



A Pilot Study on Motivations of Amateurs in the Community Saxophone Ensemble in Singapore

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Abstract

Through the realization of The Singapore Band Project, Singapore has developed a thriving wind music initiative in school music education and ensemble playing training. Nevertheless, the problem of engaging participants in music-making beyond their school remains a critical issue, as in most cases, only about 10% of each cohort continues to be engaged in the activity. This pilot study employed a quantitative methodology to investigate the musicians of two single-instrument ensembles in Singapore: The Protégé Saxophone Ensemble and the Music Elements Saxophone Ensemble. The demographic data and ongoing engagement motivational factors are as follows. The study evaluates the Motivators of Continued Participation as outlined by Krause in her 2020 study and the hierarchy of these Motivators through sentiment scoring. The findings reveal that intrinsic motives are the most significant for long-term engagement and continued participation in music making during emerging adulthood. The results aim to provide recommendations for developing sustainable recruitment and retention strategies to support music ensembles and continue growing the vibrant music community in Singapore. Therefore, this study helps to close the gap between academic music education and adult music participation, emphasizing the necessity of an individualized program approach.

Keywords: Singapore Wind Band; Saxophone Ensemble; Community Saxophone Ensemble; Continued Music Making

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INTRODUCTION

Singapore has paid much attention to the aesthetic and cultural development of its citizens by establishing a structure of wind band education that is a part of its music education policy. As in the Ministry of Education Singapore, currently there are 15 concert and 22 brass bands in primary school, 102 concert and five marching bands in secondary schools, 18 concert bands in junior colleges, five concert bands in polytechnics and one concert band for the Insti-

tute of Technical Education (ITE) (Schoolfinder, 2024). At the university level, we have the National University of Singapore, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore Management University, and Singapore Institute of Technology, all of which have vibrant concert bands. This strong network of bands can be traced back to the Singapore Band Project, which was initiated in 1966 by Singapore's first Prime Minister, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew. The project was planned to "increase the awareness and education of the general public and main-

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tain a tradition that may be to echo a national voice" (Dairianathan et al., 2006, p. 309). By this policy, singing was affirmed as an essential part of education and culture in Singapore, and the development and nurturing of art, as well as societal virtues, were instilled. In terms of historical participation rates, the initiative's success can be identified. According to a 2002 survey by Professor Eugene Dairianathan, there were 18,023 student wind band participants. By 2006, participation had increased to about 27.7% of students in the educational system. With a population of 738,200 in the 5–19 age group during that period, 204,481 students were able to engage, at least passively, in wind band programs (Department of Statistics, 2003–2007).

However, there is an issue, although recent years have seen a slight drop in participation rates from these figures. Different research has estimated. A survey conducted by the National Arts Council revealed that by 2022, only 14,393 students were involved in wind band activities, representing 3.4% of the total student population of 419,212. This decline poses fundamental questions about the sustainability of music participation among school leavers, as many learners do not transition from school-based musical programs to community or personal music making. Moreover, the focus on the wind bands has changed over the years, as will be illustrated later. In the early decades of the music program, there was a tendency to bring conformity through the schools (Yusri, 2023). However, the new tendencies in the repertoire have attempted to incorporate modern music, which aligns with global practices and enhances students' nighttime creative output. The government has promised support in the form of recurrent funding and training for band instructors; however, as stated earlier, there are limits to participation due to life changes, academic pressure, and a lack of social networks (Pitts & Robinson, 2016). The loss of wind band education goes beyond the classroom. Wind music has therefore been important in promoting unity through various activi-

ties associated with ensembles, including teamwork, discipline, and fellowship. According to Dairianathan (2006), this educational model is a miniature of the key Singaporean social paradigms, such as the focus on unity and cohesion.

