Hood, 2007).

The Coding Process

While grounded theory has multiple forms, the methods typically follow a similar path. First, as interviews are transcribed, the iterative coding process begins. Initial coding

is characterized by open coding, during which the first and most evident categories of data are identified (Creswell, 2014). Each category has properties, which the researcher documents in order to provide the data with more dimension. Engaging in constant comparison provides the researcher with insight into the breadth and limits of a category's qualities and is an essential aspect of this step (Hood, 2007).

As data analysis continues, axial coding occurs. In this step, categories are reassembled into a paradigm representing relationships between data groupings, and the theory begins taking shape (Kelle, 2007). More specifically, axial coding entails analyzing initial codes for their relationships to the core phenomenon (Kelle, 2007). The researcher identifies four general types of axial codes during this process: (1) causal conditions that contribute to the phenomenon being studied, (2) strategies or interactions that arise from the phenomenon, (3) the contextual factors which influence strategies, and (4) the outcomes of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014).

Finally, the relationships between axial codes are analyzed in selective coding (Kelle, 2007). In this step, the researcher develops a hypothesis about the relationships between the axial codes (Creswell, 2014). This hypothesis can be presented either textually or in the form of a diagram with the goal of demonstrating the interactions of factors across the process being studied (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

Grounded Theory in Occupational Science

Nayar (2011) argued that grounded theory dovetails with the purposes of occupational science research by comparing the methodology with the seven criteria for occupational science that were proposed by Yerxa and colleagues (1990). As outlined by Yerxa and associates (1990), the criteria for occupational science research are as follows:

1. Preserve the integrity of the individual;
2. Admit the individual's experiences as credible;
3. View the individual as an open system in interaction with the environment;
4. May include the past, present, and future;
5. May utilize cross-verification by both the subject and other sources;
6. Preserve and describe the natural environment;
7. Could deal with the individual's views of the extent of environmental challenge and degree of skill possessed; and
8. Allow for the study of the individual as one who develops occupational behavior over the lifespan. (p. 11-12)

Grounded theory methodology meets these standards, as evidenced by its applications in both occupational science and occupational therapy research (Stanley & Cheek, 2003; Nayar, 2011).

First, grounded theory is centered on individuals' accounts (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Some grounded theory researchers go as far as utilizing "in vivo" coding, a process in which the specific words and phrases of participants are used to create categories (Kelle, 2007). Next, grounded theory recognizes interactions between individuals and the environment; axial codes include considerations of contextual factors (Creswell, 2014). Theories created through grounded theory conceptualize processes rather than descriptions, which entails an implicit consideration of past, present, and future as well as development across the lifespan (Hood, 2007). Methods to strengthen grounded theories include cross-verification such as member checking and triangulation (Hoare, Mills, & Francis, 2012). Grounded theory is meant to describe experiences as they naturally occur, which supports

the guideline of preserving and describing the natural environment (Stern, 2007). Finally, because grounded theory conceptualizes processes involved in human occupations, environmental challenges and degree of skill are both addressed (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). As a whole, grounded theory is a reputable method of data collection and analysis that is well-suited to this study for its flexibility in representing the data as well as its sensitivity to the unique perspectives of participants.

CHAPTER 2

JOURNAL ARTICLE MANUSCRIPT

Introduction

Popular culture magazines, television programs, and radio shows feature depictions of rock musicians as uninhibited individuals who contribute to subversive cultural movements (Frith, 2010; Pemberton, 2013; Runtagh, 2014). However, little to no scholarly literature addresses rock band participation. The compelling forces that propel individuals to join rock bands, barriers to their participation, and peripheral effects on a rock musician's life are largely unknown. Prior studies have examined participation in music-related occupations through the perspectives of students (Guptill, Zaza, & Paul, 2005; McCready & Reid, 2007; Park, Guptill, & Sumsion, 2007) and individuals with disabilities (Earley, Herlache, & Skelton, 2010; Eidevall & Leufstadius, 2014). Considering the vastly different contextual factors at play, these findings cannot reliably be generalized to rock musicians. Because the nature of rock band participation is distinctive, controversial, and insufficiently documented, this grounded theory study aims to develop an understanding of rock band participation for young adult musicians, using first-person accounts.

Literature Review

Occupation and Identity

Through the history of occupational science, researchers have repeatedly defined the term *occupation*, with self-identity as a pervasive theme (Hasselkus, 2002). For

instance, Pierce (2001) reasoned that occupation is a “personally constructed, nonrepeatable experience” (p. 139), unique to the moment in time when it occurs. In other words, by its very nature occupation is subject to an individual’s own interpretation. Hasselkus (2002) goes one step further in linking occupation to identity, defining occupation as “a principal agent in the selfing process that helps forge identity” (p. 17). Whether occupations are envisioned on a more basic level of meeting an individual’s needs (Law et al., 1996) or more complexly as actions that “bring meaning and purpose to life” (World Federation of Occupational Therapists, 2012, as cited in AOTA, 2014, p. S5), it is clear that occupations play an integral role in shaping a person’s identity.

Individuals choose occupations that fit their perceived senses of self, and they are also molded by the occupations in which they partake (Sato, 1988; Taylor & Kay, 2015). For example, to a serious skateboarder, skating involves more than the action of wheels against the ground; the occupation appeals to the individual’s drive to take risks and experience freedom, while skating also provides an avenue for self-expression and bravery (Haines, Smith, & Baxter, 2010). Members of a Japanese motorcycle gang experienced a similar phenomenon, riding for both the physical heightening of alertness and the fulfilling sense of companionship with other gang members (Sato, 1988). In both of these risk-taking occupations, the individuals were motivated to partake by an intrinsic urge to pursue excitement, and they were subsequently influenced by the experience.

