The Personal and Social Impact of Non-accredited Music Education in Prison: A transformative mixed methods approach to research in custodial settings

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Signed Statement

This dissertation is an original piece of work. It is my own work and has not been submitted either in the same or different form to this or any other Higher Education Institution for a degree or other award.

Signed: ███████████████ Date: 30/08/2020

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Abstract

In recent years there has been a shift in the focus of prison education, from treatment interventions and learning that centres around employability skills building, to opportunities that support personal and social development, with the aim to position education in custodial settings as a structure that supports processes of desistance. Against this background, I set out to explore the impact of my new, non-accredited music course on learners in prison, framing music-making activity in prisons within the context of social and criminal justice. I was interested in understanding why impact is or isn't experienced in my classroom, whether it's a direct result of the music, or if instead impact is a response to the pedagogical style to teaching music that I implement.

A transformative mixed methods research approach was adopted in order to practice cultural competence, uncover multiple perspectives, build trusting relationships with the participants and address the diverse needs of the prison population. Data was collected from one cohort of learners on a four-week music course (n=6) at HMP/YOI Portland, using methods based on learning activities that are a normal part of the music course, thereby ensuring ecological validity. Data analysis was conducted using grounded theory guidelines to sharpen the thematic analysis of qualitative data, ensuring a close relationship with the data and critical self-reflection of my privileged positionality as a white, free woman. Based on concepts of Convict Criminology, interviews with two classroom peer mentors were also collected. The peer mentors were positioned as 'insider' research commenters in this study, situated to give a broader analysis of the research topics, to establish routes to the representation of authentic narratives of learners in prison.

This research found that music-making activities in prison can have a positive impact on participants' mood, self-confidence and motivation, leading to positive; changes in personal and social development; and shifts in self-evaluation and lower-order self-concept. There was strong evidence that impact was experienced by the participants, not as a result of the music alone, but because the pedagogy created the conditions for a space that contrasted the wider prison environment. Recommendations for practice are made, including the need for a pedagogy for prison education which recognises the value of social learning experiences and ensures that within the contrasting wider prison environment, spaces can be created that support positive mood states, alternative social reinforcement and the development of autonomy supportive relationships.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1 A rationale for music education research in prison

This research takes place in HMP/YOI Portland, a category C closed facility, with a population of up to 530 adult and young adult male prisoners. I have been a Music and Creative Arts Lecturer at Portland for four years. In October 2019 I started to deliver a new music course, which is non-accredited and focusses on personal and social development. The programme runs for four weeks with groups of six learners and two peer mentors. During the course, learners are encouraged to self-select the music-based activities they wish to engage in. The learners set individualised targets and monitor both their subject specific progress and personal and social skills development in their reflective journals. They may decide to participate in instrumental learning, digital music production, song-writing, performance or recording; they may also elect to work individually or collaboratively.

Before I started in my position at Portland, I had never set foot in a prison, and I didn't know what to expect. I quickly learnt that, within the classrooms in the prison, the community of people I was introduced to wasn't dissimilar to any other group in society. I experienced the education department as a place within the prison; characterised by respect and friendliness, used for socialising, learning and creativity, revealing the varied, extensive and often extraordinary talents and strengths of the different people within it. Although the prison can be seen as an inherently cold, restrictive and often hostile place, within the classrooms in the education buildings I found the existence of an alternative narrative.

As an educator and researcher in prison, I feel that it is important to share my experiences and the accounts of the people I work with, with multiple audiences; the research community, music practitioners, people that work in prisons, policy makers and the wider public. This may help to provide for others a deeper understanding of people in prison; many who may be challenged by the idea of criminality. Through research that explores music education in prison, I intend to add to a dialogue about criminal justice that attempts to challenge both perceptions and policies. This could give voice to an alternate assessment of what people in prison represent, helping others to recognise that;

> The opposite of criminalization is humanization… Showing the complexity and the preciousness of each human life, and never allowing ourselves to give in to the temptation to define a person's entire life based on the worst thing they ever did. Everybody is more than just the one worst thing they ever did. You are. And so am I. (Jones, cited in Ali 2019)

I will argue throughout this research that there is a necessity for an alternative understanding of criminality and the criminal justice system in the UK, with focus on a shared responsibility for prisoner re-entry into society and desistance from crime. This study intends to demonstrate that we can only truly start to recognise our collective responsibility for criminal justice once we begin to listen to the people that are labelled as criminals and understand the social structures that cause barriers for them. To give context to this study, Section 1.2 will introduce the current vision for criminal justice and education within prison against the backdrop of desistance theory.

1.2 Background

Historically the Western criminal justice system has reinforced retributive approaches to criminality (Marshall 2001), characterised by punishment and authoritarian methods of rehabilitation whereby 'correctional policies and government interests prevail over the individual development of the prisoner' (Meijer 2017:160). These methods have focussed 'on assessing individual deficits (risks and needs) and identifying the most appropriate expert treatment strategy to 'correct' these individuals' shortcomings or fix broken people' (Maruna 2017:8-9). Whilst the aim of retributive justice and punishment is to reduce reoffending, it fails to frame individuals in the system as 'agents in the process of change' (Behan 2014:21), making the assumption that people in prison need treatment, positioning them as risk factors and neglecting to appreciate the contextual and social factors that contribute to criminality (Ward and Maruna 2007). This has called for a renewed understanding of the factors that contribute towards desistance from crime, in order to support a transformed understanding of criminal justice and to recognise the role that education can play in the desistance process.

1.2.1 Understanding desistance from crime

Desistance from crime is simply defined as 'the end of a period of involvement in offending… meaning that an individual has given up offending permanently' (Farrall and Calverley 2006:2). However, this understanding of desistance is problematic, because it is difficult to objectively know

whether someone will proceed to desist in the future (Laub and Sampson 2001). Instead, types of desistance have been defined in order to clarify its meaning within concepts of individual agency and social structure, as well as to provide different approaches to measuring desistance.

Primary desistance, positions 'the term… at its most basic and literal level to refer to any lull or crime-free gap in the course of a criminal career' (Maruna, LeBel, Mitchell and Naples 2004:274). Primary desistance does not make the assumption that the desister will continue along a crime-free journey, but is 'identified as a condition, or a state of being' (King 2014:32), evidenced by 'the behaviour of non-offending' (Maruna et al. 2004:274). These actions can be understood as 'cognitive shifts', which are seen as 'fundamental to the transformation process' (Giordano, Cernkovich and Rudolph 2002:999). However, the contention is that crime-free periods are common for ex-offenders (Maruna et al. 2004; Piquero 2004). Therefore, primary desistance does not categorically suggest that there is 'any significant commitment from the individual concerned' (King 2014:32).

Secondary desistance however, acknowledges 'the movement from the behaviour of non-offending to the assumption of the role of a "changed person"' (Maruna et al. 2004:274). Secondary desistance still cannot be deemed as a final state of being (King 2014); however, it places desistance as a 'a process, not an event', whereby ex-offenders 'undergo a change in personality and self-concept' (Laub and Sampson 2001:27). In this case the offender is said to be experiencing the reorganisation and 'internalization of a non-offending identity' (Nugent and Schinkel 2016:570), thus 'shedding an offending identity' (Farrall, Sharpe, Hunter and Calverley 2011:219). In some cases, primary desistance is said to precede secondary desistance, as the cognitive shifts experienced 'expand the actor's capacity to imagine alternative noncriminal selves' (Healy 2013:562).

Secondary desistance therefore relates to agency, an individual's aptitude for 'intentionality, power, reflexivity, and the capacity for self-examination or monitoring' (Paternoster, Bachman, Bushway, Kerrison and O'Connell 2015:210-211). This can be understood through rational choice theory, which suggests that desistance occurs when the offender takes an active role in deciding to end criminal behaviour; through adjustments in the way they make decisions and act intentionally (Paternoster and Pogarsky 2009; King 2014). Paternoster and Pogarsky (2009) frame this within the Thoughtfully Reflective Decision Making (TRDM) model, whereby 'effective decision-makers first collect relevant information about a problem, then identify and appraise possible solutions before entering a final self-reflective stage where they retrospectively evaluate their decisions' (Healy 2013:559). Thoughtfully reflective decision making should result 'in more successful life outcomes,

the accumulation of social, personal, and cultural capital, and a reduced risk of anti-social and self-destructive behaviour' (Paternoster and Pogarsky 2009:104). However, this theory concentrates on understanding ex-offenders as people who are free to make rational choices, yet evidence suggests that many people released from prison 'experience homelessness or face barriers to housing… face problems with employment and education… [and] experience financial difficulties and debt' (King 2014:59). Consequently, 'these structural factors may have a compounding effect, whereby individual offenders become increasingly socially excluded and segregated'; thus, those release from prison may not have the opportunities or support to make the rational decision to 'participate in mainstream society' (King 2014:59). For young people in particular, late modernity has become 'increasingly difficult, protracted and individualized'; therefore 'young adults face a vast array of potential identity choices but receive little external guidance about how to proceed' (Healy 2013:565).

Thus, from a social justice perspective, secondary desistance becomes problematic, because it relies on desisters to 'not only imagine a crime free identity but also skilfully navigate their way through the obstacles and opportunities that they will inevitably encounter on the journey towards a new self' (Healy 2013:560). Secondary desistance places the responsibility of desistance on the ex-offender, and not the structural framework that surrounds them (Nugent and Schinkel 2016). However, 'the dynamics of desistance transitions are conditioned by greater complexity than the will of the individual alone' (King 2014:34). Rather than rational agents of change, the person who has been involved in crime negotiates their behaviour influenced by forces external to them (Healy 2013). Desistance, therefore, should be appreciated as the interaction between individual effort and social support (Farrall and Bowling 1999; Farrall et al. 2011; Healy 2013; Nugent and Schinkel 2016; Maruna 2017; Graham and McNeill 2018).

Tertiary desistance frames desistance within the social context, recognising 'that increasing relational capital and access to pro-social opportunities and support, while reducing perceptions and experiences of stigma and prejudice, can increase the probability of positive outcomes after prison' (Ludlow, Armstrong and Bartels 2019:34). In this case, desistance 'is produced through an *interplay* between individual choices, and a range of wider social forces, institutional and societal practices which are beyond the control of the individual' (Farrall and Bowling, 1999:261). To successfully desist from crime, a person must be given opportunities to develop social capital; that is bonds, bridges and links to people, communities and structures within society (Albertson and Hall 2020). By recognising the shared responsibility in the process of desistance, the criminal justice and wider

social systems can be positioned as playing a pivotal role in supporting desistance and social reintegration (Graham and McNeill 2018). Tertiary desistance focusses the necessity for a dyadic relationship between an individual and society, reframing desistance as;

> Not just an individual process of journey, but rather a social movement… better [highlighting] the structural obstacles inherent in the desistance process and the macro-social changes necessary to successfully create a 'desistance-informed' future. (Maruna 2017:6)

However, society can only truly support desistance if there is an appreciation that structural problems refer not only the resources and services that ex-offenders may struggle to access, but also to society's perception of criminality (Nugent and Schinkel 2016).

Nugent and Schinkel (2016) recommend a move from the use of primary, secondary and tertiary desistance as descriptors, to the terminology 'act-desistance', 'identity desistance' and 'relational desistance', as this better defines and differentiates between the different features of desistance and 'does not suggest sequencing in time or importance' (Nugent and Schinkel 2016:570). Desistance, from this perspective, is viewed as a process which is 'dynamic, gradual and subject to relapse' (Best 2019:111) and may feature 'periods of backsliding, relapse and uncertainty' (Goodwin 2016:68). This assessment recognises that terminating criminal behaviour is not a linear journey and that all systems of desistance account for the likeliness of success (Goodwin 2016; Nugent and Schinkel 2016; Best 2019). In concurrence, Rocque and Slivken (2009) remark that;

> Desistance is related to many factors, internal, external, formal and informal. Some offenders will need help with… cognitive shifts or identity changes, others are motivated and need help with more structural issues. In other words, we argue against a one size fits all approach and approaches that fail to recognise the interconnect nature of desistance enhancing factors. (Rocque and Slivken 2009:390)

Ultimately, desistance relies on the coaction of 'different spheres (the world outside, within ourselves and in relation to others)' (Nugent and Schinkel 2016:570). In all cases, act, identity and relational desistance require the offender to challenge their self-perception and assert their desistance-orientated individual agency. At the same time wider society can help with the process of desistance by making structural change and challenging their perception of people in and released

from prison; to support people to gain social capital and recognise that a person is not defined wholly by a criminal conviction.

1.2.2 The current vision for education in prison

Adopting the desistance perspective in prison education encourages a shift in focus away from treatment interventions (Maruna 2017), instead recognising individuals in the criminal justice system as people with potential, strengths and talents (Maruna 2017). This has promoted the development of educational programmes that provide people in prison with opportunities to progress their personal and social skills and build relationships with others (Maruna 2017). In this way education aims to 'combat the exclusion of society's most marginalised and disenfranchised citizens' (Costelloe 2014:31), recognising the autonomy and agency of people in prison and the social structures that are necessary to support them back into their communities.

In 2016, education specialist Dame Sally Coates was commissioned to review prison education by the Ministry of Justice. This resulted in the publication of Unlocking Potential, a report which demanded reform. In particular Coates argued that whilst 'employment has been shown to play a key role in reducing reoffending… "employability" should not drive the entire focus of the curriculum' (Coates 2016:ii). Instead, a more holistic approach to prison education could focus on curriculum design that re-engaged disenfranchised learners, focussed on supporting the talents and individual aspirations of people in prison; helping them to 'improve self-knowledge, develop self-confidence and therefore help tackle reoffending' (Coates:ii).

When Unlocking Potential was published however, the payment mechanism for prison education was set out in the Offenders' Learning and Skills Service (OLASS) contracts. OLASS offered a payment by results model for prison education providers, which '[rewarded] providers who [maximised] revenue by providing short, low level courses that typically [secured] high success and completion rates' (Rogers, Simonot and Nartey 2014:39). This, in some cases, led to issues of equity, as lower-level learners were discouraged from attending education, where providers didn't want to 'take the risk of them failing and costing them money' (Rogers et al. 2014:36). What is more, the OLASS contracts acted as a 'disincentive for non-accredited subjects such as creative arts or Personal and Social Development courses to be run' (Coates 2016:29).

The publication of Unlocking Potential paved the way for the introduction of the Prison Education Framework (PEF) contracts. These contracts were operationalised in April 2019, at the start of the

prison education academic year. Informed by the recommendations of Coates, under this new structure, governors, in collaboration with educational providers, have been able to 'shape the curriculum to their cohort of learners' (Coates 2016:29), with emphasis on quality education that is responsive to the needs of the individual learners that make up diverse prison populations (Haigh and Caulfield 2018). Due to this shift there has been a renewed focus on the role of non-accredited programmes within prison education (Szifris, Fox and Bradbury 2018), where learning is tailored to the individual learner rather than to meet assessment criteria. In February 2020, Ofsted published the new Educational Inspection Framework, which further highlighted the holistic vision for prison education. Education providers are now assessed on their ability to provide learners in prison with a curriculum that supports them 'to develop their knowledge and skills beyond the purely academic, technical or vocational' (Ofsted 2020:37). This means that the intent of prison education must also support wider skills development, helping learners to engage with society (Ofsted 2020).

When education in prison is valued as a structure that supports personal and social development and connection, supplementary to subject-specific skills building, it can be viewed as sitting within the desistance paradigm (Szifris et al. 2018). It is therefore important for practitioners in prison to reflect on the impact of their lessons, to identify whether their teaching and learning does play a role in the processes of desistance for their learners and if so, how that is achieved. With this in mind, in Section 1.3 I will outline my research aims.

1.3 Research aims

From my tetradic position, as a musician, teacher, member of the prison education team and researcher, I recognise the multiple objectives that can arise from conducting action research in prison. I want to develop a deeper understanding of my subject and frame music-making activity in prisons within the context of social and criminal justice. I want to reflect on my approach to teaching and learning and explore the impact of my new non-accredited and learner-lead course. Most notably, I hope to gain a better understanding of the learners that I work with in order to best support them in the process of desistance. In the future, this research may have the potential to bring about change to curriculum design within prison education systems.

My focussed research aims will explore the impact of my new music course at HMP/YOI Portland and examine whether non-accredited music education can be used as a tool to enable learners to engage personal and social development and to challenge their self-perception. I am interested in

the connection between the experiences of the learners in my class and what is happening in the lessons. I want to know whether learners are impacted by engagement in music alone, or something else, such as the social practice of music-making or the approach to teaching and learning that I adopt. My focussed research questions are:

> Does my new music education course have an impact on the people in prison that I work with?   If so;
> a.   What does this impact look like?
> b.   What are the reasons for this impact?
>   If not;
> c.   Why is that?

In order to address my research questions, I will firstly explore literature from diverse disciplines within prison research, before conducting a transformative mixed methods study with one cohort of learners on my new music course. As well as answering these focussed research questions I subsequently aim to provide another narrative regarding music education practice in prison, exploring its role in supporting processes of desistance.

1.4 Summary

In order to support people in prison to cease offending, rather than reinforcing retributive approaches to criminality, it is important to recognise the factors that are associated with desistance from crime. Whilst simply defined 'to desist' means to end criminal activity, desistance is the interplay of internal and external factors; non-criminal individual agency and social structures that support the desisting individual.

Education that adopts the desistance perspective focusses on recognising people in prison as individuals with potential, strengths and talents. Since the Coates (2016) prison education review, practitioners in prison have been encouraged to deliver non-accredited courses, that aim to support learners to develop personal, social and emotional skills which will help them to engage in desistance-orientated behaviours.

My study explores whether the new, non-accredited music course that I deliver at HMP/YOI Portland has an impact on the learners that I work with, in particular if that impact could help to support

processes of desistance. I also aim to explore why impact is or isn't experienced in my classroom, whether it's a direct result of the music, or if instead impact is a response to the pedagogical approach to teaching music that I adopt.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

2.1 Overview

By recognising that desistance is supported 'at the crossroads of individual effort and the provision of opportunity' (Szifris et al. 2018:49), researchers in prison can begin to examine the impact that areas within the criminal justice system can play in process of desistance. This literature review will first look at the broader impact of personal and social development education in prison, before focussing on arts-based learning, and more specifically, the impact of music learning in prison. Importantly, this examination of the literature will not only aim to explore *what* the impact of music learning is for people in prison, but also provide reasons for *why* impact may occur.

Studies into the impact of music and the arts in criminal justice settings engages researchers from diverse disciplines. During this literature review I will examine research from criminology, musicology, sociology, psychology, music education and community music studies, because 'engaging and collaborating more explicitly across disciplinary boundaries will both enrich research and help in tailoring messages… to gain traction with diverse audiences, from music practitioners to prison management, from policy makers to the general public' (Butterworth 2018:1-2).

2.2 The impact of personal and social developmental education for people in prison

There is an association between low educational achievement and criminal activity (Lochner and Moretti 2004; Farrington 2007; Evans, Pelletier and Szkola 2017). This has been observed within criminology research, and Hesselink (2018:143) remarks that the risk factors associated with low school achievement, such as 'poor problem-solving ability… negative peer associations, social isolation, early nest leaving and a low self-esteem' can encourage criminal behaviour. However, it is not the deficit of educational attainment alone that is highlighted as a risk-factor linked to likeliness of criminal activity. According to Farrington (2007:604), other personal and social factors such as 'impulsivity, hyperactivity, attention problems… poor parental supervision, parental conflict, an antisocial parent, a young mother, large family size, low family income, and coming from a broken family' also pose a threat to a person's behaviour.

There is however, a positive correlation between educational progression and the reduction of criminal activity (Hesselink 2018). This is because education can assist the development of individual agency, 'intentionality, power reflexivity, and the capacity for self-examination or monitoring' (Paternoster et al. 2015:211), and social capital, 'an individual's accumulation of... social networks, social cohesion and social support', consequently supporting processes of desistance (Lafferty, Treloar, Butler, Guthrie and Chambers 2016:1).

In her evaluation of education within correctional facilities in South Africa, Hesselink (2018) recognised that education in prison is best placed to support desistance when it engages learners, not only in gaining subject-specific skills, but in stimulating personal and social development. This could include progressing skills such as; 'foresight, planning... coping skills, perseverance, self-respect... better temperament, controlling impulses, conscientiousness and a sense of responsibility... and non-criminal and meaningful friendships' (Hesselink 2018:143). Similarly, in their review of education systems in prison in the UK and Australia, Ludlow et al. (2019:34) found that personal and social development courses within prison can be used to 'develop, enable and "scaffold" the exercise of autonomy, have equality and mutuality at their heart, and nurture and sustain inclusive community networks'. Education in prison can therefore provide opportunities for people in prison to develop in themselves and experience from others, desistance-orientated behaviours (Ludlow et al. 2019).

As part of the Policy Evaluation and Research Unit at Manchester Metropolitan University, prison sociologists Szifris et al. (2018) found that, in order to successfully support personal and social development and therefore desistance, the educational course in prison must; provide an opportunity for change; challenge stigma and encourage empowerment; and provide a space for people in prison to practice pro-social identities. The research of Szifris et al. (2018) will be explored in the following sections, with reference to studies from other prison sociologists, as well as criminologists and desistance researchers to provide a deeper understanding of the criminal justice system.

2.2.1 An opportunity for change

To encourage desistance-orientated behaviours, personal and social developmental education is argued to provide people in prison with a structural opportunity that acts as a 'hook for change' (Szifris et al. 2018:46). MacPherson (2018), drawing on his own experience having served time as an inmate in a Scottish prison, explains;

Succinctly, a hook-for-change is an instigator for transformation that is subsequently used by the individual to catalyse desistance, intentionally or otherwise. In this way, a hook-for-change functions as a foundation upon which the person can begin to build a crime-free lifestyle. (MacPherson 2018:11)

Researchers at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, Evans et al. (2017), found that a person who associates their identity with the criminal label is more likely to act with criminal behaviour. Yet sociologists Giordano et al. (2002:1002) suggest that a positive 'hook' could help remodel a person's character and for a prisoner 'identity changes gradually decrease the desirability and salience of the deviant behaviour'. Educational implementation can constitute a hook for change, as it cultivates new knowledge and understanding through different activity; 'learners can be exposed to different ways of thinking and alternative lifestyle choices' (Szifris et al. 2018:51). In this sense, learning 'may alter preferences in indirect ways' and act as a hook which 'may impact decisions to engage in crime' (Lochner and Moretti 2004:156). The consequence of this is that education can give learners in prison the opportunity to assert their individual agency, 'to develop a new identity, or reinforce a previously valued identity, that does not revolve around being a "prisoner" or "criminal"' (Hughes 2012:163).

However, in addressing the deficits of agency-centred theories of desistance, Healy (2013) recommends that a learner in prison will only value education as a possible 'hook' for change if they demonstrate a readiness to change. The learner has to be able 'to imagine alternative noncriminal selves and are accompanied by an emotional maturation process' (Healy 2013:562). There is a mutual responsibility between the person in prison and opportunity giver, with emphasis on 'the actor's own role in latching onto opportunities presented by the broader environment' (Giordano et al. 2002:1000). Based on the results of a qualitative study with British adult male prisoners, Hughes (2012) explains that;

For some prisoners, negative self-assessments of educational ability, influenced by a confluence of educational histories and socio-economic backgrounds, may lead to the conclusion that education is not for them' (Hughes 2012:52)

McNeil and Weaver (2010) suggest that the hook for change that education can offer a person in prison is therefore a balance between the prisoner's choice to view something as an opportunity and the availability of opportunity itself.