The Singaporean wind band education system can be compared to other internationally recognized music education models, such as the Sistema de Venezuela, which emphasizes the social and cultural value of early music education. The youth supported by El Sistema have proven that, through a well-developed musical program, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds can be transformed into lifelong arts enthusiasts. Likewise, Singapore has established a basic framework for nurturing and developing a vibrant tradition of wind music within the educational system, making it accessible to students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds (Dairianathan et al., 2006). Hallam et al. (2008) argue that learners who actively engage in music at earlier stages reap the following advantages: better learning achievement, mastery of a wide range of emotions, and effective interpersonal communication skills. These results reemphasize the need for ongoing support for wind music programs in Singapore schools, beyond aesthetic considerations regarding their quality and impact on students. Nevertheless, the downward trend in singers' participation rates, especially after they leave school – a phenomenon evident in Singapore's learning context – is comparable to the worldwide phenomenon in which structured programs retain student performances but do not transfer them to community or independent performance contexts (Mantie & Tucker, 2008).

Community Wind Music Making in Singapore

With there being much wind music in Singapore, there have been other opportunities, such as those outside of school, via many community wind bands. Some of the well-known bands include the Singapore Wind Symphony, the SOKA Asso-

ciation Symphonic Band, and other Community Centre bands, such as the Kim Seng Wind Symphony, Moulmein Wind Ensemble, West Winds of Bukit Batok Community Centre, Sembawang Community Centre Symphonic Band, and Audio Image of Siglap Community Centre. Many of these groups were formed during the 1990s to cater to the growing population of wind band musicians seeking post-secondary musical activity engagements. The formation of these community bands was championed by then Senior Minister of State for Education, Dr Tay Eng Soon, who wanted to see wind bands formed in the CCs to cater for the 25000 students who are presently in school bands where less than 10% continue to be actively involve in band activities after they leave school (Tan, 1998b). This not only maintained talent in music but also addressed the issue of getting people in the community to rediscover their appreciation for the arts at some point in life. However, a similar problem of participant turnover at the end of their schooling years has persisted even as community music platforms have grown. According to the People's Association network by 2023, there are 1,465 vocal and music interest groups registered in Community Centers and Resident Committees, with 23,195 members of the public participating in these groups. The above statistics show the growth in the use of music as a leisure and social activity but also reveal the disparity between the potential musical workforce and the number of people who engage in community music making.

More educational tertiary wind programs, such as the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, established in 2000, and the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, which began in 2001, also contributed to the development of Singaporean wind music (Ho & Bampenyau, 2023). Students from such schools introduced more refined methods and a deeper understanding of music into the local musical environment, encouraging the formation of single-instrument groups and chamber orchestras. Current ensembles include PhilClars, CLARQui-

net, The Clarinet Club, King's Flute Choir, The Protégé Saxophone Ensemble, Music Elements Saxophone Ensemble, and others who perform in concerts and other activities. For example, in 2024, The King's Flute Choir invited eight ensembles from the region to the Autumn Flute Fair, with two concerts aimed at deepening the understanding of Singapore as a hub for chamber music (Tan, 2024). Although the government has actively supported wind bands and single-instrument ensembles, the long-standing observation by Mantie and Tucker (2008) remains true: a significant percentage of students drop out of music after completing their education. This attrition can be caused by reasons such as transitioning through a certain phase in one's life, ignorance of other extracurricular and community music opportunities, and a reduced inclination to be involved in music activities that are not affiliated with school. To reverse this trend, the gap between the formal school-based programs and the less structured community music arenas must be closed (Bartleet, 2021). Proposals for increasing participation include implementing better-structured and more visible community ensembles, as well as developing links between schools and community centers. Analyzing the current state of Singapore's wind music reveals a rich environment that may remain engaging if properly supported for a lifetime.

Wind bands in the Singaporean community serve as an important continuation of the education institutions' initiatives, thus providing platforms for individuals to maintain their musical interests. A study conducted by Bartleet & Higgins in 2021 increases the understanding of community ensembles as agents of social integration and inclusive artistic practice. In Singapore, there are a few ensembles that can be described in this position, including The Singapore Wind Symphony and The Kim Seng Wind Symphony, which not only contribute to the country's musical life but also play an important role in specific cultural communities.

The interconnection of larger en-

sembles and smaller chamber groups, such as single instrumental groups, is often viewed as a natural transition; however, this is not a typical occurrence worldwide (Finnegan, 2013). A notable characteristic of these smaller ensembles is that they are predominantly comprised of amateurs, although they may include semi-professional musicians, and often have flexible private arrangements for rehearsals and practice (Finnegan, 2013). For participants in these groups, the motivations for these experiences are usually reliant on the engagement with a performance of a favourite work, whether in practice or public concerts (Finnegan, 2013).