As a field of study that supports the practice of occupational therapy, occupational science has produced an abundance of literature about the occupational experiences of individuals with disabilities (Eidevall & Leufstadius, 2014; Guptill, 2012; Pierce, 2014). While these studies play an important role in giving voice to physically disabled

individuals, it is equally important to study the occupational experiences of individuals without disability (Pierce, 2014). Producing descriptive knowledge about occupations enhances the understanding of occupational participation, lays a foundation for broader occupation-based research, and informs practitioners who work with these populations (Pierce, 2014).

Serious Leisure Occupations

Work and leisure are typically conceptualized as distinct from one another (American Occupational Therapy Association [AOTA], 2014). However, sometimes work and leisure overlap significantly, and the result is an occupation that does not fit neatly into either category. To address this issue, some occupational scientists emphasize the subjective meaning of occupations over functionality (Taylor & Kay, 2015; Whalley Hammell, 2009).

Adherence to firm categories of occupations that separate actions from the way those actions are experienced limit the extent to which occupations can be understood (Whalley Hammell, 2009). For an orchestral student who experiences great joy from playing her instrument, music is simultaneously an act of self-expression, an educational endeavor, and a step toward a career (Park, Guptill, & Sumsion, 2007). In this instance, playing music functionally constitutes leisure, education, and work. However, examining the occupation from these sharp angles would omit valuable information about the experience and the individual. Aspects such as the student's level of dedication and her attitude towards playing in a particular moment provide a more whole picture of her actions. In instances such as this, function-based categories of occupation lack the depth necessary to form a well-rounded perspective.

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Rock Music as a Meaningful Occupation

Music is a versatile occupation with intrinsically motivating, restorative qualities. Occupational therapists who integrated music into therapy sessions and goals found clients

experienced motivation and high levels of satisfaction (Earley, Herlache, & Skelton, 2010; Eidevall & Leufstadius, 2014). On the other end of the participation spectrum, student musicians in an orchestral program voluntarily played their musical instruments to the point of experiencing pain and repetitive strain injuries (Guptill, 2012; McCready & Reid, 2007). The occupation of playing music has multidimensional effects; it inspires creativity and unites groups, yet in certain contexts it also disrupts life balance and injures the body. Because rock musicians perform in radically different social and physical environments than orchestral musicians, more research is needed to understand their unique perspectives.

Grounded Theory in Occupational Science

Grounded theory is a qualitative methodology used to generate theories through inductive reasoning (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). While its execution takes numerous forms, grounded theory is consistently characterized by simultaneous data collection and analysis, constant comparison coding, and development of a novel theme (Hood, 2007). Categories are developed from raw data, collapsed into axial codes, and finally conceptualized as a substantive-level theory (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Kelle, 2007).

Grounded theory corresponds well with the aims of occupational science (Nayar, 2011; Yerxa et al., 1990). A number of researchers in occupational science and occupational therapy have used grounded theory to describe the experiences of individuals (Stanley & Cheek, 2003). The methodology is sensitive to the lived experiences of participants because it is grounded in the data; this characteristic contributes to its ability to accurately depict occupations and the attributes that make them meaningful (Kelle, 2007). Furthermore, because grounded theory describes processes, the methodology naturally lends itself to the study of actions and occupations (Hood, 2007). In summary,

grounded theory is a reputable method of data collection and analysis that is well-suited to this study for its flexibility in representing the data as well as its sensitivity to the unique perspectives of participants.

Methods

Design

A qualitative, grounded theory approach was employed to investigate the subjective experiences of young adult rock musicians. Descriptive qualitative studies have generated rich depictions of occupations, providing insight into the occupations' essential qualities and meanings to participants (Haines, Smith, & Baxter, 2010; Sato, 1988; Scheerer, Cahill, Kirby, & Lane, 2004). Grounded theory research entails generating a theory "grounded" in the participants' responses, allowing participants' voices to shape theory development uninhibited by a priori theory selection (Creswell, 2014). Because the experiences of rock musicians were conceptualized as being particularly distinctive and little literature existed to guide theory selection for this study, a grounded theory approach was deemed an appropriate means of approaching the subject.

Participants and Guiding Questions

Protection of participants was insured through approval of the research proposal from the associated university's institutional review board. Initial participants were recruited through flyers placed in contemporary rock performance venues within driving distance of the primary researcher. Following initial recruitment, snowball sampling was used to identify additional participants. Snowball sampling is a method of identifying potential participants through the recommendations of existing participants (Creswell,

2014). Because the aim of the research was to gain the perspectives of a cohort that is challenging to identify and access, snowball sampling was used to meet the recruitment challenge. Background information about participants is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Participant Information

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Education Level	Other Work	Living Arrangement
Avery	19	Male	High school diploma	Food industry	Apartment with roommate
Dawson	20	Male	Some high school	Music only	Lives with family
Cooper	21	Male	High school diploma	Food industry	Apartment with roommate
Jason	21	Male	Some college	Student	Lives with family
Caleb	23	Male	Some college	Music only	Lives with family
Marc	24	Male	High school diploma	Food industry	Homeless
Mitch	25	Male	High school diploma	Mechanic	Apartment
Jordan	27	Male	High school diploma	Sales	Apartment
Johnson	35	Male	Some college	Music only	Homeowner

The sample consisted of nine male rock musicians between the ages of nineteen and thirty-five. In an effort to identify dedicated musicians, inclusion criteria specified that the participant regularly receive payment for playing music as part of the rock band. No two participants participated in the same band as one another at the time of the interviews, although multiple participants had previously been in bands together. Their levels of experience ranged from a young member of a newly-formed band to an experienced touring musician.

