Article

Explaining How Community Music Engagement Facilitates Social Cohesion through Ritualised Belonging

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Abstract: The flourishing society envisioned by the South African government's National Development Plan 2030 is based on nation-building and social cohesion. With the recent civil unrests, calls for healing a nation characterised by poverty, inequality and violence through social cohesion have again been made. Community music engagement is uniquely positioned to achieve social cohesion since the discipline engages disparities of power and privilege whilst aiming to cultivate an environment of unconditional welcoming. The purpose of this theoretical framework is to explain how community music engagement can facilitate social cohesion through community music engagement. Community music engagement promotes spiritual experiences since it fosters relationships. This relational theoretical framework will be derived from a thematic analysis of the 21 chapters in the book Ritualised Belonging: Musicing and Spirituality in the South African Context and related theories. Our findings indicate that joyful musicking rituals serve as the catalyst for hope. Hope, in turn, motivates people to engage in community musicking, which requires a bodily co-presence, fosters mutual focus of attention and promotes cooperation and trust. Musickers who share values, challenges, culture, and identity experience a joyful sense of belonging. Furthermore, joy is key to spirituality since it is self-expansive, self-transcendent and other-embracing and transcends different religions. Joy moves musickers to build bonding and bridging social capital. Social capital improves individuals' and communities' quality of life and ultimately promotes social cohesion.

Keywords: social cohesion; ritualised belonging; interaction ritual; spirituality; community music engagement

1. Introduction

The landscape of contemporary South Africa is still imprinted by the consequences of segregation and apartheid. When the National Party rose to power in 1948, segregation was formalised, refined and further institutionalised. These structures remained part of public institutions and law until 1994, when the first free election was held in South Africa. Since 1994 the country has grappled with the task of rebuilding society to be equitable and to allow communities to flourish.

The flourishing of society in South Africa envisioned by the National Development Plan 2030 (South Africa and National Planning Commission 2012), is dependent on nation-building and social cohesion. After the recent civil unrest from 9 to 18 July 2021, also known as the Zuma riots, there were once again calls for healing a nation characterised by poverty, inequality and violence through promoting social cohesion (Mthenjane 2021). Community music engagement is uniquely positioned to generate social cohesion since the discipline engages disparities of power and privilege whilst aiming to cultivate an environment of unconditional welcoming and the expression of mutual intercultural solidarity (Westerlund et al. 2020).

However, there appears to be no theoretical framework that critically engages with the way that community musicking could facilitate social cohesion. It is disconcerting that although we know that music helps by: "addressing our basic human needs—for recognition as persons, identity, relationship, community, transcendence" and that "bringing good

music to those who need it is a matter of justice" and that "when music flourishes, people flourish too" (Ansdell 2014, p. 320) we still do not theorise the use of music in community engagement programmes to facilitate social cohesion. Therefore, the research question that guided this constant comparison inquiry was: What relational theoretical framework explains how community music engagement facilitates social cohesion?

1.1. Social Cohesion and Spirituality

The Department of Arts and Culture (2012, p. 31) defines social cohesion as: "the degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large, and the extent to which mutual solidarity finds expression among individuals and communities." According to this definition, a community or society is cohesive to the extent that disparities, inequalities, exclusion, conflict and distrust are reduced to improve the living conditions for all. The three components of social cohesion are social inclusion, social capital and social mobility (OECD 2011). Social inclusion is the process of improving conditions for individuals and groups to take part in society. Social capital results from groups working together towards a common goal. Social mobility is the ability of individuals to improve their social standing.

Social cohesion relates to the second, transpersonal, dimension in Baker's (2003) spirituality model, the other two dimensions being transcendent and transmissional. The transpersonal dimension refers to intrapersonal and interpersonal caring relationships with self and others, which is categorised under relationality in Van der Merwe and Habron's (2015) model. "The interpersonal side is expressed in terms of finding expressions in helping people through communication, in service to others, or in loving or caring for others" (Baker 2003, p. 52). Musicking can be a unitive experience which can make us feel connected "with something beyond and outside the self—the wider community of human beings" (Boyce-Tillman 2007, p. 1418). The synchrony or entrainment when sharing a pulse during musicking contributes to the connective nature of music (Boyce-Tillman 2021b). This synchrony must not be confused with uniformity, which is associated with control (Boyce-Tillman 2016b). Boyce-Tillman states that "music creates and restores community—communitas" (Boyce-Tillman 2013). It is this restorative nature of communal musicking that contributes to social cohesion.