Motivation for Continued Music Making

Lifelong music making and training not only enhance artistic gains but also contribute significantly to cognitive health and coordination required for producing sound and playing musical instruments (Paquette & Mignault Goulet, 2014). Furthermore, research has shown that lifelong participation in music can improve memory, lower stress levels, and slow cognitive decline in older adults. Despite these well-documented advantages, three primary reasons often lead students to cease participation post-graduation: Specifically, these restrictions include: (1) the connection between musical participation with settings or other formalized environments such as schools, (2) inadequate skills for moving to free or community-based music making, and (3) lack of information about available forms of musicking past the formal schooling year (Krause, 2020). As identified by Krause (2020), the key Motivators of Continued Participation (MCP) are diverse and interrelated, including: There are; (1) perceived benefits from relating to others, (2) the ability to meet like-minded people, (3) good relationship with the facilitators, (4) perceived enjoyment of the activity, (5) perceived sense of accomplishment, (6) passion towards music, (7) intrinsic preference for musical arts, (8) perceived boosted well-being, and (9) perceived desire to improve in music. These motivators

emphasize that satisfaction, being an intrinsic reward for inhabitants, also comes with extrinsic stimuli that include social contact and guidance.

Although prior research has been conducted on the reasons for students' engagement in school music programs in the context of Singapore, there is a lack of research on what keeps individuals who graduate from these institutions actively engaged in making music. Previous information suggests that school programs are commendably robust but often do not provide students with the tools or perspective required to become lifelong musicians (Alain, 2014). This causes essential questions about how schools and communities can better prepare for and facilitate this transition. As Singapore has significantly invested in wind band programs within its education system, a method that can engage the younger generation in continuing to make music becomes crucial. This means there is a need to access and unlock the opportunities and benefits of music to a wider population base. Alleviating extrinsic concerns, including personal interest and skills, coupled with offering highly supportive communities, will help design sustainable engagement. The purpose of this research is twofold: first, it seeks to investigate how the MCP framework, as assembled by Krause, fits single-instrument ensemble members in Singapore. Ultimately, by examining the factors that most engage participants, the study aims to provide practical recommendations for ensemble facilitators, educators, and policymakers (Bartleet, 2021). Such knowledge may one day contribute to the development of opportunities that promote lifelong musicianship by building on Singapore's networks and addressing the deficiencies that hinder sustained engagement.

Long-term engagement in music making has multiple effects on cognition, affect, and sociability. According to Paquette & Goulet (2014), musical activities have a positive effect on memory, fine motor skills, and stress levels. These benefits apply to all ages and serve to underscore

the need for designing environments for ongoing musical activity. However, Mantie and Tucker (2008) have pointed out that there are several obstacles to post-graduation music-making, including a lack of time, competing life priorities, and a scarcity of available community resources. Krause et al. (2020) specified that people's passion and desire to improve their skills are always more important than the desire to meet people and become friends with them when it comes to peoples continued musical engagement. This therefore, calls for structured programs that address this inherent need by offering participants the chance to explore their artistic potential. Deci & Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination Theory offers a framework for understanding the relationships between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. From these, they conclude that nurturing intrinsic rewards, such as the passion for making music and the accomplishment of learning new activities, can produce longer-term motivation if accompanied by environments that reduce extrinsic pressures.

The aim of this paper is to verify Krause (2020) study in the Singapore context by investigating the demographic of participants in Singapore's two active saxophone ensembles and using sentiment scoring to identify a hierarchy of the MCP which could used to highlight factors that can help to facilitate more active continued music participation in the region.

