ACTIVIST MUSICIANS:
A FRAMEWORK FOR LEADERS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

Abstract

A proposition offered in this manuscript is that activist musicians use their musical competencies to enhance their social change strategies within the local community. However, it is unclear what strategies are being utilized by local activist musicians in order to reach collective action and achieve social and political change. A self-developed framework, the Framework for Activist Musicians (FAM), portrays how an activist musician utilizes their social experiences, behaviors, and influence to enact social change. The framework delineates how a musician utilizes their music-making involvement and status to enhance their charisma and authenticity as an activist to establish social change. Additionally, the framework outlines the unique qualities of a musician and activist which make them well-prepared to be an influential community leader.

Introduction

Music is long understood as having mood-altering properties. When people allow themselves to be vulnerable to musicians or music, it has the ability to change one's mood, even allowing one to be comfortable with their vulnerability (Levitin, 2006). In allowing themselves to become vulnerable, people allow musicians to influence their emotions and mood, which ultimately leads to inspiration (Levitin, 2006). I suggest that certain factors common among performing musicians, that is, their motivation to play (self-motivation) and their commitment to craft (self-direction), undergird the gift musicians possess that allows them to be a source of inspiration to others.

It is these precise traits, motivation to play (self-motivation), and their commitment to craft (self-direction), which followers find inspirational and contribute to a musician's ability to connect with individuals. As it happens, musicians' capacity to find a source of motivation to achieve peak states of focus and creativity is unique (Woody, 2004). It is a form of thinking and behavior, which helps them be successful not only in their craft but in areas outside music.

Activists foster support for social or political causes within the local community in order to bring about change through engaged citizenship (Young, 2001). Thus, to be an activist, in general, requires an individual to influence their own behaviors and motivation and ultimately that of others. And, like musicians, their ability to do so involves mastering the art of self-direction and self-motivation.

Purpose and Objectives

There are currently no conceptual frameworks that unpack the behavioral and psychological processes

for leading within activist work. Thus, I explored how activist musicians' music-making experiences influence their activism. I allege the relationship between a musician's motivation and commitment to their craft, contribute to musicians being inherently equipped to not only lead themselves but others as well. While personality surely plays a part in the likelihood any individual will take on an activist role, I argue the leadership skills which emanate from preforming musicians' craft, self-direction, and self-motivation can prepare them more so than others to lead social change in civic society. The model described in this manuscript demonstrates how and why this may be the case.

Therefore, I discuss various constructs that contribute to one's ability to influence others towards social change. I propose a framework for illustrating the importance of each component and how each interacts with other components to bring about social change. To do so, I start by discussing the influence of musicians and then explain the role of leaders within social change movements. I then present the Framework for Activist Musician (FAM), detailing its components. The FAM illustrates one's social experiences and behaviors lead to social influence and concludes ultimately with social change.

Influence of Musicians

Research on musicians suggests they are influential in forming social bonds and improving local communities (Jones, 2010; Wilks, 2011). This is primarily accomplished through their ability to establish deep local networks of support while simultaneously extending their social networks outside of their geographical location. Establishing social ties is crucial for musicians to develop a reputation and to cultivate their social networks (Sargent, 2009).

Musicians' personalities are different from non-musicians in that they are autonomous, introverted, highly motivated, and flexible (Alter, 1989). Musicians must be able to foster effective interpersonal communication and effectively manage scrutiny by others (Woody, 1999). Overall, research on musicians' personalities is unclear and varies based on training, performance, genre, gender, culture, and environment. However, research suggests musicians are influential in communities through their acts of music-making curricula, regulation of social cohesion, creation of protest music, and merely holding the status of musician (Bowman, 2009; Haycock, 2015; Ivaldi & O'neill, 2010).

Social Movements. At the core of social movements are activists. And while it is true that at times an activist will work alone, more often, an activist attempts to influence others to support a social movement (Morris, Morris, & Mueller, 1992). Such movements are not possible without individuals who initiate action. Leaders within social movements accept responsibility to create opportunities for others to participate and create change (Ganz, 2010). In fact, the role of leadership within social movements goes beyond the cliché archetype of a leader's charismatic persona (Ganz, 2010). This is because individuals engage in activist work for many different reasons, ultimately considering the perceived costs and benefits of participation (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987).

Activism emerges from the strong support for the values and goals of a particular movement (Marx & McAdam, 1994). Nonetheless, leaders are critical to social movements. Within activism, leadership is developed at all levels within the movement (e.g., encouragement, recruitment, mobilization, knowledge sharing) (Ganz, 2010). However, in order to create, inspire, and encourage others to become change agents, someone must initiate action to begin the process towards a collaborative effort of social change.

Composition of leadership of social movement.