1.2. Community Music Engagement and Spirituality

Higgins (2012) offers three basic typologies for understanding community music: (1) the music of a community, (2) musicking to create a community, and (3) a musical intervention between a facilitator and a group, usually with a social justice aim. However, the usefulness of understanding community music engagement using this simplistic typology has been questioned. Therefore, Hardcastle and Southcott (2022) suggest that community music groups can be understood as falling into six types: (1) socio-culturally oriented, music-focused with proficiency-based recruitments, (2) socio-culturally oriented, music-focused with open recruitment, (3) socio-culturally oriented, music-incidental with open recruitment, (4) socio-culturally undefined, music-focused with proficiency-based recruitment, (5) socio-culturally undefined, music-focused with open recruitment, and (6) socio-culturally undefined, music-incidental and open recruitment. The kinds of community musicking we refer to in this article primarily address types 2 and 3. In these instances of community music engagement, the sociocultural focus is central to the endeavour with variable foci relating to music. In the instances discussed in this article, there is also an assumption that more open forms of recruitment align more closely with the ethos of hospitality and welcoming (Higgins 2012) espoused by community music facilitators.

Hospitality and welcoming are among the central guiding principles in community music (Higgins and Willingham 2017). Further, practitioners are also guided by a desire to negotiate curricula with participants and to engage in non-formal and informal pedagogies (Higgins and Willingham 2017). An emphasis on musicking as an integral part of community life, promoting lifelong learning and intergenerational engagement is also central to community music practice (Coffman and Dabback 2021; Van der Merwe et al. 2021a; Higgins and Willingham 2017). Within this framework, there may also be an emphasis

on the spiritual well-being of participants in community musicking practices (Foster 2021; Van der Merwe et al. 2021a). The intersection between spiritual well-being and community music may be explored by focusing on practices that create a sense of belonging where the individual is led to experience something bigger (Mitchell 2021). There is also a focus on spiritual well-being in the literature that addresses the role of compassion and care in community music (Morelli Forthcoming) or where there is a focus on mindfulness (Rowan 2021; Higgins and Willingham 2017). More explicitly, some community music literature also focuses on understanding religious musicking through the lens of community music practices (Leis 2021).

1.3. The Social Cohesion through Community Music Engagement Project

From 2019–2021 a group of music researchers in the Musical Arts in Southern Africa: Research and Applications research niche collaborated to explore the affordances and limitations of community musicking to facilitate social cohesion in a peri-urban South African town. This project was borne from existing collaborative and community-engaged research and teaching and learning activities and aimed to explain how community musicking could facilitate social cohesion. The project received funding from the National Research Foundation (NRF). The researchers involved in the Social Cohesion through Community Music Engagement Project (SoCoMe) were all motivated to better understand how the language of transformation, often used in policies, could be applied to the setting of community musicking and service-learning initiatives in the higher education context. As part of this project, six sub-projects were created to explore social cohesion through community music. The first addressed early learning in a rural daycare centre. The second project explored facilitating music and movement activities for children in Grade R (kindergarten). The third project aimed to teach social skills through music activities to vulnerable children at a community centre. This project served children between the ages of seven and eighteen years old. The fourth project explored how young and disabled adults learnt life skills through musicking. In a fifth project, the focus was on understanding undergraduate music students' experiences of being involved as facilitators at the other community engagement sites. The sixth and final project was focused on facilitating collaborative and participatory musicking workshops for elderly residents at a local care home.

2. Procedures

As part of our wider SoCoMe project, this theoretical framework aims to explain how such community music engagement, as described in the six projects above, can facilitate social cohesion. The findings from the SoCoMe project were recently published in the book *Ritualised Belonging: Musicing[1] and Spirituality in the South African Context*. The data for this study are from the 21 chapters in the book Ritualised Belonging (Table 1).