METHODS

A quantitative approach was utilized for the research design of this pilot study to systematically explore the motivations of participants in two active saxophone ensembles in Singapore: The Protégé Saxophone Ensemble (PSE) and the Music Element Saxophone Ensemble (MESE). The two ensembles are active with more than two musical activities per year and can therefore be used as case studies to understand the factors that keep people participating in community music making. This research design aimed to provi-

de specific information about participants' characteristics, as well as the reasons for their long-term involvement in ensemble pursuits. The study therefore employed a non-probability sampling technique that included both convenience and purposeful sampling. Availability sampling enabled access to participants in the ensembles, whereas purposeful sampling focused on participants who were more involved in these ensembles. The use of both strategies was effective for collecting specific and pertinent information, while acknowledging that pilot studies are not typically generalizable. The data was collected using an online survey instrument developed using Google Forms. A survey link was provided to the PSE and MESE ensemble directors, who then distributed it to their members. This approach leveraged readily available communication structures within the ensembles, thereby enhancing reach and participation. This involved several sections, the first of which included general questions such as age, gender, and education level. The survey continued with sections addressing the Motivators of Continued Participation (MCP) framework. To measure the level to which the different motivations of enjoyment, social relatedness, skill enhancement, and perceived well-being applied to participants, questions were worded on a five-point Likert scale. By counting the mentions and computing the sentiment associated with each reply, the relevance of their responses for understanding the importance of each motivation for perpetual engagement was compared (Figure 1).

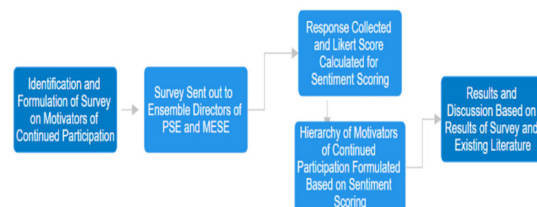


Figure 1. Work Flowchart of Study

There were also some additional questions designed in the form of an inter-

view to enable the respondent to provide an account of their experience, which offered qualitative data in addition to the quantitative data obtained from the closed-ended questions. This cross-sectional approach also amplified the study by providing diverse data on participants' incentives and barriers. The responses collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics to compare and examine the data in the study in terms of patterns. The positive and negative scores enabled the ranking of the motivators based on their importance, while the descriptive responses provided the context for the analysis (Bartleet, 2021). This dual analysis was proposed to identify key findings with implications for sustaining and recruiting membership in community ensembles.

Such a methodologically systematic approach also guarantees that not only PSE and MESE, but also other similar musical groups, might benefit from the findings. The findings can benefit ensemble directors and music teachers in understanding the issues that might lead to dropout and how they can create strategies to overcome them, promoting strong engagement.

The survey method used in this study is in accordance with the method used by Mantie & Tucker (2008) when analyzing the dynamics of music participation. I was able to insert questions that allowed me to obtain qualitative data to support the quantitative data I collected from the study. These similar approaches have been employed in related studies on participation in community music making, thereby providing solid frameworks for analyzing the antecedents of motivation (Krause et al., 2020). The use of sentiment scoring is justified by studies in music psychology that employ this approach to rank participants' responses and detect significant trends. For example, while Pitts and Robinson (2016) employed similar methods to study motivations for amateur music participation in the UK, their study provided reference data to complement the findings in Singapore. For qualitative insights, providing context to the quantita-

tive findings. Similar methodologies have been successfully applied in studies examining community music participation, offering robust frameworks for understanding the complexities of motivational factors (Krause et al., 2020). The use of sentiment scoring is supported by previous research in music psychology, where it has been utilized to rank participant responses and identify key trends. For instance, Pitts & Robinson (2016) employed similar techniques to explore motivations for amateur music-making in the UK, offering comparative data that can contextualize Singapore's findings.

The results from the five-point Likert scale survey are then tabulated and the used as a source for sentiment scoring as part of the sentiment analysis regarding MCP.

Sentiment analysis is the field of study that analyses people's opinions and sentiments (Liu, 2020). Sentiment scoring is one of the measures that can be used to quantify the findings (Liu, 2020).

Ethical Statement: The questionnaire used was based on existing literature and studies. All respondents were informed about the purpose of this survey and its use for publication. Underage respondents' parents signed an informed consent form. Only the researcher oversees data analysis.

