**Precarity en double: The Effect of COVID-19 on Musicians**

**The case of Greece**

Student Name: Zografini Maria
Student Number: 583389
Supervisor: Dr. Sven-Ove Horst

Master Media Studies - Media & Bussiness
Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication

Erasmus University Rotterdam

**Abstract**

This research reveals the struggles musicians faced during the pandemic and how COVID-19 impacted them on various levels of their livelihood. To achieve this, the research employs an interdisciplinary approach to show how those levels interrelate. By exploring how the cancellation of their activities, the loss of connection with their colleagues but also their audience impacted their professional development and made them re interpret their working identity, the focus is on the way they managed to adapt and cope, to sustain themselves economically. The psychological impact played an important role as well as their coping mechanisms as to better understand which habits and practices propelled them forwards despite all difficulties. Thus, the research question is "How has COVID-19 impacted musicians' professional, economical and psychological wellbeing and how do they cope with the experienced difficulties?"

Eleven semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted digitally with musicians from diverse backgrounds, ages and at different stages of their career. This data was fully transcribed and later analyzed with thematic content analysis that revealed five categories with fifteen subcategories. The main categories were formulated in a way to cover the different parts of the research question, meaning the economical, the professional, psychological impact and the coping mechanisms. Surprisingly, another category came up, which concerned the positive impact that the virus had on them.

The overall aim of this study was to gain a glimpse as to how COVID-19 impacted the sector of Arts and Culture by focusing on one specific segment of performing artists, musicians. This study contributes to better understanding how the music industry was affected by the virus while having a more human centered approach. It offers an in depth understanding on the way the struggles posed by COVID-19 affected musicians on various levels as it shaped not only their present but also possibly their future. The difficulties which they encountered during this period concerning their economic sustenance and their professional development impacted them also on psychological level indicating how for artists personal and professional identity are interconnected. It also indicates how this experience altered them and made them re interpret their working identity and how it taught them to cope with all kinds of adversities. Through their solidarity during these times of crisis, their spirit of

entrepreneurialism but also their love for what they do, they once again showed the dedication to their art and their faith towards music's contribution to the world.

By reviewing musicians working conditions before the apparition of the virus and exploring the difficulties they currently undergo this research indicates how musicians experience a double sense of precarity. By pointing out these difficulties this study paints the landscape as to how the people who are professionally engaged in the field of Arts and Culture are in need of more practical support and additional policies not only as to recuperate for their losses but also in order to secure their sustenance and their blooming in the future.

KEY WORDS: COVID-19, musicians, effect, livelihood, coping

# Table of contents

**Preface**

Firstly, I would like to thank my sister, my friends and my cat, all of whom helped me greatly with their emotional support these difficult months. Completing a master during a pandemic was quite an experience to say the least but their daily motivation, pep talks and cuddles were more than enough to keep me sane. I am immensely grateful to have you always by my side.

I would like to thank my supervisor Sven-Ove Horst and Sylvia Holla for being supportive of my idea and sharing my enthusiasm for this subject from the very beginning. With their advice they helped me take this thesis hopefully to another level.

Finally, this thesis would not have been possible without the help of all the participants, the musicians who so voluntarily and gladly shared their experiences and information on the subject. This study is dedicated to them and all musicians who are going through a very harsh time, as a small sign of gratitude for all they have offered to me personally and to the world with their art. I hope we find ourselves singing together once again soon!

Thank you,

Maria

**Introduction**

When the coronavirus (COVID-19) was officially declared as a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) to limit its spread and life-threatening consequences on public health, governments proceeded in taking various precaution measures, such as the enacting of social distancing policy and even mandated national lockdowns. All the activities that were deemed "non-essential" were halted as there was an intensified need for "shelter at home" restrictions (Stanford, 2020). Although there is a large body of literature examining the effects of COVID-19, research on the cultural sector which according to economic indicators is one of the most affected and the one that will experience the slowest recovery (UNESCO, 2020), remains underdeveloped.

The research is *theoretically relevant* because the contribution of art and culture during the pandemic, as Jeannotte (2021) points out, was one of utmost importance since they provided an essential form of social service, a source of diversion, inspiration and "solace" to the people suffering from the effects of their mandatory enclosure. This view is also expressed by McNiff (1981) who underlines that the engagement of an individual with the arts during personal and collective struggle can be proved to be very empowering, as it reminds them of their active role in the "life process" and of their power to transform their internal and external realities (p.6). Despite the positive impact of music being studied from different focal points, there is few research on the way COVID-19 has impacted the individuals that are the creative force of this domain.

As pointed out by Zendel (2020) due to the repercussions of COVID-19, music industry has succumbed to a "state of arrythmia" (p.14). Research on the issue is essential as according to Garland (2020) musicians' options to make a living through their art have been drastically reduced. The impact of the virus on musicians is expected to be not only immediate, due to their inability to perform live which is the primary source of income (Baym, 2018) but also long lasting, as the venues where they performed are likely to close even permanently (Jackson, 2020). Additionally, as Fuchs (2020, p. 378) notes COVID -19 has provoked a "radical rupture and reorganization of people's social life" as there has been a disruption in terms of space and time which has caused the collapse of boundaries between the private and public sphere and between work and leisure.  Since the nature of musicians' work requires of them to perform live in venues or public spaces and establish connections with their audience (Baym, 2018)

it becomes apparent that the convergence of all aspects of life in the "locale of home" (Fuchs, 2020, p. 378) has serious implications on their livelihoods. It is thus reasonable to assume that due to the current circumstances, their potentials to realize their role and working identity are impeded. This paper aims to explore the effect of the virus on various levels of musicians' livelihoods and their coping mechanisms. The research question is formulated as following:

"How has COVID-19 impacted musicians' professional, economical and psychological wellbeing and how do they cope with the experienced difficulties?"

In order to explore the research question, the current paper will draw from several theoretical discussions to employ a selection of concepts, such as the notion of "identity work" (Beech et al., 2012; Brown, 2015, 2020; Watson, 2009; Winkler, 2018) and its' connection to emotions, specifically for the case of musicians (Zhang et al., 2020). Also, it will draw on our current understanding of creative labor which is associated with gig economy and precarity (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010) and make connections with entrepreneurialism (Haynes & Marshall, 2018). This conceptual review and supportive literature will enable us to understand the shaky ground on which musicians stood even before the apparition of the virus and will shed a light as to how their working conditions have now become even harsher. Current research such as the one carried out in England in 2020 by Spiro et al. after the first lockdown, suggests that the effect of COVID-19 on performing artists was intense both on economic and emotional level and reports that a vast majority of them experienced significant income loss and psychological turbulences. Additionally, the study of Fever et al. (2020) suggests that voice professionals endured a specific form of anxiety related to their voice which led several to experience "voice avoidance" (p.1). In combination those studies paint a picture of the effect of the virus on artists. However, we need to know more about the effect of COVID-19 on musicians, especially now after the second wave of national lockdowns, when their hopes about returning to normalcy have shrunk even further. The current study will focus on a specific segment of performing artists, musicians and will combine the three aforementioned levels, thus providing a more interdisciplinary approach. By paying attention to the musicians' emotional state, the study will explore this phenomenon under a new lens as it will also refer to the coping mechanisms those developed after the longitudinal duration of the pandemic.

Societal relevance

This research is also *societally relevant*, because music is an essential form of cultural expression which influences various spheres of life (Jeanotte, 2021). According to research carried out by Van der Hoeven and Hitters (2019) live music contributes to the strengthening of social relationships as it is related to social capital and cultural identity (social impact) and contributes to the development of creativity, talent and vibrancy of the cities thus enhancing the way people experience urban spaces (cultural impact). Lastly, they point out that live music has also an economic value as it can increase tourism and create job openings. Aside from that, culture, Jeanotte (2021) notes carries symbolic value as it expresses both personal and collective identity and hence is capable of creating a sense of belonging and connection. Music mobilizes individuals and provides them with routines, assumptions and occasions which constitute the social life itself (DeNora, 2000), and as such is capable of providing meaning to people and their social surroundings (Roy & Dowd, 2010). Live music hence is an important factor in fostering resilience and social solidarity (Vanderberg et al., 2020), especially in times of a pandemic.

The need for research on the topic is prominent now more than ever especially after the launch of #Support Art Workers movement on social media which soon became a social phenomenon after artists in Greece explicitly stressed their dissatisfaction for the lack of governmental support. The governmental aid that was given to artists, called the "Special purpose compensation for art professionals", was given only to musicians who had registered on the "Artistic Record" and had an approved certificate of their musical education and two years of working experience or had collected a certain number of stamps with a minimum of 4 years of working experience in the field. Thus, a large proportion of the musical population which did not fulfill those criteria was excluded from receiving the compensation. In a way to intensify their efforts and force the government to take more effective measures, artists from various sectors started a public petition, collecting signatures to gain more support. In their official platform which is available at avvaz.org there is the following statement: "The chain of culture needs its links and we will stand united to defend its fundamental rights" (para 2).

A research conducted on the effect of COVID-19 on local musicians will yield significant results as it will not only indicate the difficulties which they underwent

during this harsh period but will also stress the need for more social support and policies which are key contributors to the wellbeing of those engaged in performing arts (Spiro et al., 2020)

## 2. Conceptual framework

This literature firstly gives an overview of some general aspects around the role of music, its connection to emotions and its use as a means of commination and socialization. Following that, there is a more in-depth analysis of the topics and the concepts concerning the development of musicians not only though identity work but also through the challenges they face as entrepreneurs, creatives and as human beings struggling during conditions of the pandemic.

### 2.1 Music in times of crisis

COVID-19 constitutes one of the major crises that humanity has faced the last decades. Being kept apart from other people is an overwhelmingly painful experience as the feeling of being with others constitutes a fundamental need for an individuals' wellbeing and a part of their social identity (Antonini et al., 2020). This has further implications, as the disruption of an individual's social identity is connected with negative emotional experiences which can lead to a deterioration of its' sense of social belonging (Eisenbringer, 2012). During these harsh times, in order to combat that and recreate their sense of solidarity, people turned to music.

A recent Spanish population study reports that during lockdown, individuals turned increasingly to music as to help them during isolation. The study's results reported that a large part of the sample spent much time listening to music, discovered new musical styles and showed a keen interest in participating in cultural musical activities (Cabelo-Mas et al. 2021). Indicative of the power of music to foster solidarity, are the impromptu concerts of Italians singing in their balconies, using cooking appliances and instruments (Viewable at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q734VN0N7hw). Those concerts, prove how music can attain a ritualistic nature, generate feelings of personal and collective wellbeing (Croom, 2012), contribute to the strengthening of resilience and the promotion of altruism (Fukui & Toyoshima, as quoted in Chiu, 2020).

## 2.2 Music as a ritual

According to Bensimon (2012), live music can resemble rituals and generate a sonic bond which can further connect individuals through the reciprocal relation of their emotions. This view builds up on the theory of Durkheim (1965) who supports that, individuals in these moments undergo a social and emotional experience which Collins (20040 calls "collective effervescence" (p. 48). Music, as the scholar notes has a dual effect, one that is immediate but transient, the offering of emotional release to the individual and another long lasting one, the generation of social intersubjectivity and the creation of symbols which further validate the collective identity of the group. In times of personal and collective struggle music thus constitutes a "hotline for collective consciousness" (Horsfall, 2016, p.52) due to its ability and purpose to connect (Bodner & Gilboa, 2009).