2.2.2 Challenging stigma and encouraging empowerment

Many people in prison do not feel that conventional opportunities are available to them after release; however, education can aim to validate a person in prison's social identity 'as an employable member of the workforce… who is capable of achievement' (Szifris et al. 2018:56). This concept surpasses the idea that prison education can enhance employability through gaining qualifications and skills, instead recognising that gaining qualifications and skills 'could serve to validate a merging identity' (Szifris et al. 2018:58); to enable learners in prison to self-perceive as having social value.

Whilst it is important to recognise that educational qualification can help people in prison to self-perceive as being capable of achieving goals after release, it is also imperative to address the reasons why a person in prison may not feel qualified to add value to society in the first place. Multidisciplinary scholars identify three key issues that could be responsible; stigma, self-stigma and labelling. Criminal justice researchers Evans et al. (2017:5) explain that 'individuals with a criminal conviction experience stigmatization through societal reactions as well as their own self-perceptions'. Firstly, upon conviction, people obtain the stigmatizing label 'criminal' or 'offender' and after release, people can experience marginalisation from normal community activities as well as employment opportunities (Evans et al. 2017). Psychologists Corrigan and Walton (2009:231) explain that this process can lead to self-stigma, the 'internalisation of stereotypes resulting in diminished self-esteem and limited self-efficacy'. Self-stigma is a three-stage process, 'awareness of the stereotype, agreement with it, and applying it to one's self' (Corrigan, Larson and Rüsch 2009:75). Evans et al. (2017) explain that within criminology and sociology this is often referred to as labelling theory, where;

> According to labelling theorists, public disapproval of the criminal label alters the self-conceptions of these individuals and induces them to perceive themselves as deviant… The result of this social exclusion is that the label becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. (Evans et al. 2017:5)

Consequently, people identified as a criminal or offender are more liable to behave in a way homogenous to that label (Evans et al. 2017). Corrigan et al. (2009:75) argue that labelling leads to the '"why try" effect', whereby 'people are dissuaded from pursuing the kind of opportunities that are fundamental to achieving life goals because of diminished self-esteem and self-efficacy'.

Education can have a notable positive impact on a person in prison, because it attempts to counteract the negative effects of stigma, self-stigma and labelling. This is achieved if education can 'help individuals to surmount social and personal deficits and pursue goals without the internal barriers that self-stigma creates' (Evans et al. 2017:18). In dichotomy to self-stigma is self-empowerment, which encourages a person to contest stigma and create positive visions for the future (Corrigan et al. 2009). Gaining qualification through education, that increases empowerment, self-esteem and self-confidence, may encourage the person in prison to critically challenge preconceptions of their criminal identity (Evans et al. 2017).

However, stigma removal achieved through prison education alone is not the entire solution for facilitating a desistance informed future. Criminal justice researcher Stone (2016) found that in wider society, empowerment towards desistance can be achieved through 'the acknowledgement of helpful others or a higher power that believes in the individual's potential and shows individuals they have worth and value' (Stone 2016:957). Certainly, equitable relationships between teachers and learners in the prison classroom can help to remove the negative effects of stigma, as a teacher may be able to '[see] the individual for who they "really are" (i.e. good and normal) when others could not' (Stone 2016:957). Yet, Stone (2016) defends that even if a prisoner self-identifies as experiencing transformation and receives structural support from practitioners within prison education, meso and macro-level societal challenges exist, that may, regardless, act as a barrier to opportunities for a person after they are released from prison.

2.2.3 A space to practise pro-social identities

Whilst 'crime is correlated with low self-control and poor empathy' (Szifris et al. 2018:46), education can promote an understanding of otherness, by providing a space 'for prisoners to spend time in a positive, pro-social environment and develop a different social identity' (Szifris et al. 2018:58). Within criminology, the educational spaces in prison are best understood in contrast to the wider prison environment, where, according to Sloan (2016:161), the prevailing culture requires prisoners to externalise a 'front-line masculine identity… to survive within the prison through hiding emotions, displaying the potential for aggression, and taking control'. These 'anti-social hyper-masculine survival identities' are a learned reaction that inmates must embody in order to succeed in prison (Szifris et al. 2018:57). Jewkes (2005:46) describes that 'for most inmates, peer group respect, individual status, and access to scarce resources all rest on a reputation for aggressiveness and physical strength'. Yet, concurrently, Jewkes (2005:46) also reveals that many prisoners are also said to 'maintain and nurture a private, interior (and usually non-"macho") sense of self'.

Researchers at the Institute for Research in Criminology, Community, Education and Social Justice at De Montfort University in Leicester found that educational spaces, in contrast to the wider prison environment, are referred to as a 'normative and emotional domains' (Crewe, Warr, Bennett and Smith 2014:71). Their positioning causes them to be;

> Quite rare emotional spaces within the prison. These spaces whilst still heavily permeated by discourses of discipline and power (security for instance) can also be thought of as nexuses of welfare — spaces in which the central concern is one of care not control, where interactions are predicated upon learning, mutual respect, creativity and personal development rather than surveillance and constraint. (Warr 2016:19)

The characteristics of the educational environment are still reliant on skilful preparation and facilitation by the teacher, as 'a different space does not automatically imply a positive, pro-social space for all prisoners' (Szifris et al. 2018:58). However, the 'humane and normalised interactions' that can occur within an effective classroom environment can encourage prisoners to experience and develop their pro-social identity (Warr 2016:19). In their longitudinal study with people engaged in education in a New Zealand prison, criminal justice researchers Morrison and Bowman (2018:103) found that identity shift is emphasised as learners begin to view themselves as having a 'pro-social "student" identity' or as they 'resurrect a previously positive "achiever" identity'.

The development of the pro-social identity is linked to desistance and a reduction in re-offending (Paternoster et al. 2015; Paternoster, Bachman, Kerrison, O'Connell and Smith 2016; Morrison and Bowman 2018). In their review of criminology literature regarding desistance theory, Paternoster et al. (2015:214) found that a 'newly emerging pro-social identity or possible self then triggers a change in the person's preferences' away from criminal activity, towards 'more pro-social things like conventional employment and social relationships'. This in turn 'sends a signal to others (like potential pro-social intimates and employers) that the person is making a change in their life', enhancing the prospect of opportunities post-release due to the development of social capital (Paternoster et al. 2015:215).

However, Nugent and Schinkel (2016), who reported on the desistance journeys of adult male offenders released from prison in Scotland, found that 'in order to make access to meso-level and beyond available to all desisters (e.g. access to employment and active citizenship), a cognitive transformation about 'ex-offenders' is required within society' (Nugent and Schinkel 2016:580-581).

Again, this highlights the necessity for the external structures to support the desisting individual; where identity change needs to be supplemented by non-criminal opportunities and relationships for the ex-offender (Paternoster et al. 2016). Ultimately, the non-criminal identity must be consolidated by membership in social communities, as it is the balance between the emerging pro-social identity and how that identity is perceived within society that can act to reinforce the desistance process (Nugent and Schinkel 2016).

2.3 An introduction to the impact of arts-based and music learning on people in prison

In their critical review of empirical research into arts-based programmes in prison, criminology researchers Cheliotis and Jordanoska (2017:1) found that arts-based initiatives have grown in popularity within prison education systems and are regularly delivered with personal and social development intent and 'the expressed aim… to promote desistance form crime'. Arts-based programmes in prison can include art, poetry, dance, drama and music and Cheliotis and Jordanoska (2017:2) discovered that the process involved in 'creating artistic products in particular, can serve a transformative function for prisoners, acting as a "catalyst" for positive psychological and attitudinal changes'.

Hesselink (2018:143) argues that the arts classrooms in prison may provide a more personalised approach than the traditional 'one-size-fits-all approach' to education, where activities can be easily 'personalised for inmates to attain their learning goals and potential'. Psychologist Kougiali, along with criminologists Einat and Liebling (2017) conducted a meta-synthesis of literature regarding art-based programmes in prison. They found that, unlike other prison rehabilitation-based programmes, which are 'designed to target and alter a specific problematic behaviour, such as substance misuse, anger, poor problem-solving skills, or violence', arts-based programmes have a 'broader and multidimensional' approach to support prison learners towards desistance-orientated behaviours and futures (Kougiali et al. 2017:4).

Music programmes, in particular, are 'not presented as an attempt by the system to induce or force… change but as something that is offered as an opportunity' (Kougiali et al. 2017:18). Criminology ethnomusicologist Herrity (2018:47) suggests that music acts as 'a valuable mechanism for exercising agency to shore up the self, to perform identity as a social actor and to form narratives of a future beyond the prison walls'. Rather than coercing transformation, music engagement in

prison inspires change, because through musical development learners are given the opportunity to experience individual agency and social interactions, factors associated with desistance from crime. In concurrence with Herrity (2018), the research of music educator Henley (2015) in particular, found that it is the relationship between emerging personal and social skills developed through musical learning that impacts a changing of criminal identity, consequently supporting processes of desistance.

2.4 The music or the pedagogy?

The impact of music and music education programmes on people in prison has been explored by researchers and practitioners working within community music, music education, criminal justice, music psychology, philosophy and ethnomusicology. The following section will explore the outcomes of studies by researchers from these diverse fields, as well as surrounding research into criminology and the criminal justice systems. The combined research highlights the impact of music on people in prison towards personal development such as increased self-confidence, emotional regulation, self-expression, motivation, self-worth, well-being and positive mood, as well as social development such as teamwork, social and communication skills, connection, trusting relationships and empathy. Specifically, the following sections will explore whether it is access to and engagement in music alone that impacts the personal and social development of prison learners, or if instead, any impact experienced is the consequence of the pedagogical approaches to teaching music in prison.

2.4.1 The impact of music on people in prison

One line of thought suggests that it is the access to music alone that has a positive impact on people in prison because it offers an opportunity for emotional escape. In a study by philosopher and cognitive scientist Krueger (2019:62), prisons are described as 'complex soundworlds, and very noisy environments' where the sound of slamming doors, rattling keys and shouts from guards and prisoners are described as 'another form of punishment and suppression of [the prisoner's] agency'. In the Western world, outside of prison, people are able to access digital music easily and instantly, which gives them the ability 'to craft transient, site-specific soundworlds specifically to regulate emotional consciousness, whether at work, play, or rest' (Krueger 2019:56). However, this is not a predisposed privilege for people in prison. Whilst some inmates have access to CD players in their cells, it is difficult to avoid the damaging and invasive environmental sounds.

Herrity (2018:41) argues that restricting access to music can have a significant and detrimental impact for people in prison, as 'prison conditions restrict the range of relationships, occupations and activities through which people perform various aspects of identity'. Within the limiting prison environment music can offer sensory liberation, which may provide;

> A means of repairing the rupture to self-narrative presented by the prison sentence. By providing emotional respite as well as social exchange, music enhances wellbeing and offers a means of maintaining connections with the outside. (Herrity 2018:47)

Giving people in prison access to music could enable a person to reconstruct their environment and actively influence their emotional consciousness, helping them to connect with their identity and experience a harmonious relief (Krueger 2019). By disrupting the prison experience, music access could create 'impactive spaces where prisoners can escape to and use as a way to cope and regain hope before returning to their everyday routine' (Kougiali et al. 2017:4). At the same time, ethnomusicologist Garcia (2019:7) found that as well as being able to 'mentally escape from his environment' a person in prison can use music as 'outlet for the expression of hidden emotions from others—to survive the volatile and hostile environment'. As the characteristics of the wider prison environment often leads to the dehumanisation of incarcerated people (Garcia 2019), music spaces could therefore establish positive 'interaction with the environment [and] coping skills' (Szifris et al. 2018:45).

Understanding the value of access to music in prison signifies how important spaces for learning music could be within the custodial settings. Music education could further attempt to address the structural issues of the environment, providing safe spaces for emotional outlet. Without this space, Herrity (2018:41) argues that there would be little room for a person in prison 'to knit together components of the self otherwise lent little room for expression'. As well as this though, access to music within educational spaces in prison could also positively impact learning outcomes. Based on the research of psychologists Lawendowski and Bieleninik (2017), music in prison has been shown to help people to experience positive moods states. This is important because, when used in the educational context, mood enhancing music could have notable impact on encouraging personal and social development learning.

Within psychology, Bless and Fiedler (2006:70) explain that 'good mood provides the resources and self-confidence needed to engage in spontaneous, internally determined, daring behaviour'. Thus,

creating a space that promotes positive impactive states such as happiness, excitement and inspiration can;

> Give the individual the backing-up for assimilative strategies, characterized by knowledge-driven creative and exploratory behaviour in the learning domain and independence of external norms in the social domain (Fiedler and Beier 2014:50-51)

Learners experiencing a positive mood are therefore more likely to be able to engage in tasks and learning that is new to them and practice social behaviours that enable them to create relationships with other learners (Bless and Fiedler 2006).

Positive mood states can also positively impact learning that aims to challenge self-perception and transform self-concept, such as art-based, desistance-focussed programmes. Psychologists Sedikides, Wildschut, Arndt and Routledge (2006:198) explain that 'sad and happy mood states… have distinct consequences for self-concept valence'; that is whether a person's self-concept is negative or positive. The Mood Congruency Hypothesis (Sedikides 1992), recognises that;

> Mood will impact the self in a congruent manner. That is, sadness will elicit negatively valenced, whereas happiness will evoke positively valenced, self-relevant cognitions (e.g., memories, judgements, expectations) and/or self-directed behaviours. (Sedikides 1992:277)

This could be important within the context of education in prison, especially for learning that aims to support desistance, because mood mediates how a learner recognises and perceives themselves; self-judgements are mood congruent (Sedikides 1992:276). If access to music in prison can positively impact a person's mood, there may be other psychological benefits, such as heightened optimism and self-belief which could alleviate social and self-stigma and help people to engage in positive self-reflection (Lawendowski and Bieleninik 2017).

2.4.2 The impact of pedagogy in the prison music classroom on people in prison

Whilst access to music can have positive psychological impact, helping an individual in prison to cope and engage positively with themselves and their surrounding environment, framing music as a resource to be used within education places the personal experience of music engagement in the social context. In a metasynthesis of research into music activity and education in prison, Kougiali et al. (2017) found that the positive impact of music programmes in prison was not caused by music

alone; rather music acted as a channel through which learners could experience and build relationships with the facilitator and other members of the group. This perspective recognises that 'music does not have power in and of itself – it offers its power only by the virtue of how it is taken and used' (Ansdell 2004:73). Henley (2019) recommends that to fully understand the impact of music learning in prison it is necessary to look at the ways in which pedagogical approaches influence socio-musical processes and interpersonal connections within the prison music classroom.

Learning music is a social practice and music pedagogies can be understood within sociocultural learning theory. Vygotsky (1978) argued that human activity is artefact-mediated and goal-orientated. In the music classroom, learning is achieved through mediating; physical cultural artifacts, such as the instruments; as well as symbolic cultural artifacts, like the language used to communicate ideas and the music being made. Group music learning therefore activates social interaction as individuals rely on each other to negotiate and make meaning of cultural physical and symbolic artefacts, in order to achieve goals and targets. Criminal justice and the arts researchers Anderson and Willingham (2019) remark;

> Music making in social settings relies on relational interaction. Risks are taken where trust and safety are felt. Creativity thrives where risks can be taken without threat or vulnerability. Relationships, connections, interaction with others all form the basis for reflecting on and making sense of who we are and what we are called to do. (Anderson and Willingham 2019:181)

Similarly, Henley (2019:278) argues that social interaction is not only necessary for 'learning music', so that learners can achieve music-based goals and find meaning in music as a subject, but music can also foster an environment that helps learners to develop personal, social and emotional skills through socio-musical processes and interaction, 'learning through music'. From this perspective, the stimulus for the impact of music on people in prison 'is not the curriculum, but the pedagogy used' (Henley 2019:278).

The following sections will explore the impact of the relationships that develop through sociocultural music pedagogies in prison, in particular how pedagogy is used to positively impact; individual agency; community and social skills development; and building social capital beyond the prison walls. Finally, I will discuss some of the limitations of research that evidences the positive impact of music in prison, with reference to issues of positive pedagogy as highlighted by Krönig (2019).

2.4.2.1 A pedagogy that supports individual agency

The relationship between the facilitator and their learners is argued to be central to the personal and social development impact for learners engaged in music activities in prison (Kougiali et al. 2017; Cohen and Henley 2018; Henley 2019). This is because, using music as the educative tool, a facilitator can practice a pedagogy that; develops the conditions for their learners to practice autonomy and personal agency in the music classroom; and creates a safe space for learners to engage in new activities, exposing them to new possibilities.

According to the criminologist and sociologist Sykes (1958), the withdrawal of autonomy is positioned as one of the 'pains of imprisonment', which occurs as incarceration deprives people of opportunities for independence and autonomous decision making. Wortley (2002:214) describes that the imprisoned person must 'conform to institutional rules and restrictions, and to the indignity and sense of powerlessness felt at having to depend upon guards for basic needs'. This can result in a 'profound threat to the prisoner's self-image because [it reduces] the prisoner to the weak, helpless dependent status of childhood' (Sykes 1958:75).

In contrast, the relationships between music facilitators and the people in prison that they work with are regularly 'nondirective, nonauthoritative, and non-judgmental, encouraging creativity rather than employing a unidirectional teacher centred approach' (Kougiali et al. 2017:15). Music education researchers Cohen and Henley (2018:158) explain that this is of particular importance within the context of prison, because it can 'run contrary to the power structures and security rules within incarceration'. This leads to an equitable, democratised classroom where learners can experience the 'development of a working alliance between the prisoners and the instructors' which 'undermines the traditional balance of power between staff and prisoners and reduces the social distance between them' (Kougiali et al. 2017:15,20).

In a study which focussed on the experiences of 207 young offenders incarcerated in Dutch juvenile correctional institutions, criminologists van der Laan and Eichelsheim (2013:438) found that when staff were able to interact with people in prison with 'support, humanity and trust', they offered opportunities for personal control and autonomous decision making. Within psychology the impact of autonomy supportive learning environments has been explored. Ryan and Deci (2000) explain that within educational settings, the notion of autonomy support denotes to environments where learners are respected as self-determined people who are qualified to make their own decisions (Ryan and Deci 2000). Instead of engaging in tasks through controlled motivation, 'to avoid guilt or

anxiety' (Ryan and Deci 2000:72), Niemiec and Ryan (2009) state that autonomy supportive environments encourage a learner to participate in independently motivated action that; has a meaningful rationale to them; allows them to adopt their own perspective, which is valued by others; and gives them the opportunity of self-initiation, choice and exploration within the learning topics. Importantly, opportunities for autonomous decision making can impact a learners' personal and social development skills, such as 'performance, persistence, and creativity… heightened vitality… self-esteem… and general wellbeing' (Ryan and Deci 2000:69). This suggests that it is not engagement in music alone that has impact on a learner in prison, but the experience of having an autonomy supportive relationship with the music group facilitator.

Another way that a music facilitator in prison is able to positively impact their learners, is by developing a pedagogical approach that nurtures trusting relationships, building the conditions for a safe space within the prison environment. Often relationships between people in prison and prison staff are 'characterized by authority, suspicion, and lack of trust' (Kougiali et al. 2017:20). In their study of five private sector and two public sector prisons in the UK, criminologists Crewe, Liebling and Hulley (2011) found that adverse relationships with prison staff can have a significant negative impact on the quality of life of the incarcerated person. However, different types of relationships can develop between prison educators and people in prison in the music classroom. Community music researcher Higgins (2012) suggests that a music facilitator can create the conditions for trust and safety when they 'embrace the notion of unconditional hospitality', showing 'a commitment to people, participation, places, quality or opportunity, and diversity' (Higgins 2012:109). This is achieved through the 'ethical action' of inviting the group member 'to become included', therefore offering 'unconditionality, a welcome without reservation, without previous calculation… an unlimited display of reception towards a potential music participant' (Higgins 2012:108).

The impact of welcoming and inclusive music spaces within prison has been explored by Henley (2019), with reference to the Good Vibrations projects, which provide learners in prison with the opportunity to learn to Javanese gamelan in a group environment. Henley (2019:286) explains that 'creating an environment built on trust is fundamental to enabling people to feel safe in taking musical, social and emotional risks'. When learners were able to make mistakes without fear of punishment during the Good Vibrations programmes, they did not limit the risks that they took. The result being that learners were exposed to new possibilities, as they felt confident to engage in and experience the impact of more learning processes than if they hadn't felt safe to take risks (Henley 2019).

2.4.2.2 A pedagogy that supports community and social skills development

The relationship between the facilitator and learner is not the only social influence that can impact the personal and social development and changes in self-understanding of a learner in prison. Music pedagogies in prison can catalyse for the learners, relationships, connection and interaction with others, both inside and out of prison.

Music education researcher Cohen (2019:7) explains that one negative effect of prison is disconnection; caused 'by removing people from their home communities and thrusting them into a new environment where making meaningful human connections can be difficult or dangerous'. Similarly, in their mixed methods evaluation of the Finding Rhythms charity music programme in UK prisons, psychologists Kyprianides and Easterbrook (2019:2) reported that 'threats to social connectedness have been shown to be detrimental to survival, and reduced social contact has negative effects on physical and mental health [raising] the risk of ill-health and mortality'. This is important, as Jetten, Haslam and Haslam (2012:4) endorse that 'accepting… our mental and physical health is supported by social factors opens a whole new spectrum of curative possibilities'.

At the most fundamental level, Kyprianides and Easterbrook (2019:2) discovered that group-based activities in prison 'can profoundly benefit group members' well-being'. Studying the interaction between psychological processes and the nervous and immune system of the human body, Fancourt (2019:186-187) found that group music-making has likeness to other psychosocial interventions 'such as tai chi, yoga and mindfulness', as it can '[facilitate] group interaction, focussing attention into the present moment… encouraging relaxation'. At the same time, according to Jetten et al. (2012:4) engagement in group activity also develops our sense of self and personal identity: this is because 'in thinking about who we are, we can define ourselves (and our sense of self) not just as "I" and "me", but also (and often more importantly) as "we" and "us"'. Group-based activities can therefore foster in people a 'positive social identity' whilst, concurrently helping to 'tackle social isolation and enhance adjustment, coping, and well-being' (Kyprianides and Easterbrook 2019:4). In psychology, this has been termed 'the social cure', which recognises 'social support, a sense of solidarity, and community' as factors that can positively influence personal and social well-being and development (Jetten et al. 2012:5).

Investigating issues within incarceration settings in England and Wales, Scott and Codd (2010:14) found that building positive social networks in prison can be challenging, as there is frequently a 'preponderance of negative relationships rooted in fear, anxiety and mistrust'. What is more,

criminal psychologist Taylor (2016) explains that when relationships do develop between people in prison they can reinforce negative behaviours. In their study evaluating the effectiveness of the prison system in the US, Apel and Diller (2017:248) found that 'a person is much more likely to engage in criminal behaviour when peers have positive attitudes about crime and somewhat more likely if peers have committed crimes themselves' (Apel and Diller 2017:248). Strong, negatively influencing relationships with other people in prison can therefore lead a person to future deviant behaviour (Taylor 2016). This is problematic in prison because criminal offenders are living together and have access to communicate with each other in un-mediated spaces. Therefore, 'without a change in the environment or the acquisition of new ways to access alternative reinforcement, criminal activity is likely to reoccur' (Apel and Diller 2017:251).