**Table 1.** The 21 chapters in the book Ritualised Belonging.

Ritualised Belonging: Musicing and Spirituality in the South African Context	
June Boyce-Tillman	Prelude
PART I: Interaction Ritual Theory: Understanding the Conditions for Spiritual Musicing	
1 Debra Joubert & Liesl van der Merwe	Understanding Ritualised Belonging in Music Education Literature Through the Lens of Interaction Ritual Theory
2 Ewie Erasmus	Experiences of Ritualised Belonging of Young Adults Living with Williams Syndrome During Variety Hour
3 Liesl van der Merwe, Catrien Wentink & Janelize Morelli	Exploring Interaction Rituals During Dalcroze-Inspired Musicing at Oak Tree Care Home for the Elderly: An Ethnography
4 Hetta Potgieter	"Be still, and know that I am God": Participants' Lived Experiences of Meditative Services

Table 1. *Cont.*

Ritualised Belonging: Musicing and Spirituality in the South African Context	
PART II: Displacement: Towards Belonging and Hope	
5 Albi Odendaal	A Musical Home with Many Rooms: Boundaries and Belonging
6 Carl Pilkington	Negotiating Queer Performativity in Music Education: Performing/Resisting for Belonging
7 Waldo Weyer	When Music and Teacher Equal Home: An Autoethnography
8 Nozipho Hlungwani & Julia Modise	Exploring Student-Teachers' Stories About Musicing and Belonging at Vukona Development Community Centre
PART III: Spiritual Musicing for the Transformation of Music Education	
9 Boudina Mcconnachie	Social Cohesion Through Sonic Intervention
10 Sihle S. Shongwe	Toward a Framework of Critical Hope for Higher Music Education
11 Urvi Drummond	Authentic Connection Through Emotional Experiences in Piano Lessons: A Piano Teacher's Autoethnographic Account of Care
12 Sonja Cruywagen & Debra Joubert	Exploring the "Experience of the Experiencer" in an Undergraduate Jazz Ensemble Learning Community
13 Joy Meyer	Musicing as an Act of Engaging with Diversity: An Autoethnography
14 Marelize van Heerden	Dance Education as an Agent of Social Cohesion
PART IV: Storied Lives: Relationality and Spirituality in Musical Experiences	
15 Janelize Morelli	Relationality as Ethical Foundation for Community Music Practice
16 Corlia Fourie	Exploring Spirituality and Relationality in the Lived Piano-Playing Experiences of Older Adults
17 Laetitia Orlandi	Connectedness and Sacred Experiences: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of Five Pianists' Spiritual Music-Making Experiences
18 Chris van Rhyn	*Because I could not stop for death*: Composing an Electronic Work as a Mourning and Healing Ritual
19 Etienne Viviers	Concerning the Utopian Control of Music: Whereto in a Democratic South Africa?
June Boyce-Tillman	Postlude—Musical Rituals for Reconciliation