It is the educational capital that one possesses, which is considered to be a key resource for many effective leaders within social movements (Morris & Staggenborg, 2004). However, the importance of the composition of leadership within social movements should not be concerned with demographics, but the quality of leadership and his or her ability to turn opportunity into purpose (Ganz, 2011). Additionally, leaders are responsible for mobilizing others to achieve purpose under conditions of ambiguity, translate values into action, and utilize narratives as a source of learning (Ganz, 2011).

Social movement leaders tend to major in the social sciences, humanities, and arts (Morris & Staggenborg, 2004). The proposition is that the values learned from their upbringing, and these fields impart movement-appropriate skills, which situate them to be effective leaders within social movements (Morris & Staggenborg, 2004). Leaders within social movement can advance others through their commitment to education for themselves and their followers (Morris & Staggenborg, 2004). Many social movement leaders ascend to their leadership roles based on skills acquired in previous social movement experiences (Morris & Staggenborg, 2004).

Leadership within social movements requires an in-depth understanding of the role emotions have in influencing others (Ganz, 2011). Thus, leaders engage others in purposeful action by mobilizing those emotions to facilitate action (Ganz, 2011). Furthermore, this includes engaging others in an emotional dialogue in order to inspire hope and belief in others (charisma) (Ganz, 2011). Thus, the art of storytelling (one's story of self) can be an integral strategy for leaders within social change.

The Framework for Activist Musicians

The framework described herein, the Framework for Activist Musicians (FAM), evolves from work grounded in self-leadership (Neck & Houghton, 2006)

and musicians' craft (Woody, 2004). The concepts of self-direction and self-motivation as they apply to musicians make up this framework (Neck & Houghton, 2006). I offer this framework to collectively explain the phenomenon of activist musicians who engage in social change through their ability to evoke, enhance, and maintain social ties through their status as a musician and their artistry. Furthermore, *leadership* within the context of activism inside the FAM is operationalized as, "an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes" (Rost, 1993, p. 102).

The FAM contains elements such as an individual's self-concept, their ability to express desirable behaviors, exercise social influence, and implement motivational strategies. Figure 1 is a visual representation of the framework. I suggest that activist musicians use competencies in the framework to elicit social change within a local community. Overall, the model illustrates the connections among these competencies and offers a structure for collecting evidence on the leadership strategies for activist musicians.

The model unpacks how an activist musician utilizes their skills and status within his or her artform to enhance their ability to achieve social change. In other words, it illustrates how one's behavior and social influence can encourage others to be involved in social change. Thus, the model suggests that an individual's ability to enact social change is enriched through their music-making involvement and status and revolves around the skills learned in their artform.

On the left of the FAM are the components *activist musician* and *self-concept.* For this framework, an *activist* is one who attempts to bring about social change (Curtin & McGarty, 2016). Activism includes activities such as: encouraging people, mobilizing people, recruiting people, and creating public awareness (Curtin & McGarty, 2016), many times in the name of seeding, cultivating, and harvesting social justice. At times, activists work independently, but often they attempt to influence others to support

specific movements (Morris, Morris, & Mueller, 1992).

Moreover, in this framework, a *musician* is one who engages in vocal, instrument, or digital music making in an independent or collaborative effort, with a current or past public performance regimen. Local musicians may extend their base of support and reach new audiences through their craft or the skills learned within their craft. This is achieved by maintaining social ties and gaining access to diverse audiences through information and communication technologies.

Figure 1 - Framework for Activist Musicians
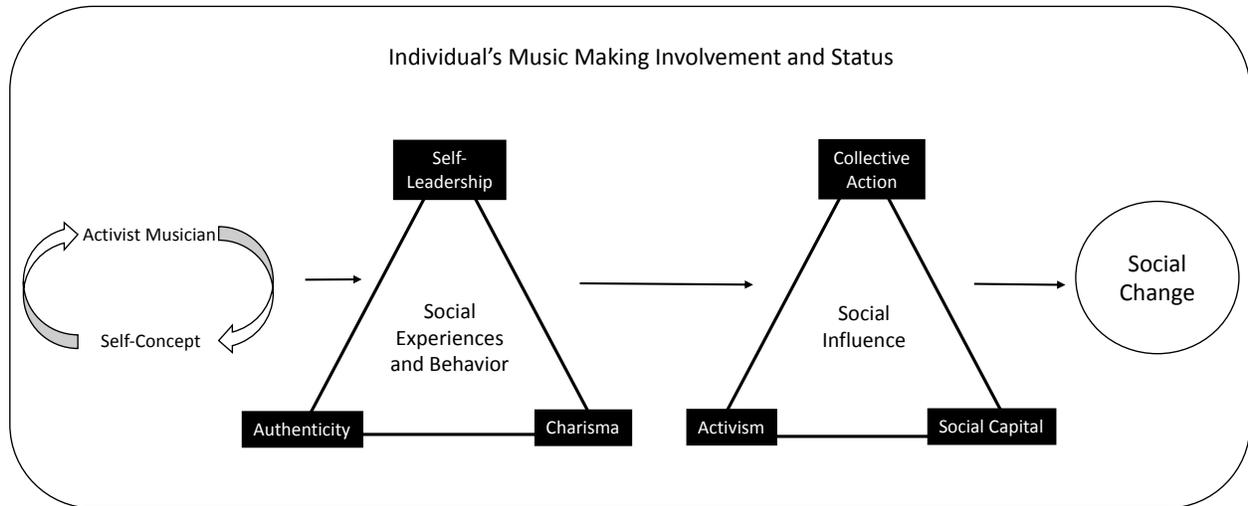
Self-concept refers to an individual's perception of themselves. The perceptions are produced through one's experiences with significant others and their environment. These perceptions are significant in understanding how an individual behaves (Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976). Furthermore, self-concept is a process in which an individual conceptualizes themselves through self-reflexivity as a physical, social, and spiritual person (Gecas, 1982).