However, music education researcher Ilari (2019:269) recommends that music-making in a group encourages positive social interactions; 'the engagement of two or more social actors in a complex, co-regulated social pattern, wherein the autonomy of each actor is maintained'. Whilst each group member focusses on the independent element they bring to a performance, the interdependent nature of a unified music performance encourages contact. This is important because, 'social interactions are not only key to the emergence of a sense of belonging, but also give rise to social cognition' (Ilari 2019:269). Music activity therefore not only helps group members to experience the well-being benefits of social engagement, connection and belonging, but also engages individuals in positive interactions; allowing them to experience alternative social reinforcement for non-criminal behaviours and practice pro-social desistance-orientated identities.

One reason that music is argued to impact positive social interactions and community development in prison is that it provides group learners with a shared goal (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017; Cohen and Henley 2018; Doxat-Pratt 2018; Haigh and Caulfield 2018). In their cross-examination of music-making experiences in US and UK prison contexts, Cohen and Henley (2018:166) found that 'building social networks involves cooperation through shared common values; and it is shared common values that enable people to engage in the world in positive ways'. Notably, Cheliotis and Jordanoska (2017:4) discovered that even if initial stages of group development are 'fraught with disagreement and conflict' in the music classroom in prison, teamwork and shared goals can 'contribute to the development of self-regulation and a spirit of reconciliation amongst participants'. Pedagogies that support group music-making and performance therefore have the capacity to bring people together in prison who don't usually socialise and encourage them to practice pro-social behaviours. Music impacts the;

Individual prisoners' capacity to communicate effectively with other participants, to socialise within the prison, to exercise empathy towards fellow participants and other prisoners, and to collaborate with others in the context of groups. (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017:4)

In a study by Doxat-Pratt (2018), she reviewed the impact experienced by learners who were enrolled on an Irene Taylor Trust (ITT) Music in Prisons week. As well as evidencing personal change such as increased self-confidence, motivation, self-worth and empowerment, through a pedagogy that supported group music-making, participants were able to develop the social skills necessary to 'work as a team because the performance required it—their desire to play well overcame personal differences' (Doxat-Pratt 2018:29). In this sense the music performance provided a framework for positive teamwork; 'the combination of necessity…and sentiment… inspired the development of cooperative skills and also gave an opportunity to utilise them' (Doxat-Pratt 2018:29).

Similarly, Haigh and Caulfield's (2018:35) examination of the Good Vibrations projects revealed that group music pedagogies supported participants to 'develop more trust in their own ability to make meaningful, valid decisions and an ethos of collective responsibility grows' (Haigh and Caulfield 2018:35). Through 'a culture of shared leadership and joint decision-making', individuals within the group develop cooperative listening and communication skills (Haigh and Caulfield 2018:35). Thus, whilst 'the harmonious nature of music' can influence positive relationships between the group members (Doxat-Pratt 2018:29), music education researchers Cohen, Silber, Sangiorgio and Iadeluca (2012:191) found that it is the approach to teaching music that also has impact, helping to 'foster social learning, to create trust, respect, sensitivity, responsibility, cooperation and teamwork'.

2.4.2.3 A pedagogy that supports building social capital beyond prison

Practicing a positive social identity through music-based group work activities in prison is important towards nurturing relational desistance-orientated behaviours (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017). However, some music programmes in prison have built on this, recognising that to fully support desistance the music activity must also aim to build social capital for people in prison within their wider communities (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017; Doxatt-Pratt 2018; Haigh and Caulfield 2018; Herrity 2018; Cohen 2019; Kyprianides and Easterbrook 2019). Doxat-Pratt (2018:31) recommends that prison music programmes should use performance to a public audience as a method to 'aid eventual reintegration' (Doxat-Pratt 2018:31). This is because;

In any musical performance, the audience are more than passive observers: connections are forged between performer and audience as one 'speaks' and one listens. By including the general public in an audience, music can act as a mediator, or bridge, between the incarcerated and the free, who will one day be living alongside one another. (Doxat-Pratt 2018:31)

By performing pro-social identities through music, learners in prison are able to 'avoid the negative effects of stigma… which [is] important for successful community reintegration' (Kyprianides and Easterbrook 2019:25). Public performances therefore can 'have a positive effect on how prisoners are perceived by their families and the broader community… preparing themselves constructively for release' (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017:5). The public performance shows the audience members that the prison learners are 'capable of achieving good things, and to know their lives and relationships with others did not have to be defined by their crime and imprisonment' (Doxat-Pratt 2018:31). However, this can be achieved in other ways; instead of performance during the Good Vibrations music projects, learners receive professionally produced CDs of their work that they can share with their wider communities. Haigh and Caulfield (2018:35) found this approach helped the people in prison engaged in the course to evidence 'achievement whilst inside, which creates positive discussion points for visits and communication with the outside world'.

The Oakdale Community Choir, led by music education and criminal justice researcher Mary Cohen, goes one step further to '[support] returning citizens by deepening the public's awareness of people in prison through educational programs, concerts, and news stories' (Cohen 2019:9). The choir brings both 'inside singers', those in incarceration, and members the community, 'outsider singers', together to write, rehearse and perform music. Cohen's choir recognises that to support desistance;

"Bonding" and "bridging" are two types of social capital that seem especially important for successful re-entry. Bonding is the social capital an individual derives from relationships within and among homogeneous groups, whereas bridging is the social capital that comes from relationships with people with whom the individual's previous connections were distant or altogether absent. (Cohen 2019:2)

Engagement in choral singing with members of the prison and wider community, along with performances to friends and family can therefore enable individuals to 'connect with restorative social networks that foster dynamics of reciprocity and interdependence' (Cohen 2019:2). Cohen's

method, however, does not assume that it is the offenders' responsibility alone to forge social bonds and bridges with their outside community. Instead, the choir aims to foster in people outside of prison 'a greater awareness of humanity within the prison system' (Cohen 2019:10). She explains;

> Choral singing performances bring people from outside of prison into the presence of people in prison, making it impossible for community members to ignore the existence of individual lives unfolding behind bars. This peek behind the walls can prompt the development of new attitudes toward incarcerated individuals and deeper awareness of problems and promises of the prison system; it may even inspire people to think about justice in positive and healing ways. (Cohen 2019:5)

In this sense, as well as offering people in prison 'a means of maintaining connections with the outside' (Herrity 2018:47), the Oakdale Community Choir provides a platform for those people outside of prison who are participating as group or audience members to recognise 'their role in social rehabilitation' (Cohen 2019:5). These pedagogical approaches to teaching music in prison ultimately aim to impact and support relational desistance; by developing both individual changes and social changes within the criminal justice system (Doxat-Pratt 2018:28).

2.4.2.4 Issues of reporting the positive impact of music in prison

The previous sections have outlined the positive impact that approaches to teaching music in prison can have on learners in prison. The wider literature explored suggests that music learning in prison can positively impact a learner's personal and social development and support processes of desistance when the pedagogy fosters relationships that encourage individual agency, community and social skills development and helps people in prison to build social capital. However, in his critical review, education researcher and sociologist Krönig (2019) found that throughout academic discourse regarding music practices in communities, scholars are at fault of affirming and evidencing positive pedagogy and the positive impact of music (Krönig 2019).

This may in part be because the scholars presenting their research are often also the facilitators involved in the music programmes and have a personal incentive to present positive data (Krönig 2019). Alongside this, according to prison education researcher Ginsberg (2019), one other risk of the mindset of prison music educators is that they can adopt a saviour mentally, assuming that all learners in prison need transformation (Ginsberg 2019). Prison educator Fabisiak (2019) warns that this can lead to falsified narratives regarding music education in prison, where the facilitator is at risk

of engaging in 'idealistic celebrations' portraying their work as 'liberative and transforming' rather than accurately representing the experiences of the learners. It is important to recognise that any learner in prison that enrols onto a music programme may already have a strong number of personal and social skills, which they are able to *display through music engagement*, not *develop because of music engagement*.

In response to Kronig's (2019) research, Henley and Parks (2020:8) advise that there is a necessity 'to explore prison and community music pedagogy in a way that reveals both positive and negative aspects of such work so as to address the criticisms of over positivity'. Music education researcher Butterworth (2018:2) reminds prison researchers that 'music can be non-transformational... It can be irrelevant, of no consequence'. Thus, Henley and Parks (2020:8) recommend that future studies that explore the impact of music in prison should recognise the 'methodological challenges of research and evaluation and how these might lead to over positivity'. Rather than focussing on positive outcomes, research should aim to explore the processes involved in music learning in prison and explore any negative impact as well as positive impact (Henley and Parks 2020).

2.5 Summary

The wider literature supports that there is a positive correlation between educational progression and processes of desistance, notably when prison education engages learners in personal social and emotional development as well as subject-specific progression. The research of Szifris et al. (2018) found that education best supports desistance when it provides an opportunity for change, helps to challenge stigma and encourage empowerment and provides a safe space for learners to practice and experience pro-social behaviours. However, desistance still relies on individual agency, a person's ambition to change, and structural support, opportunities in prison or wider society that remove barriers for people to live non-criminal lifestyles.

Arts-based learning regularly rejects a one-size-fits-all approach to education and instead of forcing change offers access to individualised opportunities for change. Music in particular, gives learners the chance to practice individual agency and experience social interaction. The literature revealed that it is the dyadic relationship between emerging personal and social skills developed through music engagement that supports processes of desistance.

Access to music alone in prison is shown to positively impact a person's psychological wellbeing and to nurture positive mood states. Positive mood states, when experienced in an educational environment, could improve learner self-confidence when engaging in new tasks and help learners to feel positive about themselves, challenging stigma. When music is positioned as an educative tool, it is the socio-musical processes and interpersonal connections developed through music learning that are shown to have the biggest impact on learners in prison. Music pedagogies in prison can support the development of positive relationships between a learner and their; facilitator; peers; and wider communities. This has been shown to impact people in prison to develop autonomy and individual agency, engage in teamwork, practice pro-social skills and build social capital beyond the prison walls.

All of the research explored evidenced the positive impact of; music on people in prison; prison music education programmes; and prison music pedagogies. This highlights a potential limitation in the wider literature, where music facilitators who conduct research in prison may be susceptible to evidencing positive pedagogies, not reporting on the negative impact of music or misrepresenting the experience of the learners in prison.

In the next chapter I will outline my research methodology in order to explore the impact of my new non-accredited music education course at HMP Portland. With particular focus on measuring personal and social development and changes in self-perception, whilst adopting methods that accurately represent the learners that I work with.

Chapter 3. Research Methodology

As a researcher, I am concerned with how I can use my position of privilege, as a white, free woman, to illuminate the narratives of people in prison and support its place in conversations of social justice and desistance. This investigation intends to emphasise the requirement for a critique about limitations within prison research; where people in prison may have been subject to having their narrative misinterpreted, wrongly or under-represented or de-contextualised. I want to conduct research in prison education that promotes authentic representation, whilst at the same time, does not impact the learning environment. There is a call for studies within prison to prioritise approaches to research that go beyond 'simply doing no harm' (Dupont 2008:205). I therefore intend to outline and conduct research that challenges oppression and power and instead encourages an ethic of emancipation, where 'the empowerment of research participants is as important as the contribution to knowledge and policy development' (Dupont 2008:200). This could provide a valuable methodological template for other prison researchers.

3.1 The limitations of music-based research in prison

Before I outline my research methodology, I want to provide some background on the limitations of music-based research in prison. I will give my justification for why, despite its limitations, research into the impact of music education within prison can still provide a valuable narrative within the discourse of desistance, particularly for practitioners within prison education systems.

There are issues with the validity and generalisability of findings from research into music in prisons (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017; Cohen and Henley 2018). For example, research often provides insufficient detail on essential methodological concerns such as 'the composition of samples, how data were gathered, how they were analysed, and how programme effects were established' (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017:5). Within sampling in particular, studies regularly provide data from small participant groups and these can be 'plagued by selection bias (due, for example, to screening by prison staff or self-selection), which inevitably weakens causal inferences' (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017:5).

Whilst music learning in prison may encourage desistance-orientated behaviours, 'it is impossible to tease out the possible sole effects of music-making participation, as inmates are involved in other educational and leisure activities' (Cohen and Henley 2018:161). What's more, there is often no way to prove whether secondary desistance has been achieved in the long-term, after engagement or

after release from prison. This is because research that follows participants after participation in music activity is rare and problematic (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017; Cohen and Henley 2018). Without this longitudinal data, conclusions from music education research within prison can only suggest effects and claim that, whilst at the time of music engagement prison learners are able to develop desistance-oriented skills, attitudes and behaviours, there may or may not be positive lasting effects (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017). It is key therefore that future researchers consider ways to examine the effects of music engagement after participants have finished programmes and are 'discharged from prison and faced with the multifarious challenges of re-entry into the community' (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017:6).

Nevertheless, even if research is not able to conclusively confirm any lasting effects of music engagement in prison, all research in this area remains important. Kougiali et al. (2017:3) recommend that 'it would be inaccurate to make the binary distinction and claim that some programmes "work" or not in their entirety or to assume a reductionist approach whereby cognitive approaches are ineffective'. Instead there ought to be a 'philosophical leap' in order to respect that;

> We need a deeper discussion, where we have the humility to accept that the relationship between inputs and outcomes of many things that society needs cannot be directly measured. (Perry 2013)

Ultimately, I feel that it is the prison researcher's responsibility to continue investigation into areas which may 'refine [the] understanding of what sorts of practice and practitioners best support desistance processes for whom in which circumstances' (McNeill and Weaver 2010:7). For education providers and teachers practicing in prisons, these types of research may lead to the refinement of pedagogical approaches, a re-examination the curriculum offered to people in prison and further instil education as a structure that supports criminal justice and desistance.

3.2 Methodology overview

For my research, I adopted a transformative mixed methods approach where explorative qualitative approaches were used concurrently and sequentially to complement quantitative methods. Because of the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic had on access to participants and delivery of education within the UK prison system, the study, initially a two-cycle action research project, was only able to provide one cycle of data collection with recommendations for a second cycle (see Section 5.5). In

order to conduct this research, approval was gained from the Conservatoires UK (CUK) Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix 1). My ethical considerations are interlaced throughout this research methodology, as I wanted to provide an overall framework for ethical prison research.

Data was collected from one cohort of learners on my new music course at HMP/YOI Portland (n=6) between the 06/01/2020 and 30/01/2020. Learners were able to enrol onto the music course regardless of whether they wanted to participate in the research: however, all participants were given a Participant Consent Form and, following the processes outlined in the CUK application (see Appendix 1), subsequently gave consent for involvement. Consent was also gained from a member of the senior prison management team, who acts as a gatekeeper for the participants. Each cohort of the music course normally runs for four weeks, or approximately 28, two and a half hour sessions, therefore data collection occurred within this timeframe.

Questionnaires were used as a quantitative premeasure, to collect data regarding the individual participant's age, ethnicity, educational background, learning needs and included a personal and social beliefs self-assessment. This was to ensure that all participants were seen as individuals within the prison environment; that no assumptions were made about individuals based on the wider perception of the prison demographic. Ethnographic qualitative and quantitative data was taken from reflective journals completed by the participants; these encouraged the participants to engage in conscious enquiry about their experiences on the music course and to measure any changes in their personal and social development and self-concept. In conjunction with this, at the end of the cohort, qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured, one-to-one interviews, to engage the participants in a macro-reflection of their experiences on the music course. The participants were also asked to complete an end of course personal and social beliefs self-assessment, to collect data to measure against the preliminary questionnaire. My intention with this research methodology was to engage in research that addressed 'the continual search for new inclusionary visions of social reality which acknowledge difference and diversity whilst at the same time recognising what we all share: a common humanity' (Scott 2018:153).

3.3 An Ethical Framework for Prison Research

As a practitioner in prison education, I considered it fundamental that this study valued and was responsive to the vast ethical considerations of fulfilling research in the custodial setting. There is an amplified responsibility for the prison researcher, who must navigate the, often-complex, needs of

the prisoner participant whilst simultaneously reacting to the 'intense, risk-laden, emotionally fraught environment' of prison settings (Liebling 1999:163). Many prisoners exhibit 'complex needs relating to criminogenic risk factors, mental health and social inequalities' and it is these multifarious dynamics that can been seen as 'vulnerabilities for the potential research participant' (Ward and Bailey 2012:150, 158).

However, seeing the potential research participant in prison as vulnerable may be further 'stigmatising and unhelpful' (Ward and Bailey 2012:158); once again alienating the person in prison and disregarding an authentic narrative of the prison experience. For this reason, I aimed to respect the participants involved by positioning them as subjects in the own right, not the objects of research; providing them with a platform to share their narrative, offering a minority lens and addressing issues of social justice. Here, the project's ethical responsibilities were 'much more than simply calculations of harm and utility, adherence for ethical guidelines, or developing excellent research skills and value judgements' (Scott 2018:154). This research is also ethically accountable for giving voice to learners in prison, 'illuminating the experiences of those people on the margins of society – those who have been exploited, dominated and oppressed' (Scott 2018:153). The task was finding a framework that was sensitive to the challenges of prison research, whilst giving people in prison safe access to participation that accurately represented their experience; thus, achieving ethical balance. Mertens (2012) outlines the transformative paradigm, an approach to research that;

> Provides a philosophical framework that focuses on ethics in terms of cultural responsiveness, recognising those dimensions of diversity that are associated with power differences, building trusting relationships, and developing mixed methods that are conducive to social change. (Mertens 2012:802)

Mertens (2012) discusses her framework through the four transformative research assumptions, which I have used to justify my research design's axiology, ontology, epistemology and methodology; this will be discussed in the following sections.

3.3.1 Cultural competence in prison research

Merten's (2012) transformative axiological approach values research that is 'cognizant of the pervasiveness of discrimination and oppression and [understands] communities sufficiently' (Mertens 2012:804). People in prison experience what is known as *justifiable* inequality, 'unequal treatment that is socially necessary', however many also face *unjustifiable* inequality 'malice, prejudice, oppression, or misappropriation of justice' (Souryal 2011:237). It is therefore the

transformative researcher's responsibility to avoid inequality in research, as this may obstruct effective data collection. Instead the researcher must achieve 'cultural competency', the 'critical disposition… to accurately represent reality in culturally complex communities' (Mertens 2012:805). This means being conscious of the 'norms of behaviour in communities' (Mertens 2012:810), in order to develop 'design and implementation processes… research questions and hypotheses, outreach and recruitment strategies, consent activities [and] data collection protocols' that are responsive to the cultural group that is going to be researched (Byrd, Lang, Cook, Edwards and Byfield 2017:80).

One recommendation is that the researcher should spend 'considerable *time in the field* among the people whose lives and culture are being studied' (Denscombe 2014:80) as this allows them to 'frequently challenge prior assumptions' (Hammersley 2015:23). Having worked in prison for four years, I have an understanding of 'the profound connections between discrete features of a community that outsiders might erroneously see as separate and divisible' (Fine, Torre, Boudin, Bowen, Clark, Hylton, Martinez, Rivera, Roberts, Smart and Upegui 2003:111). Based on this experience, I ensured that the cultural environment was retained during data collection; to support the well-being of the learners in prison, their education and the legitimacy of the results. This required honouring ecological validity, 'maintaining the integrity of the real-life situation… while remaining faithful to the larger social and cultural context' (Schmukler 2001:421).

For learners in prison, protecting ecological validity within their environment is crucial, because they can react negatively to change; anything that deviates from the norms of prison life and may feel exposing to them. As this study took place within education, it was also important to maintain the naturalness of the classroom. In this way the learning environment was not jeopardised; thus, ecological validity was supported by 'data collected normally' and 'data arising from teaching and learning activities' (Baumfield, Hall and Wall 2013: 53,54). For the purpose of the research results, ecological validity allows participants to provide data within a situation that already exists, giving 'accurate portrayals of the realities of social situations in their own terms, in their natural or conventional settings' (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2018:264). This means that 'results would not occur only in a lab or other artificial setting, but could also be applied to the real world'; supporting the research findings to be generalisable (Leavy 2017:114). In sustaining ecological validity, my research was attentive to its ambitions of cultural competency, helping to expose data that ethically and accurately represented the diverse culture it sought to explore.

3.3.2 Uncovering multiple perspectives in prison research

Next, Mertens (2012:810) explains that 'the transformative ontological assumption suggests that there are different opinions about what is real based on different lenses of privilege that people bring to the situation'. This is of particular importance to the prison researcher, as most who carry out research with people in prison are exposed to a greater level of privilege than those being researched. Fundamentally, it is important to recognise that knowledge about minority groups and communities has frequently been produced by academic, white, male researchers and;

> Their representation of minority and marginalized groups is based on their own lenses, privilege, and power to study and represent them… And because of their privileged, intellectual positions in the academy combined with their power to know Others, these interpretations or representations become *truth.* The scholars' own histories, cultures, realities and consciousness are invisible and not acknowledged nor recognised and, as a result, are protected and normalised. (Cross 2011:52)

Such versions of authenticity need to be 'critically examined to determine what is missing when the views of marginalized peoples are not privileged' (Mertens 2012:806). In many cases, research has resulted in a 'monovocal representation that ignores rival often contradictory truths' (Cross 2011:52). What is more, within prison research in particular, Jewkes (2011:64) states that many researchers engage in inquiry having been influenced by a 'mediated culture', which often represents prison as 'violent and disordered hell holes or as holiday camps for pampered inmates'.

This called for an examination of the 'relational and situational ethics' of my research project in order for me to be sensitive to the ways that power relations and media 'can impact on perceptions of truth and credibility' (Scott 2018:153). Scott (2018) advises;

> The prison researcher… needs to learn to feel and understand the experience of otherness, to evacuate silences, acknowledge that which is normally denied and attempt to translate into narrative form currently unarticulated stories of human life. (Scott 2018:154)

For researchers this means cultivating humility and entertaining the idea that academic knowing is only *one* way of knowing, not *the* way of knowing. This has been be achieved in my research by looking beyond the mediated perspective of prison and by also showing reflexivity; an awareness that 'personal and social characteristics, feelings or emotions, and behaviour may not only facilitate and illuminate but also restrict and distort the data and the analysis' (Hammersley 2015:25). By

doing this, my research has located multiple narratives 'that [take] into account the culture and diversity of a population' (Byrd et al. 2017:80).

3.3.3 A trusting relationship between the researcher and people in prison

The epistemological assumption of transformative research relies on the relationship between the researcher and the participants. Mertens (2012) advises that;

> The researcher needs to establish an interactive link with community members. This involves understanding the historical and social contexts, as well as building relationships that acknowledge power differences and support the development of trust amongst the involved parties (Mertens 2012:806)

This is particularly important within prison, where some participants may feel hostile towards engaging in a research project. The participants must be reassured that the researcher can be trusted, not only to protect them at the moment of the research, but also to represent their community, after their multiple narratives have been communicated through the data. Social researchers must feel a responsibility; to 'stand alongside the dominated and exploited, locate themselves as part of their struggle for justice and help to facilitate their critical and emancipatory potential for social transformation' (Scott 2018:154).