2.1. Constant Comparison Inquiry

This relational theoretical framework (Figure 1) was derived from a thorough constant comparison (Butler-Kisber 2018) analysis of the 21 chapters in *Ritualised Belonging* (Boyce-Tillman, Van der Merwe and Morelli 2021) and related literature, such as Collins (2004), Koelsch (2013) and Meyer (Forthcoming). Although we used guidelines from grounded theory, we did not subscribe to positivist assumptions; instead, we followed a constructivist approach (Charmaz 2006). Butler-Kisber (2010) argued that when constant comparison inquiry is used across cases, as we did in this study, common elements of the phenomenon, in our case, social cohesion, can be produced. These common elements can be helpful and convincing in making recommendations resulting from the research. Our recommendations are in the form of a relational theoretical framework of how community music engagement facilitates social cohesion. We acknowledge that the compromise is that contextual aspects are lost, although each context is available as book chapters in *Ritualised Belonging* (Boyce-Tillman et al. 2021). In this constant comparison inquiry, we put the 21 chapters of the book into one heuristic unit in ATLAS.ti; a computer-assisted data analysis software programme. ATLAS.ti is used to organise data and facilitate the interpretation of text.
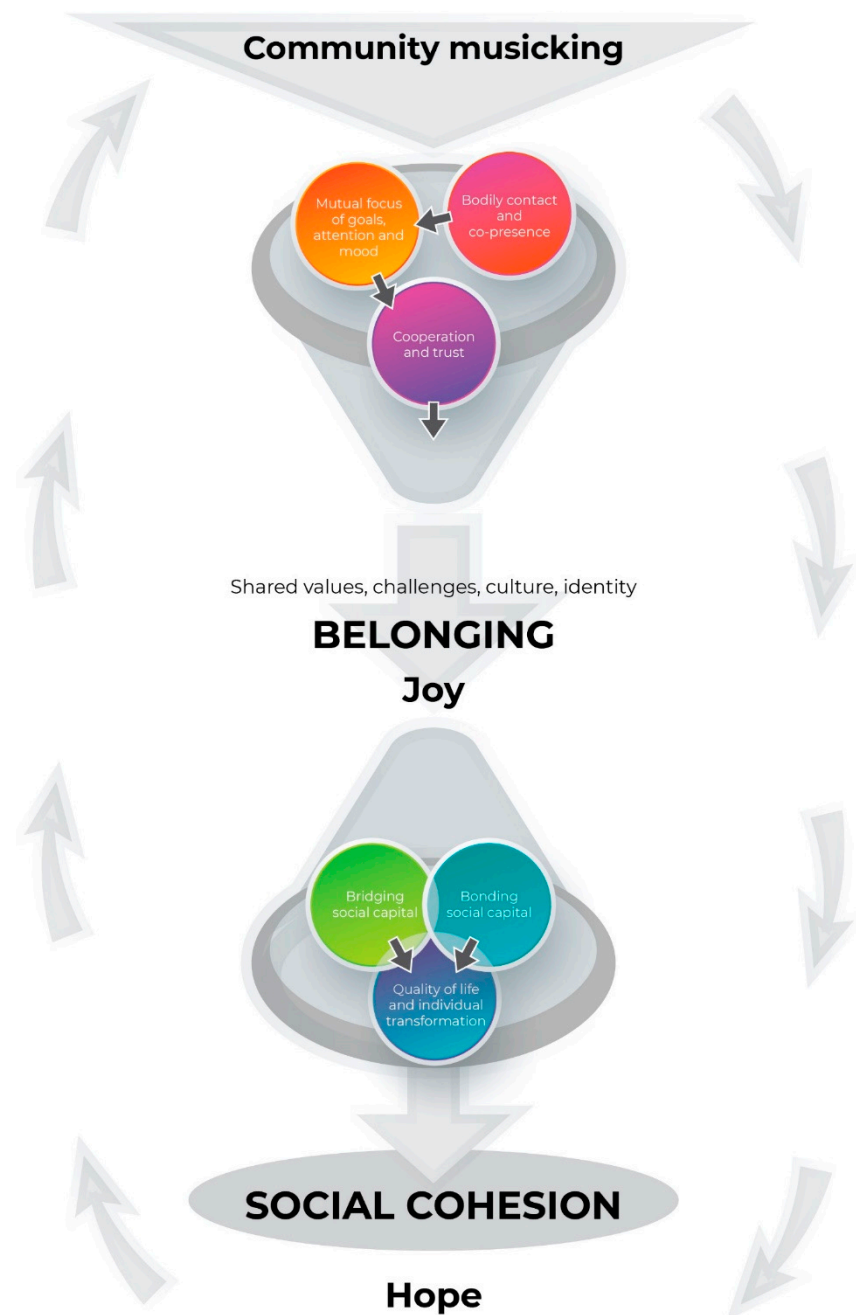
Figure 1. A relational theoretical framework of how community music engagement facilitates social cohesion.

2.2. Data Analysis

Since constant comparison is a thematic type of qualitative inquiry, the data analysis strategy was thematic analysis. We coded the 21 chapters by adding labels to quotes that illustrate what each quote is about (Friese 2019). We grouped salient codes together to form categories (Boeije 2009). Themes were identified by categorising patterns in the data (Saldaña and Omasta 2021). To make sense of the data, we engaged in reading, rereading, and dialoguing with each other about the links between themes. We engaged in concept mapping to move from the linear to the visual representation of ideas (Butler-Kisber 2010). We noticed interesting links between the themes and illustrated this visually (Figure 1).

2.3. Trustworthiness

We've been engaged in this project from 2019 to 2021. Our prolonged engagement contributes to the trustworthiness of this study. Readers of this study can decide to what extent our findings resonate with them and are transferable to their contexts. Our study makes an original contribution since no relational theoretical framework exists for how community music engagement facilitates social cohesion. We hope this framework will be useful to apply in higher education curricula and community music settings to promote social cohesion.