Self-concept provides a framework that guides the interpretation of one's social experiences and social behavior and includes social perception (understanding how others judge them), situation and partner choice (knowledge of self and situations), interaction strategies (how one shapes a particular identity in the mind of an audience member), and reactions to feedback (attune to both reactions of others and own behaviors) (Markus & Wurf, 1987).

In connecting these two concepts, *activist musician*

and *self-concept*, we get a continuous process of self-evaluation. Overall, an individual's self-concept is important in understanding one's motivation and behavior. It requires self-reflexivity and provides a framework for how individuals navigate relationships and interact within their environment. It also describes an ongoing process in which individuals continually evaluate themselves based on personal and environmental experiences. This interaction is represented on the left of the model as a process of self-reflexivity using cyclical arrows linking activist musician to self-concept. According to the FAM, as the activist musician engages in self-reflexivity to determine his or her self-concept, they are also evaluating themselves based on their social experiences and social behavior.

Social Experiences and Behavior. In the second part of the FAM, one finds the zone of *social experiences and*

behavior. In order to encourage, recruit, mobilize, and share knowledge within social movements, activists must first inspire others based on their behaviors. These behaviors go beyond one's stereotypical charismatic persona and include one's authenticity and the method in which he or she attempts social change. These constructs are found within the zone of *social experiences and behavior*. Additionally, these social experiences and behaviors include the skills and competencies learned within their craft and translated into their initiation of social movements (music making involvement and status).

Within the FAM, three elements represent an activist musician's social experiences and behavior. These elements include their level of authenticity, charisma, and self-leadership. This process is depicted within the triangle to the right of *activist musician* and *self-concept*. Each element works in tandem with the other to describe an individual's characteristics, behaviors, motivation, and purpose. I will explain each in turn here.

Authenticity. Authenticity, in the FAM, is the perception by self and others that one's actions are those of their true self. Authenticity represents an individual's behaviors, thoughts, and feelings that reflect their true self or "the unobstructed operation of one's true- or core-self in one's daily enterprise" (Kernis and Goldman, 2006 p. 294). There are interrelated subcomponents that represent four distinct aspects of authenticity: awareness, unbiased processing, behavior, and relational orientation.

Within the FAM, authenticity describes an individual's behaviors, thoughts, and feelings, which represent their true self. Furthermore, authenticity describes an individual's ability and desire to have an awareness of one's true-self, motivation to process information and evaluate themselves objectively, use actions that are congruent with their values, preferences, and needs, and act openly, sincerely, and truthfully in one's close relationships.

Charisma. Charisma, in the FAM, is the ability to utilize personality characteristics and behaviors to establish an emotional influence relationship. Scholars have grappled with defining charisma and offer a variety of definitions. For the FAM, Spencer's (1973) definition of charisma is used due to the importance of an activist musician's artistry or status may have in enhancing an emotional influence relationship.

Spencer (1973) defines charisma as "affectual relationship between leaders and followers developing as the historical product of the interaction between person and situation" (p. 352), which includes the influence of emotions one has on another. In this sense, he describes charismatic leadership as an emotional influence relationship based on interaction, time, and setting.

Self-Leadership. The last component in *social experiences and behavior* is *self-leadership*. Self-leadership is the process of influencing one's self toward accomplishing goals (Neck & Houghton, 2006), and includes an individual's ability to influence his or her motivation and behavior (Manz, 1986). The term is deeply rooted in two areas of psychology, which are self-regulation theory and social cognitive theory (Neck, Manz, & Houghton, 2019). Both are integral in shaping one's behaviors and cognitive attitudes (Neck, Manz, & Houghton, 2019).