## 2.3 Music as a means of communication

Furthermore, as Baym (2018) notes music has qualities stronger than those of the human language as it can help people express the inexpressible. The scholar also notes that music can enable a more profound interaction and a communication at a deeper level.  Indicative of that is a quote of David Bowie who once stated that music is the "grey space in between" indicating that the idea of a song is not complete unless the audience comes in to add their own meaning and interpretation (as quoted by Firth, 1998). Other renowned musicians support that music is what happens between people, when the space gets filled with different energies which interact with one another and create a vibrant conversation (Jars of Clay & Throwing Muses as quoted in Baym, 2018).  Music thus constitutes means of meaning- making and meaning-exchange as it can evoke, express and communicate emotions (Justin & Laukka, 2017). This fact makes the majority of musicians see themselves not only as artists but also as social actors who fulfill an important social role (Baym, 2018). Indicative of this, are the free live concerts that several musicians offered via social media platforms during the pandemic and though which they, tried to spread messages of positivity, persistence, adherence to the social distance rules and contribute to the generation of solidarity (Rendell, 2020). In order to better understand the role of musicians in the times of the pandemic and how they were affected by it, it is essential to understand how musicians

construct, understand but also reshape their identities through identity work (Brown, 2015; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010).

## 2.4 Musicians' identity and emotion work

According to scholars, identity is shaped not only by the meanings that the individual attaches to themselves but also from the ones that others attach to them (Brown, 2015: p. 23; Baumeister, 1986; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Gecas, 1982). Since social interaction is essential to identity construction (Gergen & Gergen 1988), it becomes apparent that identity is an "ongoing accomplishment" (Schultz et al., 2012, p.3) which is a personal but also public process. Essential to the development of identity is also the role of emotions, something which is stressed by Zapf (2012) who with the concept of "emotion work" (p.1) indicates the connection of emotions to one's sense of well-being.

Emotions constitute an important part of musicians' idenity for multiple reasons. First, because their art is itself an act of emotional expression (Juslin, 2013) and secondly because musicians use their emotions when performing, interacting with their audience and creating a song (Baym, 2018). Some the key abilities that musicians have developed are, their capacity to create the conditions in which active listening and creating can take place, seek connections in the world and relate them to the concept of the self (Street, 2017). Musicians, the aforementioned scholar notes, in order to develop their own sonic identity, they have to first make sense of who they are and interpret the elements they are made of, meaning, their experiences, values, dreams, aspirations and feelings.

Thus, we see that being a musician incorporates many elements, besides having the capacity of playing an instrument or using one's voice (O'Neill, 2002). Being a musician as Zhang et al. (2018) note, is a sociocultural construct which does not consist of a set of predetermined characteristics. In order to be assigned this label, several concepts have to come into play, such as the individuals' musical skills (Hallam, 2010), the relation they have with the concept of the musician as a part of their self-identity and the predisposition they have towards music, meaning their nature, aptitude and talent (Zhang et al, 2020). Recent literature also associates musicians with ideas of entrepreneurialism (Haynes & Marshall, 2018).

## 2.5 Musicians as (reluctant) entrepreneurs

The entrepreneurialism that characterizes musicians, springs firstly from the combination of the assets they have acquired through the engagement with their art, their capability for imagination, originality, creativity, persistence, emotional intelligence and risk management (Throsby & Peteskaya, 2017). Furthermore, as Haynes and Marshall (2018) note, it is also result of the transformations that the music industry has undergone in the last decades. The skillset of the modern musicians consists of several capacities such as networking, strategizing, generating revenues, securing funding for developing projects, scheduling tours, contacting press, promoting events, selling merchandise, negotiating with agents etc (Coulson, 2012; Umney & Kretsos, 2014). As Garland (2020) also notes musicians have developed a flexibility, persistency and creativity and a "DIY mentality" as to find alternative ways to overcome potential obstacles (para. 9). Furthermore, their capacity of spotting but also creating opportunities for the self, their musical opportunitism (Obschonka et al., 2015), together with their continuous search for unexplored ways of composing, producing and sustaining a relationship with their audience (Weber, 2004; Baym, 2018), constitutes the spirit of musical entrepreneurism (Weber, 2004). Thus, it becomes evident that the modern musician is an independent, polymath musician who is in charge of their own future and their music career (Darker, 2013, para 2).

## 2.6 Working in the creative industries and feelings of precarity

Entrepreneurialism as pointed out above is also generated out of the need of musicians to deal with a hostile labor market (Coulson, 2012, p. 259). According to Bridstock (2015) musicians were living the "gig" way of life, a term directly borrowed from the improvisatory style of jazz musicians, before the notion of "gig economy" was conceptualized. Musicians as the primary gig workers have learnt how to lead "protean careers" which are characterized by self-management and willingness to gain various skills in order to enhance their employability (Hall, 2004, p.1). However, despite the voices that claim that gig economy promotes openness, self-management and cooperation (Ross, 2003) there are several others that underline its harsh conditions. As Twose (1992) and Menger (2006) support, artists are predominantly young workers, the majority of whom are freelancers or self-employed under harsh conditions such as

irregular work hours, short term contracts, almost none job protection and further career prospects. The working conditions of creative workers, Gill and Pratt (2008) note, lead them to experience "bulimic patterns of work" (p. 14) which are extremely common for musicians. For the majority of creative workers there are long gaps in their employment and as a result, job searching turns into a "relentless activity" (Patterson, 2001, p.497). In order to cope with the financial instability that is generated, the vast majority of musicians hold also other part time jobs or rely on the help of their parents which enables them in pursuing their dreams (Gross et al., 2017).

The precarious conditions in which creative workers work and live, according to Armano and Murgia (2013), cause them to experience an emotional imbalance, due to the continuous interplay of very negative emotions such as fear and anxiety and very positive ones such excitement and unconditional love for what they do. Standing (2017) underlines that these workers experience a constant anxiety which the result of the gig economy and the precarity that it entails, supporting that the minds of these individuals are precariatised. According to research conducted by Gross et al. (2017) there are alarmingly high levels of self-reported depression (68.5%) and anxiety (71%) amongst music makers' which are caused by their poor working conditions. The same study points out that the musicians that experience this anxiety are more prone to have a lower sense of self-esteem and a high level of self-doubt when they indulge in acts of self-comparison. This self-comparison the scholars note is directed both outwards and inwards as many musicians are likely to compare themselves to the version, they think they could be. Thus, we understand that musicians by striving to meet their own expectations and criteria are prone to experience a sense of exhaustion and a feeling of burn out (Gross et al., 2017).

The conditions that these workers experience are incompatible with their intense personal investment, the "apparent voluntarism" and their heightened sense of self-commodification (Ursell, 2000, p. 807). However, creative workers are reluctant to quit their job positions of lower pay out of fear that they might lose future opportunities that may lay ahead, engaging thus in what is referred as "hope labor" (Kuehn & Corrigan, 2013) or "sacrificial labor" (Ross, 2003). Many times, scholars note, especially younger individuals, accept non-monetary rewards as compensation for their work in an attempt to gain experience or some sort of recognition and tend to deal with this precarity as "a matter of course" and even regard it as the "new normal" (Burrows, 2013, p.393). Thus, the work force appears not only to be constantly growing (Twose,

1992; Menger, 2006), but also experiencing a complex form of freedom (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010), a freedom which is associated with precarity, anxiety and an intense feeling of self-reflexivity (McRobbie, 2015).

After pointing out the always existing difficulties concerning the working conditions of musicians, their economic predicament and their psychological burden there will be a discussion as to how COVID-19 has affected those aforementioned layers, making their position even more precarious.

## 2.7 Impact of COVID-19 on professional level

Professional musicians spend hours per day rehearsing, nurturing their abilities, utilizing their discipline, ameliorating their technique, playing the same song, breaking it down to parts and constructing it once again, until they feel they have reached the limits of their performance (Kenny & Ackermann, 2015; Ascenso et al., 2017). Daily practice and preparation are essential as in their field, high performance is always expected (Habe et al., 2019). In order however for musicians to practice and better their skills, they also have to perform. Thus, musicians as the aforementioned researchers note, are embedded in sociocultural events, practices and conventions which play out an important role both in personal but also social level. Their skills are harnessed and cultivated through the years, in the time of the actual performance but also when they spend time practicing with their co-workers or other trained professionals.

Aside the hours of practicing with their co-workers, another crucial aspect which affects their development and their performance is the social belonging and the sense of affiliation they experience when they are together (Antonini-Philipe et al., 2020). Several studies have indicated that the sense of communication and companionship they experience affects the way they work. (Nielsen et al., 2018; Aucouturier & Canonne, 2017). This is also evident in the research on musical ensembles of Biasutti (2013) where she notes that each "individual contribution is framed in an overall shared design at a group level which cannot be reduced to merely the sum of the individuals" (Biasutti, 2013, p. 63). This indicates she notes that among individuals there is the sensation of common musical objectives, behaviors and artistic ideas.

COVID-19 with the social distancy restrictions and stay at home regulations has been found to have a significant effect on musicians' professional life. Research has shown that many artists except being unable to perform, they experienced also difficulties with meeting their co-workers and coaches which made them struggle with producing creative content which could generate income (Americans for the Arts, 2020). The same study points out that performing artists during the lockdown were impeded from accessing places where they could practice such as studios, or needed supplies, resources and were unable to connect with the people with whom they were working with. Furthermore, a research carried out by Fever et al. (2020) reports that voice professionals (vocal artists, singers and actors) experienced "voice avoidance" as they used their voice to a lesser extent and were more conscious when using it. This was a result not only of the cancelation of their performances but also of the difficulties they underwent when trying to reach their voice coachers and therapists.

## 2.8 Impact of COVID-19 on Economic Level

The precariousness and instability of freelance creative professionals were also prevalent before COVID-19 (Bartleet et al., 2019; Willis et al., 2019). However, as Communian and England (2020) note the pandemic brought them back to light and intensified them even more. Most of the workers in the sector of arts earn low averaged income through short term and often informal contracts and live performances (Abbing, 2008; Throsby and Petetskaya, 2017) and as Wilkstrom (2009) points out most musicians gain their income through their performance in pubs, clubs, touring and other similar venues and not from the recoding of music. Furthermore, as Holt (2010) notes there has been an inversion of the relationship between recording music and touring as now the latter serves as a publicity tool for touring and not as an important revenue stream. Thus it becomes evident that since all live events and tours have been indeterminably cancelled and many venue spaces are expected to close down in the future (Jackson, 2020) it is reasonable to assume that the livelihoods of musicians have been put into jeopardy.

In May 2020 the World Economic Forum had predicted that a six-month shutdown could cost the music industry a loss of 10 billion US dollars in terms of sponsorships. The prolonged restrictions however and the national lockdowns implemented by governments across the world are certain to have affected the industry

to an even greater extent. As noted by Van der Wielen and Barrios (2020) the majority of individuals expressed experiencing a very negative economic sentiment during these times. This is further supported by the results of the study of Spiro et al., (2020) where many performing artists reported that they lost all their scheduled worked overnight and they found themselves in a very grave position as they had planned on sustaining themselves and their families with the income gained from those performances. This is also supported by Adams-Prassl et al (2020) who states that self-employed workers, those with varying schedules and working hours as well as those who were unable to work from home were more likely to have been intensely affected by the economic downturn resulted from COVID-19. The fear is imminent for musicians as well as other creative workers belonging in underrepresented groups, as there is a high probability to drop out of the work force of the cultural economy during or after the pandemic (Eikhof, 2020)

## 2.9 Impact of COVID-19 on psychological level

According to research carried out by Reena (2020) concerning the impact of COVID-19 on mental health and by Pachon (2012) concerning the effect of job or income loss, there is evidence that individuals can experience higher levels of stress, anxiety and depression. This was evident in the study of Spiro et al (2020) as the loss of jobs and the cancellation of activities of performing artists was something that made them experience intense anxiety symptoms. Many performing artists reported feeling forgotten, unsupported and their work unappreciated. Those feelings of loss were an outcome not only of the stress regarding their current unemployment but also of their anxiety regarding their future and the future of the arts after the lockdown has ended.