Scope of Study

The scope of this paper would be limited to:

1. Getting a demographic of participants in Singapore's two active saxophone ensemble
2. Identifying how each point of the MCP resonates with members of the respective ensemble
3. Distinguishing the hierarchy of the MCP and which could be more factors that can help to facilitate continued music participation

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Background of Saxophone Ensemble

Community Members

Members of both ensembles ($N=30$), PSE ($n=16$) and MESE ($n=14$) were received. Most survey respondents (86.7%) are male (Figure 2), which aligns with the study done by Sergeant (2022), which found that the large majority of the male presence in this genre of ensemble music performance. This discrepancy in gender distribution might be due to the selection of instruments during the participants' schooling days. Research has found that women in brass bands and orchestras consistently prefer higher-pitched, lighter-weight instruments, while male players tend to favor lower-pitched instruments (Hallam, 2008). Although the saxophone is considered one of the least gender-stereotyped instruments, when given more options, the instrument tends to attract more boys to learn it (Hallam, 2008). The tenor and baritone saxophones within the saxophone ensemble, which could be significantly heavier could be one of the reasons that accounts for the higher proportion of males within the survey participant's pool.

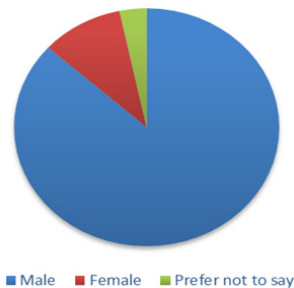


Figure 2. Gender Distribution of Survey Participants

The two largest age groups to respond to the survey consist of 10-19 years old and 20-29 years old (Figure 3). The ages in this survey were grouped as follows: middle childhood to adolescence (10-19 years old), emerging adulthood (20-29 years old), middle age (40-60 years old), and old age (65 years old and above). The reason the adolescent was chosen is that the bulk of Singapore wind music players would be from the bands of the Singapore education system. Hence, a majority of the students would be from the ages of 13 and

above for secondary school or from the ages of 10 for primary school.

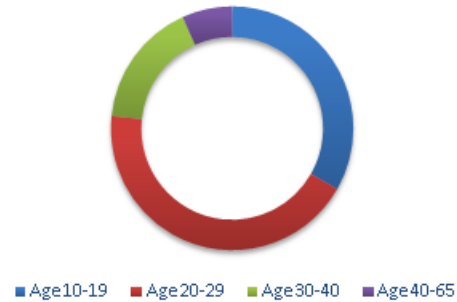


Figure 3. Age Distribution of Survey Participants

In Singapore, both men and women can be conscripted for National Service (NS) under the Enlistment Act (Singapore), although only men have been enlisted for NS since 1967, for a term of up to two years (previously two and a half years) (Tan, 207). This is followed by operationally ready service until the age of 40 for non-commissioned officers and 50 for commissioned officers in the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF), the Singapore Police Force (SPF), and the Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) (Tan, 2017).

This could account for a higher proportion of members (43.3%) who are from the emerging adulthood age group. This age group is particularly important in sustaining continued music making, as Pitts (2016) points out that adults' reasons for sustaining or ceasing participation are determined at the university stage. The kind of organised musical activities that they enjoyed during these school years would enable this life stage, which presents active music making as part of their lifestyle (Pitts, 2016, p. 329).

The survey also pointed to the fact that 63.3% of participants had only learned the instrument from their band directors, which according to a 2004 study found out in a survey of 54 band directors that 40.8% of band directors in Singapore had no prior instrument playing experience, 30.6% with no theory background and almost half of the surveyed does not possess the minimum requirement of a music diploma (Lee,

2004, p. 38). This lack of proper instructions from qualified instructors may be a factor that prevents students from continuing with their music-making endeavors. With the advancement of instrumental studies, there was an increase in saxophone majors, resulting in 36.7% of survey participants being able to study with a saxophone tutor as part of their band program (Ho & Bampenyoun, 2023). 26.7% of survey participants were also affiliated with a tertiary institution for music, having completed a Diploma, Degree, or Master's program in Saxophone Performance.

The survey also revealed that 83.3% of participants remained actively engaged with one or more ensembles, while 16.7% only rehearsed and performed with their respective saxophone ensemble (Figure 4). In 30% of the survey participants, the issue of why they ceased was investigated, and the following results were obtained: 54.5% due to key life transitions, such as career changes or having a baby. 36.4% in losing interest right after graduation and 9.1% of not being aware of external music-making activity. None of the participants who had substantial breaks from music making noted a lack of skills as a criterion for their absence from music making activity, this is quite a departure from one of the significant reasons found in the Krause (2020) study that the self-perception versus musical identify does not pose as a significant problem in Singapore amateur music making scene.