Self-Regulation Theory. Self-regulation functions through a set of psychological subsets which must be developed and utilized for self-directed change (Bandura, 1991). Self-regulation theory describes the actions in which individuals manage their behavior through a process similar in the way a thermostat senses temperature variation and initiates a signal to increase or decrease the temperature (Neck & Houghton, 2006). In addition, self-regulation theory suggests people will adjust their effort and attempt to change their behavior if a deficit exists between one's actual level of performance and the standard (Neck, Manz, & Houghton, 2019). Overall, the

individual is striving to improve their performance and eliminate the difference between his or her level of performance and the standard.

Social Cognitive Theory.   Social cognitive theory describes human behavior as a triadic reciprocal relationship among internal influences, external influences, and behavior (Bandura, 1988). Additionally, social cognitive theory suggests that the foundational structure of one's self-regulatory system is comprised of self-monitoring, self-judgments, and self-reactions (Neck & Houghton, 2006). The basic assumption surrounding social cognitive theory is that individuals have control over setting their own performance objectives (Neck & Houghton, 2006). Thus, individuals set goals based on a dual control system of discrepancy production and discrepancy reduction (Neck, Manz, & Houghton, 2019).

Self-Leadership Strategies.   The process by which individuals influence their motivation and behavior to successfully execute a performance is referred as self-leadership. It is conceptualized as behavioral strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought pattern strategies, all influencing behavior (Manz, 1986). Self-leadership strategies fall into three categories: behavior focused, natural reward, and constructive thought pattern approaches (Neck & Houghton, 2006).

Behavior-Focused Strategies.   Behavioral focused strategies are intended to enhance an individual's self-awareness. Self-awareness refers to the ability of an individual to recognize, identify, and understand themselves, by reflecting on their emotions, motives, values, and identity (Northouse, 2016). Behavioral strategies to enhance self-awareness include self-observation (introspection), goal setting, self-rewards (positive reinforcement), self-punishment, and self-cueing.

Natural-Reward Strategies.   Natural reward strategies create conditions in which individuals are motivated by the inherently gratifying aspects of the activity. They are intended to develop a setting which is encouraging or rewarding. Naturally rewarding activities has three primary functions: to make one feel more competent, to help one feel self-controlling, and provide a sense of purpose (Neck, Manz, & Houghton, 2019). The activities that make an individual more competent are often tied to external rewards in some way. Additionally, these activities provide a sense of self-control and purpose. These practices include building natural rewards into one's life (finding ways to make activities more enjoyable) or focusing on natural rewards (focusing on the positive aspects) (Neck, Manz, & Houghton, 2019).

Constructive Thought-Focused Strategies. Constructive thought pattern strategies are intended to enable the development of constructive thought patterns and routine ways of thinking. These strategies include identifying and replacing dysfunctional beliefs and assumptions, mental imagery (cognitive creation of an experience before physical movement), and positive self-talk (mental self-evaluations and what individuals covertly tell themselves) (Neck & Houghton, 2006). Overall, cognitive thought pattern strategies are designed to enhance positive thinking.

Identifying the process by which musician activists achieve focus and motivation can help clarify how they lead others in supporting specific causes. However, without these strategies, an activist musician is merely a musician with strong beliefs and opinions. They may communicate these messages through their music making experiences or simply holding the status of musician within the local community.

In sum, the *social experiences and behavior* illustrates the importance of one's behaviors in encouraging, recruiting, mobilizing, and sharing knowledge within

social movements. Overall, activists must first inspire others based on their behaviors before establishing social ties.

Social Influence. The next component of the FAM is the zone *of social influence.* As activist musicians influence others within social movements, they capitalize on their ability to impact, persuade, and lead others. These influences extend from the zone of *social experiences and behaviors* to include aspects related to social bonds. These constructs are found in the zone of *social influence*. These social influences enhance social bonds and are a driving force behind actions towards social change. Three major elements comprise the zone of *social influence*: activism, social capital, and collective action.

Activism. The method by which people attempt social change is referred to in the FMA as activism. Activism includes encouraging people, recruiting people, mobilizing people, and creating public awareness (Curtin & McGarty, 2016). The end goal of activism is to bring about change through engaged citizenship (Young, 2001). These methods have been used historically to bring about changes in social justice (i.e., awareness of police brutality, desegregation, and women's suffrage).

Activists can be defined as "people who actively work for social or political causes and especially those who actively encourage others to support those causes" (Curtin & McGarty, 2016 p. 228), which may include the recruitment and mobilization of people. While some research examined the detailed aspects of mobilizing participation in social movements (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987), research focusing on what activists do is somewhat limited (Curtin & McGarty, 2016). Furthermore, there is limited information on the strategies activists utilize to lead others in supporting specific causes. However, it clear that in order to lead others, one must create a bond with those he or she is leading. These social ties help create sustainable networks in which activists focus their activism.