My positionality was one way that was able to build trusting relationships with my research participants. I had already developed a connection with members of the prison community through teaching at HMP/YOI Portland for four years; both with the staff members and the people in prison. I am not a complete *insider*, but certainly not an *outsider*. Hall (2018:398) recommends that the trusted *insider* can gain access to and uncover 'the concealed but rich and nuanced cultural practices that pervade those communities involved in crime'. However, conversely, an *insiders*' 'positionality can engender a myopic view of social reality' (Phillips and Earle 2010:360); where the researcher 'might be over familiar with the setting and the suffer from 'over-rapport'… [suffering a] subsequent tendency to dismiss the subtle nuances of meaning and practice that the outsider might recognise as significant' (Hall 2018:398). Furthermore, the *insider* status suggests closeness to the participants that might cause bias, creating a 'tension between being *objectively neutral* and being involved with community members (Mertens 2012:807).

Hammersley (2015:26) recommends the prison researcher becomes a '"marginal native", or rather perhaps to make analytic use of the fact that at best one *will always* be a marginal native, never a

complete insider'. By adopting the positionality of the moderate *insider*, I was able to develop trusting relationships with my participants whilst retaining reflexivity, the knowledge that I would always be an *outsider*. In doing so I could engender the 'capacity for both empathy and distance, honesty and discretion' (Bhatti 2017:88).

3.3.4 Addressing the diverse needs of the research participants in prison

The transformative methodology follows on from the transformative axiological, ontological and epistemological assumptions outlined by Mertens (2012); in that it supports cultural competence, multiple perspectives, the trusting relationship between the researcher and participants whilst addressing the power imbalances that exist within prison research. The aim of the transformative methodology is to;

> [Seek] to improve the situation of its participants, focussing, thereby, on issues of: agentic control of one's life; power, empowerment, social justice, marginalisation and oppression; voice and action, all in a world characterised by a political, negotiated view of reality' (Cohen et al. 2018:34)

A transformative methodology uses a mixed methods research approach; the blend of qualitative and quantitative methods, 'with the ambition to generate a more accurate and adequate understanding of social phenomena than would be possible by using only one of these approaches' (Biesta 2012:147). The basic assumption is that 'we see the world in multiple ways, some of which may or may not agree with each other' (Cohen et al. 2018:31-32) and therefore mixed methods research represents;

> A more comprehensive and complete understanding of phenomena to be obtained than single method approaches and answers complex research questions more meaningfully, combining particularity with generality, "patterned regularity" with "contextual complexity", insider *and* outsider perspectives (*emic* and *etic* research), focussing on the whole *and* its constituent parts, and the causes of effects. (Cohen et al. 2018:33)

This approach provides the researcher with a formula for cultural competence, whereby 'mixed methods provide a strategy for addressing the diverse needs of community members' (Mertens 2007:220). Not all research methods will appeal to and be suitable for every participant, especially in prison research, where many who are researched may struggle with literacy skills or have learning

needs. Thus, by using the mixed methods approach I have been able to recognise the cultural challenges of the prison demographic, reacting to 'dimensions of diversity' (Mertens 2007:224). This subsequently addressed some of the feared power imbalance between myself as researcher and the participants, stimulating trusting relationships, whereby I was 'responsive to the needs of communities, and communities witness the power in both qualitative and quantitative data' (Mertens 2007:224). The consequence of this is that the data collected represents a variety of voices 'in form and content' (Mertens 2007:215).

3.4 Selection of Participants

Whilst this research purposely obtained participants that are learners in prison, 'because their life experiences reflect critical cultural... positioning in regard to the phenomena under study' (Mertens 2009:214), participants from that population were selected using convenience sampling. This type of sampling finds 'captive audiences... those who happen to be available and accessible at the time' (Cohen et al. 2018:218). The sample was drawn from those who were allocated naturally to attend the music course at HMP/YOI Portland. Learners are selected to enrol on education courses by the prison Allocations team. Some have applied to enrol, some have been selected to attend; this can be part of a sentence plan or not. Cohorts are made up of six to eight learners in the music classroom, therefore this research hoped to collect data from a minimum of six participants (n=6). This approach to sampling was taken to ensure ecological validity within the data collection, by retaining the 'conditions of a natural setting in which the behaviour or process being studied is found' (Whitley and Kite 2013:230). Rather than seeking participants purposively, the research participants represent those who have followed the regular prison processes to enrol on the music course.

There were potential limitations of using convenience sampling in attempt to protect ecological validity, primarily the threat of sampling error and undercoverage (Frey 2018). One side of the debate defends that if research takes place outside of normal processes then it lacks external validity, however others argue 'that conducting research in natural settings does not guarantee its external validity in the sense of generalizability' (Whitley and Kite 2013:230). Arguably, a sampling error could occur if convenience sampling 'provides a sample whose characteristics (e.g. participants' age, educational level, or socioeconomical status) differ systematically from those of the population of interest', whilst undercoverage could mean 'that certain individuals in the population of interest are excluded by the sampling method' (Frey 2018:402-403). However, the

transformative approach that my research takes, values naturalness over generalisability. This is because my study aspired to explore the multiple identities of people in prison, by representing individual voices and challenging any preconceived ideas of criminal identity. Whilst I intended to represent the rich and diverse demographic of learners in prison, even if the data was deemed not generalisable, this was not the primary concern of using convenience sampling: rather the intention was 'to acquire in-depth information from those who are in a position to give it' (Cohen et al. 2018:219).

3.5 Methods

In order to explore my research questions, regarding the impact of my new non-accredited, personal and social development music course, the methods used needed to find a way to monitor the self-perception of learners in prison as they engaged in the music course; with particular focus on the learners' recognition of their personal and social skills development. Gore and Cross (2011) observe two ways in which people evidence alterations in their self-perception, through experiencing *self-concept change* or *self-evaluation change*. Whilst a person's sense of self is often complex, abstract and multivariate, at its most simplified it is the 'network of characteristics through which people define themselves' (Gore and Cross 2011:140). Change in *self-concept* can be evidenced when a person describes or denotes their 'content, attitudes, or evaluative judgements' as having altered or transformed (Oyserman, Elmore and Smith 2012:72). There are two levels of self-concept change; lower-order change and higher-order change (Gore and Cross 2011). Lower-order change occurs when 'the variation in self-content [is] the result of immediate situational factors' (Gore and Cross 2011:135); for example, when self-perception is impacted by new environments or relationships. Higher-order change, on the other hand, develops when a 'person's self-concept has shifted toward a generalized focus on abilities and skills' (Gore and Cross 2011:136); in this case the self-perception is not impacted by external variances. A person may also experience deviations in self-perception through *self-evaluation change*, where they '[do] not see the self as changing in content... but rather changes the evaluation of the characteristic', perhaps from negative to positive or conversely (Gore and Cross 2011:136). These types of changes in self-perception are 'operationalised as self-esteem or self-efficacy and are a distilled evaluation of the person's sense of worth and competence in the world' (Oyserman et al. 2012:72).

There are two recommended methods for measuring change in self-perception (Brinthaupt and Erwin 1992; Gore and Cross 2011). Firstly, '*reactive self-report* measures [which] involve participants

locating the self on one or more dimensions deemed important by the researcher', secondly 's*pontaneous self-report* measures [which] involve participants answering an open-ended question about the self' (Gore and Cross 2011:137). Using both types of approach, reactive and spontaneous, has enabled this research to 'measure quite different aspects of the self' for the participants involved (Brinthaupt and Erwin 1992:157); collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. The reactive self-report measures I used have encouraged the participants of this research to self-evaluate against themes relevant to the research questions, which has allowed me to explore whether the participants experienced *self-evaluation* change through engagement in music. The spontaneous self-report measures used encouraged participants to self-describe; this has enabled me to evidence whether engagement in music impacts lower or higher-order *self-concept* change.

3.5.1 Questionnaires

Preliminary and plenary questionnaires were designed to be completed by participants (see Appendix 2.1), in order to provide both quantitative and qualitative information. As a quantitative premeasure, the preliminary questionnaire collected data regarding each individual participant's age, ethnicity, educational background and learning needs. This was to ensure that the participants would be seen as individuals within the context of the research. This is particularly important when carrying out research with minority and minority ethnic groups, as 'the experiences of specific communities often remain hidden within generalised discourses that subsume specific identities and histories within very general categories and labels' (Chakraborti, Garland and Spalek 2004:34). While evidence suggests there are key characteristics that influence the likeliness of criminal behaviour (Prison Reform Trust 2019), it would have been an ontological misjustice to ignore the diverse backgrounds of people in prison.

Both the questionnaires at start and end of the study included a spontaneous self-report measure, in the form of an open question. The preliminary self-report measure was collected to be analysed against the plenary, in order to assess the impact engagement in music had on the participants' self-perception. This part of the questionnaire was semi-structured, and an agenda was set but I did not 'presuppose the nature of the response' (Cohen et al. 2018:475). Participants were asked to self-describe using the heading 'Who Am I… I am…'. Whilst other instructions were given to support participants who may have low level literacy skills or other learning needs, this approach did not rely 'on researcher-provided dimensions' but required 'subjects to respond spontaneously to a very general or vague prompt' (Brinthaupt and Erwin 1992:147). Although having a prompt may have detracted from this method being entirely spontaneous, each participant was still able to '[provide]

one's own items to the researcher through an unconstrained format' (Brinthaupt and Erwin 1992:148).

The spontaneous approach was therefore used to provide data that was able to give a more authentic description of the self-concept of each participant; as, in using this method, the participant 'selects the contents of the measure… [allowing] the respondent to focus directly on those dimensions considered to be the most important or relevant' (Brinthaupt and Erwin 1992:150). Here, the open-ended question encouraged 'participants to write a free account in their own terms, to explain and qualify their responses and avoid the limitations of pre-set categories' (Cohen et al. 2018:476).

There were two potential disadvantages to using the spontaneous self-report measure in the questionnaires. Firstly, this method assumes 'that respondents will be sufficiently or equally capable of articulating their thoughts and committing them to paper' (Cohen et al. 2018:475). However, the open-ended question is 'particularly suitable for investigating complex issues, to which simple answers cannot be provided', such as an investigation into self-perception (Cohen et al. 2018:476). Secondly, there is the possibility that 'respondents won't necessarily report their beliefs, attitudes, etc. accurately… there is likely to be a social desirability response bias' (Robson 2002:233). This occurs when a research participant aims 'to present a favourable image of themselves… to conform to socially acceptable values, avoid criticism, or gain social approval' (van de Mortel 2008:41). In response to the potential threats to the validity of the data produced through the 'Who Am I… I Am…' question, this research also took data from reflective journals; solicited diaries which are completed as part of the normal music course. Here any changes in self-perception were documented through engagement with music learning, perhaps detracting from the personal nature of collecting information regarding self-concept and self-evaluation. This method was used to 'capture rich data on personal events, motives, feelings and beliefs in an unobtrusive way' (Bartlett and Milligan 2015:5).

3.5.2 Reflective Journals

Autoethnographic qualitative data and quantitative data was taken from reflective journals that I use as part of my normal music course (see Appendix 2.2). These were completed by the participants and encouraged them to engage in conscious enquiry about their experiences on the music course, documenting any changes in their personal and social development or self-perception. By concurrently collecting both quantitative and qualitative data I was '[seeking] to compare both forms of data to search for congruent findings (e.g., how the themes identified in the qualitative

data collection compare with the statistical results in the quantitative analysis)' (Creswell, Clark, Gutmann and Hanson 2003:171-172).

The diary method used within the reflective journals 'considers personal experience as an important source of knowledge in and of itself, as well as a source of insight into cultural experience' (Ellis and Adams 2014:254). Using journals within research therefore empowers the participant to communicate their personal narrative (Bartlett and Milligan 2015), it permits;

> The point of view of the participant, and can offer helpful insights into his or her thoughts, can signal changes over time in thinking or self-perceived mastery of something... [and] can document reasoning processes or the participant's feelings about an issue or phenomenon (Lankshear and Knowbel 2004:255)

This is of particular importance for the transformative researcher and offers the opportunity to build an equitable and trusting relationship with the research participant (Bartlett and Milligan 2015). Unlike the questionnaires, the use of journals encouraged the participants to take more ownership of evidencing their experiences; they acted as reflective learning tools for individuals on the music course to track progression as well as research tools. Consequently, 'the distance between researcher and researched can also result in diarists feeling less "judged" by their responses or less pressured into giving what they feel (rightly or wrongly) is the "right" answer' (Bartlett and Milligan 2015:15); this therefore offered the opportunity for an authentic representation of the participants' self-perception.

The reflective journals allowed the participants to write a sequential account of the music course, giving them the space to reflect on any impact experienced towards personal and social development, and self-perception. In order to achieve efficiency, to support participants with low-level literacy skills and to ensure this data collection tool worked within the time constraints of the music lessons, the reflective journals were structured. This allowed me to 'standardise the way participants report on the event, with dedicated sections of the entry within which the experience is dissected into focussed information' (Hyers 2018:83); collecting both quantitative and qualitative data.

Entries into the reflective journals were made by the participants before music engagement each day, then at the end of music engagement each day. In theory each participant would be able to

produce approximately 14 diary entries across the four-week course; however, this was impacted by prison regime and closures. The reflective journals included both reactive and spontaneous self-report measures regarding the participants' self-concept and self-evaluation. Each journal page featured four sections for participants to document during every entry; Activity Completed; Type of Work; Mood, Self-Confidence and Motivation Scale (reactive self-report measures); and Self-Evaluation and Self-Concept Questions (spontaneous self-report measures).

3.5.2.1 Activity Completed

The new, non-accredited music course that I deliver is responsive to the learners' personal targets. Each participant used their reflective journal to document their agreed individual target at the beginning of music activity that day, before documenting their progressed target at the start of the afternoon session. For the purpose of my research, the two target boxes were necessary to collect data regarding the music activity each research participant was carrying out each day, to be referenced against the other data collected.

3.5.2.2 Type of Work

A tick box section was included in the reflective journals, for participants to highlight whether they worked individually, in a group or a mixture of both, as this provided insightful data in conjunction with the other information collected.

3.5.2.3 Mood, Self-confidence and Motivation Scale

Participants were asked to respond to reactive self-measure scales in their journal for each day of their attendance on the music course. These were in response to how music activities during the day impacted three target themes; the participant's mood, self-confidence and motivation. These target themes were used for two reasons; primarily to protect ecological validity and the normal learning activities that occur within the music course; and secondly, because increased positive mood, self-confidence and motivation have been evidenced as characteristics of desistance-orientated behaviours, as outlined in the introduction and literature review (see Section 1.2 and Section 2.4).

A semantic differential scale was used to enable evaluation of each target theme against a set of polar opposite adjectives; in this case 'low' to 'high'. For the purpose of quantitative analysis, the scale was laid out with 10-points and participants were therefore able to assess their mood, self-

confidence and motivation out of 10. The first scale on each journal page was completed on arrival to the music classroom, the second, comparative scale was completed at the end of music engagement each day.

The use of this type of scale 'attempts to capture evaluations by relying on the connotations of adjectives' (Neuman 2014:237) and also requires the participant to understand what is meant by the target concepts; mood, self-confidence and motivation. Brinthaupt and Erwin (1992) advise that when using reactive measures;

> There may be differences in understanding of terms or items attributable to a variety of differences among respondents, such as differences on cognitive, developmental, social or cohort dimensions (Brinthaupt and Erwin 1992:150)

A reactive measure relies on the participants' understanding of what the researcher means by the terms used. To prepare the research participants to be able to complete this section of the journal, with recognition that many people in prison education have different learning needs, a description of the terms was given to, read out and discussed with each participant (see Appendix 2.2.1).

3.5.2.4 Self-Evaluation and Self-Concept Questions

Alongside the data gained through the semantic differential scales, the journals also enabled the participants to complete a spontaneous self-report, prescribed through a written activity. They were given two open questions; 'What impact has doing music had on you today and why?'; and, 'What have you learnt about yourself today?'. These were used to prompt 'the diarist to write a more detailed temporal narrative… to gain a deeper understanding of a person's actions, experiences, thoughts and emotion around a particular topic' (Bartlett and Milligan 2015:21). The use of qualitative data in particular 'is critical in transformative research and evaluation as a point of dialogue between the researchers and the community members' (Mertens 2012:807); it 'affords participants greater control over how their lives and experiences are represented' (Bartlett and Milligan 2015:72). Results from these questions were also collected to be cross referenced against the quantitative data evidenced through the journals; for example, I was able to evaluate whether participants learnt more or less about themselves in a session when they experienced large changes in mood, self-confidence and motivation.

Whilst there are many benefits of using reflective journals and diary method as a form of data collection within a transformative mixed methods approach, there are also some limitations. One

principal debate is whether the journaling approach should be used 'with [participants] who express themselves well verbally but have limited writing skills' (Creswell and Poth 2018:174). Many of the participants that engage in prison research may find diary writing;

> As either challenging or constraining… diary writing requires good literacy skills and command of the (English) language… For some individuals, especially… those with lower educational abilities this may not be easy. In this case a written diary is unlikely to provide a helpful outlet for self-expression, in fact it may even pose a risk to a participant's emotional well-being by highlighting something that they are unable to do. (Bartlett and Milligan 2015:75)

What is more, written accounts alone do not afford the researcher the opportunity to explore the responses given by the participants, or to ask for clarification. Lankshear and Knobel (2004:255) therefore recommend that, reflective journals aren't used as 'self-contained data sets', but are used in concurrence or sequentially with other methods. This affords the participants other opportunities to express themselves and means that a research methodology can respond to the culturally diverse needs of participants within prison. The reflective journals were therefore used alongside interviews.

3.5.3 Interviews

Interviews formed the main source of data collection for this research project. Whilst the questionnaires would provide information in order to understand each participant as an individual and the reflective journals would give, in the moment, accounts of the impact of music engagement, together these two methods gave structure and meaning to the interview process. Interviews were used in conjunction with the other methods, 'to go deeper into the motivations of respondents and their reasons for responding as they do' (Cohen et al. 2018:508). I used an interview schedule to outline the structure of my interviews (see Appendix 2.3).

In order to be culturally responsive and meet the needs of their research participants, an interviewer should ensure that 'topics and questions are given, but the questions are open-ended and the wording and sequence may be tailored to each individual interviewee and the responses given, with prompts and probes' (Cohen et al. 2018:511). Therefore, the interviews were semi-structured, allowing me to 'modify the sequence of questions, change the wording, explain them or add to them' (Cohen et al. 2018:508). Participants were interviewed one at a time, within the final session of the music course. Each interview was split into two sections and began with asking participants

broad questions about the music course. The recording was then stopped, to allow time for the participants to read through their reflective journals, before the recording resumed and more focused questions were asked. This approach was adopted because the participants' knowledge may have been 'tacit and difficult for them to explicate in simple discourse' (Johnson and Weller 2002:491). In this way the participants' reflective journal was used as a prop. This is an elicitation technique, which is used to aid the participant to remember and explain information more accurately (Johnson and Weller 2002).

Interviews were referred to as 'discussions' to the research participants. This was in response to conducting research within prison, where people may be discouraged to participate due to the implied formality of interviews and the negative associations people in prison may feel towards them, as they may both 'evoke suspicion or hostility' (Horrocks and King 2010:74). Instead of using a Dictaphone I used recording devices already accessible as part of the music course I deliver, to retain a naturalness and to avoid impacting the teaching environment. Whilst I did not foresee the interview method and questions posing any emotional difficulty to my research participants, I was aware that interviewing can make some people feel anxious, leading them to 'adopt avoidance tactics if the questioning is too deep' (Cohen et al. 2018:507). It was therefore important for me to recognise that 'the interview is a social encounter, not simply a site for information exchange' (Cohen et al. 2018:507). I had to show 'a stance of care, respect and sensitivity to nuances of emotional changes' and be prepared to allow the participant to stop at any point (Brooks, Riele and Maguire 2014:110).

The interview method is particularly appropriate within a transformative approach because 'rather than seeking to gain "truth" about reality that exists outside of human perception, [it] seeks to investigate the participants' own reality' (Bows 2018:100). The transformative researcher recognises that 'different versions of reality are given privilege over others' (Mertens 2012:806), therefore 'by collating personal narratives' of the prisoner participants, research 'may subsequently create new social truths' (Stanley 2018:324). This approach was adopted in order to help understand phenomena from the participants' perspectives, revealing 'the world as experienced by the subjects, and with the assumption that the important reality is what people perceive it to be' (Kvale 1996:52). Thus, I ensured that the transformative ontological assumption was upheld, which 'rejects cultural relativism, while recognizing that different versions of what is believed to be real exist' (Mertens 2012:806).

3.6 An ethical framework for prison research analysis

The transformative mixed methods research approach that I adopted enabled the collection of concurrent and sequential quantitative and qualitative data for analysis. By mixing the different sets of data in analysis, I could seek 'convergence… identifying areas of divergence, adding clarity, raising additional questions, and expanding the breadth of the enquiry' (Mertens 2009:311).

3.6.1 A close relationship with qualitative data and critical self-reflection

Ideas from a constructivist approach to grounded theory informed the process of analysing the qualitative data collected through this research; grounded theory guidelines were used to 'sharpen' thematic analyses (Charmaz 2011:360). I have used the logic of constructivist grounded theory by 'fragmenting empirical data through coding and working with resultant codes to construct abstract categories that fit these data and offer a conceptual analysis of them' (Charmaz 2011:361). This was achieved through a three-stage process recommended by Charmaz (2014), which involved initial coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding, with memo-writing practised throughout.

Unlike original models of grounded theory, namely the emergent model (Glaser and Strauss 1967) and the systematic model (Strauss and Corbin 1990), which encouraged explanatory, positivist outcomes (Charmaz 2014), 'the constructivist model gives rise to descriptive theory' (Cohen et al. 2018:716). This approach to grounded theory is therefore better suited to research that is immersed in social justice and that utilises a transformative methodology: this is because it;

> (1) Rejects claims of objectivity, (2) locates researchers' generalisations, (3) considers researchers' and participants' relative positions and standpoints, (4) emphasises reflexivity, (5) adopts sensitising concepts such as power, privilege, equity, and oppression, and (6) remains alert to variation and difference. (Charmaz 2011:360)

Each stage of this process employs the researcher to understand the necessity for 'a close relationship with the data [and] to be critically self-reflective' in order to support narratives of social justice (Mertens 2009:294). Grounded theory encourages 'tolerance and openness to data and what is emerging… [the] ability to work with emergent categories rather than preconceived or received categories' (Cohen 2018:715). This was important; it would have been antithetical to the research aims and design to use pre-determined codes to analyse the data. I wanted to reveal emergent themes and the narrative of the learners in prison, recognising that;

> Adopting grounded theory strategies in social justice research means that we cannot import a set of concepts such as hegemony and domination and paste them onto the realities in the field… We need to treat concepts as problematic and look for their characteristics as lived and understood, not as given in textbooks. (Charmaz 2014:327)

Therefore, whilst I could have chosen to analyse my data in response to themes linked to desistance theory, I decided instead to '[study] the data and [develop] analysis from conceptualising these data rather than imposing a theoretical framework on them' (Charmaz 2008:163).