Instrumentation

Data was collected through a series of semi-structured interviews conducted by the primary researcher. Open-ended questions were used to allow themes to develop from the musicians' perceptions and experiences. Utilizing a semi-structured interview format provided the researcher sufficient flexibility to use probing follow-up questions to fully explore the musicians' responses (Creswell, 2014).

In order to explore rock band participation, the following questions were used to guide this study:

1. What does being a rock musician entail?
2. What meaning do rock musicians attribute to being in a band?
3. How does being a rock musician affect other areas of one's life, including work, relationships, finances, and occupational balance?

Data Collection

Interviews took place at locations mutually convenient for the participant and researcher, most often coffee shops within 30 minutes of driving for both parties. Each participant was briefed about the study, informed of the study's confidential nature, and given an opportunity to ask questions before signing consent forms and participating in an interview. The primary investigator conducted one semi-structured interview per participant, each lasting from 45 to 120 minutes. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed verbatim by the researcher.

Analysis

Data collection and analysis occurred simultaneously, consistent with best practice in grounded theory (Hood, 2007). *HyperRESEARCH* software was used to electronically

maintain a record of codes, facilitate constant comparison between codes within their categories, and to conceptualize the relationships between codes. As initial codes emerged from transcripts, interview questions were refined in order to generate more meaningful responses and elicit information that was initially overlooked by the researcher's line of questioning. Each transcript was read thoroughly and repeatedly by the investigator, who then coded line-by-line using constant comparative methods. As data collection continued, axial coding was used to begin identifying the core processes occurring within rock band participation (Creswell, 2014; Kelle, 2007). Finally, the codes were used to construct descriptive theory statements about musicians' patterns of participation in rock bands.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a practice in which an author explores his or her involvement with the subject matter by reflecting on experiences, preconceived notions, and values that may shape aspects of the study such as interviews and data interpretation (Creswell, 2014). While a researcher can never fully extricate herself from data analysis, taking steps to identify aspects of oneself that could influence interpretations supplements the study's authenticity. The primary investigator maintained a reflexive journal throughout the research process in an effort to actively self-assess her interactions with participants during interviews and to identify potential barriers to objective data analysis. Here, Brooke King reflects on her position in relation to the subject matter:

My interest in the occupations of rock musicians was kindled by my husband, who is a rock musician, himself. It is through his involvement in the local rock music scene that I have had the pleasure of meeting so many other musicians and seeing their distinctive, fascinating lives firsthand. Despite my closeness to the subject matter, I am an outsider. I do not play

an instrument, and I recognize that I will never fully comprehend the feeling of playing in a committed band. That being said, I have made a conscious effort to separate my views from those of the participating musicians in order to portray their voices accurately. I thoroughly reviewed interview questions in an effort to remove preconceptions from the questioning process; reflected on my position as an interviewer before, during, and after interactions with participants; and kept memos with personal reflections while coding.

Results

Participation in a rock band was conceptualized as a dynamic process between identifying as a musician, facing challenges posed by participation, and handling challenges that arose. As musicians navigated through these elements of participation, they either experienced rewards which reinforced participation or made the decision to discontinue their pursuit of the band. When musicians felt band participation was essential to their occupational identities, were willing to persevere through difficulties, and possessed the skills necessary to meet the involved challenges, they experienced a high level of enjoyment that intrinsically motivated them to sustain participation. A summary of these interactions is presented in Figure 1.

Identifying as a Musician

Musicians initiated band participation for two reasons: being a musician was essential to participants' identities, and participating in a band marked the pursuit of a strong passion.

Being a Musician. Interview data showed that participants did not conceptualize themselves as simply participating in a band, but rather as *being* musicians, deeply

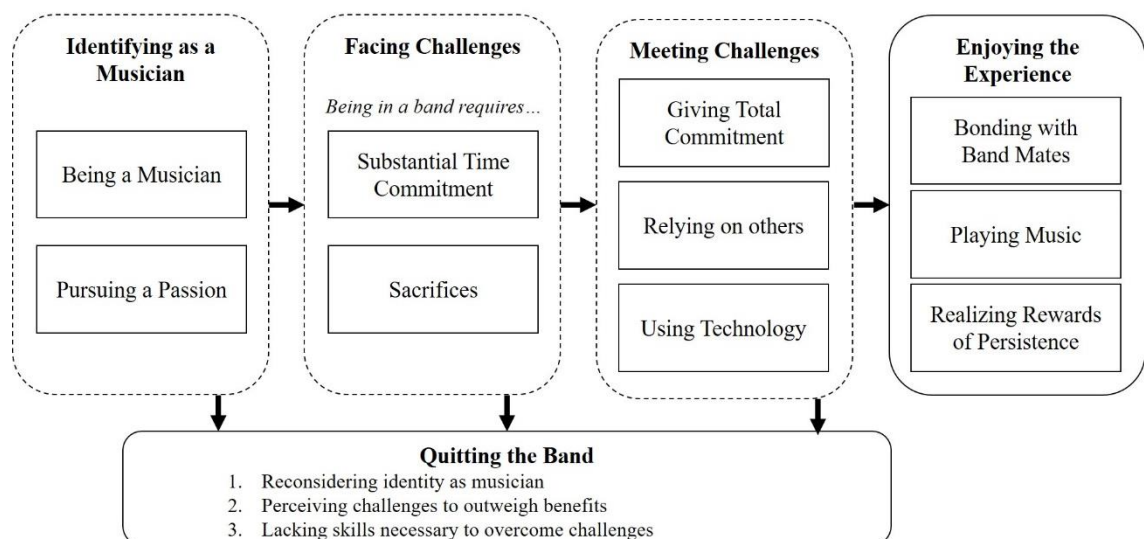


Figure 1. Dynamic Process of Rock Band Participation

connected to music with an insatiable drive to create. For instance, when discussing difficulties his band faced, Caleb explained, “I am all in. There is nothing else . . . this is who I am. It’s what I do.” Furthermore, music was his most primal method of self-expression: “I always joke that music is my first language and English is my second language.” Quitting the band was not a desired option for Caleb because his band participation and music creation was so intimately linked to his sense of self.