Social Capital. Social capital refers to one's investment in social ties and their expectations of returns on that social investment (Lin, 2017), often seen as benefits attained through membership in networks or other social structures (Portes, 1998). Expected returns on investment can be in the form of information (useful knowledge about opportunities or choices), influence (effecting decisions), and social credentials (vouching for an individual and recognizing worthiness). Furthermore, social capital is concerned with how individuals participate in social relationships and how they spend resources in the interactions to generate a return (Lin, 2017).

Social capital is created through changes in relations among individuals who facilitate action. In order to build social capital, an individual must be able to relate to others and is contingent upon elements of obligations, expectations, and trustworthiness (Coleman, 1988). This model suggests activist musicians use charisma, authenticity, and self-leadership strategies to establish relationships and influence others. In addition, he or she uses their music making experiences and status within the local community to enhance these relationships through the triangle of social experiences and behavior. Through this process, the activist musician is able to directly attain social capital, which is depicted as an arrow from the triangle of social experience and behavior.

Collective Action. Collective action is ultimately the mobilization of people. Mobilization within social movements is critical for leaders. This requires a leader to hold sufficient social capital and have an in-depth understanding of the role emotions have in influencing others (Ganz, 2011). Additionally, leaders engage others in purposeful action by mobilizing those emotions to facilitate collective action (Ganz, 2011).

The process of mobilizing people to actively participate in social and political causes is referred to in the

model as collective action. Additionally, collective action is a process by which individuals act together to enhance their status and accomplish a common objective (Olson, 1965). The concept of collective action also includes three major motivational factors that attract individuals to participate in social causes (van Zomeran, Postmes, & Spears, 2008). The three motivational factors are injustice, efficacy, and identity, which may predict participation in different social contexts. Injustice refers to one's perception of inequality experienced or recognized. Efficacy denotes one's desire to make a change, and identity indicates one's strong and internal obligation to participate (van Zomeren et al., 2008).

In sum, each element of the zone of *social influence* effects the other, and when taken in totality, the triangle describes an individual's ability to use social influence to create social change. An activist's strategies can influence social capital and, in turn, lead to collective action. Thus, the level of attraction one has on followers can enhance social change through these social influences.

Social Change.   The last component of the FAM is *social change*, which is the culmination of the framework. This includes the activist musician's self-concept, experiences, music making involvement, behaviors, methods, and strategies of social influence towards social of political change. All components within the FAM work harmoniously to illustrate the culmination of one's influence in leading others within social change.

Methodology

A collective case study design (Stake, 1995) was used to develop the FAM. This interpretive case study was designed to understand activist work among individual musicians and explore commonalities across the cases. Individual interviews were used to gain a comprehensive understanding of how the music making experiences of activist musicians translated into their activist work.

Defining the Cases.   In this study, an activist is defined as one who attempts to bring about social change. A musician is defined as one who engages in vocal, instrument, or digital music making in an independent or collaborative effort and has a current or past public performance regimen. An activist musician is defined as one whose self-identification as a musician meets the definition above in conjunction with their activist role.

This study utilized a two-tier approach for the identification and recruitment of individuals (i.e., musicians). Each individual (or case) was bounded by three criteria. First, individuals were selected based on my knowledge of their experiences and behaviors regarding their musicianship and activist work. Second, the individuals engaged in vocal, instrument, or digital music making in an independent or collaborative effort. Finally, these individuals use their music or musical training skills to foster support for social or political causes within the local community. In this tier, three participants were identified.

The second tier for recruitment was chain referral. This method is primarily used to contact individuals who may be hidden (exact size of the sample is unknown) or hard to reach (difficult to access) (Bagheri & Saadati, 2015). Thus, individual participants were asked to provide information on potential individuals who met the case criteria. In this tier, an additional four participants were identified for a total of 7 individual cases.

Data Collection.   Two primary instruments were used for data collection: the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ), and a semi-structured interview protocol. Interviews were conducted in a conversational mode to help establish an individualized relationship with each participant

(Yin, 2016). All interview questions were open-ended with follow-up questions, probing questions, and specifying questions (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2009) based on the scores of the RSLQ.

The questionnaire data and interview data were collected case by case in the participant's setting of choice. Each participant was contacted by email to schedule a day, time, and location for a meeting. The following procedures were used. First, each participant was asked to either confirm or deny being an activist musician (self-concept). Second, I asked the participant to complete the RSLQ, using a university-provided computer with the web-based survey system, Qualtrics. Once the participant completed the RSLQ, I used a separate university computer to analyze their responses to obtain mean scores on each of the participant's RSLQ sub-dimensions. Mean scores were calculated also using the web-based survey system, Qualtrics. There are nine sub-dimensions on the RSLQ: five sub-scales on behavior-focused strategies, a single sub-scale on natural reward strategies, and three sub-scales on constructive thought strategies.