3. Findings

3.1. Community Musicking

Our account of the social cohesion theoretical framework starts with the notion of musicking. Small's (1999) concept of musicking is helpful since it focuses on music as social action. From our own community music engagement, we have experienced first-hand that "the meaning of musicking lies in the relationships that are established between the participants by the performances" (Small 1999, p. 9). We also realised that in our regular community musicking, we could model the nature of the relationships and what they ought to be (Small 1999). Throughout our community musicking from 2019 to 2021, with people from different ages, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds, we continuously observed and explored the conditions that promote social cohesion. We noticed, especially during the pandemic, that it is essential to share a bodily co-presence (Collins 2004) to build relationships.

3.2. Bodily Contact and Co-Presence

A group of people musicking together become attuned to one another and rhythmically entrained (Joubert and Van der Merwe 2021). Our bodily co-presence mutually influences one another (Collins 2004). Koelsch (2013) makes a similar point to Collins (2004) and explains that during musicking, we come into contact with each other, which fulfils a basic need. We've become acutely aware of this need during the isolation imposed on us by the pandemic. At one of the community music engagement sites, the nurse said, "Please come back. They are dying of loneliness". Contact with other individuals during musicking is the first step towards creating social cohesion.

3.2.1. Social Cognition

Music listening and performance stimulate social cognition. Participants try to understand the intentions, beliefs and desires of the individuals with whom they make the music (Koelsch 2013). Erasmus (2021) reports that, during community music engagement with individuals living with Williams syndrome, young adults learn about body language and how to convey "the message of the song they are performing". Van der Merwe et al. (2021b) noticed that social cognition is activated in groups of older people when they are asked to make sense of the meaning of a musical work. Orlandi (2021) writes that the professional pianists in her study experience connectedness with the audience "through their intention to communicate the beauty and the meaning of the music". When the audience tries to understand these intentions, the music cultivates social cognition, and we move towards social cohesion.

3.2.2. Coordination

Coordinating our movements while musicking and an exchange of "movement habitus" (Van Heerden 2021) might help to embed cultural norms (Koelsch 2013). Syncing our movements with others can be a joyful experience (Joubert and Van der Merwe 2021). McConnachie (2021) explains that coordination during musicking is promoted since it can "be experienced by large numbers of people simultaneously and in synchrony". Cruywagen and Joubert (2021) write about the coordination between jazz ensemble members during

improvisation. These shared joyful experiences, from coordinating our movements, for example, can promote social cohesion and enhance communication between musickers.

3.2.3. Communication

Potgieter (2021) explains how lived experiences of meditative church services offer members of the congregation the opportunity to "communicate in some way the awareness they have come to hold as sacred". Furthermore, music can be used in games to communicate directions and facilitate bonding between music teacher and pupil (Drummond 2021). Older adults find they can express themselves physically by playing the piano (Fourie 2021). Orlandi (2021) and Cruywagen and Joubert (2021) explain that chamber music facilitates acute awareness and sensitive communication between musicians. When the audience and musicians share the emotion conveyed by the music, co-pathy (Koelsch 2013) or shared mood (Collins 2004) is experienced.

3.2.4. Co-Pathy

When "interindividual empathic states become more homogenous", conflict decreases, and social cohesion in a group is promoted (Koelsch 2013). Musicking rituals are "a mechanism of mutually focused emotion and attention producing momentarily shared reality, which thereby generates solidarity" (Collins 2004, p. 7). Solidarity, created through repeated musicking rituals, contributes to social cohesion. For successful musicking rituals, a mutual focus of attention is a requirement (Collins 2004).

3.3. Mutual Focus of Goals, Attention and Mood

In community musicking, "participants' mutual entrainment of emotion and attention" (Collins 2004, p. 48) produces shared emotional or cognitive experiences. At a care home for the elderly, Van der Merwe et al. (2021b) noticed that active music listening activities promote the elderly's focus of attention. Fourie (2021) similarly noticed that when older pianists play for others, the shared excitement and mutual focus of attention provide emotional energy to everyone present. In the postlude to the *Ritualised Belonging*, Boyce-Tillman (2021a) explains that the mutual focus of attention during community musicking can facilitate flow (Csikszentmihalyi 2013).