Before coding however, I undertook a period of 'digesting and reflecting' (Clarke 2005:84), listening back to the recorded interviews and reading through the reflective journals. After using online transcription software, Otter, I was also able to print my interview transcripts which helped me to feel more immersed in the interview data (see Appendix 5). I used memoing techniques to capture my 'thoughts, capture the comparisons and connections… and crystallise questions and directions' (Charmaz 2014:162). This included keeping a notepad of considerations, using the software SimpleMind to map links between my ideas, as well as using voice recording software on my phone when I was away from my data. Any memo writing that was achieved using digital technology was particularly useful, as I was able to return to the files and manipulate the content; 'revising it via collapsing and expanding categories/items, adding and deleting' which was 'analytically very provocative' (Clarke 2005:89). I kept dated versions of previous electronic memos to explore how my investigative thinking had progressed and to recognise the 'multiple ways of representing a particular issue' (Clarke 2005:136). Charmaz (2014) recommends that memoing and memo writing play a 'central role in constructing theoretical categories' in grounded theory, and for this reason I continued this practice throughout data analysis.

Using NVivo analysis software I was able to start a phase of initial coding using qualitative data from the reflective journals and interviews (see Appendix sections 4 and 5). This encouraged the study of 'fragments of data – words, lines, segments and incidents – closely for their analytical import' (Charmaz 2014:109). Initial coding required the recognition of the value of codes that were 'provisional, comparative and grounded in the data' and how these could be used in order 'to remain open to other analytic possibilities' (Charmaz 2014:117). After, I was able to reflect on the initial codes that were more recurrent and significant and begin focused coding; selecting codes that had 'the most analytic power' in order to 'determine a new code that captures a number of initial codes' (Belgrave and Seide 2019:176). This enabled me to synthesise larger chunks of data across

the reflective journals and interviews. Finally, theoretical coding allowed me to 'specify possible relationships between categories' that I had developed during selective coding, in order to 'weave the fractured story back together' (Glaser 1978:72). Essential to this stage of analysis, I had to work to avoid the intrusion of prior knowledge guiding the process of categorisation, as theoretical codes needed to remain emergent. This was achieved by 'wrestling with preconceptions' and being careful to not apply 'a language of intention, motivations or strategies' unless the data validated my assertions (Charmaz 2014:155,159).

3.6.2 Using quantitative data to sharpen findings

As well as qualitative data, this research also collected quantitative data through the semantic differential scale used in the reflective journals; as described in Section 3.5.2.3, where participants measured changes in their mood, self-confidence and motivation during each day of music engagement. This provided numerical data as participants scored changes between 1 and 10. This data was input into Microsoft Excel, where I was able to analyse data to provide descriptive statistics; calculating the mean, median, minimum and maximum and range of results in order to analyse individual and group results (see Appendix sections 4 and 6.1).

This quantitative data was then used to sharpen findings from qualitative analysis; to be 'mutually informing' (Cohen et al. 2018:45). For example, I could use the quantitative data to find the date a participant experienced their highest increase in self-confidence and then explore their qualitative narrative from that day's reflective journal entry. Through analysis of the quantitative data I could see when participants were working alone or in a group and this could be compared against qualitative data. Furthermore, the quantitative data proved useful in finding anomalies within the data and then reflecting on qualitative data to understand what was happening.

With all statistical data it was important, under the transformative framework, that I remained sensitive to 'results that statistical analysis show to be "statistically significant" or that rely on average scores without serious consideration of… relevant dimensions of diversity' (Mertens 2009:299). Whilst my research participants represented a group of people in prison, the sample size was small and my quantitative data could have led to misleading, over-generalised findings if used differently.

3.6.3 The use of people in prison as research commentators

My ethical approach to data analysis also takes inspiration from Convict Criminology, which aims to challenge conventional findings and dominant discourses in criminal justice research (Richards and Ross 2001). In attempting to address underrepresentation and distorted images of incarceration, Convict Criminology recognises the 'value of privileging the voices of those incarcerated' in order to provide 'an alternative lens for examining the criminal justice landscape' (Aresti and Darke 2018:3).

One innovation of my study is the use of research commentators. In my music group I have two peer mentors: these are people in prison that I have selected to support me with the delivery of my course. They see multiple cohorts of learners engage in music activity and could therefore offer their unique perspective, as prison 'insiders', on the experiences and realities of prison life. In the study the peer mentors will be referred to as Howard and Guy.

The peer mentors have not been positioned as researchers in this study, nor do they act as participants. Instead they are positioned as commentators 'in order to remain true to the desistance idea… involving research "subjects" themselves in the data analysis and interpretation' (Maruna 2017:15). This involved collaborative action, the peer mentors did not have access to the data collected from participants, instead they were situated to give a broader analysis of the research questions I am asking in this project. They took part in separate, semi-structured interviews in order to maintain a dialogue of collaboration (see Appendix sections 2.4 and 7); offering 'a channel to "knowing differently" and potential for creating humanising spaces within the prison environment' (Brown and Brady 2020:1).

Whilst this approach attempts to address the power differential in prison-based research (Brown and Brady 2020), I appreciate that it does not remove the imbalance in power of academic research altogether. This method recognises that people in prison may not have 'sufficient academic training to theorize, articulate, and analyse their experiences of incarceration and the criminal justice' alone, but can aim to eliminate the dichotomy of researcher and research participant by 'treating academics and prisoners as co-producers of knowledge' (Aresti and Darke 2018:11). Gaining interview data from the peer mentors regarding my research questions therefore allowed me to uphold a transformative approach, by attempting to further establish routes to representation, to challenge the landscape of prison research that does not legitimise authentic narrative, as well as having the potential 'for establishing ethical relationships based on trust and mutual respect' (Brown and Brady 2020:11).

3.7 Summary

This chapter has outlined the transformative mixed methods approach taken to conduct my research with six participants on my new, non-accredited music course at HMP/YOI Portland. The methodology was adopted in order to; practice cultural competence, uncover multiple perspectives; build trusting relationships with the participants; and address the diverse needs of the prison population. The data collection methods, questionnaires, reflective journals and interviews, combine exploratory qualitative approaches and complimentary quantitative methods. All methods are based on learning activities that are used as a normal part of my music course in order to ensure ecological validity.

Data analysis was conducted using grounded theory guidelines to sharpen the thematic analysis of qualitative data, ensuring a close relationship with the data and critical self-reflection of my privileged positionality as a white, free woman. Quantitative data was also used in analysis, to mutually inform qualitative information. Based on concepts of Convict Criminology, interviews with my two classroom peer mentors were collected. The peer mentors were positioned as research commenters in this study, situated to give a broader analysis of the research question, to establish routes to the representation of authentic narratives of learners in prison.

The next chapter will introduce the six participants involved in this research and, through the mixed data collected, as well as the interviews conducted with the peer mentors, explore the participants' experiences of my new, non-accredited music course.

Chapter 4. Presentation of Findings

4.1 Overview

Data regarding the experiences of six learners on my new, non-accredited music course was collected through questionnaires, reflective journals and interviews and will be presented throughout this chapter (the complete data set can be found in the Appendix). The findings represent a synthesis of data from all collection methods. This chapter will explore the personal and social journeys of each learner and identify whether they experienced any impact from the music course, through changes in their personal and social development or self-reflection. Given the importance of authentically representing the marginalised people that I am researching, as highlighted in the methodology (see Section 3), supplementary to the data collected from the research participants, interviews with the peer mentors will be used throughout this chapter. This is to give additional depth to the narrative of the findings as well as providing and an 'insider' perspective of the impact of music on people in prison (see Section 3.6.3).

4.2 Introduction to the learners

The six people that made up the music group during this study had diverse backgrounds, like many of the cohorts of learners I work with in prison. The group included:

- Chris: A 32-year-old Irish learner who had previously been involved in music performance, with experience of MC'ing at parties and raves. On the course he wanted understand how to play the keyboard, drums and learn about digital music production. Chris has a mental health condition that causes him to have cyclothymic episodes, and he also has ADHD. Chris had previously achieved qualifications at Level 3 equivalent.

- Dave: A 38-year-old British learner, who had started to learn bass guitar in another prison and wanted to continue developing his skills and engage in group performance. Dave self-declared as having social and emotional difficulties, a mental health condition and dyslexia. He had no previous education qualifications.

- Nate: A 19-year-old learner with a Caribbean background, who has previously played the steel pans in a local band and was passionate about UK rap, grime and drill music. He joined

the course to write original music and improve his skills on the step sequencers. Nate had previously achieved qualifications at Level 3 equivalent.

- Pat: A 49-year-old British learner, who had played drums in a number of bands and was also interested in writing poetry. On the course Pat hoped to improve his technical drum skills and expand his awareness of other music genres. Pat had previously achieved qualifications at Level 2 equivalent.

- Rami: A 28-year-old Kurdish Iranian learner, with English as his second language, who had no experience of playing music. He was interested in learning the guitar and keyboard. Rami had previously achieved qualifications at Level 2 equivalent.

- Taylor: A 25-year-old British learner, with experience as an MC and producer, having released on music videos on YouTube. He was interested in writing instrumentals and new lyrics on the music course. Taylor has a mental health condition and Asperger's syndrome. Taylor had previously achieved qualifications at Level 1 and below.

As well as the six research participants, the two peer mentors, Howard and Guy (as introduced in Section 3.6.3), were in the classroom throughout the course. Before discussing the data collected from the participants, the interviews with Howard and Guy will be used to set the scene, giving context to the findings.

4.3 Setting the scene

In separate interviews with Howard and Guy, I was able to ask them about their experiences of being in prison. First time offender Howard explained that coming to prison isolated him from his normal life and its familiarities, the result of this was loneliness and fear:

Howard: When I first came in, it was really frightening. Um, I felt like I've been abducted from my life. And that was very frightening… I was scared and I had to tell myself that what's the worst thing can happen to me? And that would purely be based on what I find out day to day and people exaggerate all the time. So, I spent the first month thinking that I could be stabbed in the shower or raped or anything.

At the same time as contending with the challenges of a new and anxiety-invoking environment, Howard went through a period of acclimatisation. At this point prison can become familiar and normal to him. As Howard told me:

Howard: I think, for me, it took about six months to almost, to almost... You almost have to forget about your life outside, not forget, you have to kind of distance it a bit. Otherwise, it's, right... Otherwise you can't really flow, you can't exist here.

Howard coped with the transition into imprisonment through separating his life inside of prison from his life outside. He achieved this by self-administering further barriers and limiting contact; for example, removing the opportunity for connection with his family through visitation.

For Guy, who had been to prison before, it was separation from his family that he found challenging, along with the strict, structural controls:

Guy: When you're in for so long you miss family. You know, you miss like the most simplest things in life. Meaning like, being able to use metal forks and knives and, you know hugging your family, to hug your mum. You know, being away from people telling you what to do all the time. You know, you kind of want your own space.

Being in prison had not only created personal barriers for Guy but meant that he had to adapt to having his autonomy removed by following the rules of the environment.

However, whilst Guy and Howard experienced isolation from the people close to them outside of prison, friendship groups helped them to develop social structures and community within prison. Howard explained:

Howard: What I've learned from being in here is something I didn't expect I'd learn. And that is, a new level of male closeness, that I haven't experienced since I was about 14... I think I'll have some friends in here that'll probably last, as friendships, a lot longer than some of the other friendships I've made from outside.

What Howard and Guy exposed through my conversations with each of them was the dichotomous nature of prison; the extraordinary yet the mundane; the insecure yet the secure; and the separation from, as well as the development of, community ties and relationships. Howard revealed that music within prison can exist too in dichotomy to the wider environment:

Howard: In prison, most of the things that you do are what you're told to do. And even the most basic thing like sleep, it's poor quality, it's interrupted, with someone else underneath you, it smells, on a horrible bed, in a freezing cold environment with a strip light. The food, again, the poorest quality. So, everything you've got… it's all the poorest quality of everything. But then there's music, and music only exists, it only exists as what you make it. So, it's the highest quality. It's the only thing in this environment that is that for me. I can make it whatever I want to make it.

In contrast to the restrictive and problematic characteristics of the prison environment, Howard describes how the music classroom enables people in prison to engage in activities with the ability to create something original. Through music, learners can regain autonomy, the freedom of choice and ownership. The music classroom is seen as a positive space within the wider prison environment, Howard told me:

Howard: Being involved in music in prison. It feels like, compared to everything else, it feels like a privilege… If they opened the doors and said, "where you going to go?" everybody would run there (laughs).

With Howard and Guy's descriptions of prison for context, the findings from the research participants will now be explored, focussing on the impact of music on the participants mood, self-confidence and motivation.

4.4 Increased positive mood

Each participant in the group self-assessed their mood on arrival to the music class and was then asked to re-assess their mood after engagement each day. The impact of being on the music course meant that the group of six participants experienced an average of 16.4% positive increase in change of mood during each day of participation, and the average end of day measure for mood across all participants was 8.81 out of 10.

4.4.1 "Music gave me a chance"

Positive shifts in mood were, in some cases, attributed to the contrast the music classroom offered to the wider prison environment. Chris had been self-isolating and was apprehensive about joining the music class, but had been encouraged to attend by Howard, whom he knew from his wing. Chris was interested in learning both the guitar and keyboard, being able to sing at the same time, so that he could perform a song by his favourite artist, Frank Sinatra. Chris told me:

Chris: After being locked up in my cell, all night, and after the chaos on the wing, you know I wake up in the morning feeling miserable, depressed, I don't want to be here, no wants to be here. You know, none of us want to be in prison, but we're here, we've got to get on with it.

Chris found that the change in environment and the opportunity to engage in a positive activity, against the negative backdrop of being in prison, had a positive effect on his mood. Chris experienced higher than average changes in mood; on average his mood positively increased by 27.3%, from the start to end of each day of music engagement. On a day when he experienced his largest change in mood, from a measure of 4 to 9, he reflected:

Chris: Making my drum and bass beat and writing lyrics has cheered me up because at the start of the day I was getting over a long weekend of bang up in my cell, and by the end of the day it lifted my mood, music always cheers me up.

Similarly, for Dave, music engagement helped to keep him occupied in an enjoyable and positive activity, instead of being confined to the wing. Dave had played guitar before, 15 years previously, in another prison and was hoping to rebuild his skills and learn how to play the bass guitar, in order to join in with a group performance. He told me:

Dave: I think it's because I'm on the wing all the time, it's the same thing every day. I'm stuck in a cell all day doing nothing. Here it's like an escape, it's more, it's enjoyable. It's a break from the prison. I don't feel like I'm in jail.

Escape from the prison environment was a recurrent theme linked to a positive change in mood. For Pat, he believed that doing music in prison had a positive impact on his well-being because he had been taken away from the 'normality of prison', he explained:

Pat: Music takes your mind away from the, just from the basic sort of boredom of life. Especially in prison. So, you know, your mind can be taken to other places with music.

Engagement in music was therefore seen by these participants as a physical escape from the wider prison environment, but at the same time an opportunity to experience a mental break from prison life. For Chris, he was able use the experience of making music in prison to offload negative feelings that he had been experiencing in other areas of the prison. Chris explained:

Chris: There's not a lot for us to release any feeling or emotion. Where we supress it all the time, we're locked up in a cell and we're trapped on a wing and we're surrounded by so much negativity and violence all the time. We don't get any opportunity to release it and music gave me a chance to release it.

Again, engagement in the music class provided an escape, for Chris, he was able to experience an emotional release causing a positive increase in his mood.

4.4.2 "Music's like a language"

Nate had studied a music qualification in prison previously and hoped that upon joining the class this time he would be able to write new original songs and improve his skills with the music technology available. Out of all the participants, Nate experienced the highest change in mood across the music course; daily increases averaged at +28.9%. For Nate, music had a positive effect on his mood because it enabled him the opportunity to express himself, he explained:

Nate: [Music] helps a lot, take your mind of certain things. And, you can express yourself through it. Even though you may not be good at talking to people, what you say in your songs can complete a story and tell everyone how you're feeling and what you've been through.

Similarly, for Guy:

Guy: [Music] gives me a chance to express my emotions and how I feel about things… Me personally, I find it hard to speak my emotions and say how I feel. Whereas if I write it down on a piece of paper and turn it into… an art, it's easier to express myself. So, I'd rather express myself through music, and that way, it's easier to show other people what kind of person I am.

Where both Nate and Guy used music to benefit their mood by communicating personal narratives and to connect with others in the group, Taylor, who experiences social challenges because of his Asperger's syndrome, explained:

Taylor: I feel like when it comes to music it makes people a lot more, easy to approach. Like not that I necessarily wouldn't have spoken to the people that I've spoken to anyway. But it's just, I don't know, music's like a language init'?

Despite finding it difficult to speak with others in the class or to show their emotions, music acted as an accessible platform for Nate, Guy and Taylor to build relationships with the group, which helped to positively impact their mood. The ways in which the learners saw music as a tool for communication differed, with Nate and Guy utilising lyric writing for self-expression and Taylor using music to approach others and begin to build relationships.

4.4.3 "There's a strong feeling of togetherness"

There was a slightly higher average increases in positive mood for participants when they worked in a group; +19.4% overall increase during music engagement, compared to +15.4% when people worked individually. The reflective journal data evidences how the music course promoted group work, or development of individual skills towards group outcomes. 49% of the time the group completed sessions combining both individual and group activity, 29% of the time participants engaged in solely group-based work, whereas 22% of the time participants engaged in exclusively individual work. Chris, Pat, Nate and Rami all experienced their largest increase in mood during Session 12; during this lesson all learners were engaged in collaborative work leading to group performances. When Howard was asked how it feels to be part of a group performing together, he remarked:

Howard: I've told you before many times, that's the, that's the best lesson… it's when there's a strong feeling of togetherness, and people are playing, and even playing one note on a guitar, and they're part of it, you can see the magic, people light up. And that's… It's like going to church and singing hymns, right? People can't sing, so what? It's the elation of being part of it. And that tames behaviour. It tames and it lifts depression. It's, that, that is God working in full effect.

Despite varying levels of skill in the classroom, music enabled these learners to engage as a group and experience the wellbeing benefits of collaborative music-making. Similarly, when was Chris was asked what he felt the impact of working with others in the class was, he replied:

Chris: It was a joy to share that feeling with them because a lot of lads go through what I go through. And to see them smiling and to see, to see what it was doing for them, made me happy as well.

Music-making helped the learners to connect with each other, in both the physical act of playing and the emotional outcomes that it encouraged. Howard and Chris uncover that the music classroom offers an accessible activity for learners to experience togetherness, both in the creation of music and a unified sound, but also in the collective experience of happiness.

Within the class, the group members recognised the benefits of working collaboratively. Nate told me:

Nate: Sometimes I'm a bit of a poor sport, that is what I am more or less. But, in here you have to work together, to make things happen, and you can't do everything by yourself.

Likewise, Dave remarked:

Dave: I don't know but I've got very bad paranoia and I don't trust anyone. But in here you get to know people and how they are, and how you can work together with them. Cos' you're doing something together, and you know that they're going to be there for you anyway.

And for Pat:

Pat: I've learnt a bit more about me working with other people since I've been in prison… Fortunately the people on the course have been positive too, they've been good to spend time around… Basically, I've generally been in sort of a period of isolation since I've been in here, behind my door… So yeah… it's helped me sort of interact better with other inmates. Whereas I was more than happy to be behind my door and do my time, so that's a good thing.

This shows that even for those who were reticent about working with others, the interdependent act of making music together not only helped learners to engage with each other, but also acted as a source of well-being and comfort.

4.5 Increased self-confidence

All six participants assessed their self-confidence before and after music engagement each day. The impact of being on the music course meant that the group of six participants experienced an average of 13.4% positive increase in self-confidence during each day of participation. The average end of day measure for self-confidence across all participants was 8.84 out of 10.

4.5.1 "I didn't know that I was able to"

The data evidences the range of activities that the participants engaged in, and this included; understanding, practising and performing vocals, keyboard, acoustic guitar, bass guitar and drums; creating original instrumentals using digital technology; writing original lyrics; performing; and recording. The participants had varying levels of previous music experience; however, they were all able to engage in learning activities that were new to them. The data evidences that as participants discovered subject-related skills, and in some cases wider skills, this positively impacted their self-confidence.

On the first day of the music course Rami refused to engage. Although he was encouraged to stay and learn about the activities he could join in with, he decided to go back to his wing. As Rami was on the allocations list for music, he was unlocked from his cell to attend the class the over the following three sessions. Each time he was asked if he would like to observe the class, but again he

refused. By the fifth class, the other learners in the room had settled in and Rami decided to watch what they were doing. During that session, through conversations with the other learners and participating as an observer, Rami decided that he would like to join the group.

Rami experienced positive changes in mood, self-confidence and motivation during each day of the music course. Daily increases during activity averaged at +12.7% (mood), +13.6% (self-confidence) and +10.9% (motivation). Rami explained:

Rami: At the beginning I start playing with the guitar with the group, for example singing the song as a group. And then I played drums, I played piano, keyboard and beats.

As Rami experimented with different instruments, his reflective journal reveals that he discovered musical ability and ways he could express himself, and that he also began to join in with the group. During session 10, Rami decided to play the drums. Despite never playing them before he was quickly able to coordinate both hands and keep the pulse with the bass drum. He explained that what he was playing sounded like the Kurdish Iranian music that he normally enjoyed listening to. He was encouraged by the group to develop his idea and during the next session he recorded the drum beat along with some original Kurdish lyrics. This is when Rami experienced his highest change in self-confidence, and he reflected in his journal at the end of this session:

Rami: I didn't know that I was able to play well on drums and make my own track. I'm surprised that I had the confidence that I could sing and make my own song.

The session had a significant impact on him and his perception of himself, as evidenced in the switch of role from being an observer to being observed by others in the class. Howard witnessed this change too and suggested that Rami's increasing confidence in his ability to engage in the music-making was a defining moment of realisation:

Howard: His confidence grew every single lesson and as he realised that he could do these things… He really found his moment… when he realised what he had that was him and nobody else, was his ethnic background. And he focused in on that and he came alive. And recorded, and he was doing vocals. And… it was real… it worked.

Rami discovered new skills and talents in himself which increased his self-confidence, yet at the same time the safe and social environment of the music classroom also enabled Rami to feel

confident to perform his music to others in the class. He was able to share his new skills, which fostered in his peers a mutual responsibility to partake in Rami's music journey, by listening and adding other parts to his music, which may have also had a positive effect on his self-confidence.

4.5.2 "I wasn't told enough that I was talented, I wasn't told enough that I was good"

One key finding from the data is the positive role that encouragement and recognition of talent from others had on improving the self-confidence of participants. For three of the participants, Chris, Dave and Nate, during their interviews they revealed that they had previously experienced disapproval and negativity from others:

Dave: I don't know I think it's like, all the other times I do something, I feel like I'm not good at it. Or I get told I'm not good at it.

Chris: I weren't really a confident person. I wasn't told enough that I was talented, I wasn't told enough that I was good.

Nate: Hmm, you know when you're used to people putting you down?

This not only signifies that these learners had previously experienced negativity from others, but also suggests that they have internalised that negativity, causing them to have low self-belief and self-confidence. Howard confirmed this as he told me:

Howard: A lot of people in prison have been constantly run down and, and so many people have come from broken backgrounds. And that's another thing I've learned about as well, that the majority of criminal offenders generally have had very disruptive upbringings and constantly rundown and told that they're worthless and that they're terrible and that's why they continue to be like that… It's like, if you call apple an apple, then it's never gonna be a lemon.