Once I calculated the mean scores of the RSLQ sub-dimensions for the participants, I rank-ordered the sub-dimensions from highest to lowest. I used the participants' top four highest-scoring sub-dimensions to guide my interview questions and protocol. I then proceeded with the interview. At the conclusion of each interview, I asked each participant to refer me to other potential research participants based on the criteria defining an activist musician.

Instruments. The RSLQ is a 35-item scale designed to measure three dimensions of self-leadership (behavior focused strategies, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought strategies (Neck & Houghton, 2006), which align with self-leadership theory. Participants were asked to respond to each question according to how accurate they are in describing personal behaviors. The more closely the statements align with the perceived behaviors, the higher the score.

Interviews were conducted face-to-face at places and times of the participant's choosing to better reveal the personal and private self of the participants (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Interview questions were developed based on a review of the literature, the RSLQ, and constructs of Curtin and McCarty's (2016) definition of activist: encouragement, recruitment, mobilization, knowledge sharing. Additionally, participants were asked to discuss their musical experiences and how those translated into their activist work.

Data Analysis. Data analysis included an in-situ analysis of RSLQ results, described above, and an examination of participant backgrounds to provide baseline data associated with the individual. Interview data were analyzed using an inductive approach, which involved discovering patterns, themes, and categories among data (Patton, 2001). Themes were identified through thematic analysis (first cycle), and intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences were examined through narrative coding (second cycle) methods. Thematic coding was used to assess the categories for analysis, and narrative coding was used to identify the participants' subject positioning and presentation of self (Saldaña, 2015). Furthermore, descriptive findings were organized using Dedoose software package, and then a cross-case analysis was conducted to analyze topics (Patton, 2001).

Case Findings

Interview data revealed a variety of methods utilized by participants to initiate social change. Initiating change is conceptualized in the forms of encouragement, recruitment, and the mobilization of individuals. Overall, participants aligned themselves with causes and initiated social change movements related to city budget proposals, housing inequalities, racial injustice, refugee resettlement, financial inequalities related to local union members, youth

mentorship and resources for individuals affected by poverty, and teachers within public education.

A total of seven individual cases were constructed. Pseudonyms have been used for participants to protect their identities.

Activist Strategies. When discussing how participants encouraged other community members to be involved, a majority of participants described methods for making others feel comfortable, and role modeling desired behaviors. For example, Larry explains, "being very humble" and to "show the stuff we focus on impacts your life" in order to get people involved in the city budget planning initiative. Similarly, Mia describes, "I think a lot of what we work to produce is like trying to meet people where they are" in regard to refugee resettlement. Additionally, Joe explains, "it's just basically listening for hanging points…you listen for things that they found dishonorable" in regard to local union issues. Eddie describes, "first, allowing people to feel comfortable with conflict" as the first step in encouraging others in regard to racial injustice.

Several participants described the importance of modeling desired behaviors as a source of encouragement for others. For example, Freddy explains, "I'm more of a doer, so I think my first motivation piece is when people see me active… leading by example" in regard to youth mentorship. Similarly, Marvin describes, "I'm a lead by example person…I feel like if people see you get enough stuff done, they start to believe that they can walk with you in that process" in regard to housing inequalities.

When discussing the recruitment of others to participate in social change movements, participants discussed how to appeal to others based on various circumstances. For instance, Freddy explains, "empowering them to drive themselves…they seem to be more excited because now they're creating everything" in regard to organizing a coat drive for youth. Joe describes, "it's like networking…just kind of making connections and slowly build from there"

when discussing a racial justice movement. Similarly, Vic explains, "you just have to make it more important somehow and each person is different…there are different people that I would approach differently" in regard to teacher sickouts.

When discussing mobilizing efforts, participants addressed the importance of collaboration and envisioning the benefit of cooperation. For instance, Freddy discussed, "I'm like, I need to make this less about me and make this more collaborative" in reference to improving a water drive he initially started independently. Mia explains, "it's a combination of the soup that we're all living in right now" in regard to everyone working together towards refugee resettlement policy change. Marvin reports, "ultimately everything comes down to trust… trust takes time, and it takes me being genuine and honest, there's no shortcut" in regard to housing inequalities. Additionally, Eddie uses the following analogy in regard to his leadership of a local initiative to remove public monuments of confederate soldiers

I called it the Voltron…So, Voltron essentially was this giant robot that was made up of five smaller robots. And when they came together, they created Voltron the defender of the universe. But if you only have one, even if it was just one missing, you couldn't have Voltron. So, everybody knew they had to come together and show up the best way.