3.3.1. Shared Goals

The collective effervescence (Durkheim [1912] 2008) experienced during musicking can motivate participants to work towards a common goal (Joubert and Van der Merwe 2021). Meyer (Forthcoming) explains that shared social goals and a common purpose can promote social cohesion. Musicking rituals focus everyone's attention and awareness on the music activities as a shared enterprise (Cruywagen and Joubert 2021).

3.3.2. Shared Mood

The mutual focus of attention reinforces shared emotions (Collins 2004). The interviews and observations at a care home for the elderly made it clear that the participants shared joyful experiences. For example, one of the participants said that musicking "takes all the depression away; it is something big" (Van der Merwe et al. 2021b). Similarly, Cruywagen and Joubert (2021) found that in the jazz ensembles, "the joy of performing together did elevate their mood". A shared mood enhances group solidarity (Collins 2004) and can motivate people to commit to reciprocity and civic cooperation (Meyer Forthcoming).

3.4. Cooperation and Trust

Musical rituals, such as community musicking, can positively influence cooperation (Dissanayake 2006). Koelsch (2013) and Cruywagen and Joubert (2021) argue that musical performance requires intensely detailed cooperation between musicians. Such cooperation builds trust, which increases the likelihood that they will cooperate in the future. When we cooperate during community musicking, we start to experience a sense of long-term belonging.

3.5. Belonging

Mutual respect for shared values can also contribute to this sense of belonging (Joubert and Van der Merwe 2021), which in turn can motivate community members to return to musicking sessions week after week (Van der Merwe et al. 2021b). However, Shongwe (2021) explains that musicking can also challenge an "ideology that perpetuates hegemonically dominant values" and give critical hope to oppressed minorities. Weyer (2021) states that when music students overcome challenges, they create pathways of hope. Similarly, Erasmus (2021) notes that when young adults with shared challenges relating to inequality and subjugation make music together, they build special bonds. Shared cultural values can also promote solidarity. Both "the shared repertoire of familiar folk songs" and the shared identity of being devout Christians increased the sense of group membership and feelings of solidarity among the elderly in a care home setting (Van der Merwe et al. 2021b). Odendaal (2021) argues that a musical home—i.e., music that is repeatedly returned to—can create a sense of belonging. Shared values, challenges, culture and identity can create a sense of belonging and contribute to social cohesion.

3.6. Joy

A sense of belonging is a source of joy (Krumrei-Mancuso 2020). Collins (2004) explains that when people are together and focus their attention on a common task, such as communal musicking, they can experience collective effervescence. This shared excitement can generate positive emotions such as joy and a sense of belonging. Van Heerden (2021) has witnessed "the joyful interaction between culturally and politically diverse students" in her dance education classes. She termed these experiences 'collective effervescence' and related them to the purpose of African song and dance rituals intended to heal and build community. Fourie (2021) relates this collective effervescence to flow experiences for older pianists.

During a weekly musicking ritual between young adults living with Williams syndrome, which they call Variety Hour, participants experience emotional energy and joy when they "celebrate individual achievements and abilities within a supportive culture where they feel valued and belong" (Erasmus 2021). Similarly, Drummond (2021) tells of her music teacher, who celebrated her achievements with great joy, which motivated her to deal with the next challenge. Weyer (2021) tells related stories of music teachers creating safe, inspiring and positive experiences in a home away from home.

Joy is the central concept in our theoretical framework since communal joy goes a long way toward creating social connectedness (Krumrei-Mancuso 2020) and changing our way of responding to the world (Chauhan et al. 2020). Many older adults at a care home emphasised the joy these music rituals generate. Jeanette noted, "Everybody dies, and it is sad, but the music sessions are fun and bring light" (Van der Merwe et al. 2021b). Joy creates a virtuous circle (Casioppo 2020) with "motivational effects that make it especially conducive to human flourishing and social bonding" (Johnson 2020b, p. 87). Farrel (Council of Europe 2009) argues that well-being within a community is one of the objectives of social cohesion. We argue joy is also a catalyst for the generation of social capital.