Praise and encouragement within the music classroom was shown to challenge the negative effects of stigma and self-stigmatisation; helping people in the class with low self-esteem to build self-confidence and challenge any negative labels that they associated with themselves. Howard endorsed that praise is an important part of rehabilitation:

Howard: Just for someone to be actually praised and told that "yeah, you can sing, and it sounds great" then that's, that's worth millions of… more than anything… That's what rehabilitation is about, that's part of rehabilitation for people. Confidence building and confirmation that you're not all bad. Even though your behaviour has been bad, it doesn't mean that you are bad.

Analysis of the reflective journal data suggests that Dave had low self-confidence; his average score at the start of each day of music engagement for self-confidence was 4.14 out of 10. His self-confidence grew as he built trusting relationships and received support and praise from the group members. Dave explains:

Dave: Here, what's the word, you bring out the self-confidence in me. When you say, "oh yeah you're good at that, a bit more practice", things like that.

Through music engagement and encouraged by social support, in Dave's penultimate music session, he remarked:

Dave: I shouldn't think that I can't do it when I can and I'm proud of myself. But I've never been told I'm good at something.

This comment is deeply reflective and suggests that by receiving social reassurance, Dave was enabled to challenge his self-evaluation. Despite previously experiencing negativity which had caused low self-confidence, Dave was able to reconsider what he believed he was capable of and build self-belief that he was able to participate in non-criminal and education-based activities.

Similarly, for Chris, praise and encouragement from others in the class challenged his self-worth. He experienced an average positive change in self-confidence of 26.4% during each day of music engagement. When asked about the benefits of music engagement, Chris remarked:

Chris: I don't believe in myself… I don't give myself as much credit as what I deserve. I used to listen to what people said before when they put me down, said I was rubbish or whatever and I don't believe that anymore. Now I believe that I am better than what they say I am… Coming into your group, and showing you what I could do and everybody praising me and telling me that I am talented and telling me that I am

good, you know it lifted up my self-confidence, it made me feel like I'm better than what I was.

This highlights how music learning can help to create an environment that stimulates peer to peer praise, encouragement and alternative social reinforcement, positively impacting self-confidence.

The most evocative data to show that music can positively impact self-confidence by providing learners in prison with an opportunity to challenge negative self-image was evidenced in the Who I Am reflections in the questionnaires. In Nate's pre-course questionnaire, when ask to complete his reflection, he wrote:

Nate: I am… sorry.

After engagement in the course he stated:

Nate: I am… Nate! Well to be honest I feel like I am an intelligent and influential person who may seem scary (stereotypically) but I'm kind at heart.

Similarly, Dave too showed change in self-evaluation and self-concept. He initially answered the Who Am I question by responding:

Dave: I am… No one.

Then after the course he wrote:

Dave: I am… a good thinker. I am creative and can pick up things fast. I am a man with strong beliefs in things. And as a member of the prison council I believe things can be changed with support. I am kind, helpful and passionate about music.

From the self-critical responses that highlighted low self-worth in the initial reflections, by the end of the music course both learners were able to identify positive attributes and qualities about themselves. This highlights a significant positive alteration in self-evaluation and self-concept change.

4.6 Increased motivation

Each participant in the group self-assessed their motivation on arrival to the music class and were then asked to re-assess their motivation after engagement each day. The impact of being on the music course caused the group of six participants experienced an average of 14.3% positive increase in motivation during each day of participation in the music course. The average end of day measure for motivation across all participants was 9.15 out of 10.

4.6.1 "I want to do more"

For Dave, music engagement stimulated motivation and removed boredom, allowing him to construct of meaning in an environment that had no value to him, as the following comment demonstrates:

Dave: I think where you're stuck on the wing, it's the same thing every day. And if you ain't working, you just lay in your bed all day, and you just lose like the will to do anything. When you come on the music course and that, you're doing something, you're achieving something, making yourself better.

Giving the learners the freedom to choose their own activities and monitor their own progression was correlated with increased motivation. Chris explained:

Chris: Each time I was doing better, I wanted to do better each time more. So, my motivation to do better grew more and more. So at the beginning of every day my motivation was low, but then, the more I completed learning new chords, learning new melodies, the keyboard, the guitar, the writing, the step sequencer, it just made me motivated to learn more, I want to do more.

Others in the class, who wanted to continue doing music after release from prison, were able to create targets that would support their career ambitions. Pat set targets to explore different genres and practise rudiments on the drums, in order to improve his ability for when he re-joined his band after his release and Taylor wrote a collection of instrumentals to take away with him. In all cases, music engagement acted as an intrinsic motivator for the learners in prison, because they saw it as an enjoyable and valuable activity that related to their personal aims and ambitions.

4.6.2 "I can do something positive"

Not only were the participants intrinsically motivated by the ability to autonomously engage in music activities that were meaningful to them, but their external recognition and praise from others in the class also had a positive effect on motivation. Chris explains:

Chris: When people tell you how good you are doing it motivates you to do more.

Rather than external motivators such as punishment and deadlines, the learners in the class experienced positive recognition from their peers in the class, which motivated them to achieve their goals. Nate told me:

Nate: Out of nowhere, people start praising you for your work and telling me that I'm good at certain things which I've done, yeah that's where my motivation goes up.

Therefore, peer-to-peer, mutual autonomy supportive relationships were also developed in the classroom, as learners encouraged and supported each other with their individualised targets. At points throughout the course the learners took on different roles, sometimes providing autonomy support, sometimes receiving autonomy support. For example, Taylor told me:

Taylor: I came in and found out that there was somebody on the course that likes to rap to a certain genre of music. And... he hadn't clocked how to make that on the sequencers. So, I sat on them for a day and worked out how to do it and just started making those kind of instrumentals with him. And that give him somewhere to rap and he's written loads of lyrics since we started doing that.

By offering his support, Taylor enabled another learner in the class to achieve their intrinsically motivated goals. This was important for Dave, who relied on the social structure around him to accomplish his targets. On two separate entries in his journal, Dave reflected:

Dave: I can do something positive with help from inmates in the class and from Natalie.

            I can work as a team and when I mess up I can just do it again, whereas before, I'd just get up and leave.

Not only were learners in the group receiving autonomy support from me, as their teacher, but autonomy supportive relationships had been established between the learners, which positively impacted motivation.

4.7 Learners who didn't experience notable impact

The participant who appeared to experience the smallest impact from the music course was Taylor. Analysis of the responses from Taylor, who worked both individually and with the group throughout the course, revealed that he experienced a small positive change in mood, no change in self-confidence and a negative change in motivation across the music course. Daily increases in mood averaged at +6.7% (mood), +0% (self-confidence) and -1.1% (motivation). However, Taylor's average start to end of a day of music engagement across the course equalled 9 to 9.67 (mood), 9.56 to 9.56 (self-confidence) and 10 to 9.89 (motivation), which meant that often he was unable to score higher after music engagement.

For Taylor, who had a high level of music experience as a recording artist and music event organiser outside of prison, the course in prison gave him the opportunity to engage in an activity that he enjoyed, as he told me in his interview:

Taylor: I already knew what I was capable of. But having somewhere to go and do it, and make music… I don't know, it's like where I've been away from music for so long, having somewhere to do music, maybe I feel a lot more confident in myself and it made me feel a lot more positive throughout the day.

However, whilst engagement in music did impact his well-being whilst in prison, he did not feel that it helped to impact his progression. When I asked Taylor if he had developed any skills on the music course he replied:

Taylor: Not really no. But that's not your fault, that's just because I know everything.

Another indication that Taylor experienced less impact than others on the group was evidenced in his questionnaire. Before the course, when answering the Who I Am reflection, he gave a detailed response that highlighted positive self-concept and evaluation:

Taylor: I am… 25 from X. I've lived in Y and now in X. I'm a really passionate person and I love and care for my family and friends. I make music and really enjoy making things happen. I used to run a media channel and shoot music videos, take photos at music events in and around Z. I've put on events and organised rap battles on radio in Y. I love doing anything to do with music and connecting artists together. I'm very determined and really believe in myself. The time in jail has given me time to plan lots of things like getting a job and being a bit more mature.

When Tayler completed the same activity at the end of the course he answered:

Taylor: I am really motivated to make music.

Conceivably then, music learning in prison did impact on Taylor, by keeping him connected to his identity outside of prison. As Taylor was not engaging in activities that were new to him, instead of experiencing significant change in his self-concept and evaluation, perhaps music acted to reaffirm his goals and ambitions for the future.

4.8 Summary

The six participants, along with Howard and Guy defined the challenging nature of the prison environment. They described prison as being characterised by fear, restriction, isolation, disconnection, repetition, negativity and violence. However, this chapter has revealed that within the prison environment my music classroom provides an educational space that nurtures opportunities for people in prison to regain autonomy and develop relationships. This was shown to positively impact the personal and social development as well as enable learners in prison to challenge their self-perception.

Music was shown to positively impact the mood of the participants because of three predominant reasons; it created a space which positively contrasted the wider prison environment, offering an escape; it gave learners the opportunity to release their emotions and express themselves; and it encouraged learners to work as a group and experience togetherness. Throughout Section 4.4 music engagement was also shown to impact the learners' ability to engage in meaningful activity, connect and develop rust with new people, communicate effectively and share feelings of joy.

The music course was shown to have a positive impact on the self-confidence of the learners for two predominant reason; through music, learners were able to discovered new skills; and group music-making or sharing enabled learners to experience alternative social praise and encouragement from the group, which often challenged previously experienced negativity from others. Throughout Section 4.5 music engagement was also shown to positively impact the learners' self-evaluation and self-worth as they experienced feelings of pride.

Finally, the music course was shown to positively impact the motivation of the participants because of two predominant reasons; it gave learners the autonomy to engage in self-determined tasks that had personal value; and through collective music-making learners were able to give and receive recognition and support from others in the group. Throughout Section 4.6 music engagement was also shown to positively impact the learners' ability to make progress and practice tenacity.

Section 4.7 showed that for one learner, Taylor, my new music course appeared to have little impact on his personal and social development or changes in self-perception. Whilst Taylor did enjoy the course, he didn't feel that he engaged in a great deal of new learning. Engagement in music however did keep Taylor connected to his identity outside of prison and reaffirmed his goals and ambitions for the future.

The following chapter will discuss the impact of my new music course in relation to concepts of desistance. I will explore the reasons why music had a positive impact on the learners in my class and also consider why, for Taylor, music had less impact on him than his peers. In particular, I will focus on whether it was music alone or music used within the framework of pedagogy that caused positive personal, social and emotional developmental changes for my learners.

Chapter 5. Discussion and Interpretation

5.1 Overview

This research aimed to explore whether my new, non-accredited music education course has had an impact on the people in prison that I work with. I wanted to understand whether music could be used as a tool for personal and social development, and to help people in prison reconsider their self-perception. I intended to reflect on my approaches to teaching and gain a deeper understanding of the people that I work with, to examine the connection between the experiences of my learners and what was happening in the class. In particular, I wanted to uncover whether my learners were impacted by music alone, or my approach to teaching music in prison.

In this chapter I will explore the impact that the group of learners experienced in my class and address the causes for that impact. I will discuss one learner who didn't appear to experience notable impact and look at the reasons why my approach to teaching may have not supported his development. I will outline my implications for practice, by attempting to articulate the elements of my pedagogy that appeared to have a positive impact on my learners, whilst taking into account the limitations of my study and recommendations for future research in custodial settings. Notably, within this chapter, I will explore the impact of this research with regards to conversations of desistance.

5.2 The impact of non-accredited music education on my learners in prison

In response to research question 1a., 'If my music course has an impact on the people in prison that I work with, what does that look like?', throughout the findings there is evidence to suggest that people engaged in my new non-accredited music course experienced positive impact in personal and social development and positive changes in self-evaluation and self-concept.

As well as experiencing positive changes in mood (see Section 4.4), self-confidence (see Section 4.5) and motivation (see Section 4.6), the participants involved in this study also evidenced changes in their personal and social development throughout the findings (see Chapter 4). Personal developmental impact from engagement in music was evidenced as different participants demonstrated the ability to; actively engage in learning; set targets; plan time positively; build and develop new skills; achieve tasks; use creativity; overcome challenges; focus; effectively manage mental health issues; practice tenacity; gain self-control; and create positive visions for the future.

The group also experienced social developmental impact from engagement in music, evidenced as different learners were able to; join in with group activity; work and communicate with others; share positive feelings and joy with others; share skills with others; and give and receive praise, encouragement and support. This suggests that, through music participation, learners in prison are able to develop their individual agency and social capital, which, as discussed in Section 2.2, could support processes of desistance. Furthermore, as participants recognised development in both their musical ability and personal and social skills, this supported them to challenge their self-perception, through changes in self-evaluation and lower-order self-concept; evidencing feelings of pride, recognition of self-worth and demonstrating self-belief. Of course, as each learner came to the course with a different personal biography and individualised aims and ambitions, their experiences of the course and the impact they felt differed.

Whilst overall my research suggests that the participants experienced positive impact towards personal and social developmental changes and alterations in self-perception, because data was only collected from participants during enrolment on the music course and did not follow learners after course completion, this research cannot indicate that the participants engagement in my music course in prison had a sustained impact on their self-perception change. My study indicates that, during the music course, participants demonstrated changes in the self-evaluation of their skills and abilities, and lower-order self-concept change impacted by situational factors, my findings cannot confirm whether participants experienced changes in higher-order self-concept change. As discussed earlier (see Section 3.5), higher-order self-concept change is evidenced when a person's sense of self is not impacted by external and environmental influences; instead shifting to a more generalised self-understanding (Gore and Cross 2011). Within the narrative of this research, participants have shown situational changes in their self-perception from being in the music classroom. What is omitted however, is evidence to suggest that changes in self-evaluation and self-concept were retained by participants after the music course had finished.

5.3 The pedagogy, not just the music

In order to answer research question 1b., 'If my music education course has an impact on the people in prison that I work with, what are the reasons for that impact?', it is key to understand that for the participants involved in this research, all personal and social development and changes in self-perception took place within a social and educational space that was created through my pedagogical approach to teaching music in prison.

My study evidences a clear dichotomy between the wider prison *environment* and the educational *space* that was created through my approach to teaching music in prison. During their interviews, when reflecting on the prison environment, learners described that they felt 'trapped', 'locked up', 'stuck', 'banged up' and 'suppressed', but described the music course as an opportunity to be 'taken to other places', a 'break', a 'release' and an 'escape' (see Chapter 4). The learners were seen to use this space to manage their emotions, express themselves, build relationships and support each other. This validates the research of criminologists Crewe et al. (2014) and Warr (2016), as discussed in Section 2.2.3, who found that educational spaces, in contrast to the wider prison environment, can be experienced to as 'normative and emotional domains' (Crewe et al. 2014:71), where 'interactions are predicated upon learning, mutual respect, creativity and personal development rather than surveillance and constraint' (Warr 2016:19).

Importantly though, Szifris et al. (2018) advised that giving a person in prison access to different space through education does not directly mean that the environment will be positive and pro-social; the conditions of the space have to be prepared and managed by the facilitator (see Section 2.2.3). Corroborating the research of Ansdell (2004), Kougiali et al. (2017) and Henley (2009), as discussed in Section 2.4.2, framing music as a tool to be used within a pedagogy that encourages socio-musical processes and interpersonal connections supports learners to develop their personal and social skills, not by *learning music* but by *learning through music*. My findings therefore suggest that the impact learners experienced during my new music course was not just the result of having access to music, but instead the sociocultural pedagogy used, which created the conditions for a space that contrasted the wider prison environment.

I was able to construct this space within the prison environment, in part, because the course was non-accredited. Supported by the Coates (2016) review of prison education, as discussed in Section 1.2.2, I had the freedom to deliver a course that supported the autonomy, talents and aspirations of the individuals in my class, rather than designing teaching and learning exercises to meet qualification criteria. This enabled me to adopt an approach to facilitation and build relationships with my learners like those examined by Kougiali et al. (2017), as discussed in Section 2.4.2.1; where nonauthoritative and nondirective approaches to teaching music in prison help to contrast surrounding power structures within custodial environments and lead to equitable and democratised learning spaces.

The elements of the pedagogy that were shown to create a positive space within the prison environment, and therefore have the biggest impact on my learners, were associated with promoting positive mood states, alternative social reinforcement and autonomy support relationships. This will now be explored, and I will also discuss how my approach to teaching positioned my course as a structure within prison that could support processes of desistance. Then I will address research question 1c., and consider why, for one participant, music did not appear to have notable positive impact.

5.3.1 A pedagogy that positively impacted mood states

By reflecting on the data collected linked to positive increases in mood (see Section 4.4), there were three elements of the pedagogy which appeared to facilitate positive mood states and subsequently impact the personal and social development of the participants. The pedagogy supported learners to; a. engage in an enjoyable activity in a positive environment in prison, which acted as a form of escape (see Section 4.4.1); b. engage in activities that encouraged self-expression (see Section 4.4.2); and c. work as a group (see Section 4.4.2).

As discussed in Section 2.4.1, Krueger (2019) recommended that access to music in prison can offer an escape, helping people in prison to re-organise their environment and create spaces for regulated emotional consciousness. Similarly, Garcia (2019) explained that access to music in prison could help people to survive the difficult environment. As my new music course is non-accredited, rather than engaging in a curriculum of music that demanded the learners to study certain genres, the group were able to explore music that they personally valued and enjoyed. As well as this, Herrity (2018) found that music could offer sensory liberation and help people in prison to re-connect or stay connected with their identity. The pedagogy evidenced in my study allowed learners to engage in self-determined music activities, rather than meeting the criteria of a qualification. Because of this some learners were able to focus on writing original lyrics, using music as a communicative tool to express their identity and build connections with others. Accessing, learning and performing music that held personal value to the learners therefore had positive impact on their moods.

The other element of the pedagogy that was evidenced to positively impact the mood states of the learners in my class was the facilitation of group music-making. As discussed in Section 2.4.2.2, sociocultural music pedagogies encourage relationships between learners in a group. This counteracts the isolating effects of imprisonment, allowing learners to develop communication skills, build a positive social identity, engage in teamwork, recognise collective responsibility and

receive support from others (Cheliotis and Jordanoska 2017; Doxat-Pratt 2018; Haigh and Caulfield 2018). In my class, learners were supported to engage in group music-making tasks with a shared goal, and this, validating the research of Cohen and Henley (2018), encouraged learners to experience shared feelings of joy and participate with positivity.

5.3.1.1 Positive mood states and desistance

As addressed in Section 2.4.1, being able to create an educational space that supports positive mood states can encourage learners to feel confident enough to engage in new tasks and social situations and also to reflect on themselves in a more positive light (Bless and Fiedler 2006; Sedikides et al. 2006; Fiedler and Beier 2014). This suggests that the reason learners in my class were able to engage in a number of new and challenging activities and build and maintain relationships in the classroom was, in part, because they were experiencing positively valenced mood states. As well as this, some learners in the classroom also experienced positive shifts in their self-evaluation, and this may have also been because their mood state aroused positively valenced self-perception.

If prison educators across the curriculum can create the conditions for positive mood states, by adopting a pedagogy that allows their learners to engage in enjoyable activities, ensuring opportunities for self-expression and encouraging group work, they may create more chances for learners to self-reflect and perceive themselves in a positive light. This may impact the learners' self-belief that they are capable people that can engage in new tasks and maintain relationships, therefore supporting the development of individual agency and social capital, two elements of desistance (as discussed in Section 1.2.1).

5.3.2 A pedagogy that encouraged alternative social reinforcement

By reflecting on the data collected linked to positive increases in self-confidence (see Section 4.5), there were two elements of the pedagogy which appeared to encourage alternative social reinforcement and subsequently impact the personal and social development of the participants. The pedagogy supported learners to; a. access a safe space to discover new skills (see Section 4.5.1); and b. experience praise and encouragement from others (see Section 4.5.2).

As discussed in Section 2.4.2.1, Henley (2019) recommends that the music facilitator must create a safe and trusting environment in order to enable learners in prison to take risks in both subject and wider skills development. Learners in my class were able to accessibly participate in music

engagement because the pedagogy recognised that 'to music', is to participate in any capacity, whether by listening, rehearsing or performing. Because of this, along with being able to autonomously set their own targets instead of conforming to learning activities necessary to meet assessment criteria, the learners in my study experienced a safe space where they could try new activities and not be afraid to make mistakes. By feeling comfortable to try new activities and take risks, my teaching approach encouraged learners to work and share together without fear, providing a platform for equitable and positive relationship building in the classroom.

As group members, the participants took on pro-social roles, labelled as musicians and team members rather than criminals, which, corroborating with the research of Corrigan et al. (2009) and Evans et al. (2017), is linked to providing opportunities for developing social capital, challenging stigma and self-stigma and experiencing empowerment, which can support learners in prison with processes of act and identity desistance (see Section 2.2). Through accessing social learning activities and sharing their new skills, the learners were able to receive praise and encouragement from others in the group, or alternative social reinforcement, that is reinforcement of positive, non-criminal behaviour. This not only had an impact on the learners' self-confidence, encouraging them to challenge previous incidents of negativity from others, but also helped with the development of other personal and social skills and positively influenced their self-perception.

5.3.2.1 Alternative social reinforcement and desistance

Creating the conditions for alternative social reinforcement in prison education could have a wider impact on learners by supporting processes of desistance. In Section 2.4.2.2 I explored the idea that negative relationships between people inside and outside of prison can reinforce negative behaviour. Apel and Diller (2017) found that people are more likely to engage in criminal activity if their peers have positive attitudes towards crime or have offended themselves. Within prison, people who have committed crimes live together and are able to build relationships in unmediated spaces and this, as Taylor (2016) found, can lead a person to future deviance as a person experiences social reinforcement for negative behaviour.

This study has revealed that education in prison can create the conditions for alternative social reinforcement. This can be achieved when there is an emphasis on collaborative work in classroom that creates space where people in prison can practice social skills such as recognition, support, praise and encouragement for non-criminal, desistance-orientated behaviours. This consequently had a positive influence on the participants' personal and social development and self-perception in

my class and for this reason I believe that, as an approach to education in prison it has the potential to support processes of desistance.

5.3.3 A pedagogy that encouraged autonomy supportive relationships

By reflecting on the data collected associated with positive increases in motivation (see Section 4.6), there were two elements of the pedagogy which appeared to encourage autonomy supportive relationships in the classroom, which subsequently impacted the personal and social development of the participants. The pedagogy supported learners to; a. autonomously set targets and engage in meaningful activity (see Section 4.6.1); and b. experience recognition and support from others (4.6.2).

In Section 2.4.2.1, I discussed the theory that incarceration leads to the removal of autonomy (Sykes 1958). However according to the criminologists Paternoster and Pogarsky (2009) and Kind (2014) the ability to assert personal agency and make decisions relates to secondary desistance (see Section 1.2.1). On my music course, again because learning is non-accredited, rather than taking a unidirectional approach to teaching, I gave the learners the freedom to set their own targets and complete learning activities of their choice. This allowed me to develop autonomy supportive relationships with my learners, whereby they were able to assert their individual agency as I supported them to achieve their individualised targets.

What is interesting for me is that the learners' motivation and additional skills development was not only impacted by the autonomy supportive relationships that I was able to build with them, but also the autonomy supportive relationships they were able to cultivate with each other. Relationships where autonomy support is present tend usually feature a dynamic of power, with the partner providing autonomy support being in a position of authority, such as a teacher, and the person receiving that support is in a non-dominant position, like a learner (Deci, La Guardia, Moller, Scheiner and Ryan 2006). Whilst I present myself as having an equal level of power to the learners within my class by encouraging learner-led activity, my status will always be one of authority as ultimately, I have a responsibility to control the class. This, therefore, does not allow my learners to engage in and practise providing autonomy support within that relationship dyad, because the structural position of the learner means they 'not expected to provide... autonomy support to the authority' (Deci et al. 2006:313).