Except the anxiety caused by their professional and economic predicament, the impact of the virus on musicians' psychological state is expected to be even more intense due to the fact that musicians could not realize their working identity. According to Baym (2018), performing and making music is for musicians not only an act of "self-realization" but also a source of "self-validation". Thus, we see that when live performances were cancelled, musicians were also denied the possibility to enact their selfhood. This connects us back to the intertwined relationship between their well-being, their professional and personal identity (Smith & Thwaites, 2018). The current pandemic is a highly stressful experience which can pose difficulties in an individual's

identity work and realization. As scholars report, when people undergo experiences where they feel a sense of precariousness related to the concept of self, they are more probable to engage in identity work (Beech 2008; Pratt et al., 2012) but also experience negative emotions (Alvesson & Willmott 2002; Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003). This is confirmed in the study of Spiro et al (2020) which demonstrates that the inability of artists to perform their professional identity was detrimental to their sense of self and their feelings of motivation.

Additionally, literature regarding the effect of COVID-19 on mental health reports high levels of stress, anxiety, depression as a result of the inability to socially interact with other people (Pereira-Sanchez et al., 2020). As mentioned above the connection that musicians establish between themselves contributes mainly to their psychological wellbeing (Ascenso et al., 2017). According to Arditi (2020), musicians are firstly connected by the bonds created from the division of labor which is essential for music production and performance. The scholar notes that this mechanical solidarity is further complimented by an organic solidarity, which is shaped by the personal bonds that are created between band members when they spend hours working together, practicing, creating, being on stage. As Cohen (1985 as quoted in Arditi, 2020) observes, the more time band members spend together, their relationships intensify which leads to stronger feelings of solidarity, appreciation and egalitarianism between them and leads them to perceive each other as family. The inability thus of musicians to meet and practice with their colleagues is expected to have a great psychological impact.

## 2.10 Coping Mechanisms

Adaptive coping mechanisms

For Folkman and Moskowitz (2000) the autonomous actions that an individual takes in order to take control of a situation are the "adaptive copying mechanisms" and in those they include actions such as planning, getting social and emotional support as well as the acts of acceptance and self-distraction. Current research carried out by Shanahan et al. (2020) pointed out that physical activity, positive reframing and daily routine are some practices used by young people which were found to diminish stress levels.

*1) Resilience*

Musicians have been observed to have fostered a certain form of resilience as a way to cope with rising competition in their field and the often-experienced rejection (Smith & Thwaites, 2018). They have developed a self-confidence which allows them to deal with the precarity entailed in their profession and have learnt to value and see obstacles as opportunities for self-development and a chance to equip themselves with values and skills (Armstrong 2013; Taylor & Littleton 2012 as quoted in Smith & Thwaites, 2018). The scholars also mention that musicians from a young age understand that in order to realize their identity they have to have courage, network and seek exposure as it is crucial not only to be "doing it but also to being seen to do it" (p.601).

*2) Hope and Belief in the self*

The feeling of resilience is closely related to the concept of hope. Hope according to Snyder (2002) is a specific pattern of thought which points the individual to follow different pathways as to cope with experienced difficulties and as suggested by Bailey et al. (2007) it is closely connected with subjective well-being. In the study of Thwaites and Smith (2018) musicians rely on their selves and keep faith in their powers. Musicians they note try to keep their self-conception intact and believe that music is part of their self-identity. This indicates that the boundaries between personal and professional identity in the field of creative work are merged and that as Firth describes "music is a way of being in the world" (1996, p.114).

*3) Audience*

As Baym notes (2018) having constructed a meaningful relationship with their audience can validate musicians as artists and as humans. Their messages of support, admiration and their own storytelling experiences (how has a certain song affected them, the feelings they experienced when attending one of their concerts) give musicians a sense of affirming recognition which helps them become the person they want to be (Baym, 2018). This further supported by Hesmondhlagh and Baker (2012)

who note that creative workers are increasingly aware of their audiences and they try to resolve their own anxieties by trying to please them with the quality of their work.

### 4) Unions

As Saundry et al. (2007) note, freelancers are in more need of union support in relation to permanent working workers. The rising derecognition of the difficulties of freelance working and the playing down of the gifts that creative professions offer correlate with lower starting payments, longer working weeks, removal of payment for overtime working hours and reduction in holiday and redundancy pay (Gall 1997, p.157-158 as quoted in Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010). In his study Cornfield (2015 as quoted in Arditi, 2020), by applying the theory of Durkheim constructs a sociological theory with which he explains how musicians self-organize and collectively react by displaying "artist activism" in order to support one another and minimize the risks that their precarious working position entails.

### 5) Alternative business models: Digital lives

By utilizing the affordances of social media, many musicians turned to alternative business models and started organizing digital lives. During those, the artists provided intimate performances in the safety of their homes either alone with their instruments or in collaboration with others (Sanchez and Lock, 2020; Eames, 2020 as quoted in Rendell 2020). The fact that those concerts were "live" intrigued individuals as they had an added sense of presence, a heightened immediacy and a sense of involvement (Skjuve & Brandtzaeg, 2019, p. 590). Those "portal shows" despite not being something new (Trainer 2015 as quoted in Rendell, 2020), have sharply increased during the pandemic, as the internet was the only means with which artists and audiences could communicate (Marshall, 2020 as quoted in Rendell, 2020).

### 6) Music making as an antidote in itself.

Music making, singing and performance can work as a therapeutic antidote and a means of escapism (Scharff, 2017) as they have been associated with the act of storytelling which brings the self into the story of the other, and the other in the

story of the self (Baym, 2018). This interaction the scholar points out can help an individual understand its own past experiences and enable it to move forward. This supported by McNiff (1981) who claims that art can help an individual in times of struggle as it has the potential of changing the relationship of the individual with the disturbance by placing it into the creative process and using it as material and a fuel for expression.

For musicians their art is a "labor of love", as artists have a strong sense of connection with their work which they regard as their "calling" (Freidson, 1990 as quoted in Hesmodhagh & Baker, 2010). Other scholars refer to this as a form of "pleasurable absorption" (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010) or a "passionate form of work" (McRobbie, 2015) which leads them into experiencing the phenomenon of "timesless time" (Hesmondhalgh & Baker 2013; Marotto et al 2007) and that of "being in the zone" (Jordan et al., 2017) where musicians lose track of time, connect to others but also to themselves. Thus, we see that music is for them a means of self-actualization, enabling them to feel a sense of belonging and empowerment which springs from their capacity of being heard and helping others (Baym, 2018).

| Term | Definition | Source |
|---|---|---|
| Music as a ritual | The sonic bond which connects individuals attending a concert through the reciprocal relation of their emotions through "collective effervescence" | Collins (2004); Bensimon (2012); Durkheim (1965) |
| Music as means of communication | Music acquiring different qualities from those of human language, expressing the inexpressible (Baym, 2018). | Baym (2018) |
| Musicians' identity | The formation of a musician's professional identity with the combination of music knowledge, technical skills along with the web of their experiences and their interpretation of the concept of "musician" | O'Neill (2002); Hallam (2010); Zhang et al. (2018; 2020) |
| Music entrepreneurship and Music opportunism | capability for imagination, originality, creativity, persistence, emotional intelligence, risk management, spotting and creating opportunities for the self | (Throsby & Peteskaya, 2017); Haynes & Marshall, (2018); Obschonka et al. 2015); Weber (2004) |
| Precarity in the creative industries | The hash working conditions that are encountered in the working field and generate feelings of stress and anxiety | Hesmondhagh & Baker (2012); Gross et al. (2017) |
| Identity work | The process of forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising identity in periods of precariousness | Sveningsson & Alvesson, (2003) |
| Adaptive coping mechanisms | Developing a mindset to deal with difficulties and achieve a goal by finding alternatives, planning, accepting, getting social and emotional support as well as hoping and believing in the self | Folkman and Moskowitz (2000); Snyder (2002); Smith &Thwaites (2018) |

*Table 1. Overview of the used terminology, concepts and phenomena used in the theoretical Framework*

## 3. Methodology

This section covers the methodology and the steps taken for the carrying out of the present study.

## 3.1 Qualitative approach

The qualitative approach is most suitable when the focus of research is to uncover people's emotions and life stories by analyzing their subjective concepts and paying attention to their emotions, language and patterns of thought (Brennen, 2017). In this way, the researcher can focus on a small sample of participants, go in depth and generate "Thick Data" (Moisander et al., 2012). It is notable to say that qualitative researchers while exploring their topic of choice observe that social reality is constructed that there is no single explanation but a variety of truths and multiple versions of reality (Brennen, 2017). The best way to capture this multifaceted reality is to develop an in-depth understanding of those experiences which generate it.

## 3.2 In-depth interviews

The methodological tool that was used in order to answer the research question were the in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews allow the researcher to take a closer look on the participants and their social words and capture all levels of significance as to understand how those make sense of themselves and their experiences (Hermanowicz, 2002). As pointed out by Johnson (2011) in-depth interviews enable the exploration of the contextual boundaries of the individuals' experiences and give the opportunity to the researcher to develop a more reflective understanding about the phenomenon itself. Thus, interviews become "a window to the world" (Hyman et al., 1975 in Holstein & Gubrium, 2003, p.2).

 Since in-depth interviews do not contain standardized answers, the musicians had the freedom to construct their own narratives. According to Riessman (1993), to construct a narrative means that the individuals will tell their story about the subject matter by reflecting on their own experiences and showing the researcher their own perspective. The active interview Holstein & Gubrium (2003) note, has the capacity to transform the participant "from a repository of opinions and reasons or a wellspring of

emotions into a productive source of knowledge, a meaning-maker" (p. 9). This method led to a better understanding of the meaning-making linkages and practices of the musicians (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). The musicians guided by the interviews' topic list, offered their own accounts from their personal standpoint.

The in-depth interviews were semi structured as it was important for the researcher to remain both flexible and attentive to the variety of meanings that emerge as the interview progressed (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). For example, during the interview when the respondent referred to a meaningful personal experience, the researcher had the opportunity to spontaneously ask follow up questions in order to dive deeper into the issues addressed. This helped as to further shed a light into the topic of research (Brennen, 2017). Furthermore, with the in-depth interviews the researcher had the opportunity to gather significant cues from body language and facial expressions which constitute a valuable part of communication (Brennen, 2017).

## 3.3 Context and participants

The selected sample consisted of 11 participants all of them professional singers or instrument players. As Lofland and Lofland (1995) suggest, a researcher should begin "where they are" and explore a phenomenon to which they have an access or a vantage point. For this reason, the sample of musicians was collected from a group of secondary acquaintances that the researcher has acquired through their education on Athens National Conservatory and its external musical associates and acquaintances the researcher has formed due to their participation in other music seminars. The sample consisted mainly of classical musicians and musicians of Greek folk music. The selection of two different music genres will ensure that the sample was more representative of the population of the professional musicians and gave the researcher enough data to provide a meaningful interpretation.

According to Johnson (2002) the individuals performing classical music will have to be classically trained meaning that they have to have acquired a deep knowledge of musical theory and have reached a level of mastery as classical music he notes has a sophisticated form of orchestration, rhythm, phrasing, texture, harmony, musical development, and notation system. Classical music is most often staged in official buildings such as operas, conservatories and theatres. Greek folk music on the other hand, is a country specific musical genre, with a unique stylistic playing and lyrics

which are delivered in the national language and is most often performed in local taverns and festivals. Greek folk music was specifically enriched in the 1950's when a new wave of music developed called "rebetiko" (Kioussi, 2020). The instruments that are used are a combination of traditional ones such as bouzouki and baglamas along with a guitar. Modern versions of Greek folk music have incorporated more instruments and thus more musical sub genres have emerged such as "entechno" where the music expression is a more lyrical and poetic (Konstadinidis, 2014).