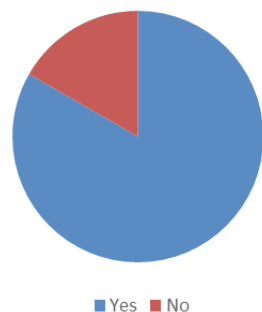


Figure 4. Engagement with other forms of music making beyond Saxophone Ensemble

Motivations of Saxophone Ensemble Community Members

From the analysis of the sentiment score on the Likert scale, the higher-ranked MCPs are personal fulfillment (4.87), liking the music (4.73), and having the desire to develop musical skills (4.77), indicating higher motivation factors for their participation within the ensemble (Figure 5). Interestingly, the sense of feeling connected to the ensemble or with certain members of the ensemble (4.05), the opportunity to socialize with like-minded people or feeling that there are like-minded people within their ensemble (4.065), and improved perceived well-being (4.1) were ranked lower (Figure 5).

This result aligns with Self-Determination Theory (SDT), with the higher-ranked MCP in the survey leaning more towards the intrinsic motivation side of the self-determination continuum (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Having personal fulfillment and a desire to develop their musical skills is seen as an intrinsic regulation and integrated regulation, which are identified as intrinsic, given their locus of causality (Deci & Ryan, 2000). The socializing aspect and being connected with the ensemble, which depends on outsiders, seems to rank lower and is more inclined towards an external locus of causality (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This is good news for community ensembles in Singapore, as research has shown that learned behaviors are a function of reinforcement, whereas intrinsically motivated behaviors do not depend on reinforcement, as the act of engaging in an interesting activity itself serves as the reward that meets psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Similarly to White (2024) study, the influence of others in continued music making falls in comparison to school years, the feeling connected and socializing with like-minded ranks lower compared to the intrinsic needs of the individual (White & Pitts, 2024). 11 respondents commented that they had significant lapse in their playing, the reasons given were key-life transitions (54.5%), lack of interest after graduation (36.4%) and unawareness of outside music-making opportunities

beyond school (9.1%). Jun (2005) noted that growing up, additional family and work commitments, life changes, and time pressures are cited as reasons to give up comparable activities (Jun, 2005).

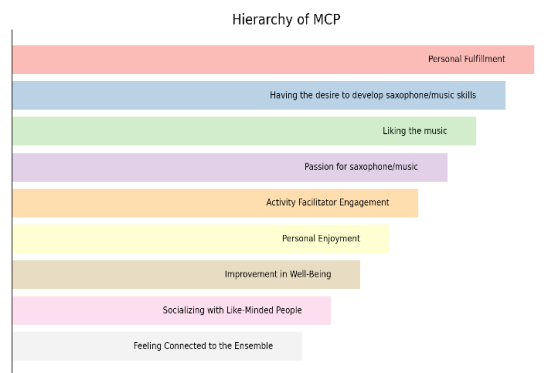


Figure 5. Hierarchy of MCP

The findings of this study are in concordance with the research works conducted in other developed countries about the participation of amateurs in music. For instance, Krause et al. (2019) found that extrinsic motivation was lower than interest and satisfaction across multiple cultures. Similarly, Bartleet & Higgins (2021) noted that community ensembles played a significant role in offering means of creative engagement, irrespective of social factors sometimes being of secondary importance. The findings reported in this study further underscore the need for facilitators of ensembles in Singapore to focus on the use of extrinsic incentives, as well as the barriers described by participants. For instance, Pitts (2016) pointed out that the role of teacher-facilitator business relationships with students is in directing them towards post-graduation life. In this way, educators can create a supportive environment that fosters ongoing formal education and individual music-making throughout one's lifetime.