3.7. Bonding and Bridging Social Capital

Social capital refers to the characteristics of joyful social relationships, which may include the nature of the networks, the mechanisms to build trust within and among networks, and the norms and values required to cultivate cooperation necessary for social cohesion (Aldrich and Meyer 2015). Social capital is an outcome of the other processes in our relational theory of social cohesion through ritualised belonging.

For the purposes of our relational theoretical framework of social cohesion, we distinguish between two distinct forms of social capital: bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital refers to the formation of networks amongst individuals who share core characteristics of their identities, while bridging social capital refers to networks created amongst individuals or groups of people with different core identities (Claridge 2018). Core identity markers may include race, cultural or ethnic background,

religion, gender or mother tongue. However, there may be many intersections within one's identity, and identity itself also remains constantly in flux (Crenshaw 2017). This implies that these two forms of social capital do not function independently of each other. Within community musicking contexts, in particular, both bonding and bridging social capital may be at play. Odendaal (2021), through his metaphor of the musical home, demonstrates the need for music facilitators to negotiate both fixed boundaries (bonding social capital) and permeable networks (bridging social capital) within their musicking. Similarly, both of these forms of social capital can be seen in Hlungwani and Modise's (2021) description of student facilitators' process when building trusting relationships with vulnerable participants. Despite the interconnectedness between these two forms of social capital, it is theoretically helpful to distinguish between prominent features of bonding and bridging social capital.

Bonding social capital establishes fixed barriers to outsiders (Claridge 2018). Hlungwani and Modise (2021) and Meyer (2021) describe the strong barriers to outsiders created by a group of vulnerable children. These barriers challenged the student music facilitators involved in their service-learning project to create trusting relationships with the vulnerable children. Although the barriers to outsiders can be exclusionary, the resultant bonding capital may be a vital source of mutual support for marginalised groups in society (Claridge 2018; Putnam 2000).

Yet, despite the significance of bonding social capital as a support structure for marginalised groups in society, it may also have various negative impacts precisely because of its exclusionary nature. Shongwe (2021) and Meyer (2021) discuss the impact social exclusion continues to have on higher music education. This instance of bonding capital may be ascribed to segregation during apartheid. Bonding social capital may also lead to the creation of standards of morality, accompanied by righteous anger when these standards are violated (Collins 2004). Viviers (2021) points out that even an enterprise such as this theoretical framework (Figure 1), with its focus on community musicking for social cohesion through ritualised belonging, is vulnerable to becoming utopianist if the discourse is dominated only by consensus, as may be the case in groups relying exclusively on bonding social capital.

As opposed to bonding social capital, bridging social capital creates connections between people who would otherwise not have strong social connections with one another (Claridge 2018). McConnachie (2021) describes musicking, informed by indigenous African musics, as a possible means through which individuals from different spheres of society may create strong social bonds. Similarly, Van Heerden (2021) highlights the importance of expression, nurturing, and kindness in dance education as a possible way to foster bridging social capital. Meyer (2021) also works towards belonging at Sethaba Primary school, regardless of their differences. These three examples illustrate the positive aspects of bridging social capital clearly. Bridging social capital creates networks between individuals and communities who would otherwise not be connected. These networks may increase levels of tolerance and acceptance. The tolerance and acceptance cultivated within these bridging moments of musicking may contribute to political stability and a culture of peace (Cremin and Bevington 2017). As a ten-year-old boy stated, after a collaborative musicking performance: "It was like peace on earth. Everyone did their own thing, but it all fitted together" (Boyce-Tillman 2016a, p. 19).

We contend that the forms of musicking discussed in these three examples address issues of representation (the political dimension of social justice) and recognition (the cultural dimension of social justice), thereby helping facilitators and participants work together towards creating more equitable musicking communities. However, it also became clear in our analysis that only the representation and recognition dimensions of social justice (Fraser 2009) were affected by the bridging social capital in their musicking work. Therefore, we assert that although bridging social capital in musicking spaces may contribute towards equity (at least in terms of representation and recognition), the social mobility afforded through these networks falls short of macro-level social transformation.