**3.4 Data gathering**

The data collection started at the end of March 2021 and ended at the end of April. Due to COVID-19 restrictions and regulations in Greece, the interviews were not possible to be conducted face to face. Online interviews may not be the most optimal method however, it was the best solution available which would allow for the research to be carried out. Interviews were conducted online via the help of online communication tools which according to Sullivan (2012) come closer to doing face to face interviews and enable both the researcher and the interviewee to gather important nonverbal social cues.

The tools used were Zoom, a digital interactive platform, which enables both sound and video recording and Facebook, in cases where participants had difficulties with the aforementioned platform. In the case of Facebook video calls were conducted using Messanger and they were recorded via an online screen recorder called "Apowersoft". The interviews were also recorded via telephone. The interviews of musicians as mentioned previously were semi structured through the use of a topic list which was developed according to the theoretical framework. The semi structured interviews gave the interviewees a more conversationalist feeling which further enabled them to feel at ease, develop rapport and feel more comfortable to express their views and experiences (Roulston & Choi, 2018).

In order to ensure the meaningful analysis and the interpretation of data, interviews were transcribed the same day they took place and notes were taken during the interviews as this would enable the capturing of thoughts and would enhance the analysis and interpretation of the "in the moment" experiences (Holstein & Gubrium, 1997).

### 3.4.1 Sampling method

As Babbie (2013) mentions for social research the outcome of the research is strongly dependent on the answers, opinions, statements and worldviews of the respondents. In this case, musicians were the essential unit of analysis. As mentioned by Palinkas et al. (2015), the sampling procedure that the researcher will follow has to be on line with the aims of the research and its purpose as this will ensure that there will be a maximization of the efficiency and validity. Since the topic of research required professional musicians, in order to collect the required data, the strategy of purposive sampling was chosen, which allows the researcher to choose a specific and targeted sample from a population (Etikan et al., 2016, p. 1). This method enabled the researcher to select individuals who are considered experts in the field and thus can be treated as a rich source of information (Palinkas et al., 2015). The same scholars point out that these individuals are thought to be knowledgeable, experienced and communicate their experiences "in an articulate, expressive and reflective manner' (p. 534).

### 3.4.2 Purposive sampling

The partcipants chosen for the interviews had to fulfill certain predetermined criteria. "Criterion sampling" enables the understanding of the subject and the reaching of theoretical saturation (Palinkas et al., 2015). The individuals that participated in the research had to identify as musicians, had to be professional, meaning that their musical activities were their primary or at least secondary source of income and that they are in the field for quite a long period of time. The musicians had to also agree to be recorded and to speak openly about their experiences during the pandemic. It was the aim of the researcher to include participants from two diverse backgrounds and at different stages of their career as this would show more comprehensively and elaborately how COVID-19 has impacted them.

Musicians of all genders, ages, playing different instruments, in varying different stages of their career and with different level of experience were included in the sample as to have maximum variation. This strategy of sampling is also known as heterogeneous sampling where the researcher selects participants "across a broad

spectrum relating to the topic of study" (Etikan et al. 2016).  Heterogeneous sampling generated rich data and enabled the researcher to explore the topic from various angles.

| Name | Age | sex | Musical practice/profession | Music genre | Duration interview | Date interview |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Georgios-Alexandros Vallis | 25 | M | guitar/vocals performance/education | Greek entechno, classic guitar performances | 01:30:59 | 31/03/21 |
| Stamatis Petsakos | 26 | M | Guitar/ French horn | Greek folk music, rebetiko | 00:44:50 | 1/04/21 |
| Vironas Ntolas | 30 | M | Guitar, improvisation, education | Jazz music | 44:30 | 2/04/21 |
| Areti Kokkinou | 50 | F | Guitar, mandolin, composition, arrangement | Greek folk music, rebetiko, | 50:16 | 2/04/21 |
| Marios Kazas | 41 | M | Piano | Collaborative piano, piano accompanist, chamber music | 43:17 | 3/04/21 |
| Semeli Papavasileiou | 26 | F | Guitar/ vocals/ education | Greek folk, rebetiko music | 01:04:24 | 3/04/21 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Despoina Panayiotou | 26 | F | Vocals, education | Classical music | 48:13 | 4/04/21 |
| Manos Kitsikopoulos | 34 | M | Piano, improvisation / education | Classical music | 47:20 | 4/04/21 |
| Hristos Botisis | 22 | M | Vocals | Greek entechno | 45:20 | 5/04/21 |
| Kaiti Koulia | 50 | F | Vocals/ education | Greek folk music, entechno, | 40:05 | 6/04/21 |
| Antonis Palamaris | 40 | M | Piano, composition, performance, production, arrangement, education | Greek entechno | 52:45 | 8/04/21 |

*Table 2: Overview of participants in the study.*

## 3.5 Operationalization

In order to understand the impact that COVID-19 had on musicians' professional life some of the questions asked concerned how were their plans affected by COVID-19, how they sustained their relationship with their co-workers and audience and how they expected COVID-19 to impact them on the long run, both individually but also generally the field of Arts and Culture. They were also asked whether they underwent a change concerning their working identity. Questions to assess the economic impact addressed whether they received the governmental aid and if they think that was enough to cover their needs. Furthermore, they were asked if they were thinking of a backup plan in order to avoid experiencing similar uncertainty in the future. In order to explore the psychological impact of COVID-19, musicians were asked questions about what it means to be a musician/ artist for them, how does it feel to be an artist now and whether they felt this experience had an impact them. They were further asked about their feelings during isolation and what did they miss the most. In

order to discover their coping mechanisms, they were asked about their daily activities, how they coped with the experienced difficulties and their emotions. Lastly, they were asked if they felt that COVID-19 inhibited their musical development or if they used that time to practice and further explore things around their musical vocation and what are the things that help them keep going. These questions serve as to help the researcher undercover the overall impression that musicians had about themselves as they were undergoing this experience.

| Concept | Focus | Questions |
|---|---|---|
| Introduction | Information about demographics and music genre | Could you tell me your full name, age and music field you involve yourself in?<br><br>Is music your part time or full-time profession? |
| Economic impact | Artist subsidy, feelings towards the state | Did you manage to get the governmental aid (Artist's subsidy)?<br><br>Do you think it is sufficient?<br><br>Do you think you would get it without the Support Art Workers movement? |
| | How they cope economically | Could you describe how you are holding up financially? |
| | See if they had to find additional jobs or | Did you felt the need to develop a back up plan?<br>Can you describe it a little bit? |
| Professional impact | How Covid disrupted their program and their livelihood | Which were your plans before Covid hit and how has the virus impacted them? |
| | If they thought about alternatives to doing music or if it remains their profession no matter the circumstances | Did you feel the need to develop a backup plan?<br>Could you describe this backup plan a bit? |
| | how they expect their future to be | How do you expect Covid-19 to impact you in the long run?<br><br>Do you feel you have already changed because of it?<br>Could you describe how you feel you changed? |
| | How they see the future of arts and culture | What do you expect to be the impact on the cultural sector in the months to come?<br><br>What are some changes that you think are going to stay?<br><br>Many venue experts talk about hybrid venues how do you feel about that? |
| | See if they want to adapt to the changes and how they feel about those | Many musicians try to do "digital lives" Have you tried it yourself or will you in the future? |
| | See whether they can plan their present and future | Which are your current or near future plans? |
| | How they keep their connections | How do you manage to maintain your relationship with you co-workers b |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | See whether they can plan their present and future | Which are your current or near future plans? |
| | How they keep their connections | How do you manage to maintain your relationship with you co-workers b |
| Psychological impact | The importance of music and what their profession means to them | How does it feel to be an artist/musician to you? |
| | How has covid impacted their sense of identity | How does it feel to be an artist right now? What is different now? |
| | See which were the difficulties they stumbled upon and how they affected them | We all know the insecurities and precarity that come along when someone chooses to become an artist. Covid however has shown and intensified those even more. Which were some ofthe expected and unexpected difficulties? |
| | Their current feelings about the situation | How did you handle stay at home restrictions? How do you feel this period of time? |
| | Impact on their psychology | What do you miss more now? |
| Coping mechanisms | Understanding their new routine and practices | Which are your daily activities during the series of lockdowns? |
| | Coping mechanism | How do you manage to decompress from everything happening right now and how do you manage to stay creative and keep working and practicing? |
| | Overall impression of impact on their career and development | Do you feel that lockdown inhibited your career, plans and development musician? More time to practice, lean new things and create? |
| | Closing with a positive note | What is that keeps you going? |

*Table 3: Theoretical concepts, focuses within, associated questions covering the four pillars of this thesis*

## 3.6 Data analysis

The method of analysis was thematic analysis of qualitative content. The research also employed an iterative process of data interpretation which allowed rich interpretation and abstraction from what was said (Brown & Clarke, 2006). Essentially the interviews were treated as a body of text, rich with data as it was the sum of how respondents spoke, thought and felt about the topic of the current research (Brennen, 2017). Thus, the themes that came up during the analysis of this body, capture essential points about the topic itself and the responses of participants on the research question (Brennen, 2017). Thematic analysis is one of the foundational ways of analyzing data coming up from qualitative research (Anderson, 2007). This method of analysis allows for a systematization, identification, organization of data which further allows the researcher to reach valuable insights into patterns of meaning (themes) across the data set (Braun & Clarke 2012, p 57). In order to do that the aforementioned as Braun and Clarke (2006) note the researcher will have to search for themes and key patterns in data which will later form the categories of the analysis and the relevant open, axial and selective codes.

The coding schemes can be developed in two ways, the inductive or data driven approach and the deductive one which is theory driven. In the inductive method (bottom-up approach) the codes emerge directly from the analysis and the interpretation of the actual data, while in the deductive method the codes are informed by the theory (top-down approach) that the researcher has immersed themselves prior to data collection (Chi, 1997). This research combines the bottom up and top-down approach. The topic list for the interview questions was developed after processing a detailed theoretical framework. When doing the thematic analysis, the large list of initial codes that came up were derived mainly from the analysis of the data collected during the research itself. Theoreticians refer to this method also as "abductive interpretation" as it allows the researcher to go back and forth between theory, interpretation and data (Dubois & Gadde, 2002). This going back and forth demonstrates how coding can be an iterative process (Braun& Clarke, 2006). The similarities found when analyzing the data in the first stage allowed the researcher to come up with the open codes. The different themes that came up during the initial step of the coding process were given a code name which encapsulated their essence. The axial codes that came after were formed by the grouping of open codes into subcategories (Boeije, 2010). In order to do

that as Schreier (2013) notes, the meanings had to be taken to a higher level of abstraction, which would allow the researcher to capture their main message. At the end, the selective codes emerged through the further grouping of the axial codes into their broad and core categories. At the end of the process as pointed out by Brown and Clarke (2006), initial codes were reexamined in order to capture all the nuances and contradictions. The comparing and contrasting between the themes served as a magnifying lens which revealed all the complexities embedded in the issue of research.

The initial phase of open coding revealed 294 codes which were later merged as to form 192 final open codes. In the beginning the set of open codes described themes in all their complexity however it decreased their usefulness as one code seemed to fit only one of the participant's statement. For that reason, there was need for further abstraction which would enable the researcher to continue the process of coding. For example, the codes "music as esoteric fulfillment" and "music as self-satisfaction" were merged into one, the "need to leave their own imprint" and "the need to be authentic" were merged and renamed as "notion of authenticity". This process continued as to leave only the necessary codes which enabled the development of axial coding.