What this research furthers reveals therefore, is that because group music-making can develop a community of cooperation, trust and support within prison (Doxat-Pratt 2018; Haigh and Caulfield 2018; Henley 2019), learners in my class were able to develop peer-to-peer, mutual autonomy supportive relationships, where they were able to give and receive autonomy support (see Section 4.6.2). This appeared to further positively impact motivation and the learners personal and social development as they worked together to support each other.

5.3.3.1 Autonomy supportive relationships and desistance

I believe that the findings of my study have significant implications for the way that teachers should understand autonomy supportive environments within prison education. There is a compelling case to be made, not only that approaches to teaching should encourage personal and social development and self-perception change in the learner through an autonomy supportive relationship between the teacher and learner. Supplementary to this the teacher should aim to facilitate an environment where learners engage in group in order to give and receive mutual autonomy support within peer relationships.

Deci et al. (2006) studied the impact of both receiving and giving autonomy support within close friendships and relationships. They found that whilst receiving autonomy support benefits needs satisfaction, well-being and motivation, as does giving autonomy support to another;

> If Person A gave something meaningful to a friend (e.g., autonomy support), Person A would be likely to experience a sense of competence in having had the friend receive this offering, a sense of relatedness to the friend because relatedness involves caring for as well as feeling cared for by a friend, and a sense of autonomy because Person A would be freely and volitionally doing something that he or she valued (viz., giving to the friend). (Deci et al. 2006:313)

Mutual autonomy support can positively impact autonomous motivation. What is more, it can enhance 'relationship quality (emotional reliance, security of attachment, dyadic adjustment, inclusion of friend in self, vitality with the friend, and overall relationship satisfaction)' (Deci et al. 2006:325). An autonomy supportive relationship between peers in the class could not only enhance autonomous motivation but improve peer to peer relationship quality and improve the learners' well-being. As well as this, it could give learners in prison the opportunity to practice giving autonomy support, arguably a skill that promotes social responsibility and could therefore act to support processes of relational desistance.

5.3.4 A gap in the pedagogy

In order to answer research question 1c., 'If my music education course does not have an impact on the people in prison that I work with, what are the reasons for that?' I will reflect on one learner, Taylor, who did not appear to experience notable impact from engagement in my music course. This could have been because the research methods used did not accurately capture all impact. For example, learners were only asked to measure their mood, self-confidence and motivation on arrival to class and then at the end of each lesson. If the first scale was completed on the wing, before attending class, the results may have been different; perhaps providing a more precise portrayal of the impact of music engagement against the wider prison context. However, I want to explore the idea that music engagement in fact did not have a great impact on Taylor and reflect on why that may have been.

In section 2.4.2.4 I introduced the research of Krönig (2019) which suggested that often academic discourse regarding music practices in communities is at fault of affirming and evidencing positive pedagogy. I also referenced the work of Ginsberg (2019) who argued that often prison music educators can adopt a saviour mentality, assuming that all learners need transformation. As discussed earlier in Section 4.7, Taylor joined the course with notable music experience and evidenced strong and positive self-evaluation and self-concept in his questionnaire. One reason why Taylor may not have experienced notable impact from the music course is that he did not need transformation. Any impact that was evidenced through my research regarding Taylor, related to music engagement helping to reaffirm his identity and motivate him to pursue his music career after release from prison. This corroborates with the work of Morrison (2018:103), who found that education can function as the catalyst for some learners, not to form a new identity, but to 'resurrect a previously positive "achiever" identity' (see Section 2.2.3), as well as the research of Hughes (2012), who found that education in prison can 'reinforce a previously valued identity' (see Section 2.2.1).

Yet, perhaps there is a gap in the pedagogy for learners like Taylor. Even if learner-led, autonomy building, non-accredited courses can impact many learners in prison who may have low educational background, learning needs or low self-esteem among other complexities, how do prison educators still ensure impact for higher achieving or more self-confident learners in prison? Reflecting on my research, in particular on Taylor's reflective journal and interview, I believe that I didn't support Taylor enough to access areas of his 'self' that he hadn't previously accessed. Because of his background and experience – he was a skilled musician - Taylor could have taken on more

responsibility in the classroom. Instead of the nondirective approach I took with the whole class, perhaps I should have given Taylor more accountability and asked him to engage in peer mentoring activities. Whilst I defend that not all learners in prison need transformation, any person can gain increased self-understanding through new learning. What I failed to support Taylor to do was to engage in activities that were new to him and this may be the reason why he didn't experience notable impact from the music course.

5.4 Implications for practice: towards a pedagogy for prison education

Against a backdrop of assessment and prison regime that has historically threatened equity and diversity in prison education, at the beginning of this research I highlighted the changing landscape of pedagogies in prison. There is a shift of focus, from treatment interventions and education that purely cultivates employability skills, to education in prison that supports personal and social development and therefore, processes of desistance. This research has attempted to frame current practice, revealing; different approaches to teaching and learning within prison education; new teaching tools; and the impact of non-accredited learning and learner-led courses.

What this study has revealed is that creating a space within the prison environment, that helped to support personal and social development and encouraged learners to challenge their self-perception, was not just the result of giving learners in prison access to music-making. Instead, the approach to teaching and learning that supported positive mood states, enabled alternative social reinforcement and encouraged autonomy supportive relationships, positioned music as a tool for positive personal and social development. This is important because the pedagogy evidenced could inspire or provide other prison educators across the curriculum with a teaching and learning framework for prison education. As well as this it could help other practitioners within prison education to re-examine the ways in which their subjects can be used as a tool for both subject specific knowledge and wider development.

I want to offer a short, non-exhaustive, outline of a pedagogy for prison education. Here, I aim to focus on the organisation of learning rather than the curriculum, as the curriculum should be seen as a 'powerful mediating tool, rather than an end point'; to express a 'robust humanising pedagogy; instead the focus is necessarily on a constellation of influences on learning; such as social and spatial relationships, tools, processes, and aims' (Vossoughi and Gutiérrez 2017:143). Whilst concepts from inclusive and critical education can provide a foundation for the proposed pedagogy for prison

education, what this research has highlighted is that the prison pedagogue must also be 'reactive to the understanding that effective learning within prison happens within a social framework' (Henley 2019). Sociocultural learning theory supports that 'knowledge is distributed through a group engaged in shared practice' (Esmonde and Booker 2017:162); this not only leads to the construction of subject specific knowledge, but the re-construction, or changes in self-perception, regarding one's identity (Vadeboncoeur, Vellos and Geossling 2011). Holland and Lachicotte (2007) state that;

> Identities are culturally imagined and socially reorganised types – social and cultural products – that are actively internalised as self-meaning (treating one's behaviour reflexively as symbolic) and serve as motivation for action. People identify themselves with (and against) the socially constructed types in the various domains of their everyday lives (Holland and Lachicotte 2007:134)

Exposure to education therefore, and the communities that can develop within educational spaces, can give the learner in prison access to 'social ties and meaning networks [that] offer both support and challenges for identity and its re-construction in changing situations' (Korhonen 2010:26). This of course, throughout this research, has been argued to be a necessity of prison education, where learning aims to cause 'subjective changes in the person's sense of self and identity, reflected in changing motivations, greater concern for others, and more consideration of the future', thus supporting the desistance process (McNeill and Weaver 2010:45).

I therefore propose a pedagogy for prison education which recognises the value of social learning experiences and ensures that within the wider prison environment, spaces can be created that support positive mood states, encourage alternative social reinforcement and promote the development of autonomy supportive relationships. I have highlighted that this can be achieved through non-accredited learning when the pedagogy supports learners to; be seen as subjects in the process of learning and engage autonomously in activities that are meaningful to them; have opportunities for self-expression; be encouraged to complete group activities with a shared goal; have access to a safe space to try new activities and take risks; and to experience praise, encouragement, recognition and support not only from their teacher but from their peers.
The way this approach to teaching and learning manifests within the different prison classrooms will alter, depending on the mediating curriculum that is being delivered. However, by encouraging these values, prison educators can aim to create spaces within the challenging wider environment that foster positive mood states, enable alternative social reinforcement and encourage autonomy

supportive relationships; giving learners the opportunity to achieve personal and social development and engage in positive self-perception change that may help them to achieve desistance-orientated futures. As a prison educator who is passionate about the improved practice of prison educators, this could be an opportunity for future research; that explore if and how my proposed pedagogy impacts learning outcomes and experiences across the prison education curriculum.

5.5 Limitations of research and suggested amendments

This research was originally set out to be a two-cycle process; however due to the COVID-19 healthcare crisis I was not able to complete the second cycle. Despite this, by reflecting on the relational and situational ethics of this project, I have outlined amendments I would make to future research in prison in order to better uphold a transformative approach. Scott (2018) discusses the 'view from below', the 'promoting of new epistemologies (knowledge claims) grounded in the ontological assumptions (worldview) of those placed on the margins of society… in criminological research' (Scott 2018:153). Here, I must reconsider how future research methods can further generate data that '[looks] through the eyes of those people who, because of social structures, have limited credibility or authority' (Scott 2018:154). Abbot et al. (2018:9) explain that there is a much greater probability that the voices of prisoners will be hidden within research, 'given the power differential inherent to incarceration'. Therefore, in order to elevate research, it is necessary to become a more 'virtuous researcher' and facilitate a more equitable environment for my research participants; I must be 'reflexive enough to recognise [my] own privileged position' (Scott 2018:154) and how this effected the data collected in this study. The limitations that I have observed within this study focused on; the language used in the methods; my relationship with my research participants; and a potential power imbalance.

5.5.1 The language used in the study

Including the semantic differential scale in the reflective journals, to collect quantitative data regarding changes in participants' mood, self-confidence and motivation, perhaps caused the participants to use these pre-set themes as points of reflection in their qualitative, written entries in their journals. In 35% of the participants' written reflections in their journals, the participants used the terminology 'mood', 'self-confidence' or 'motivation'. This leads me to question whether this language would have been used if the quantitative scales were not included in the journals. If I were to repeat this research, the quantitative, reactive measures would be removed from the reflective journals. Rather than using a structured approach to the journals, a semi-structured style would

instead 'allow space for diarists to record their own priorities' and could 'prove useful for capturing the meaning and weight respondents attach to different events and experiences' (Bartlett and Milligan 2015:21). Using open questions would ensure that 'respondents are free to report about the self as they please' (Brinthaupt and Erwin 1992:149); they can tell their own story in their own language, with less influence. The reflective journals would, once again, be used in cooperation with interviews, 'as a prompt to explore key time-related or other issues in more depth' (Bartlett and Milligan 2015:21); helping me to understand language used by participants and further explore their narrative.

5.5.2 My relationship with the research participants

Out of the 177 responses collected through the mood, self-confidence and motivation scales in the reflective journals, only 3.4% of the entries recorded that a participant felt a decrease in one of these measures. It is therefore important to recognise that the participants could have been giving socially desirable responses. Being in the role of both teacher and researcher could have caused response bias, where the relationship between myself and the learner/participant may have meant that 'the respondent [had] the opportunity to easily respond in a patterned manner that is irrelevant to his or her report about the self' (Brinthaupt and Erwin 1992:152).

Given (2008:767) explains that 'researcher-participant relationships may fall anywhere along a continuum from distant, detached, and impersonal to close, collaborative, and friendly'. My observation is that I have a collaborative and friendly relationship with my learners; this is something that I feel positively impacts learning, fostering feelings of equity and respect. However, within the context of research this could have led to an increase in 'the chance of introducing confounding variables', where usually 'limited interactions between participants and researchers' are recommended (Given 2008:767). Arguably, my learners could have measured increases in their mood, self-confidence and motivation because they wanted to sustain a positive relationship with me, as their teacher, and felt that their quantitative responses represented the success or failure of my teaching each day.

5.5.3 Power imbalance in prison research

One limitation of the interview method used during this study relates to the researcher-participant relationship and the power imbalance of doing research with people in prison. Kelman (1972) recognises that;

The power deficiency that often characterizes the subject in social research can be traced to two sources: (a) his position of relative disadvantage within the social system - that is, the society in general and the particular organization in which the research is conducted; and (b) his position of relative disadvantage within the research situation proper. (Kelman 1972:989-990).

The learners in prison that took part in my research are already in a position of social inequality, stripped of their power. It is therefore my responsibility as a researcher to ensure that the methods used in the research do not exasperate this issue. Stanley (2018:323) remarks that 'most of the power within interviews is held by the interviewer'; this is because the interviewer 'establishes the meeting… sets the boundaries of the topic… asks or does not ask certain questions… interprets the interview… [and] creates a final truth of collected data' (Stanley 2018:323). In order to give more power to the marginalised interviewee;

The interviewer will need to consider greater use of informal, open ended interviews (which follow the train of thought and response of the respondent and which use… context-appropriate language) rather than highly structured interviews. (Cohen et al. 2018:531)

By doing this, the researcher hopes to enable the participant to provide a self-determined narrative, that is told in their own words, to facilitate a more equitable relationship between interviewer and interviewee. The interviewer should become 'a passive subject of the interviewee's subjective phenomena and a facilitator who helps the interviewee to unfold his or her fully developed narrative on his or her own terms' (Enosh and Buchbinder 2005:2).

For future research in prison I would therefore use in-depth interviews. Cohen et al. (2018:535) recommend in-depth interviews when studying 'marginalized or stigmatized groups in society' because they 'explore issues, personal biographies, what is meaningful to, or valued by, participants… what they have experienced, how they feel about… issues, their attitudes, opinions and emotions' (Cohen et al. 2018:535). Whilst in-depth interviews are regularly semi-structured, which enables the interviewer to maintain direction and stay focused on the research questions, they must use the 'respondents' responses to dictate the direction of the interview' (Cohen et al. 2018:535). In-depth interviews use nondirective questions, which may avoid any bias caused by close researcher-participant relationships. These types of questions '[allow] the subject freedom to define the scope and terms of his answer' (Lindlof and Taylor 2011:202), rather than using

questioning that centres around themes deemed important by the researcher. In this way, the researcher can use probing questions to investigate further into the respondents' true narrative.

Ultimately, to address issues of language used, researcher-participant relationships and power-imbalance within my data collection, I am required to become sensitive to my relational dynamics within this research. Holloway and Jefferson (2013) recommend that;

> Relational dynamics, such as understanding and respect, have the capacity to transcend structural power differences. Such relational dynamics, which draw on the deep pool of common human characteristics, do not equalise power, but make it negotiable, rather than an inevitable effect of status difference. (Holloway and Jefferson, 2013:79)

In future research in prisons I intend to fine tune my methodological approach, to give me the opportunity to show more understanding and respect to my participants and their personal narratives. Whilst never truly solving issues of power imbalance in prison research, this would afford me the opportunity for a more equitable negotiation between myself and the participants. Although I would continue to set the parameters of the enquiry, the transformative, socially just, approach would be better upheld when 'participants express their own meanings as part of their own way of describing the world' and when they are provided the 'opportunity to follow their own sequences' (Yin 2016:144)

5.6 Desistance revisited

In many ways this research has evidenced that music can have a positive impact on the personal and social development of people in prison, allowing them to challenge their self-perception. However, like the majority of research within this area of study, its primary limitation is that it does not investigate whether the benefits of music engagement in prison have positive impact for people as they re-enter society. Yet I argue that research of this manner, that reveals the good, pro-social and humanising characteristics of people in prison, should not be neglected. Because through illustrating a positive image of what prison can be, it should too inspire a vision of what wider society could look like in the future.

The criminal justice system extends way beyond the perimeter of the prison, the cells the prisoners inhabit and the classrooms that prison educators work tirelessly in to empower their learners. It encompasses every part of society; criminal justice is the responsibility of the community beyond

the walls. I argue that if educators can create within prison spaces for communities of care and development – in a hostile environment, where equipment and resources are limited and people typically have complex histories, challenging day-to-day lives and an unknown future – this can be achieved within our wider communities too.

This research represents, by failing to explore the lasting effects of music engagement for learners in prison, the bigger issue that exists within society. Whilst there is responsibility to care for, educate and understand people whilst they are in prison, it appears that the level of support is not given to those after they walk out of the gates. It seems that much of the accountability for desistance relies too heavily on the individual once they are released and not the social structures that are necessary to support successful prisoner re-entry. In Section 2.2.2, I discussed the research of Stone (2016), who identified that meso and macro-level societal challenges and barriers exist for those released from prison. Supporting the research of Nugent and Schinkel (2016), as discussed in Section 2.2.3, I argue that a cognitive shift must first occur in the way that society perceives people in and released from prison to truly support the processes of desistance.

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic proved challenging within the practical framework of this research, it allowed me to engage in a heightened reflection of what it means to be socially isolated. On the 23rd of March 2020 in the UK the population went into lockdown and remained with restrictions until the end of this project. In some way, I experienced a fraction of what it may be like to be imprisoned; isolated from my family and the familiarities of my normal life. If anything, this challenging social landscape has helped me to acknowledge the importance of social belonging. I found other ways to communicate and share experiences with my community whilst in lockdown, and collectively we were afforded the promise of positive and supportive re-entry to society once restrictions were lifted; "we will meet again". Many of the people in the prison I work with will re-enter society in an all-together different way. They will be labelled as ex-offenders or criminals, facing stigma and often having to resume a life, not on pause, but fractured and broken by the effects of imprisonment.

The COVID-19 pandemic reminded me of the natural threats that humans face and how they impact health and well-being; creating barriers and causing harm within our communities and societies. At the same time, in May 2020, a 49-year-old African American man, George Floyd, was murdered in an act of police brutality in Minnesota. This sparked global outrage at the fact that humans have the capacity too, to inflict these types of damages on others around them. In this case, features of social inequalities and structural neglect, such as colour blindness and white privilege, led to mass protest,

because many choose to ignore that is not enough to be not racist, that we have a collective obligation to be anti-racist; that "all lives matter only when black lives matter".

In this heightened moment of social consciousness, I feel that it is important to reflect on my shared responsibility in creating positive social change. That 'even in the face of the most severe challenges, humans have agency' (Esmonde and Booker 2017:ix); the ability to make choices and impose those choices on our world. Now more than ever I recognise my role in making the choice to support others and fight for equality, success and happiness for all in our global community.

Within criminal justice, regardless of whether someone has made wrong choices or bad decisions, I believe they should always be afforded opportunity. Opportunity is what learners are given in my prison music classroom. If people are given access to opportunity in their communities once they are released from prison, more people within society may get to share in seeing, first-hand, the personal and social strengths of people like those that I work with. This could lead to a more collectively engaged social effort to support people released from prison and help more people to achieve desistance-orientated futures.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Ethical Approval

Appendix 1.1: CUK Ethical Approval Application with blank consent forms

Ethical Approval Application

Natalie Betts

Table of Contents

Conservatoires UK (CUK) Ethics Approval Form

for NON-PRACTICE-BASED research involving human participation

Status of researcher:	STUDENT
Title of project:	In what ways can music be used as a tool to enable learners in prison to reflect on their personal and social development and challenge their self-perception?
Name of researcher(s):	Natalie Betts
Name of supervisor (s), line manager or head of department:	Mary Stakelum
Date:	Friday 6 December 2019

	Mark with ✓ in box	YES	NO	N/A
1	Will you tell participants the purpose of your research at the outset, explain what you will ask them to do (e.g. take part in interviews or experiments, take tests or be observed) and tell them how long it will take, so that they know what to expect? **If you are undertaking questionnaire research, please complete the CUK Ethics Approval Form for questionnaire research with adults only.**	✓		
2	Will you tell your participants that their participation is voluntary?	✓		
3	Will you obtain participants' written consent to take part in your research?	✓		
4	If the research is observational, will you ask participants to give their consent to being observed?			✓
5	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time without giving any reason?	✓		
6	If participants are required to complete questionnaires as part of the research, will you tell them they have the option of omitting certain questions if they do not want to answer them?	✓		
7	Will you tell participants that their data will be treated with full confidentiality and that, if published, it will not be identifiable as theirs?	✓		
8	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation (i.e. give them a brief explanation of the study)?	✓		
9	If the research involves interviews, will you obtain participants' consent to have their interviews audio- or video-recorded, and tell them that you will not record them if they refuse to give consent?	✓		
10	If you make audio- or video-recordings, will you obtain participants' consent for you to play excerpts from the recordings in the course of disseminating your research (e.g. in presentations)?	✓		

If you have replied **No** to any of Q1-10, but have **completed Box A** on the next page, please give an explanation on a continuation sheet. (*Note:* N/A = not applicable).

	Mark with ✓ in box	YES	NO	N/A
11	Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants in any way?		✓	
12	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort? If **Yes**, give details on a continuation sheet and state what you will tell them to do if they should experience any problems (e.g. who they can contact for help).		✓	
13	Will any conflicts of interest arise from your research?		✓	

If you have replied **Yes** to Q11, Q12 or Q13 you should normally **complete Box B** on the next page; if not, please give a full explanation on a continuation sheet.

2

	Mark with ✓ in box		YES	NO	N/A
14	Does your project involve work with animals? If yes, please **mark Box B** on the next page.				x
15	Are participants members of any of these vulnerable groups? If so, please refer to the BERA Ethical Guidelines or the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics and **complete Box B** on the next page. **You should ensure that you have DBS clearance.**	Infants and children under the age of 18			
		People with physiological and/or psychological impairments and/or learning disorders			
		People dependent on the protection or under the control of others ✓			
		People with limited knowledge of the English language ✓			
		Parents of sick children			
		People engaged in illegal activities (e.g. drug-taking)			
		Patients			

There is an obligation on the lead researcher to bring to the attention of the CUK Research Ethics Committee any issues with ethical implications not clearly covered by the above checklist.

PLEASE COMPLETE **EITHER** BOX A **OR** BOX B BELOW AND **PROVIDE THE DETAILS REQUIRED** IN SUPPORT OF YOUR APPLICATION, THEN SIGN THE FORM (print, sign and scan, or provide electronic signatures).

Mark with ✓

A. I consider that this project raises **no** important ethical issues that need be considered by the CUK Research Ethics Committee.	
Give a brief description of the purpose of the research, methodological approach (e.g. quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods) **and specific methods**: design, participants (recruitment methods, number, age, sex, exclusion/inclusion criteria), materials/apparatus, procedure, proposed analyses *(maximum 200 words)*. **If your research involves interviews, please provide the interview schedule on a continuation sheet.**	

OR

Mark with ✓

B. I consider that this project **may** raise ethical issues that should be considered by the CUK Research Ethics Committee, and/or it will be carried out with children or other vulnerable groups.	✓
Please provide all the information listed below on a continuation sheet headed Ethical Considerations. 1. Title of project 2. Purpose of project and its academic rationale 3. The methodological approach (e.g. quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods) and specific methods you are using: design, participants (recruitment methods, number, age, sex, exclusion/inclusion criteria), materials/apparatus, procedure, proposed analyses 4. Interview schedule if appropriate 5. A clear and concise statement of the ethical considerations raised by the project and how you intend to deal with them 6. How you will obtain informed consent and provide debriefing 7. Estimated start date and duration of project	

3

Please discuss with the CUK REC representative at your institution (normally Dean of Research or equivalent) which guidelines are more appropriate for your research and then tick the box to indicate those you have read (✓):

I have read and am familiar with *either* the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics | ✓

or the BERA Ethical Guidelines | ✓

and (if appropriate) I have discussed them with the other researchers involved in the project. | ✓

Signed: ███████████
(Researcher)

Print name: Natalie Betts   **Date:** 22/11/2019

███████████
Signed:
(Supervisor, line manager or head of department)

Print name: Mary Stakelum   **Date:** 02/12/2019

Signed: ……………………………......   **Print name:** ………………………………   **Date:** ………………………
(CUK REC representative at your institution)

E-mail address of CUK REC representative at your institution: …………………………………

4

Ethical Considerations

In what ways can music be used as a tool to enable learners in prison to reflect on their personal and social development and challenge their self-perception?