Part of the unity between participating in music and understanding oneself could be due to the experience of participating in music-related occupations across the life span. Participants began participating in music from as young as two years of age to as late as the early teen years. As they learned to play their instruments, joined bands with high school friends, and experienced the healing power of music, music became woven into the sense of self. Mitch described the integral role music played in shaping his identity:

[Music] 's given me more than anything else in my life. I've travelled the country because of music. I've met some of the best people I've ever met because of music . . . music calms people down and lets them get their things out and doesn't let them go crazy and hurt themselves or other people or whatever.

Furthermore, participants explained that creating music was their most salient talent. Where others may have defined themselves by their day jobs, the musicians who worked only to generate a living defined themselves by this more valued occupation. As Avery reasoned, "It's one of the things I'm best at . . . it's just always lit something up in my head whenever I think of music or see an instrument."

Pursuing a Passion. Aside from fitting into the participants' identities, playing music meant pursuing a dream. Some of the participants did not have extensive educational backgrounds. For these individuals, pursuing a career in music was a way to achieve a better life. Marc reflected on the effects his music career had on his opportunities:

And it's kind of crazy to think about how I graduated high school with like a 1.3 GPA or some shit like that, so I was kinda destined to do hard labor for the rest of my life . . . and I didn't want that. So it's amazing that, I don't know, I have a potential to be doing something better for my life.

For the participants, choosing a career path in rock music was an exciting avenue to avoid living a monotonous life. The daily unpredictability, opportunities to travel, and rewarding feelings of playing music all contributed to the musicians' choices.

Additionally, participants felt that creating music made a valuable contribution to society. Mitch calls music "the great equalizer" because regardless of a person's

experiences, they have been touched by music in some way. For Mitch and other participants, music was instrumental in helping them overcome mental and emotional struggles in their teen years; producing music was a way to contribute. As Avery puts it, “You wanna sell, you wanna inspire, you wanna influence, you wanna give people something that they can get away from stresses of the world.”

Facing Challenges

Substantial Time Commitment. Being in a band required a substantial amount of time. As participants shared, playing music was only a fraction of the effort involved in participating. Marketing, maintaining social media presences, booking shows, and practicing were tasks often cited as time consuming. However, the participants did not define their time commitment with concrete measures. When asked how much time was spent on band-related tasks daily or weekly, participants described large, amorphous amounts of time. Their inability to pin down a range of hours was due to two factors: their inconsistent routines and the unstructured nature of their tasks.

Because the musicians’ schedules changed so often, workload related to the band was unevenly distributed over time. When asked how many hours he spent on work related to the band, Avery characterized the sporadic nature of musicians’ schedules by responding, “In a week? I couldn’t really say a week, because it’s here and there.” As he explained, some weeks involved constant, intense work, for example a week spent recording or touring. In other weeks, the band may have a break from shows and other major obligations, which made participation less demanding.

Furthermore, some tasks were intangible, making the associated time commitment difficult to quantify. For example, multiple musicians considered time in which they were

preoccupied by contemplating band responsibilities. Jason explained, “I’m constantly thinking like, what’s the next business step we should take, and so it’s twenty-four seven.”

Band participation also affected the amount of time musicians spent sleeping. The musicians described spending much of their time with the band late in the evenings. Practice sessions and performances occurred after typical work hours to accommodate the availability of band and audience members. Time conflicts occurred between the musicians’ band participation and their traditional jobs, when they would stay up late for the band and sleep few hours before waking to go to their day jobs. Cooper described a particularly long day:

We were at a studio last night ‘til about one or two in the morning I stayed in my work clothing and got right in bed and set my alarm for four, ‘cause I had to be at work at 5.

Band members embraced their erratic sleep patterns as part of the fabric of their lifestyles. As Mitch explained, “I have the weirdest sleep schedule ever. I stay up until two and get up at seven thirty every day.” For most of the participants, sleep deprivation was a natural ramification of playing in a band and characteristic of the time commitment required of participation.

Finally, musicians’ schedules were characterized by unpredictability. Shows, practices, and writing sessions occurred sporadically, at times arising with only a few hours’ notice and having no predetermined end time. Participants described difficulty with establishing routines, but individuals like Caleb also expressed sentiments that routines were undesirable: “I’m extremely unorganized. And I don’t have a routine. I hate that shit.”

Sacrifices. In order to meet the demands of band participation, musicians were willing to make personal sacrifices. Some sacrifices were financial or work-related. For instance, Mitch thought little of quitting his day job for the band:

Until like a year ago I just worked part-time jobs, like three or four at a time to be able to just go on tour. And that way if like three of the part-time jobs would give me time off, one of them wouldn't, I'd just quit that one and be like, whatever, I have three other jobs, it's fine.

Another musician, Caleb, was offered a high-paying promotion at the same time that an opportunity arose for his band: “But then I met all these people and was like, there’s the dream, so I quit.” Sacrificing day jobs was one way musicians were able to meet the time demands of band participation.

Other sacrifices were less tangible, in the form of romantic relationships. Musicians stayed out late at night, spent much time with band members, and prioritized the band over others, which led some participants to explain that being in a relationship with a musician could be challenging. Mitch reflected, “It takes a lot for a person to be a musician’s wife or girlfriend or whatever because it’s late nights, always playing shows, travelling, spending money on stupid things like cymbals or guitars or pedals.” Others openly admitted to choosing the band over romantic relationships. As Jason stated, “I mean, the band comes first. I know I’ve had plenty of girlfriends in the past that don’t really like that.”