Many participants during the interviews referred to their new practices such as the Online lessons and Digital lives which were used as selective codes. The open codes refereed to their characteristics, which were later distributed into positives and negatives. The "positive aspect" and "negative aspect" were used as axial codes. In the final stage of processing the digital lives and online lessons were put under the higher selective code of professional impact as it referred to musicians' new professional practices. The final selective codes covered the different parts of the research question: the professional impact, economic impact, psychological impact and coping mechanisms. Additionally, another selective code came up which referred to the positive things that participants stated came out of COVID-19. This selective code was labelled as "positive impact".

| Axial codes | Selective codes |
| --- | --- |
| Always existent difficulties<br>Present difficulties<br>Online lessons<br>Digital lives | Professional impact |
| Always existent difficulties<br>Present difficulties<br>Subsidy<br>Future difficulties | Economical impact |
| Feelings<br>Anxieties/fears<br>Affecting working identity | Psychological impact |
| Internal<br>External | Coping mechanisms |
| Time<br>Focus on the self<br>New practices<br>Solidarity | Positive impact |

The interviews were conducted in Greek and for that reason they had to be first transcribed and then entered in Atlas.ti software, a digital analytical tool which helped the researcher during the coding process as it ensured systematization and the thoroughness of the research. The fact that the interviews were conducted in Greek language was a conscious choice as this is the native language of both the researcher and the participants. Since the methodological tool used were in depth interviews which is a form of lengthy, meaningful conversation it was deemed essential that the expression of the respondent was not inhibited by language barriers and that they would be able to express themselves in the most optimal way. In the final stage a translation procedure had to take place, from Greek to English. Attention was paid so that the essential message and meaning of the narrative was retained, something which is of utmost importance for the research.

## 3.7 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two important aspects of qualitative research which are said to complement one another as they ensure its replicability and accuracy (Golafshani, 2003). The researcher thus, should be explicit and consistent when reporting the circumstances under which the research took place, when evaluating and testing the coding frame and when reporting the data process in order to avoid any sort of confusion (Farrokhi & Mahmoudi-Hammidabad, 2012; Golafshani, 2003). By analyzing all the steps taken during the processing and interpretation of the data the researcher ensures the validity and reliability of the results and provides evidence that the results of this study could be replicated.

In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the research, the individual biography of the researcher has to be taken into consideration along with their life experiences, everyday common knowledge and their embededness in the sociocultural setting (Arendell, 1997). Due to the researcher's own association and involvement in the musical background and their immersion in theoretical literature, professionalism did not play a significant part in the interpersonal dynamics as there was a shared level of understanding.

## 3.8 Research Ethics

When a researcher involves themselves in ethical research it is important that there is a prior awareness that potential confrontation or harm may be caused to vulnerable people, or that a disturbance may affect interaction (Brennen, 2017). In this case it is important that accuracy, confidentiality, respect, and sensitivity are retained but also anonymity if a participant decides so. In order to tackle those issues an informed consent form which was provided by Erasmus University of Rotterdam was sent to all participants prior to the interviews. This contained a section with the contact information of the researcher, a description of the aim and scope of the research, the time involvement, a claim for payments and an overview of potential risks and benefits as well as a description of the participants' rights. It also included a table where the participants could put their signature. According to Babbie (2013), this is essential as with-it participants declare their voluntary participation to the research.

In order to understand the full implications of COVID-19 on musicians some rather sensitive questions were asked regarding their ability to economically sustain themselves, their emotional state during these times, the difficulties they encountered etc. Despite the fact that all participants were open to discuss their experiences, attention was paid as for the questions not to lead to any psychological harm (Babbie, 2013).

## 3.9 COVID-19 as the new context for Identity Struggles

This research was carried out during the pandemic of COVID-19 and is also thematically connected to it. COVID-19, which has been described by media as a war against an invisible enemy. Thus it constitutes the basic contextual element which can influence wellbeing, shape working identity and entrepreneurial behavior as it both produces but also frames struggles concerning identity work (Hunter, 2020).

A study carried out by UK's government Office National Statistics (ONS, 2020) points out that financial concerns were major, with 70% if respondents reporting that the pandemic had reduced their income and 30% reporting that they had to rely on their personal savings in order to cover their living costs. Concerning the psychological effects of the pandemic, 75% reported that they were worried about their jobs in the future, while 63% were anxious and 30% felt lonely. COVID-19 created insecurity and a feeling of lack of control over the situation and this anxiety made individuals question themselves and wonder whether they would have a job after the pandemic, whether they could cope financially and it probed them to think about the skills they need to harness in order to survive in the harsher post pandemic work environment.

Furthermore, the security measures that several governments took in order to limit the spread of the disease is something that shaped the work identity. In Greece, on 22 of March 2020, the first lockdown was officially declared (Government of Greece, 2020). Several measures were taken including restrictions concerning traveling, transportation, as well as the shutdown of public places (such as restaurants, bars, stores but also theatres, cinemas, cultural centers etc.). Furthermore, in Greece it was declared that citizens were able to get out of their house only for important activities and after sending a code message to an official state number 13033. In case citizens could not work from home, and they had to transport to their place of work they had to have with them an official document certifying that. It was also prohibited to have a distance lesser

than that of 1.5m form others and social meetings could not include more than three people (Government of Greece, 2020). As pointed out previously, the inability to socially interact is something that can affect the individual negatively both on personal and emotional level.

All those emotions can induce the worker questioning themselves about the kind of person and worker they are, their position in the working field, their place in society and probe them to think how they can contribute and offer support to the people around them. These questions are crucial for all workers but especially musicians, who always considered music as a means of communication (Baym, 2020) and a form of psychotherapy (McNiff, 1981). Furthermore, in the case of musicians, social interaction and communication is at the base of their profession and at the core of their identity as entrepreneurs. Thus, we can understand how the merging of all activities in the "locale of home" (Fuchs, 2020) can affect them in several layers, impact their identity and wellbeing.

## 4. Results

The data analysis process revealed that COVID-19 has indeed affected musicians on professional, economical and psychological level. However, it also showed that they found ways to cope with the presented difficulties. In this chapter there will be an analysis of the results.

### 4.1 Professional effect

From the analysis of the qualitative interviews, it becomes clear that musicians were impacted first and foremost on professional level. Firstly, though it is useful to point out some difficulties that were always existent in this sector as to inspect how COVID-19 has made the working conditions of musicians even harsher.

### 4.1.1 Always existent difficulties

Selecting music as a career path is a risky choice as musicians mentioned because this field was connected with a lot of uncertainty. In their interviews they mentioned that themselves as well as their co-workers lacked a stable income, consistent schedule, legal protection and that they worked long hours. This corresponds with the statements of Twose (1992) and Menger (2006) about creative workers conditions and with that of Gill and Pratt (2008) who reported that musicians experience a "boulimic schedule".  Being taken advantaged of economically or not being paid their worth was a phenomenon occurring often especially to younger musicians. As a participant mentioned:

> A lot of times, I have dedicated many hours and very much energy for zero
> money. There have been countless 4hours or 6hours of playing, giving my
> all, people having fun and shouting… and we were not paid anything, not
> even a symbolic compensation (Semeli Papavasileiou)

When the participant was asked why this had happened, she answered that those people thought she and her colleagues were "newbies" and that it would be easy not to recompensate them for their effort and service.

Another participant mentioned that he had to compromise and play in gigs which did not satisfy him in order to be able cover his needs. He considered finding an additional job was a better option as it would a allow him to select where to participate and where not to.

> The last two years I started giving music lessons but before that I used to live off by playing live gigs and it wasn't easy. It does not mean that you always do your creative part… it's very difficult to earn enough money so you can live off just by doing lives… I have played for music schemes whose style did not interest me very much and it was not easy. (Vironas Ntolas)

Participants also mentioned that when completing their musical studies and in the early stages of their career they had to rely on the support of their parents and take on an additional job as to recuperate from the financial instability they experienced. This is the case for a lot of musicians as mentioned by Gross et al. (2017). Except the instability, the lack of security and legal protection participants mentioned that their field has always been overcrowded and that there was a lot of competition, which sometimes was even unfair. This becomes evident in the following statement:

> This field is extremely antagonistic and egoistic. For example, today we might both go to a rehearsal and just because you are prettier, or you know someone in there, they will choose you instead of me despite the fact that you may be a worse singer. This is something that happens very often and you have to have strong stomach to withstand all happening in the music field. (Hristos Botsis)

### 4.1.2 Current difficulties

The following section will demonstrate how COVID-19 and the mandated lockdowns impacted musicians professionally.

### i) Cancellation of their activities

Musicians faced a lot of problems concerning their work, starting with the cancellation of their live events, their tours and festivals on which they participated. This annulment of their plans started even before the declaration of the lockdown as people started to panic and cancelled their tickets and organizations continuously postponed their programmed events. The fact that there was not any official declaration from the state and the health protocols concerning live shows were constantly changing, brought musicians to a very difficult position. What they managed to do was after a lot of personal but also collective effort and due to the sheer power of their will. As one participant mentioned:

> The last scheduled show I played was after a lot of hard work and effort because until last minute we did not know if that could happen. The parameters were changing all the time, first it depended on the space of the concert hall, then on the type of the concert etc (Manos Kitsikopoulos)

Soon enough musicians understood that it was a matter of time before all their live activities stopped. Except of the cancellation of their activities, the closing of spaces where they worked such as the theatres, bars, restaurants but also studios and conservatories impacted them greatly. These results are similar to those of other studies such as the one conducted by Spiro et al. (2020) and the of the organization Americans for the Arts (2020).

### ii) Difficulty of planning

Aside from the cancellation of their events, musicians reported that there were few auditions happening and their plans for their future were uncertain. Most of them tried to schedule their professional activities for the summer when they hoped things would be a little more laxed. However, participants stated they felt a lot of uncertainty as they did not know if the things they were trying to plan would work out.

> It's a time where everyday life reminds us that whenever we try to make plans God seems to laugh… There has been some work on a studio, preparing some songs, there have been some propositions for some live

concerts in the summer. However, we do not know if those will happen.

In a manner I feel that I am trying to plan but everything is very very fluid

(Kaiti Koulia)

### iii) Career change

As their shows, concerts, gigs and tours were cancelled and the recording sessions and chances for auditions were fewer, some musicians had to think about career change.

From what I see around me, everybody has settled down in any way they

can. Digital lives do not seem to be a substantial economic source for

musicians. Most of whom I know, give private lessons or follow a path in

the education sector. Also, I must say that babysitting is something which

I see a lot now. A lot of women in the sector have become babysitters.

(Areti Kokkinou)

Career change was not though a decision they took lightheartedly. The majority of participants despite being preoccupied from the state of events was reluctant to yet seriously think of a backup plan. Furthermore, for some, their back up plan was again music related because as they said that was what they were good at and that they had organized all their life around music.

### iv) Connection with audience and colleagues

From the interviews it became evident that COVID-19 seriously impacted musicians as it affected the way they kept contact not only with their audience but also their colleagues. As literature points out the bond between musicians is important, as with them they formulate an intricate relationship which is essential not only for their professional advancement but also for their wellbeing (Nielsen et al., 2018; Aucouturier & Canonne, 2017). Concerning the relationship with their colleagues they stated that they were able only to meet and practice with those with whom they were living close by due to intense COVOD-19 circulation restrictions.

If a colleague wanted to rehearse then we did follow of course all protocols and safety measures, wearing masks etc. When the artists though could not transport because they could not justify their transport then this was a very practical problem and all these months we had to come up with an alternative. (Marios Kazas)

In order to do that, some tried rehearse via social platforms such as Messanger or Zoom which proved to be very difficult. With most of their colleagues they said they tried to maintain their relationship via social media and with some others they admitted they had lost all contact. Concerning their audience, they stated that they tried to maintain their relations again via social media, by posting what they were currently working on or snippets from past lives/concerts. They stated though that despite posting not as often as in the past, the support of their audience was very strong and this filled them with motivation to keep going. The use of social media came up in all of participants interviews something which shows the need of the modern musician to be technologically adept and know how to maintain their public relations by themselves (Haynes & Marshall, 2018).