3.8. Quality of Life and Individual Transformation

Despite the challenges with macro-level social transformation, individual transformation is possible through musicking (Erasmus 2021; McConnachie 2021; Orlandi 2021). Joubert and Van der Merwe (2021) argue that the positive emotions generated during music education interaction ritual chains can promote learning and moral transformation. Since musicking helps young adults living with Williams syndrome to practice life skills, it supports their personal transformation (Erasmus 2021). Fourie (2021) explains that playing the piano can add life quality and individual transformation for the elderly since playing the piano is an important part of self-care and self-validation. Similarly, professional pianists' flow experiences contribute to their life satisfaction (Orlandi 2021).

Striving for social cohesion is a complex negotiation in the space between community and individual (McConnachie 2021). Van Heerden (2021) explains that tolerance towards another is not enough for personal transformation. We must develop strategies so formerly segregated groups can strive for social transformation while honouring cultural diversity and supporting individual transformation (McConnachie 2021). Shongwe (2021) warns that we should avoid empty platitudes of hope for transformation that lack actions towards transformation. Van Rhyn's (2021) study is an example where hope and his composition process turned the mourning ritual "into an act of transformation" (p. 328).

3.9. Social Cohesion

Social capital contributes to social cohesion by creating strong networks at the macro, meso and micro levels. Fonseca et al. (2019) define social cohesion as "The ongoing process of developing well-being, sense of belonging, and voluntary social participation of the members of society, while developing communities that tolerate and promote a multiplicity of values and cultures, and granting at the same time equal rights and opportunities in society (p. 246)."

Our theoretical framework for explaining how community music engagement facilitates social cohesion through ritualised belonging is confirmed by this definition. Our framework also explains social cohesion through ritualised belonging as an iterative process, with a focus on improving the quality of life through joyful social relationships. Potgieter (2021) highlights the important relationship between spirituality, religion and meditative musicking as a means through which religious and non-religious individuals may experience different aspects of well-being in a church context. These experiences of wellbeing may be attributed to the relationality fostered through active musicking (Morelli 2021). Community music engagement afforded participants opportunities to create a sense of belonging with others (Erasmus 2021; Fourie 2021). Hope is born through this sense of belonging (Shongwe 2021; Weyer 2021).

3.10. Hope

Weyer (2021) discusses the loss of hope when one is uprooted from one's social networks. In these instances, musicking and the connections created through musicking may provide a glimmer of hope. Pilkington (2021) indicates that one may find hope through a struggle to belong musically and physically. Van Rhyn (2021) finds this hope through a composition process, where "hope turns the mourning process into an act of transformation". In this sense, the hope we are referring to as an outflow of social cohesion is not simply optimistic. Rather, this form of hope is critical and conscious (Shongwe 2021). Through the process of joyous social interactions with others in and through music, one may become more sensitised to the realities of the other, thereby becoming more aware of the need for social transformation (McConnachie 2021). The musicking connections created both within and between sections of society (through both bonding and bridging social capital) may help us understand our context better and activate our moral imagination (Lederach 2005). Critical hope, as a prerequisite for and an outcome of our collective moral imagination, stands at the centre of social transformation towards a more cohesive, more equitable society (Shongwe 2021).

4. Conclusions

Joyful experiences during community music engagement are the catalyst for spiritual experiences and social cohesion. Joy helps us to cope with adverse circumstances since abiding joy is found in something larger than ourselves (Johnson 2020a). Joy is a spiritual experience since this positive emotion promotes positive regard towards others and fosters relationships (Van Cappellen 2020). Joy helps us to imagine a better future and motivates us to stand up to injustice to bring about a better world (Johnson 2020a). "If we are dreaming of the whole world being one, it will only happen with joy" (Buxbaum 2002, p. 107). Therefore, joyful musicking rituals serve as the catalyst for hope. Hope, in turn, motivates people to engage in community musicking, which requires a bodily co-presence, fosters mutual focus of attention and promotes cooperation and trust. Musickers who share values, challenges, culture, and identity experience a joyful sense of belonging. Joy moves musickers to build bonding and bridging social capital. Musical rituals are fertile ground for reconciliation (Boyce-Tillman 2021a). Social capital improves individuals' and communities' quality of life and ultimately promotes social cohesion, which gives us hope and the musicking cycle repeats, and with every repetition, we move closer towards social cohesion through community music engagement.

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Note

[1] Both musicing and musicking is used in this article. Musicing is spelled with a "c" when referring to Elliott and Silverman's (2015) concept, and musicking with a "k"when referring to Small's (1999) concept.

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