PURPOSE OF PROJECT AND ITS ACADEMIC RATIONALE

This research aims to explore the impact of non-accredited, learner-driven music education in a male adult and youth prison in Portland, UK. The project will examine whether music can be used as a tool to enable learners to reflect on their personal and social development. Current research suggests that the wider benefits of engaging in musical activities can lead to prisoners challenging their identity; constructing visions of a new and positive self. This is of notable importance as the changing of criminal identity is strongly linked to the desistance process.

This research could lead to a deeper understanding of the teaching approaches and activities that lead to the wider development of learners in prison. In this sense, the project has the 'potential for democratic and emancipatory outcomes' (Ward and Bailey 2012:150). Against a backdrop of assessment and prison regime that threatens equity and diversity in prison education, current researchers are looking to challenge the pedagogical approaches that frame current practice. This research will test different approaches to teaching and learning within prison education, new teaching tools, the impact of non-accredited learning and learner-lead courses. In the longer term, this research may have the potential to influence curriculum design at institutional level or more broadly, and to frame 'musicking' activity in prisons within a more critically and politically engaged context of emancipation and rehabilitation.

This research also intends to highlight the necessity for an epistemological critique about the kinds of knowledge being developed in the literature and its limitations; where the inmates' voice might be misunderstood, misrepresented, under-represented or de-contextualised. The research design was chosen to uncover the prisoners' perception of the impact of music education, rather than that of the "outsider" researcher. Furthermore, this study will examine whether it is possible to conduct research in prison education that does not impact the learning environment; it therefore could provide a valuable methodological template for other prison researchers.

This study will adopt a transformative mixed methods approach, collecting data from two cohorts of learners on my Music course at HMP Portland (n=12). Learners are able to enroll onto the Music course regardless of whether they participate in the research; the effect of this may mean that I have a lower number of participants than the proposed 12. Each cohort will run for four weeks, or approximately 28, two and a half hour sessions. Questionnaires are to be used as a quantitative premeasure, to collect data regarding the individual participant's age, ethnicity, educational background, learning needs and will include a personal and social beliefs self-assessment. This is to ensure that the participants are seen as individuals within the prison environment; that no assumptions are made about individuals based on the wider perception of the prison demographic. Ethnographic qualitative and quantitative data will be taken from Reflective Journals completed by the participants; these will encourage the participants to engage in conscious enquiry about their experiences on the Music course and measure any changes in their personal and social development. In conjunction with this, at the end of each cohort, qualitative data will arise from structured, one-to-one interviews, to engage the participants in a macro-reflection of their experiences on the Music course. The participants will also be asked to complete an end of course personal and social beliefs self-assessment, to collect quantitative data to measure against the preliminary questionnaire.

Qualitative data from both the Reflective Journals and interviews will be analysed in NVivo, 'to help manage the sheer amount of data to be analysed and their complexity and density' (Gibbs 2017:243). Initial analysis will use a predetermined, deductive coding list, formed by Henley (2015a). This coding list relates 'to themes drawn out of the desistance theory literature' (Henley 2015a, p. 110) and will enable me to examine whether my study contributes to or contrasts current literature that suggests musical learning encourages the development of 'individual agency and social interactions... relating to desistance from crime' (Henley 2015b:135). Other inductive, emerging codes will be explored to produce categories from the collected data that relate directly to the events that occur in the specific learning environment being researched.

6

The following Interview Schedule outlines the proposed format of interview that my research participants will be involved in, this will be audio recorded. Whilst I have suggested potential questions, semi-structured delivery means that my schedule contains 'topics, themes or areas to be covered during the course of the interview, rather than a sequenced script of standardized questions' (Mason 2004:1020).

Interview Schedule	
Interview type:	Semi-structured
Capture method:	Audio
Research question:	In what ways can music be used as a tool to enable learners in prison to reflect on their personal and social development and challenge their self-perception?
Questions Section A: Impact of the Music course	Has being on the music course had any impact on you, and if so, what has that been? Have you learnt anything about yourself during the Music course and if so, what have you learnt? What skills have you developed on the music course? Are there any that aren't linked directly to music?
Questions Section B: Reflective Journal (Participants will be given time to look through their Reflective Journals)	If you look through your Reflective Journal, what does it tell you about your journey through the music course? What effect has keeping your Reflective Journal had on the tasks that you have completed in the music classroom? By looking at the Reflective Journal, what effect has working with the rest of the group had on you? And did your role in the group change? Through being on the Music course, what have you learnt about your self-confidence? Through being on the Music course, what have you learnt about your motivation? Through being on the Music course, what have you learnt about your mood? Was the process of keeping you Reflective Journal positive or negative? And why is that?

7

My enquiry recognises the significant ethical considerations of undertaking research in prison. As a permanent and experienced member of staff at HMP Portland I am accustomed to making ethical decisions as they arise in my teaching. Therefore, ethical practice underpins my entire approach to teaching, as it will too, to my research. My ethical considerations focus on ensuring that I keep the needs of the participants at the forefront of the research; challenging myself to constantly evaluate how I minimise risk to my participants and how I represent their voice in my findings.

Central to this research is that the methodology does not affect the learning environment for the prisoners involved. The research will aim to preserve ecological validity; it will show ethical respect to the learners in prison by capturing an authentic naturalness whilst not impacting on their learning. To achieve this, all stages of the research design are based on activities that already exist in my teaching and course design. This will therefore form an unobtrusive foundation to ethical data collection, avoiding educational risk and minimising emotional risk.

Participants will have a clear understanding of the research aims, provided to them during the consent process and at any point throughout the project that they may require further information. No information about data collection will be omitted and no forms of deception will be used, however, interviews will be referred to as 'discussions' to the research participants. This is because of the implied formality of interviews and the negative associations prisoners may feel towards them, which may both 'evoke suspicion or hostility' (Horrocks and King 2010:74). Instead of using a Dictaphone I will use recording devices already used as part of the Music course I deliver, to retain a naturalness and to not impact the teaching environment. Whilst I do not foresee the interview method and questions posing any emotional difficulty to my research participants, I will show 'a stance of care, respect and sensitivity to nuances of emotional changes' and allow the participant to stop at any point (Brooks et al 2014:110). Likewise, at any point during the research participants will have the option to withdraw without explanation. Throughout the data collection I may respond to any disclosures of mental health issues by signposting learners to additional support services offered by the prison if there is any cause for concern under the Care Act 2014, this is my duty of care as both researcher and prison educator.

As well as for my M.Ed dissertation, I hope to use the information gained through this research project for publications and conference presentations. Participants will be given a signed statement of confidentiality. All names and identifying information will be removed from data collected; no identifiable information will be used, only pseudonyms. This is common practice within prison education, whereby the names of learners may not be discussed or carried outside of the prison walls.

Informed consent will be obtained from both the research participants and their gatekeeper, the governor of HMP Portland. In both cases this will be done in person with the option for both parties to ask questions and discuss participant information. In recognition of the complexity of power dynamics within prison, whereby 'a culture of compliance' may make prisoners feel like they have to participate, I will enable prisoners to make voluntary and informed decisions about their participation 'free from any influence from gatekeepers' (Wiles 2013:30). A large proportion of learners in prison have difficulties with reading and writing. Therefore, participants can choose to have the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form read to them, by myself or another member of staff from the education department at HMP Portland. As well as describing the research project, the consent forms will inform the participants and gatekeeper on how the data will be collected and recorded, how anonymity and confidentiality will be managed and how the research will be disseminated. Participants will be able to give or withhold their consent for each of the activities involved in the research project.

A debriefing will be offered to both the participants and the gatekeeper at the end of the research project. This will enable both parties to 'learn more about the benefits of the research to them and to society in general' (Jackson 2015:58). At the same time the debriefing will ensure an opportunity for participants to be given information regarding follow up pastoral support that the prison is able to offer, should they need it.

9

ESTIMATED START DATE AND DURATION OF PROJECT

Whilst preparation for this research project began in September 2019, data collection will begin in January 2020. The research project is due for submission on the 31st of August 2020. In September 2020, the participants, along with their gatekeeper, will be offered a debriefing. The following table breaks down the two-cycle action research project.

Month:	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Refine research proposal	█	█											
Apply for Ethical Approval		█	█	█									
Literature Review			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█			
Data collection (Cycle 1)					█								
Data analysis (Cycle 1)						█	█						
Preparation for Cycle 2							█						
Data collection (Cycle 1)								█					
Data analysis (Cycle 2)									█	█			
Findings										█	█	█	
Debriefing													█

10

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Dear

I am writing to ask your permission to conduct research at HMP Portland for a study entitled: In what ways can music be used as a tool to enable learners in prison to reflect on their personal and social development and challenge their self-perception?

This research is being conducted by myself, Natalie Betts, as part of my Master's degree research project for the Royal College of Music. I am required to obtain gatekeeper permission as I intend to use learners from HMP Portland as my research participants. In total this would be 12 learners, over two cohorts of my Music course. This study will not interfere with the regular delivery of my Music course. All data will be taken from activities already completed as part of the educational programme, including a questionnaire, Reflective Journals and an audio recorded discussion.

The aim of this research project is to explore the impact of music education within prison. I particularly want to understand whether learning music has any impact on a prison learner's personal and social skills, attitudes, well-being and how they perceive themselves. Current research suggests that the wider benefits of engaging in musical activities can lead to prisoners challenging their identity; constructing visions of a new and positive self. I feel that it is important for me to add to this area of research, as the changing of criminal identity is strongly linked to the desistance process. Overall though, this research project aims to develop my skills as a teacher and understanding of teaching practices that benefit learners in prison. All outcomes from this research will be shared with other Weston College staff at HMP Portland, to ensure the continued development and high level of education that we deliver to the prisoners in your establishment.

All participants will be asked to give consent and are able to withdraw their consent at any point without being penalised. I do not foresee the research causing any problems to the learners, but as I am in my teaching, I will be responsive to the needs of anyone involved. Along with this letter, I am enclosing a Participant Information Sheet and Participant Consent Form for you to read, so you are aware of all information that the participants will receive.

If you are happy for me to carry out my research, please sign the form on the following page that acknowledges that you have read this letter and the enclosed Participant Information Sheet and Participant Consent Form; acknowledging that you understand the nature of the study being conducted and the risks and likely benefits of participation in this study, giving permission for the research to be conducted at the site. For further information please contact: Natalie Betts, Weston College, hmpportland@weston.ac.uk or Mary Stakelum, Royal College of Music, mary.stakelum@rcm.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely, Natalie Betts

12

I [Name:_____] as [Role Title: _____]

of [Site Name:_____] having been fully informed of the nature

of the research to be conducted by Natalie Betts, give my permission for the study to be conducted.

I reserve the right to withdraw this permission at any time.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Participant Information Sheet

Title:

In what ways can music be used as a tool to enable learners in prison to reflect on their personal and social development and challenge their self-perception?

Date:

Invitation:

You are being invited to take part in my research project for my university master's degree. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. You can ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. If you need help with reading, I am happy to read this document out to you. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. You will be given this information sheet to keep. Thank you for reading this.

Project:

The aim of this research project is to explore the impact of music education within prison. I particularly want to understand whether learning music has any impact on your personal and social skills, attitudes, well-being and what you think about yourself. I have designed this research project to give you a voice, for you to share your journey through music prison education and to give your opinions. The research that I will collect is taken from learning activities that you have to complete as part of the regular Music course. This includes, a questionnaire, a Reflective Journal and a discussion at the end of the course. I intend to audio record the discussion using the microphones and the mixing desk. You will be able to still take part in the Music course if you do not take part in this research.

Characteristics of participants:

You have been asked to take part in this project because you are a learner within the prison education system. You could help educators and wider society to understand better the impact of education in prison. You could also help prison educators like me, to understand whether certain teaching and learning activities add value to the courses delivered in prison. There will be 12 participants involved in this project.

Voluntary participation:

It is up to you to decide if you want to take part in my project or not. If you don't want to take part, or you change your mind about taking part, having agreed to do so, you won't be penalized in any way. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. By giving your consent

14

you are agreeing for me to collect data from all three activities; the Questionnaire, Reflective Journal and Discussion; with data from the Discussion being collected as an audio recording. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. You can withdraw by retracting consent for me to use whatever contribution you have already made to the research. Again, you won't be penalized in any way.

Nature of participation:

The project will last for the duration of your time on the Music course, which is the equivalent of four weeks or approximately 28 sessions. If there are any prison shut downs, the course may be extended to ensure you get enough time on the course, therefore the research project will continue until you finish the course. During the first session you will complete a questionnaire, this will take approximately 20 minutes and will ask you to give information about you age, background, learning needs and a skills self-assessment. Other data will be taken from your Reflective Journals, which you will complete every lesson. Finally, on the last session of the Music course, you will be asked to individually complete an audio recorded discussion with me. During this, we will look through your Reflective Journal and I will ask you some questions, so that you can explain what has happened during the Music course and any impact it has had on you. We will also discuss whether or not completing a Reflective Journal was a useful tool. All activities involved in my research project are activities that you will be asked to complete as part of the regular Music course.

Lifestyle restrictions:

You are not likely to experience any lifestyle restrictions by taking part in this project.

Potential risks to participants:

There are no foreseeable risks of being involved, as the activities you will complete during this project are part of the regular Music course. If unforeseen risks arise during the course of my project, we will be able to discuss these, and you may withdraw your consent at any point. I may respond to any disclosures of mental health issues by signposting you to additional support services offered by the prison if there is any cause for concern under the Care Act 2014; this is my duty of care as a prison educator at HMP Portland. At the end of the project you will be offered a debriefing and will be given information about any pastoral support that the prison offers, should you need it.

Potential benefits to participants:

Whilst people taking part in my research are unlikely to experience any personal benefits as a result, I hope my research will positively impact prison education practices in the future.

Possible termination of research:

15

If the project has to be terminated for any reason and and/or the contribution you have made is no longer required for the research, you will be told and this will be explained.

Confidentiality and anonymity:

Information that is collected about you, for the purposes of the research, will be kept strictly confidential. Information you provide will only be attributed to you by a pseudonym.

Storing personal data and information:

Your personal data and any information that you provide for the purposes of the research will be stored securely at HMP Portland for ten years. At the end of the period it will be destroyed.

Outputs:

The contribution that you make to this project will be used for my Master's thesis, conference presentations and publications. Outcomes from this research will also be shared with other Weston College staff at HMP Portland.

Ethical approval:

The CUK Research Ethics Committee (REC) has reviewed this project and granted ethical approval for it to be carried out.

Contact details:

Natalie Betts   Mary Stakelum

Weston College   Royal College of Music

hmpportland@weston.ac.uk   mary.stakelum@rcm.ac.uk

Thank you:

I want to thank you for the time you have spent reading this participant information sheet.

Natalie Betts

16

Consent Form (Researcher copy)

Title of project: In what ways can music be used as a tool to enable learners in prison to reflect on their personal and social development and challenge their self-perception?

Name of researcher: Natalie B

Participant identification code for this project:

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet dated [   ] for research project in which I have been asked to take part and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason. ☐

3. I give the researcher permission to collect and use data about normal teaching and learning activities (Questionnaire, Reflective Journals, Discussion and audio recording) for the purposes of the research project, provided all information about me will be kept confidential, stored securely and destroyed after ten years. ☐

4. I understand that if there are any disclosures of mental health issues during the data collection the researcher may signpost me to prison services for pastoral support if there is cause for concern under the Care Act 2014. ☐

5. I agree to take part in the above-named project. ☐

_____   _____   _____
Name of participant   **Date**   **Signature**

_____   _____   _____
Name of person taking consent   **Date**   **Signature**
(if different from lead researcher)

_____   _____   _____
Researcher   **Date**   **Signature**

17

Consent Form (Participant copy)

Title of project: In what ways can music be used as a tool to enable learners in prison to reflect on their personal and social development and challenge their self-perception?

Name of researcher: Natalie B

Participant identification code for this project:

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet dated [   ] for research project in which I have been asked to take part and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

3. I give the researcher permission to collect and use data about normal teaching and learning activities (Questionnaire, Reflective Journals and Discussion and audio recording) for the purposes of the research project, provided all information about me will be kept confidential, stored securely and destroyed after ten years.

4. I understand that if there are any disclosures of mental health issues during the data collection the researcher may signpost me to prison services for pastoral support if there is cause for concern under the Care Act 2014.

5. I agree to take part in the above-named project.

Name of participant   **Date**   **Signature**

Name of person taking consent   **Date**   **Signature**
(if different from lead researcher)

Researcher   **Date**   **Signature**

18

Conservatoires UK

CERTIFICATE OF ETHICAL APPROVAL

This certificate confirms that the application made by **Natalie Betts** to the CUK

Research Ethics Committee was **APPROVED**.

Project title: **In what ways can music be used as a tool to enable learners in prison to reflect on their personal and social development and challenge their self-perception?**

Date approved: **24.01.2020**

Signed: ███████   Date: 24.01.2020

Professor Emma Redding

(*Chair of CUK Research Ethics Committee*)

Reference Number: CUK/TL/2019-20/12

Appendix 2.1: Blank questionnaire

Personal Information

Age:

Ethnicity:

White

English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British □

Irish □

Gypsy or Irish Traveller □

Any other White background □

Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups

White and Black Caribbean □

White and Black African □

White and Asian □

Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background □

Asian / Asian British

Indian □ Pakistani □

Bangladeshi □

Chinese □

Any other Asian background □

Black / African / Caribbean / Black British

African □

Caribbean □

Any other Black / African /

Caribbean background □

Other ethnic group

Arab □

Any other ethnic group □

Educational Background

No qualifications □

Other qualifications: level unknown (including foreign qualifications) □

Qualifications at level 1 and below □

GCSE/O Level grade A*-C, vocational level 2 and equivalents □

A levels, vocational level 3 and equivalents □

Higher Education &professional/vocational equivalents □

Learning Needs

Do you have a disability or learning difficulty?

Yes   No □

If yes, please tick below any which apply to you:

Visual Impairment □

Hearing impairment □

Disability impacting mobility □

Profound complex disabilities □

Social and emotional difficulties □

Mental health difficulty □

Moderate learning difficulty □

Severe learning difficulty □

Dyslexia □

Dyscalculia □

Autism spectrum disorder □

Asperger's syndrome □

Speech, language and communication needs □

Other please specify: □

_____

Music Skills (SOC)

Music experience and skills

Music Aims andAmbitions
(Select three course targets)
1.
2.
3.

Skill Scanner					
On a scale of 1 - 5 (1 being not confident, 5 being very confident)					
Music Skills	**Start of Course**				
Playing the guitar	1	2	3	4	5
Playing the keyboard	1	2	3	4	5
Playing the drums	1	2	3	4	5
Playing another instrument (please specify)	1	2	3	4	5
Writing lyrics	1	2	3	4	5
~~Song writing~~	1	2	3	4	5
Singing/rapping	1	2	3	4	5
Music technology	1	2	3	4	5
Performance	1	2	3	4	5

Personal and Social Beliefs: Self-Assessment (SOC)

Who I Am

Please write a short paragraph about yourself. What are the things that you believe are important about you? What are the things that define you as a person?

I am…

Music Skills (EOC)

Music experience and skills

Music Aims andAmbitions
(Select three course targets)

1.

2.

3.

Skill Scanner
On a scale of 1 - 5 (1 being not confident, 5 being very confident)

Music Skills	Start of Course				
Playing the guitar	1	2	3	4	5
Playing the keyboard	1	2	3	4	5
Playing the drums	1	2	3	4	5
Playing another instrument (please specify)	1	2	3	4	5
~~Writing lyrics~~	1	2	3	4	5
Song writing	1	2	3	4	5
Singing/rapping	1	2	3	4	5
Music technology	1	2	3	4	5
Performance	1	2	3	4	5

Personal and Social Beliefs: Self-Assessment (EOC)

Who I Am

Please write a short paragraph about yourself. What are the things that you believe are important about you? What are the things that define you as a person?

I am…

Appendix 2.2: Blank reflective journal page

Mood Self-confidence Motivation

M SC M

High

End

Low

Agreed target (PM)

Agreed target (AM)

M SC M

High

Start

Low

What have you learnt about yourself today?

Did you work...

Individually ☐

In a group ☐

A mixture of both ☐

What impact has doing music had on you today and why?

Mood, self-confidence and Motivation Meanings

Mood relates to how you feel. If you have a low mood, you might feel sad or upset, angry or negative. If you have a high mood you might feel happy or joyful, excited or positive.

Self-confidence relates to how much you trust yourself, your abilities, qualities and judgements. If you had low self-confidence you might not believe you are able to achieve your goals. If you have high self-confidence you might have lots of belief in yourself.

Motivation relates to your drive do to achieve, produce, develop and keep moving forwards. If you have low motivation you might not feel like you want to do anything. If you have high motivation you might feel determined to achieve and reach your goals.

Interview Schedule	
Interview type:	Semi-structured
Capture method:	Audio

Research questions:	1. Does my new music education course have an impact on the people in prison that work with? If so;
	    a. What does this impact look like?
	    b. What are the reasons for this impact?
	
	2. If my new music course doesn't have an impact on the learners I work with, why is that?

Questions Section A: Impact of the Music course	Has being on the music course had any impact on you, and if so, what has that been? Have you learnt anything about yourself during the Music course and if so, what have you learnt? What skills have you developed on the music course? Are there any that aren't linked directly to music?
Questions Section B: Reflective Journal (Participants will be given time to look through their reflective journal)	If you look through your Reflective Journal, what does it tell you about your journey through the music course? What effect has keeping your Reflective Journal had on the tasks that you have completed in the music classroom? By looking at the Reflective Journal, what effect has working with the rest of the group had on you? And did your role in the group change? Through being on the Music course, what have you learnt about your self-confidence? Through being on the Music course, what have you learnt about your motivation? Through being on the Music course, what have you learnt about your mood? Was the process of keeping you Reflective Journal positive or negative? And why is that?

Interview Schedule (Peer Mentors / Research Commentators)	
Interview type:	Semi-structured
Capture method:	Audio

Research questions:	In what ways can music be used as a tool to enable learners in prison to reflect on their personal and social development and challenge their self-perception?
	
	1. Does my new music education course have an impact on the people in prison that work with? If so;
	    a. What does this impact look like?
	    b. What are the reasons for this impact?
	
	2. If my new music course doesn't have an impact on the learners I work with, why is that?

Questions	Can you describe what it's like to be in prison? What do you think about the opportunity to do music in prison? How does it feel to be part of the music group and group performance? Can you give an example of when you have witnessed the music class having an impact on a learner? Do you believe that learners can develop wider skills through music? What comes to mind when I say; 'music in prison'?