As a whole, the musicians recognized that sacrifice was part of the experience of being in a band. Cooper summarized the sentiment well by stating “It’s one hundred percent sacrifice. It’s, you can’t be selfish in a band. You can’t because you’re all doing

the same thing for the same reason.” Thus, feelings of loss were mitigated by the knowledge that other band members made equal or greater sacrifices to perpetuate the band.

Meeting Challenges

Musicians met the challenges posed by band participation through multiple strategies: offering total commitment to the band, relying on others for help, and using technology.

Giving Total Commitment. For these young adult rock musicians, being in a band inspired total commitment, which they demonstrated by prioritizing it over other obligations and developing skills in areas that would help the band. As Mitch shared, “You involve yourself in it fully or you don’t. It’s sort of an all or nothing thing.” Like Mitch, numerous musicians were propelled to participate in their bands because they valued total submersion in local music culture. Participating in a band extended beyond playing music and into nearly every aspect of the musicians’ lives. Similarly, Jordan explained, “You have to be 100% willing to give it everything you’ve got—emotionally, physically, mentally, spiritually, because it does take a lot to do.” For him, commitment meant incorporating every aspect of himself into creating and pursuing music.

Musicians also dedicated themselves by developing skills that supported band participation. Complex social and process skills were necessary for successful involvement in a contemporary rock band. Musicians scheduled their time methodically when they shared practice spaces with other bands. They exercised skills in graphic design when creating merchandise, creative problem solving when technology malfunctioned in the middle of a performance, and marketing savvy when creating web pages and selling

products. Some musicians felt frustrated by the variety of skills needed to be in a band, expressing that they were not managers or marketers but had to acquire these skills in order to be successful. Despite this challenge, many recognized the overall value of developing additional skills. Marc reasoned that he would get out of the band the effort that he put into it: “It’s like an investment for my life and my craft.”

Relying on Others. Participating in a rock band is a highly collaborative occupation. Musicians described frequent, meaningful interactions with their band members and mutually beneficial relationships with others through networking. All of these interactions played roles in the musicians’ continued involvement in rock bands, simultaneously helping them meet the challenges of participation.

With the large amount of responsibility involved in participating in a band, participants reported sharing responsibilities with band members. In some bands, responsibilities were split according to members’ skills. In Marc’s band, his drummer handles finances because “he has a great administrative mindset and I don’t, necessarily.” In other bands, responsibilities were divided based on the amount of an individual’s commitment to the band. Dawson explained that his drummer had aspirations outside of music, which led Dawson to do most of the band’s administrative work.

Contributions from others were also essential to the success of the band. Some participants identified networking as the most important skill for a musician to have, and all agreed that it was vital to a band’s success. Bands utilized their connections to book shows, find affordable photography, and obtain press coverage. Social networks commonly included venue managers, other bands, bloggers, graphic designers, merchandisers, and endorsement companies. As Jordan put it, “You have to know the right people, know the

right booking agents, know the right venues . . . the list goes on about the people you have to know.” Every professional connection shaped the band’s trajectory, influencing the number of shows the band would play, the amount of money the shows would generate, and the number of fans that would be reached. The relationships were often mutually beneficial and established with the unspoken understanding that the favor would be repaid in the future.

Using Technology. Technology was woven through nearly every aspect of musicians’ experiences. Musicians used technology to create music, to portray their band’s image on social media, and to connect with others.

First, musicians utilized technological devices to generate music. Distinctive sounds were created with technological affordances such as guitar pedals and electronic keyboards. The use of digital instruments decreased the burden of carrying around numerous, bulky instruments. Additionally, triggering complex sounds through sound boards allowed smaller groups of musicians to create rich, sonically full sounds on stage.

Social media was one of the most common applications of technology for a band. Participants reported that prior to social media, bands promoted shows by posting paper flyers. Social media served as an important method of generating interest for and sharing information about shows. Significant effort went into shaping social media profiles. Musicians spent hours crafting posts, designing marketing strategies, and taking professional pictures that would further the band’s image. As illustration, consider the way Caleb described his thought process when posting a picture or video to social media:

I have to worry about: How's this gonna look on camera? How's this gonna look if I post this on social media? Are they gonna think we're newbs or are they gonna think we're pros?

Technology was also essential to connecting with others. Mitch described sending out 650 emails in one week in order to book his first out-of-state tour. Creating Facebook events for upcoming shows and inviting Facebook friends to attend constituted a significant time commitment for one participant. Some band members reported using web-based services to sell and maintain inventory for merchandise or to distribute music. For Avery's band, digital music distribution helped them overcome financial barriers: "We wanted to print CDs but we didn't have a lot of money. We did release onto iTunes and Spotify." The internet and digital communications provided musicians with affordability and convenience.

Enjoying the Experience

Musicians experienced joy as a result of participation in rock bands. They developed intimate friendships, felt emotionally connected to their music, and earned intangible rewards for their persistence.

Bonding with Band Members. A number of factors played into the bonds between band members. For those who depended on their band participation for income, band members relied on one another for their livelihoods. Band members also shared goals, spent copious amounts of time together, and trusted each other to make contributions. These factors combined with the experience of playing music together nurtured emotional intimacy between band members, which was one of the most enjoyable aspects of playing music in a band. Caleb described this phenomenon:

Playing music with other human beings is fun, but when you're doing it with people that you love to be around and love hanging out with and just love, then that makes it completely worth it and completely enjoyable experience.