Knowledge Sharing. Interviews revealed a wide range of social and/or political cause alignment among participants. Overall, participants aligned themselves with causes and shared knowledge related to city budget proposals, housing inequalities, racial injustice, refugee resettlement, financial inequalities related to local union members, youth mentorship and resources for individuals affected by poverty, and teachers within public education. Knowledge sharing strategies between activist musicians also varied based on specific causes and/or populations. For instance, Larry explains, "I wouldn't say that we have a main way or that I have a main way. A lot of it's like talking with people" in regard to housing inequalities. Freddy explains the knowledge sharing

process based on different generations and their preferred social media platforms:

I know that when I want to engage youth with some sort of knowledge, I'm on Instagram because that's what they use. You know age fifteen you know twenty, thirty okay Instagram, Snapchat. So, I'm utilizing that for messaging for young people. But with Facebook it's older, you know people my age tend to be on Facebook's been around longer so a bit easier to use so whenever I have messaging for that age group or demographic, I'm using Facebook...

Similarly, Mia states, "we have a smaller self-selecting community who are part of our online community who receive even more information and resources because they've opted into that we have our social media channels," in regard to refugee resettlement. Additionally, Joe reports, "the best way is to use a social media platform. Whether it be Facebook, Twitter Instagram – those like are good ways for you to share knowledge" in regard to racial injustice. Eddie describes the knowledge sharing process in regard to racial inequalities and adjusting the process based on context:

I'm handing out literature and I think that generally like once we talked about like so specifically to racial injustice. Most of the time when you explain to people that this space, where the two statues where is the site of a former slave auction block and that there are some tunnels underneath where they used to take, you know move people back and forth...two men who literally fought to uphold slavery standing on pedestals on the space where people were bought and sold. Once you got to that part most of the time people were already like on board. But again, I think each movement in each thing is going to be completely different.

Furthermore, Vic explains, "I think yes, personal dialogue...and then there's a lot of Tweeting" in regard to public education.

When asked to describe successful knowledge sharing practices a majority of responses focused on effective communication and human connection. For instance, Larry describes:

"I'm not a budget expert for the city and I'm not a public policy expert. Because of that I think it is easier for me to communicate those topics with people. It's like I don't have a degree in that, but I have experience of that..."

Also, Mia describes how success is defined in the context of knowledge sharing:

...yeah I travel and teach and do presentations all over the country but in terms of success, I think one of the areas that we need to improve upon is like what is the measure of success... at the end of the day, any of one of those engagements that's good...being able to bring somebody along.

Furthermore, Marvin explains the importance of understanding your audience's preferred method of communication in regard to knowledge sharing methods:

I would also you know, going back to that sort of overarching mandate of equity. I have realized that everybody communicates differently. Some people even though most you know, most people have a smartphone where they have text message, they have Facebook Messenger, they have email. They can make phone calls, but everybody communicates differently.

When asked to describe unsuccessful knowledge sharing efforts, a majority of participants focused on their weaknesses as a potential cause. Larry explains, "I mean there's so many reasons, right? People don't care, okay that's like one. I'm probably bad at sharing information sometimes." Similarly, Freddy describes:

...Yeah I think Twitter was something that was huge when I was a more engaged musician...but kind of reached a disconnect because I took a year off...then when I got back like it was just that's just how fast things was totally different so here I am trying to get messaging out there to promote events, community,

and issues and I'm getting little-to-no feedback. And it was really like, you know I really had to take a crash course...

Furthermore, Marvin explains:

...understanding what the essential information is without omitting information. And that's you know that might be as accurate that might be the key to life- because you know you try to figure out what all needs to be in there without overwhelming people... my role is to show up prepared and do and like do the work in advance and be ready to go when the moment happens yeah and so it's very difficult.

When participants were asked to describe how their music making experiences connect with their activist work, a majority of participants described the similarities of listening and connecting with others in music as they do within their activist work. Similarly, their responses mirrored their answers when describing successful knowledge sharing strategies. For instance, Larry describes:

...You have to show up prepared to those right and if you are not prepared everything, everyone else's part. Like your whole is dependent on each part you know...the whole is contingent upon the sum of the parts... we're trained to listen and adapt to others right. We're trained to like...everyone's playing this particular note flat I'm going to have to play it a little bit flat even if I'm correct because I need to match. Because the group's more important to me and so you know it is at the root of it...

Freddy explains how the music making experiences translate into networking:

There's a grind to music...to get your music out there, you want people to hear you. So, it taught me how to network, it taught me how to present things you know which is helping with funding our engagement...so I think that experience of trying to connect with people and networking has helped me so much as an activist. Like I don't think I'd be able to do what I'm doing if it wasn't from that experience specifically.

Similarly, Mia describes:

I think that because music requires that you listen to the people, you're playing music with. Like you have to, like I said earlier when I was talking about skill sharing and knowledge sharing and listening to other people and then learning how to move forward together. That's very much just like how musicians act when they're playing together. If you're going to listen and play off each other and like figure out where you're going with any kind of musical pursuits. So, I think that that's given me a lot of the ways that I lead and how I work with groups is usually based on listening to the input of the people in the room.