### 4.1.3 Lessons

Many of the participants complimented their income by working in conservatories or offering private music lessons which offered to them a sense of security and stability. Due to lockdown however conservatories closed down and those lessons were being given in an online manner. At first, all of them were concerned about their effectivity but as the time went by, they referred to this practice as "a brave decision" as they adapted and found efficient ways it could be beneficial both for themselves and their students. Some participants mentioned that online lessons had certain elements of practicality and that they would like to keep this practice even after the lockdown ends. As one participant mentioned:

Online lessons have some good elements, there are times I am thinking that I would prefer to do some lessons online because you are in your own space, you have a Skype session and then you are done. You don't have

to take your car and go to another area where the other lesson is… you know? (Vironas Ntolas)

This practice is both time and money saving as they said because there was no need for commuting. And it also offered them a certain kind of freedom. Other participants mentioned that they also had the possibility to deliver lessons to students living in other areas or countries. It is noteworthy that for many of the participants, those lessons were a means of solace and they considered themselves lucky that they still had the opportunity to support themselves through music and not having to resort to another job which would be less fulfilling.  Those lessons hence, were seen as a form of psychotherapy which reminds us the statement of McNiff (1981) about the healing role of music and the generation of positive feelings for all those who engage with it.

On the negative side, participants mentioned that they had lost some of their students who decided not to continue as they thought that "it would not be the same". With those who continued at initial stage they faced a lot of problems due to time delay and the lack of interpersonal connection. This was the case especially with younger learners for whom online education was more problematic. Musicians also revealed that in the beginning they faced difficulties when trying to communicate practical skills and techniques.

It is not easy to have a rehearsal or a lesson via the internet because there is this delay of sound. I have learnt how many splits of the second is the delay, so I can sing before my student and thus synchronize with them and help them cope with the difficulties… If it were live my role would have been more supportive for the student. It's a confusion but we manage and we learn to adapt. (Despoina Panagiotou)

### 4.1.4 Digital lives

Due to COVID-19 all the live events that musicians had scheduled or thought of programming in the future were cancelled. Some of them decided to choose the alternative of doing digital lives on various social media, such as Youtube and Twitch. While others had decided not to proceed in events like these as they would rather wait for things to reopen, others saw it as an opportunity and as an additional means with

which they could present their work, maintain the connection with their audience (Marshall, 2020) and even expand it, thus indicating the DIY mentality of musicians (Garland, 2020) and their "musical opportunism" (Obschonka et al., 2015). Those digital lives were not though without difficulties. Some participants mentioned that it was difficult to create without having any audience, without feeling their energy and hearing their applause as a feedback. As a participant mentioned:

> The loss of live interaction with the audience is something which poses difficulties and since you do not have it, you have to change the way you think when you perform. Me and my colleagues saw it more like recording on studio where you still give your best self despite not having a direct recipient of your work who supports you with their feedback, applause or the energy. (Antonis Palamaris)

Some of the participants mentioned that their digital live streams were not actually live but long shootings which were filmed days ahead with a lot of cutting and stopping, fixing of the sound etc. Those who did a digital live full band said that it required a lot of effort, equipment, organization and that they also had to do recurrent covid tests thus making those events difficult to take place.

Another participant who livestreamed alone mentioned, that this practice required attaining some technological skills and learning to multitask. He said that musicians now had to read and respond to comments, engage with the audience by talking to it and keeping it entertained but also leaving enough time for playing their music.

> It is a huge learning process for a musician to play, read and comment on other people's comments at the same time. We did not have this type of interaction in the regular lives. I am doing live gigs for years, and I played one hour for a live stream with songs that I have played countless times and I was exhausted, I had turned all red, as if I had been playing for hours. (George- Alexandros Vallis)

Concerning the interaction with his audience the participant mentioned:

The connection in the live stream is different. The audience feels like is just you and them, people see it as one to one type of connection, you are no longer an authority on the stage. There is a closer connection so it is a good means of keeping the connection with my audience alive. (George-Alexandros Vallis)

By closer connection the interviewee means that in these lives it felt almost like more personal contact. In his streams he said he tried to be more talkative and shared funny stories or things about his songwriting experiences, not only because it was "expected" of him to interact but also because himself wanted to try to establish a true bond with his audience in a way to diminish the distance between them.

Many of the participants mentioned that despite the difficulties of this practice, they appreciated the benefits that it gave them. They mentioned that they had a more freedom as to what they would play and that the recording was something that they could later study and keep for their portfolio. Furthermore, it gave them solace that they could still share their music with people. It seemed to them like "a gift" both to themselves as they could through them they realize one part of their identity but also to their audience which seemed to be in dire need for the sort of relaxation that only music can offer. This brings back to the theme of music as means of communication (Baym, 2018) and as a means of escapism (Scharff, 2017).

## 4.2 Economic effect

### 4.2.1 Always existent

As it was mentioned previously being a musician is not an easy career choice as it does not equal economic stability or a large wage. The majority of musicians operate on a local level, earn daily wages and many times they have to find an additional job, related or unrelated to music in order to sustain themselves. This becomes obvious in the following statement.

Certainly, when you decide to follow music or any artistic path professionally, you know it is a luxury for some and a necessity for others. In the society we live in, art does not have the same kind of investment

from the state as other fields. Thus, your life is a continuous economic crisis, a continuous struggle to secure your survival first and your well-being afterwards and COVID-19 certainly made things even worse (Antonis Palamaris)

This statement is indicative of what Standing called as the "precariatised state of mind" of a musician and also confirms that searching for a job is "a relentless activity" (Patterson, 2001). Little remuneration was a theme that came up several times during the interviews and a lot of participants mentioned that people outside of this field were not aware of the difficulties artists experience. This becomes clear in the following statement:

In the mind of people, the artist is someone who is having fun, a hobbyist. But they do not realize that behind the show of a musician there are years of effort, dedication and a lot of economic investment especially from the parents, since music education more often starts from very young age. (Marios Kazas)

Thus, we see that, artists despite the effort they put into their craft and their development, they are still treated as not having a serious occupation, or as if doing music is something easy and which generates a great income. However, as it was pointed out by several participants this is far from true. Another participant mentioned that the professional development of a musician is a continuous process and that their musical studies almost certainly never finish as high performance is always expected (Habe et al.,2019). In his interview Hristos Botsis mentioned that singers have their own vocal coaches, their specialized doctors and sometimes they have people who are in charge of their public relations. Thus, being an artist is certainly something which requires a lot of personal economic investment.

Thus, economic stability is rarely achieved. A lot of musicians decide to participate in concerts or take a job because they want to build their curriculum, and gain experiences. This is evident in the following statement:

I try to sustain myself from various angles because this profession does not have any kind of stability… Now I'm doing some concerts but they are more for expanding my experience and my curriculum. Artists

nowadays work not because they make a lot of money but because they
want to gain experiences (Despoina Panagiotou)

This brings us back to the theme of "hope labor" (Kuehn & Corrigan, 2013) or "sacrificial labor" as mentioned by Ross (2003) where this kind of workers hope for better conditions in their future and in the meantime are rewarded with the emotional compensation that their art offers.

## 4.2.2 Current difficulties

One of the other effects of the mandated lockdown was that the spaces where musicians played, worked and rehearsed started closing down either temporarily or permanently. The majority of the musicians found themselves in a difficult position to sustain themselves because they earned their livelihood by playing in places connected with food or drink services such as restaurants and bars. As one participant mentioned the studio work of a musician is considerably less than live events confirming the statement of Baym (2018) that live evets are the main source of income for the majority of musicians.

There are 30 big singers in the disc company, who are on the radios having done all the things they have done… but all others, thousands of people worked, earned their wage and lived off by playing on cafes, bars, restaurants and small taverns. They were professional in this music domain and this is one of the strongest that has been affected by COVID-19. (Hristos Botsis)

Additionally, the fact that conservatories had also closed down and the fact that there were not many propositions for new work, generated anxiety to musicians as to how they could economically support themselves and secure their survival. Some participants lost some of their lessons and digital lives did not constitute an important source of income.  As a result, some musicians found themselves in need to search for an additional job. When musicians talked about how COVID-19 impacted them they often compared their working field with others indicating that their profession had been

one of the most affected and thus confirmed the statement of Adams-Prassl et al (2020) who reported that creative workers and freelancers were more likely to experience harsher economic difficulties during the pandemic. This result is similar to the one reported in the study of Spiro et al. (2020) where participants reported experiencing intense anxiety about their economic predicament.

### 4.2.3 Subsidy

In order to support the sector of Arts and Culture during this harsh period the government offered an economic aid which they called "Special purpose compensation for art professionals". However, it was only given to musicians who had registered to the "artistic record" and had an approved certificate of their musical education and two years of working experience or had collected a certain number of stamps with a minimum of 4 years of working experience in the field. Some participants managed to get it as they fulfilled the criteria. Others got another kind of subsidy based on their work contract they had signed with the conservatories with which they had collaborated prior to the lockdown. Others did not receive any of those subsidies, as during the lockdowns chose to sustain themselves with other job positions in other working fields. Musicians were not eligible to take the compensation if they had another source of income or received any other form of subsidy. As it became evident from the interviews some musicians faced difficulties meeting those prerequisites. This is evident in the following statement:

> There were many colleagues that could not work due to the cancellations during March for the shows they were although continuing rehearsing about and did not manage to gather enough stamps and as a result they did not receive the subsidy. Later on, the prerequisites to get it, broadened and some managed to receive some money afterwards. But there was big despair in the beginning, as there were many artists' shows that had already been cancelled by February. Generally, there was a feeling that there was a dead end. (Areti Kokkinou)

The economic situation of many professionals was very grave not only due to the unexpected turn of events but also because of the difficulties posed by the existent practices in the music field. In Greece it is very common for musicians to work without having signed any official kind of work contract not receiving stamps for their work (black work). This practice created a work force without any kind of legal protection, where their rights and their compensation were defined by the wants and needs of the market thus validating the results of the study conducted by Hesmondhalgh and Baker, (2013) about the working conditions of the creative industries. However, now this situation had very intense implications as it brought musicians to a stalemate. Furthermore, as participants mentioned, except of the difficulties of eligibility there was also an issue with the bureaucratic procedure in order to get the compensation.

Musicians who got the subsidy mentioned that it was not substantial as it could cover only their basic needs and believed they would not have got it if was not for their own efforts.

> For someone who has a family and children it is not enough. If they have to pay a rent this amount is nothing, you cannot support a family like this… It was the least that the state could give us and it would not have been done without the mobilization of artists themselves (Stamatis Petsakos)

The economic help was a small boost which helped them cope with the anxiety and pressure they felt when they lost their income. However, it was not substantial they said, as it was not accompanied by other economic measures which could offer further relief, as it was the case with musicians in other countries.

### 4.2.4 Future difficulties

Musicians expect that COVID-19 will impact them gravely in the long run. Some of them believe that there will be an "artistic explosion" and people will be willing to organize things as to recuperate what they have lost and thus arts will flower once again. However, they also expect that the return to normalcy will be very slow:

Let's be realistic, it will take about a year, a year and a half from now for our mind to clear, for a sense of security to be created and to feel that we are not in danger so that someone will have the necessary calmness to organize something, to take initiative without having this kind of ghosts in our heads (Kaiti Koulia)

Thus, we see that musicians have found themselves in a grave position which they cannot control since the realization of their activities but also their future is dependent on the will or the fear of people and organizations to schedule or attend events. Some participants stated that they feared that after the lockdown ends an economic crisis would follow and that their art, which might be a primary need for them and for likeminded people, will be treated as kind of luxury.