More than half of participants described their relationships with band mates as being part of a “marriage” because of the level of dedication, sacrifice, and friendship they shared. Participants felt like their bonds with their band mates surpassed friendship because of the depth of mutual understanding and commitment they shared. Of his band members, Dawson shared, “I would describe it as like finding a soulmate,” and Mitch explained, “Me and him have this unspeakable bond.” Sharing these meaningful relationships with band members was one of the most valued aspects of participating.

Playing Music. For nearly every participant, the best part about being in a band was playing music, whether it was for a crowd or during a personal song-writing session. Because band participation entailed so much more than performing, playing music felt like a reprieve from working through the business aspects of the band. Dawson described simultaneously feeling exhilarated, overwhelmed, and empowered by playing in front of a crowd:

Imagine, alright, imagine like jumping outside, jumping out of an airplane without a parachute, but knowing that you're going to land successfully . . . And then you make it, and you're like, Oh God that was awesome, the best feeling in the fucking world, let's do it again! I feel like a superhuman.

Like Dawson, many participants found performing to be a transcendent experience in which they connected with others and expressed their true identities. For example, Jordan felt an “intimate” connection to members of the audience, while Cooper “bared my soul”

on stage. The exemplary feeling of playing music with band members in front of a crowd was a strong impetus to continue involvement in a rock band.

Realizing Rewards of Persistence. Overcoming challenges was one of the most fulfilling aspects of participating in a band. First, challenges broke up the monotony of everyday life. Cooper explained that being in a band “can be incredibly demanding, but I love that it’s demanding; I love that ... there’s always something interesting happening.” The constant demands, changing schedules, and high level of involvement kept musicians interested. Challenges also provided motivation to continue. For example, participants who had been snubbed by venue owners reported feeling a stronger motivation to continue in order to prove their value.

As a whole, there was an overwhelming response that the rewards of being in a band outweighed the difficulty. Avery summarized the sentiment when he stated, “One night playing a live show is worth all of the challenges we’ll face.” While some challenges were admittedly unpleasant, musicians still felt that the experience of playing music in a band was so wonderful that it completely negated any difficulties. Marc offered a further glimpse into his motivation to persevere with the band: “Now that I’ve seen what hard work can do, it kind of gives me a motivation to keep growing and keep seeing things, keep experiencing things. That’s why I do it, that’s why I play music.” So, in addition to playing music, seeing tangible results from the effort put into the band supplemented participants’ motivation.

Quitting the Band

Being in a band was not for everyone. Participants shared numerous anecdotes of band break-ups and member changes. From these accounts, reasons for discontinuing band

participation were found to fit into three areas: the individual reconsidered their identity and found that being a musician was no longer paramount; the individual perceived challenges that significantly outweighed benefits of participation; or the individual lacked the skills needed to overcome challenges posed by participation.

One of the driving factors in rock band participation was an innate sense of being a musician. Participants recalled bands falling apart as other members realized they did not possess the same level of dedication to creating music, often in part because being a musician did not provide stability or guaranteed income. Jason reasoned, “I know plenty of people that have just totally skipped the whole school thing and gone straight to like touring and everything, and then they’ve failed miserably.” In this case, the fear of failure contributed to individuals’ pursuit of different careers. Caleb shared a similar story; a former bandmate decided to quit the band in favor of attending a strong college program. To individuals who highly valued security, participation in a band was casual and short-lived.

Some participants explained that for previous band members, the challenges were too great to justify participation. Some individuals were unwilling to put forth the effort to continue or did not contribute to the accessory aspects of being in a band. Caleb described his last band’s break-up, explaining that he had been the only one truly committed to making music while his fellow band mates decided they could not handle the level of responsibility required.

Finally, some individuals discontinued participation because they lacked the skills needed to overcome challenges. Contrary to popular belief, participating in a band requires dedication, commitment, internal motivation, and responsibility. Participants expressed

frustration with individuals who lacked these skills and were more focused on partying than contributing. Jason recalled a band member who was kicked out because he was “always drunk,” or another who exercised such poor money management that it interfered with his ability to support to the band’s financial needs. Jordan reflected on a band member who had trouble playing in front of a crowd: “He had really, really bad social anxiety... so we were just like, maybe live music’s not for you.” Without the skills needed to contribute to the band, individuals either discontinued participation independently or were ultimately asked to leave the band.

Discussion

In this study, nine musicians shared their experiences of overcoming significant obstacles in order to participate in rock bands. The men who shared their stories made life-altering sacrifices, underwent emotional and physical duress, and demonstrated harrowing levels of dedication in order to pursue the craft with which they so closely identified. The demands of rock band participation required musicians to dedicate themselves to more than their ability to play an instrument by also requiring musicians to develop ancillary skills in areas such as technology and interpersonal communication. For nearly every musician in this study, the commitments of time, financial resources, and efforts were all-consuming. While the demands of participating were too great for some individuals to justify continuing in a rock band, those who persisted reaped intangible rewards through deep friendships and opportunities to collaboratively create music.

Results are supported by prior research demonstrating the motivational power of occupations (Kielhofner, 2008; Sheerer, Cahill, Kirby, & Lane, 2004; Townsend, 1994).

Participation posed numerous challenges to musicians, however, their passions for music supported their abilities to overcome challenges and find joy in the process. Findings also supported the hypothesis that participation in a rock band is a complex occupation, shaped by a number of factors including identity (Abrahams, 2008; Taylor & Kay, 2015). Participants' decisions to participate in a band hinged on personal characteristics such as their affinity for playing music and their willingness to make sacrifices in order to succeed. Furthermore, in many respects participation in rock bands reflected characteristics of serious leisure occupations. Rock band participation entailed significant challenges, time use, and energy (Lamont, Kennelly, & Moyle, 2014; Taylor & Kay, 2015).