Furthermore, Joe describes the importance of communicating and networking:

I would say just... you have to talk to people get them on your side, like to listen like you talk to people and then you listen to people at these shows. You listen to them tell you about their ten favorite artists and then you make those connections...just like the way that you have to grind especially in rap music to like get some sort of notoriety or for people to start checking for your music you got to do the same type of legwork.

Conductor of Social Change. The overall music making experiences of participants in conjunction with their methods for initiating change and knowledge sharing, leads me to conceptualize activist musicians within the local community as conductors of social change. Orchestra conductors are important for a variety of reasons, though many may think they are responsible for simply waving their hands. However, conductors are also responsible for timing, communications with musicians, coordinated action of the orchestra, and expressive behavior (Volpe, et al., 2016). Thus, as a metaphor, I have conceptualized activist musicians as conductors of social change based on the similarities in characteristics. Just as a conductor leads an orchestra through a performance utilizing these four main characteristics, the same can be seen and heard through activist musicians in social change movements. The following table describes the similarity of characteristics of both conductor and activist musician.

Table 1 – Conductor of Social Change

Characteristic	Definition	Orchestra Conductor	Activist Musician
Timing	Arrange when something should happen.	Coordinates timing of the music to support synchronicity of musicians.	Obtaining and sharing knowledge and information in a timely manner among followers of social change.
Communication	Responsible for group information flow among individuals to facilitate understanding among everyone.	Relays information to higher ranking musicians, who are then responsible for continued information flow to others of the same instrument family.	Disseminates knowledge and information effectively among followers of social change.
Coordinated Action	Synchrony between actions performed by two or more individuals.	Uses her/his motor behavior to drive the players towards a common aesthetic goal (sensorimotor conversation with musicians to perform a task).	Responsible for initiating action towards social change.
Expressive Behavior	Aspects of conduct which are discernable by others.	Expressive musical conception of the piece (expressive movement).	Role model behavior expected for successful social change initiatives.

Limitations

This study has limitations related to the study sample and the method of chain referral. First, the sample of activist musicians was relatively homogenous. A majority of participants were males, and some considered themselves as "classically trained" musicians. Secondly, this study focused on a single county within a single state. Therefore, findings may not be generalizable to other counties or states. Lastly, chain referral sampling can be considered biased based on the inter-relationships participants have to one another (Bagheri & Saadati, 2015). Thus, it may not be an effective method for yielding reliable estimates of total population size.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Initiating social change is primarily based on several principles, which include leadership as a socially responsible process, a collaborative process, accessible to all people, value-based, and acknowledges the significance of community involvement and service in the process (Komives, 2016). Additionally, initiating social change requires a flock leadership process in which one initiates the group's coordinated movement towards a goal (Amornbunchornvej & Berger-Wolf, 2018). Furthermore, initiating social change movements requires learning and the exchange of information among communities of place, practice, and interest (Von Krogh, 2011).

Results indicate activist musicians in the local community have initiated various social change movements related to housing inequalities, racial injustice, refugee resettlement, financial inequalities related to local union members, youth mentorship and resources for individuals affected by poverty, and teachers within public education. A majority of participants vary their knowledge sharing methods based on generational differences and specific social change movements. Additionally, a majority of participants articulated the importance of

communication and human connection regarding their successes. However, a majority of participants emphasized themselves when describing their unsuccessful methods of knowledge sharing for a variety of reasons (poor communication, lack of social media knowledge, deciphering how much information to share).

Perhaps the most salient finding was how participants conceptualized their music making experiences within the activist work. They believe success is dependent upon effective communication, human connection, and their responsibilities within the overall effort. They focus on their responsibilities towards the collective effort and critique themselves when efforts are unsuccessful. Additionally, they understand the knowledge sharing process requires effective communication skills, establishing rapport, and the ability to critique one's self. Activist musicians have inherently performed these skills through their artistry and articulate how these skills translate to their activist work. Thus, essentially making them conductors of social change movements within the local community.

This research also provides an implicit argument for the importance of music education. This study revealed the importance of each participant's music-making involvement (listening and solidarity) in regard to leadership, community education, and social change. Perhaps, music education is the best training one can receive when discussing the constructs related to leadership, community education, and social change. The skills of adaptability, resiliency, and visioning seem to come naturally for musicians. Additionally, musicians are passionate, clear in formulating their own values, and capable of reframing the mindset of failure as challenges from which to learn. Lastly, there is an opportunity to encourage participating in music-making experiences to further social change leadership. Ultimately, utilizing music as a tool to enhance both leadership capacity and social change outcomes.

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