The musical domain and the field of arts in general is sometimes thought of as a luxury for a lot of people, you know… going to a concert or starting an instrument is not a basic need, there will be other more pressuring expenses that people will need to cover. I am worried because it's a chain reaction, covid affects all domains and it will also affect mine. It is obvious that the effects afterwards will be very grave.  (Vironas Ntolas)

The anxiety about their survival was intense as they all felt that the decompression would be very slow. They were uncertain about when they would be able to perform and under which circumstances, they would be able to do so. Some participants believed that the road to their career and professional advancement will be more difficult as there will be fewer work opportunities. They also expected that their working environment might become unsustainable.

Job positions will be seriously fewer, the wages will diminish and this sector among others will not be viable, it will shrink and vegetate…I expect very harsh conditions after the pandemic. (Antonis Palamaris)

This anxiety about their future and the future of culture and arts was also prevalent in the study of Spiro et al. (2020) where participants indicated high level of stress which was future orientated.

**4.3 Psychological effect**

From the analysis of the musicians' interviews, it became evident that COVID-19 had impacted them also on a psychological level. This effect was an outcome not only of their economic predicament and the difficulties they came across on professional level but also a result of the loss of connection with their audience and colleagues and of the inability to share their music.

**4.3.1 Anxiety, insecurity about shows/ survival**

The first period was a period of much anxiety insecurity as musicians did not know what would happen with their impending shows since there was no official declaration and the health protocols were constantly changing.

> The shows were getting cancelled the one after another. So, 15 days before the declaration of the lockdown I was like… what I am doing? Am I preparing for those? How do I handle it? I was in a constant standby…it was very difficult because during that period you felt that there was not something in the horizon but you had to prepare for the shows you had already booked. (Manos Kitsikopoulos)

Form the interviews it became evident that these feelings of anxiety and insecurity were long lasting as they started before the declaration of the first mandated lockdown and stretched to the present but also in the future as they felt that they could not make certain plans about their activities or their life. This result is similar to that of Spiro et al. (2020) who stated that participants of the study felt high levels of stress, anxiety and depression and reported having insecurities not only about their economic stability for the time being but also about the future of their profession and the repercussions that all this would have on the field of Culture and the Arts.

### 4.3.2 Impact on self/ working identity

Pursuing a music career has been for all participants a childhood dream. The inability to realize their work identity, to communicate and present their work to the audience cost them on psychological level. When the lockdown was officially mandated and all their activities stopped, they felt a sadness, feelings of depression and a kind of void which they were not able to fill. Those feelings were intensified in cases where participants had to search for an alternative source of income.

> In my case being an artist changed radically as I had to work in a domain completely different from music which distanced me from my creative nature. This work was not as creative and the time it took away from me, was something that I cannot take back. Also, the psychological pressure that I experienced, made it difficult from me to exist as an artist in the time I was left with. So, the pandemic affected my profession very much, as it impacted not only my ability to economically sustain myself but also my very artistic nature (Antonis Palamaris).

This statement shows how musicians regard their art not only as something that fills them with pleasure but also as the calling (Freidson, 1990). It also indicates that musicians were affected on a deeper level which is connected not only with their work identity but also their self-identity (Smith & Thwaites, 2018). Indicative of that is that the theme of music as a way of living, an act of self-discovery, a means of creation and self-realization (Baym, 2018) was prevalent in many of the participants' interviews. This is evident also in the following statement:

> This is a way of living for me, it's my oxygen. So, when I hear that everything suddenly stops, I am searching to see once again who am I ..., how can I build now what I had back then. How can I have music as the base of my life, how can I respect my life, how can I continue playing music and singing without being able to meet with people? How will I sustain myself and understand if I am worthy or not to be called an artist, now that I am cut off from all those who reassured and stimulated me? (Kaiti Koulia)

The referring of the audience as a system of support shows how the identity of a person is also shaped by the meanings that other people attach to them (Brown, 2015: p. 23; Baumeister, 1986; Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Gecas, 1982). We also see that social interaction is doubly important here because it contributes to the formation of their identity as a musicians' work depends on their ability to connect and interact with people, and on their need to be supported and accepted by them (Baym, 2018).

### 4.3.3 Loss of connection

The most important thing that musicians said affected their psychology was the feeling of having lost the connection with their audience and their colleagues. Despite trying to keep contact with them via social media the majority of the participants stated they could not communicate with them musically. The theme of music as a means of communication occurred several times during the interviews

> The connection and the communication not only with the audience but also between the musicians themselves is essential for music. Besides the economic difficulty which creates a sense of anxiety, this loss of creative communication makes them feel like animals in a cage, because for an artist, their craft besides being a means of sustaining their livelihood, it is also an internal, psychic need. So, its loss definitely creates issues. (Areti Kokkinou)

Many times, the participants mentioned that playing music was a collective act something which is achieved by the interplay and the exchange of energies and artistic goals between colleagues. This statement is indicative of the bond between musicians which is a both mechanical and organic (Arditi 2020) and also shows how this interaction is crucial for their wellbeing (Ascenso et al., 2017). Some participants also said that this need to communication felt to them as being an internal need which they needed to fulfill as they regarded human connection a source of life, a fuel for inspiration and something which makes them evolve.

Concerning their audience, musicians referred to it as a system of support. Their applause they said, is the physical manifestation of the connection between them and a

form of psychic compensation which shows them that their art and their identity are validated and celebrated (Baym, 2018).

> I miss the applause, it's obvious that we need this reassurance… The other thing I miss is this silence and this dedication when pairs of eyes look at you and you know that they are listening to you. When there is that silence you know that you have won your audience. That is when true communication starts. When they murmur the song along with you, you converse with them at a deeper level and in this moment, they can hear your feelings. The applause in the end is just the icing on the cake. This is what I miss the most, what happens when there is music and people together (George-Alexandros Vallis).

This is statement is indicative of the phenomenon of "being in the zone" (Jordan et al., 2017) or the effect of "timeless time" (Hesmondhalgh & Baker 2013; Marotto et al., 2007). The applause is thus a form of non-monetary compensation which fills the psyche of the musician in a way that actual remuneration does not and that its lack provokes a feeling of sadness and a sense of a void.

### 4.3.4 Restlessness/feeling of exhaustion

As the time passed by musicians overcame the first shock and managed to adapt. However, they also begun feeling a sort of restlessness. They missed doing gigs, touring, going to studios, communicating with the audience, as for them music is not only an economic source and the means with which they present their art but it is also a part of themselves. Most of the participants during this period seemed to be experiencing an emotional rollercoaster, with emotions ranging from anxiety, anger and sadness to peace, relaxation and then restlessness again. This is evident in the following statement:

> In this second lockdown I feel that I am being restless, that I have reached a point of saturation. I force myself from stubbornness to keep going and keep creating. I feel a psychological and psychosomatic drain now…

Because of the lives, I used to tour in the countryside very much and because my father is also a musician and toured and took me with him, this was a very important part of my life since I was a kid. Now I'm starting to feel that I really miss that and that I feel pressured. (Semeli Papavasiliou)

The feeling of imprisonment was something that came up several times during the interviews and participants said that the seclusion and the prolongment of this situation had caused a psychosomatic drain of their energy. Many participants when discussing the impact that this had on their psyche used metaphors such as "being in prison" or feeling "like animals in a cage". It is noteworthy that some participants also mentioned that the harsher their economic predicament was, the more intensely they felt it affected their psychological state and the more they were disturbed by their externally enforced enclosure. This indicates how for musicians the personal and working identity are interconnected and how those two together impact their sense of wellbeing (Smith & Thwaites, 2018).

### 4.3.5 Impact on motivation

Participants also pointed out that sometimes it was difficult to remain productive and that being restricted all the time in their private sphere caused them to run out of stimuli. As a participant said in her interview:

We don't always succeed being productive. Sometimes, there is complete stillness, other times there is a lot of energy and I want to contact my friends to rehearse. But there are other times when I think what is the point of doing that since we can't go out, we can't play and we cannot share it? It's not a given that we will always feel well and motivated and we shouldn't idealize the situation. (Kaiti Koulia)

This statement of the participant shows how although musicians had more time in their hands as to create, their psychological state sometimes impeded them from doing so. The same participant mentioned that at times, she felt that some of her colleagues due to the psychological difficulties they experienced seemed to have lost

their vision. This is also reported in the study of Spiro et al. (2020) where it mentioned that the virus had affected performing artists as it had an impact on their motivation and their notion of selfhood.

### 4.3.6 Feelings towards the state

The first wave of anxiety about the future of their shows turned into panic as to who would be eligible to get the subsidy. The panic then led into anger and resentment as to how they were treated by the state and the lack of essential organization and support. All of the participants stated that without self-organizing, creating the unions and fighting to claim their rights, they would have not achieved what they did. Some of them also mentioned that the state had never showed support towards the sector of Art and Culture as it never gave the same kind of investment as it did to other sectors. The pandemic they said was just another example of that.

> The way we were treated shows that the state needs us only for blowing her horn. But in the difficult situations it seems that it does nothing…so the mobilization of musicians was huge and we managed to take those 500 euros which is the least we could take. (Stamatis Petsakos)

The lack of information, the continuous alteration of protocols and the small support which was given to them after a lot of time, effort and bureaucratic work angered them. Many of them also mentioned that the health measures and the mandated lockdown were very harsh and there was a kind of obsession from the state as to how it tried to handle the situation. They were uncertain about the measures effectivity and thought it was not fair for them not to realize any of their events if they followed all the necessary health measures.

### 4.3.7 Anxiety about societal repercussions

All participants throughout their interviews mentioned several times that they were preoccupied by the state of events. This anxiety was not only regarding the repercussions on the field of Arts and Culture but also, about the effects of COVID-19 on humanity. Participants were sensitive about the wellbeing of their fellow citizens.

It puts a toll on me what is happening around us, the fact that I see stores closing that people have lost their jobs and I am worried about how those people live (Despoina Panagiotou)

They were also preoccupied by the fact that people seemed to have got used to their enclosure as they considered it an abnormal situation which was not healthy. Some of them mentioned that this might even affect the human code of communication as people have become lonelier, face mental health issues and do everything electronically.

We have closed to ourselves, we have become lonelier and in the long run it will not only affect me but the whole world, the code of communication changes, the role of technology is intensified and we will forget our human nature, that human beings are social beings. (Hristos Botsis)

This statement points the psychological the trauma that COVID-19 has provoked to individuals and indicates the need for social interaction which is fundamental to psychology as it contributes to the formulation of an individual's social identity. (Antonini-Philippe et al. 2020). Some participants were also concerned because the seclusion of people in their private spheres created issues such as tension between family members and incidents of police brutality. Musicians stated that it was their duty as artists and as human beings not to close their eyes to what is happening around them, to remain sensitive but also critically aware.

**4.4 Coping mechanisms**

Most participants stated that the first lockdown was harsher for them because it was the first shock and did not know how to react. As the time went by though, they managed to adapt, found new professional practices and ways to deal with the psychological repercussions of the fact that they were denied the possibility to realize their selfhood by sharing their art.

### 4.4.1 Internal

#### 4.4.1.1 Love for what they do

One of the most important factors that helped them cope during this difficult period is their love for what they do. Many of the partcipants referred to music as being their madness, their drug, their oxygen and also a magical world. In the interviews they stated that their art was a means of self-expression, self-realization, self-discovery and a source of life and pleasure.

> From the day I started working I said that I would never do anything else in my life. I will fight for this to the last moment and I will always have this in my life... I will do anything possible to achieve it and I will fight for it till the end, till I succeed in what I love. (Stamatis Petsakos)

This statement reminds us of what Freidson (1990) called as a "labor of love" as participants regarded music as their true calling. They stated that the hardships they go though do not diminish the engagement with their art which constantly remains their means of self-actualization (Baym, 2018) and their way of escapism (Scharff, 2017).