In addition to information supported by previous findings, these interviews provided fresh insights into the occupations of rock musicians. Band participation served as a bridge to opportunities that otherwise would have been out of reach, including extensive travel and, if successful, a high-paying career. Additionally, in contrast to the finding that serious leisure entailed assimilation to the relevant culture, the allure of an opulent rock star lifestyle was largely tempered by a level-headed dedication to producing quality music (Lamont, Kennelly, & Moyle, 2014). Some of the most novel findings include the deep connections between band members, the applications of technology across the occupation, and the unexpectedly complex skill sets musicians used to navigate the music scene.

Previous studies have examined participating in music through an individual perspective rather than examining the interpersonal aspects of playing with others (Earley, Herlache, & Skelton, 2010; Eidevall & Leufstadius, 2014; Guptill, 2012; McCready & Reid, 2007). For the musicians in this study, however, interactions with band members

while playing music were integral to the experience. In occupational science, highly interactive occupations such as this are termed co-occupations (Pickens & Pizur-Barnekow, 2009; Pierce, 2009). Much of the research on co-occupation centers on the interactions between mothers and children, which suggests that finds from this study not only contribute to the understanding of the occupation of playing music but also contribute to understanding the qualities of co-occupation (Pierce, 2009).

Multiple aspects of rock band participation constituted co-occupation: band members wrote songs together, allocated responsibilities for shared goals, and performed cooperatively. As Pickens and Pizur-Barnekow (2009) define the term, each of these occupations would constitute co-occupations because of the levels of shared physicality, emotionality, and intentionality between band members throughout participation. For example, in song writing, musicians experienced high emotional connections as they generated creative material, shared the intention of creating a song, and interacted physically by playing their instruments to the same beat. Performances constituted the most complex level of co-occupation, as musicians closely mirrored each other's actions, felt emotionally connected by their passion for playing music, and coordinated their movements with the shared intention of playing each song (Pickens & Pizur-Barnekow, 2009). The multifaceted, meaningful bonds between band members was a key aspect of their participatory experiences, which suggests that future studies should examine music with a strong consideration of interpersonal relationships.

Technology's diverse applications are increasingly being studied as innovations change the ways individuals interact with the world. This study found that technological skill was essential in rock band participation. From creating music to disseminating

information, conducting business transactions, and accessing their social networks, musicians utilized technology for multiple purposes. Social networking sites allowed musicians to instantaneously communicate with audiences across wide areas with little to no cost, although also presented new challenges as expectations for a band's image were elevated.

These findings challenge stereotypical representations of rock band participation. At present, rock band participation is stigmatized by popular culture portrayals of rock musicians. Contrary to mass media portrayals, these rock musicians exercised responsibility, effective time management, and extensive personal sacrifices. They strategically engaged in social participation, financial planning, and marketing techniques to navigate the music scene and obtain opportunities for their bands. Furthermore, individuals who did not possess a high level of responsibility and dedication ultimately ceased participation as a result of being unable to overcome the diverse challenges posed by band participation. This knowledge may contribute to a greater respect for rock musicians. The significant amounts of effort they exert in spite of the risks demonstrates a notable level of courage and self-motivation that is worthy of additional investigation.

Limitations

Transferability of the findings is limited by the small sample size (Creswell, 2014). Additionally, the use of snowball sampling generated a group of participants who were socially connected, which could have elicited a description of experiences unique to this group rather than to every rock musician in the music scene. The researcher fully disclosed her husband's involvement in the local music circuit to every participant, and although

confidentiality was assured, the interviewer's status as a musician's wife could have influenced the way participants shared their experiences.

Conclusion

Results of this study are supported by previous findings, but also contribute new insights into the experience of playing in a rock band. Similar to other highly valued occupations, rock band participation was deeply motivating and shaped and expressed an individual's identity (Abrahams, 2008; AOTA, 2014; Earley, Herlache, & Skelton, 2010; Taylor & Kay, 2013). Producing music within a rock band was inherently enjoyable and prompted musicians to persevere despite challenges (Guptill, 2008; McCready & Reid, 2007; Park, Guptill, & Sumsion, 2007). Additionally, the overall experience of participating in a rock band was similar to the experience of serious leisure (Lamont, Kennelly, & Moyle, 2014; Taylor & Kay, 2013).

This study also generated novel information about rock band participation. The deep connection musicians shared, the use of technology in the music scene, and the complex skill sets employed by musicians all represent new knowledge that contributes to the understanding of this and other occupations. While research supports the contributions of occupations to identification with a sub-culture, information about the relationships between band members adds a new dimension to this understanding (Beagan & Saunders, 2005; Haines, Smith, & Baxter, 2010; Lamont, Kennelly, & Moyle, 2014). The rapid growth of technology has impacted the ways individuals communicate. Evidence of musicians' technology skills and habits illustrates the complexity of social network applications and the pervasiveness of technology in the practice of some valued

occupations. Finally, this study offers to a multi-dimensional portrayal of rock musicians that is grounded in their own perspectives. Rather than reflecting the popular media stereotypes of reckless and nonchalant rebels (Frith, 2010; Runtagh, 2014), these participants were level-headed, deliberate, and responsible. Aside from playing music, the participants engaged in extensive time management, complex social participation, and strategic financial planning.

This study is just the beginning of research examining rock musicians, as many aspects of this occupation are yet to be investigated. Future inquiries could delve into the perceptions of older rock musicians, the value of music to former musicians, and the health effects of participation in a rock band. Occupational therapists may be interested in exploring the diverse occupational demands posed by rock band participation, the various contexts in which it occurs, or its therapeutic potential for young adult males. Generating information about participation in valued occupations not only informs individuals working with the population at hand, but also builds understanding of the complex ways that occupations shape individuals' lives.