The findings of the present research provide a wealth of understanding into the factors that encourage or hinder the persistence of participants in community music ensembles in Singapore. In demographic terms, male participants continue to dominate the instruments, thus underscoring

the need for gender-sensitive approaches that will encourage the participation of female participants. The analysis of the age distribution highlights the importance of emerging adulthood as a developmental period during which sustained musical engagement can be established. However, challenges such as the lack of early training by qualified trainers, as well as changes in aspects of life, persist. Motivationally, it was found that amounts of intrinsically measurable desires, such as joy, passion, and satisfaction, resulted in the strongest motivation for participating in music competitions; this supports Self-Determination Theory. The generally lower impact of social motivators can be seen as a reason to continue focusing on individual development plans and personal motivation. The data also seem to deviate from international studies, where self-conception and musical persona act as barriers to engagement; in the Singaporean context, these factors seem less effective. As a result, community ensembles in Singapore have the potential to support lifelong music-making by focusing on internal reasons and external factors, including transition and limited knowledge of opportunities after graduation (Alain, 2014). To improve recruitment and retention, facilitators need to aim for providing more diverse, entertaining, and skilled programs that appeal to participants' self-organised motivation for learning music. Ultimately, these strategies will contribute to the sustainability of the community music base in Singapore.

Globally, there is a need for more culture of inquiry, whether in macro or micro form, within the realm of community music (Higgins & Willingham, 2017). This study of members of the two saxophone ensembles in Singapore has a macro focus to measure the hierarchy of the MCP among members; however, it can also be used to explore deeper questions within each MCP and to quantify the data for greater accuracy.

Musicians in community music are utilizing diverse approaches that are participatory in nature, community-focused

and underpinned by socially oriented principles and goals (Badham, 2015).

CONCLUSION

From this research, it is evident that self-interest motivations stood out as the key influences for sustained music making after the learning institution. Intrinsic motivational aspects, combined with fun, passion for music, and a desire to improve musicianship, are essential for maintaining interest. Related aspects, including social relations and rapport with a facilitator, also have a supportive impact and are important. This is why it is essential to develop music programs that are beneficial and specifically targeted to appeal to the intrinsic rewards of the target participants.

The challenges of amateur music groups graying their membership and enlisting youths are a perennial problem, as pointed out by existing literature. Solving this problem entails designing a less disruptive transition for students from formal school settings to either independent or community music making. This is not a linear or ahistorical process; it can and does require purposeful actions by teachers, workshop leaders, and policymakers. Teachers' experiences from their own school contexts are central to the process, as teachers are facilitators of learning. Teachers must ensure that students continue with music after leaving school and that the connection between the school environment and the broader community is maintained.

The study also highlights the need to design viable support structures that enhance the coping mechanisms of individuals at different life stages. For instance, early-career workers or individuals starting their own households often find it challenging to spare time for music ensembles. These are major barriers, however, which can be managed through flexible scheduling for practice, the availability of venues for practice, and proper targeting of the audience to ensure that community music is a feasible option for everyone at every

stage in life.

However, the number of participants enrolled in this study is limited, which forms a constraint to the generalization of the study results. Furthermore, it can be noted that although sentiment scoring was helpful in assessing motivational priorities, further qualitative explorations can help capture participants' day-to-day experiences and the complexity of stakeholder perspectives. Future research might also consider including subjects with whom the investigator maintains ongoing contact, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of what motivates people to stay active in music-making or lose interest. The second gap is focused on establishing the nature and extent of community music in Singapore. Although a considerable amount of research has been conducted on school-based music programs, research on community music making remains relatively scarce. Identifying how community ensembles can be improved in their capacity to address the needs of their members, through such mechanisms as new forms of programming, opportunities for mentoring, or partnerships with schools, might also be investigated. Lastly, creating passionate music consumers for a lifetime has a positive impact on the value of Singapore's culture and society.

Continuing to make music in later life is beneficial to brain health, self-esteem, and social connection —three valuable assets that become increasingly important as people age. Policymakers, educators, and ensemble facilitators can utilize the insights from this study to remove the barriers identified and build on the motivators for long-term engagement. This research forms the basis for identifying the factors that sustain music participation in Singapore, benefiting both current and potential ensemble members. Community music-making has the capacity to evolve alongside future societal structures, while simultaneously maintaining the potential for mutually creative, collaborative, and transformational experiences.

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