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APPENDIX A:
Notice of IRB Approval

NOTICE OF IRB APPROVAL

Protocol Number: 16-228

Institutional Review Board IRB00002836, DHHS FWA00003332

Review Type: Full Expedited

Approval Type: New Extension of Time Revision Continuing Review

Principal Investigator: **Brooke King** Faculty Advisor: **Dr. Doris Pierce**

Project Title: **Exploring the Experiences of Young Adult Rock Musicians through an Occupational Lens**

Approval Date: **5/23/16** Expiration Date: **12/19/16**

Approved by: **Dr. Ida Slusher, IRB Chair**

This document confirms that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved the above referenced research project as outlined in the application submitted for IRB review with an immediate effective date.

Principal Investigator Responsibilities: It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to ensure that all investigators and staff associated with this study meet the training requirements for conducting research involving human subjects, follow the approved protocol, use only the approved forms, keep appropriate research records, and comply with applicable University policies and state and federal regulations.

Consent Forms: All subjects must receive a copy of the consent form as approved with the ECU IRB approval stamp. Copies of the signed consent forms must be kept on file unless a waiver has been granted by the IRB.

Adverse Events: Any adverse or unexpected events that occur in conjunction with this study must be reported to the IRB within ten calendar days of the occurrence.

Research Records: Accurate and detailed research records must be maintained for a minimum of three years following the completion of the research and are subject to audit.

Changes to Approved Research Protocol: If changes to the approved research protocol become necessary, a description of those changes must be submitted for IRB review and approval prior to implementation. Some changes may be approved by expedited review while others may require full IRB review. Changes include, but are not limited to, those involving study personnel, consent forms, subjects, and procedures.

Annual IRB Continuing Review: This approval is valid through the expiration date noted above and is subject to continuing IRB review on an annual basis for as long as the study is active. It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to submit the annual continuing review request and receive approval prior to the anniversary date of the approval. Continuing reviews may be used to continue a project for up to three years from the original approval date, after which time a new application must be filed for IRB review and approval.

Final Report: Within 30 days from the expiration of the project, a final report must be filed with the IRB. A copy of the research results or an abstract from a resulting publication or presentation must be attached. If copies of significant new findings are provided to the research subjects, a copy must be also be provided to the IRB with the final report.

Other Provisions of Approval, if applicable: None

Please contact Sponsored Programs at 859-622-3636 or send email to tiffany.hamblin@eku.edu or lisa.royalty@eku.edu with questions about this approval or reporting requirements.

APPENDIX B:
Informed Consent Document

Consent to Participate in a Research Study
Exploring the Experiences of Young Adult Rock Musicians
Through an Occupational Lens

Why am I being asked to participate in this research?

You are being invited to take part in a research study about what it is like to play music for a working rock band. You are invited to participate because you are an adult age 18-30 and you play in a rock band that generates income. If you take part in this study, you will be one of about fifteen people to do so.

Who is doing the study?

The person in charge of this study is Brooke King, a student at Eastern Kentucky University. She is being guided in this research by Dr. Doris Pierce, the endowed chair in occupational therapy at Eastern Kentucky University. There will be other people on the research team assisting at different times during the study.

What is the purpose of the study?

By doing this study, the researcher hopes to learn about what it is like to be a rock musician and how being a rock musician affects other areas of your life.

Where is the study going to take place and how long will it last?

The study involves a single, 45-minute interview. The interview will be conducted at a location that you and the primary researcher agree is convenient and practical such as a local restaurant, coffee shop, or library.

What will I be asked to do?

You will be asked to participate in an interview for about 45 minutes. In the interview, you will be asked to share your perspective and personal experiences about playing in a rock band.

What are the possible risks and discomforts?

There are no risks associated with this study. However, during the interview process, you will be asked questions about your life and what being a professional musician means to you. If you are uncomfortable answering any question during the interview, you may choose not to answer.

Do I have to take part in this study?

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering.

If I don't take part in this study, are there other choices?

If you do not want to be in the study, there are no other choices except to not take part in the study.

What will it cost me to participate?

If you choose to participate, you will cover the cost of your own transportation to the agreed-upon interview location.

Will I receive any payment or rewards for taking part in the study?

You will not receive any payment or reward for taking part in this study.

Who will see the information I give?

Only members of the research team will see the information you share. When we write a report on the study, your information will be combined with information from other people taking part in the study. You will not be identified in these written materials.

We will make every effort to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that you gave us information, or what that information is. For example, your name will be kept separate from the information you give, and these two things will be stored in different places under lock and key.

However, there are some circumstances in which we may have to show your information to other people. For example, we may be required to show information that identifies you to people who need to be sure we have done the research correctly; these would be people from such organizations as Eastern Kentucky University.

What if I have questions?

Before you decide whether to accept this invitation to take part in the study, please ask any questions that might come to mind now. Later, if you have questions about the study, you can contact the investigator, Brooke King at 937-422-0197 or Brooke_King62@mymail.eku.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research volunteer, contact the staff in the Division of Sponsored Programs at Eastern Kentucky University at 859-622-3636. We will give you a copy of this consent form to take with you.

What else do I need to know?

At the end of the interview, you may be asked if you could recommend anyone to participate in the study, and you have the right to decline to provide this information. If you agree to recommend someone you know, the primary researcher will provide you with a letter to share with individuals who may be eligible or interested.

I have thoroughly read this document, understand its contents, have been given an opportunity to have my questions answered, and agree to participate in this research project.

Signature of person agreeing to take part in the study

Date

Printed name of person taking part in the study

Name of person providing information to subject