#### 4.4.1.2 Resilience

Another coping mechanism that helped musicians, were the previous difficulties they had dealt with during practicing their art.  Many of them mentioned that working in the music field had never been easy as it demanded years of effort, dedication and practice When they entered the professional field, they found out that usually the remuneration and the legal protection were little and the field overpopulated and antagonistic. Many times, they had to find additional jobs and deal with situations that made them learn how to stand on their own feet.

> In the past I went abroad to work as a musician and not only did I not do that but I had to work in different jobs and ended up working in an office for three years. This had a big impact in my psychology as it unrooted my artistic side and it numbed me. However, due to that harsh experience I had developed a resistance and a coping mechanism that helped me during the

pandemic. I felt lucky as it did not affect me to the degree it could have done… I felt that since I had already done it once and survived, I can do it again. (Antonis Palamaris)

This statement shows the complex form of freedom which cultural workers experience (Hesmondhagh & Baker, 2010) which is associated with much anxiety, precarity and a self-reflexivity (McRobbie, 2015). However, the resilience musicians develop as pointed out by Smith & Thwaites (2018) enabled them not only to deal with the uncertainty an instability which seems to be embedded in this working field but also with the insecurity provoked by COVID-19.

### 4.4.1.3 Entrepreneurial mindset

Some other tactics that musicians used and helped them greatly were programing, setting an ultimate goal, seeing obstacles as opportunities, adapting and always having an eager volition for learning and exploring. These techniques are indicative of their entrepreneurial mindset.

It is a creative job and it is a job which requires discipline. Especially now that you do not know when you will play again, it is very easy for someone not to have a goal or just sit around and do something one day and nothing the next. I try to put my own goals, smaller ones, for example I say… I always liked these pieces in the past and never had the time to study them, so this month I will do this… in two weeks I will have achieved that. I set personal deadlines. (Manos Kitsikopoulos)

The same participant mentions that he has tried to build his own "microcosm" by trying creating the conditions which enable him to stay productive. In similar lines other participants mentioned that they have tried to distance a little bit themselves from what is happening and develop creative routines which allowed them to feel that they were not stagnating.

### 4.4.1.4 Hope and Gratitude

Despite facing many difficulties across all levels, participants did not abandon their feeling of hope. They were positive that although the decompression would take a lot of time, things would ameliorate and they would be able to perform live, work again with their colleagues, reconnect with their audience, meet again with their friends and regain their freedom. This feeling of hopefulness enabled them to stay productive, prepare for future opportunities and do everything in their power as to take advantage of the time they were given.

> I am hopeful that things will again go back to normal. Whether we go through this more easily or more difficultly, we will be able to perform, enjoy music and sing all together once again. (Marios Kazas)

This hopefulness was a saving grace as it did not only have a positive impacted on their wellbeing (Bailey, 2007) but also enabled them develop create a different pathway as to achieve their goals (Snyder, 2002).

## 4.4.2 External

However, there were also a another set of strategies based on external factors that musicians implored as to enable themselves deal with the experienced feelings and anxieties.

### 4.4.2.1. Physical exercise

A lot of them mentioned that they tried to put exercise on their schedule. Some of them stated that the first lockdown had impacted in terms of their health as they had an unhealthy food consumption which led to the gaining of weight. Walking in the nature they said was particularly helpful and relaxing as it helped them clear their mind, kept them energized and filled themwith inspiration.

I gain my inspiration by spending time in nature. I walk very often by the sea because it helps me clear my mind and finding my internal power to keep going, to always return to what I love and keep practicing daily. (Despoina Panagiotou)

This is similar to the view of Shanahan et al. (2020) where participants in the study mentioned that physical exercise was a means which helped them cope both physically and psychologically.

### 4.4.2.2. The need and the support of others

Additionally, a lot of them mentioned that their loved ones, their families and their friends were their system of support which gave them the necessary boost as to keep creating. Many participants stated that music was a form of psychotherapy and solace (McNiff, 1980) not only for themselves but also others. People's comments on their videos, their participation and excitement for their digital lives and the general support they showed towards their movement were things that filled them with joy and made them realize once again their social role (Baym, 2018).

Artist is the one that in difficult periods of time, even during covid, can support other people with their inspiration and their imagination. We might seem that we are the most sensitive of the people… but we emanate this energy and we have the ability to transmit it and say things though music and through any kind of art. This is something which is definitely lifesaving during covid. (Despoina Panagiotou)

This connects us back to the idea of music as a hotline for "collective consciousness" in times of a crisis (Horsfall, 2016). The connectivity of music (Bodner & Gilboa 2009) and its use for the sustenance of personal and collective wellbeing (Baykin et al. 2012) is also seen in the following statement.

The effect (of Covid-19) on the soul of every artist will be shown in the future. I believe though that the passion that we have for what we do, is

stronger and will cover any kind of fear that some may have had. Art brings

us closer, this is the secret, the goal and the biggest gift of art to humanity.

(Marios Kazas)

Evident here is again the theme of music as a calling and a reason of being (Freidson, 1990).

## 4.5 Positive impact

Despite all difficulties musicians managed to take advantage of the time they were given and did everything in their power in order to evolve and benefit themselves. One of the main positive things that came as a result of the lockdowns was that they found themselves with more time which they could devote to the activities themselves needed or desired.

### 4.5.1 Time

#### 4.5.1.1 Studying/ Exploring new music

All participants said that they had more time which they used according to their needs. Some of it was devoted to studying and exploring new musical horizons. The musicians said that during the lockdown being in the seclusion of their house studied pieces they always wanted to learn, practiced and focused on bettering their technique which according to scholars is essential for their professional development (Kenny & Ackermann, 2015; Ascenso et al., 2017). Also, despite being isolated, musicians tried to remain active by preparing for what is to come. As a participant mentioned:

I share my ideas and my projects to various organizations so I can declare

my presence with artistic propositions and claim future possibilities... I

always try to find time for creation, for action and this helped me to

discipline myself and take advantage of this time so that when things open,

I will be a better musician, wiser, more prepared and more developed

(Manos Kitsikopoulos)

This statement also indicates the theme of musical opportunism (Obschonka et al. 2015) and musicians' entrepreneurial mindset (Haynes & Marshall, 2018).

### 4.5.1.2 Resting

When discussing how COVID-19 had impacted then on psychological level, all participants reported that one of the most important things that came out of the situation was that they devoted time to their psychosomatic and phonetic resting. Being a musician in today's world signifies tight schedule, long working hours, touring which they said after all these years being in the field had brought an exhaustion (Gross et al. 2017). Thus, resting was a kind of gift for them as it gave them the opportunity to heal. This becomes evident in the following statement:

> Because I was always there for my job, and I was so dedicated to it, there might have been a period that I worked every day of the week, and if you think about it that I was doing this from 16 and now I'm 26, it's been 10 years. I feel that I have destructed my biological clock… In the beginning of the lockdown, I felt blessed that I got off from working so late at nights, our working schedule was awful… I also felt emotional when I heard the voices of my female singer friends were changing. In the videos they were uploading, the hoarseness in their voices was gone and now they were clearer, more beautiful (Semeli Papavasileiou)

This finding seems to contradict the one of Fever et al. (2020) where it spoke about voice avoidance as many participants of this study thought of this time as a break, when a healing procedure could start which helped them regain their balance.

### 4.5.1.3 More creativity

Despite encountering difficulties when trying to stay productive, losing their stimuli and the contact with other people which helped them develop, many of the participants mentioned that they were given the possibility to be more creative. The rest and the calmness they felt enabled them to express themselves with more artistic

freedom and explore new artistic pathways. As mentioned in the literature review, according to Street (2017) musicians are able to create because they have acquired the ability to develop the conditions of active listening which enables them to seek the connections in the world, relate them to the concept of the self. This is evident in the interview of Kaiti Koulia where she mentioned that during the lockdowns she tried to prepare and use her creativity and what is happening around her as a fuel for expression and as a means to express herself more authentically.

> How can I express what is happening around us through the art of singing? What I want to say is that our truth and our life is not only the window but also the reason to keep searching to find how we can be present in the moment through our art (Kaiti Koulia)

This statement also indicates what McNiff (1981) mentioned about using life difficulties as a "fuel for expression". During the lockdowns musicians continued studying and exploring new pathways by letting their imagination and inspiration roam as to develop new projects and re-invent themselves.

### 4.5.2 Focus on the self

#### 4.5.2.1 Reseting/ Taking important decisions

When the barrage of live events stopped, participants stated that they had the opportunity to relax. This relaxation brought them to a deeper level of consciousness and it made them realize several thigs about themselves. It gave them the opportunity to discern what was important for them and how they wanted to move forwards.

> This circumstance helped me enter a condition of thoughtfulness to get away from things that may have taken too much time, to center on things that are important in my life, to dedicate more time for my own preparation…, to study more to be more creative and think how I want to move forwards both as a human being and as a musician. (Manos Kitsikopoulos)

Despite the fact thus that their activities have been brough to a halt, this newly found time proved essential and of outmost importance as it helped to pause and think how they could become the version of themselves they wanted to be.

### 4.5.2.2 Redefining working identity

Despite experiencing negative feelings when they were denied the possibility to enact their working identity at least in the way they used to, this period of time made them rethink their position towards their working identity and re-interpret it.

> There is a part in us as artists that we are a little bit of narcissists when we are on stage and when we define one part of ourselves, how we live and exist by the appreciation and the acceptance of the world, by his clap in our success. This shows a kind of vanity and one good thing that covid showed is that the artist has to be something more profound than to identify themselves with the acceptance of the world. (Kaiti Koulia)

Thus, we see that during this period of isolation musicians experienced conditions which helped them gain valuable lessons. This statement indicates that working identity is a continuous accomplishment and process (Schultz, Maguire, Langley, & Tsoukas, 2012, p.3). Furthermore, it shows how COVID-19 is an example of the identity transformation that individuals undergo when they live a stressful experience which destabilizes their sense of self (Beech 2008; Pratt 2000).

### 4.5.3 New practices

A lot of participants mentioned that the difficulties they encountered made them stronger and they understood that the most important thing is to learn how to cope with the sources and the means available to them. Participants adapted both their music lessons but also their concerts in a way that would enable them to function despite the struggles. When discussing the future of the live events and how the art sector is going to be impacted in the future, a lot of the participants discussed that it is the duty of the artist to change with the change. About the digital events a participant mentioned:

It's true that by no means this is my first choice but from the other side it is the duty of the artist to use his fingers and touch on society's beat inside which he works. We can't live isolated form the word or the change. If the message that each of us has to offer can be transmitted through the means of these technologies we can't go back. (Marios Kazas)

Artists they said always find a way to survive but also evolve through their encounter with obstacles.

### 4.5.4 Solidarity

Another positive impact that came along was the artists' solidarity. A lot of participants stated that the artistic filed was very chaotic, that it lacked organization and that there was no protection or any feeling of security. However, when artists unionized, demanded their rights and tried to enter the "artisitc record" in order to get the subsidy, they managed to set the foundations for a better future. This mobilization was a first step towards the amelioration of the working conditions of their field. As one participant mentioned:

Due to the pandemic most of the artists unionized and those who had not any connection to their associations or did not involve themselves with the chasing of their rights, worked together and managed to make their position stronger. They claimed some very basic rights and received the little things that the governance gave them, which was the least it could give them. But they managed to take it nevertheless. This would not have been the case if there wasn't all this fight. If this reasoning of unions continues, there are possibilities to better the working conditions for all artistic workers after the pandemic. (Antonis Palamaris)

Thus, we see that the spirit of "artist activism" (Cornefield, 2015) was intensified as during this harsh period musicians realized the need to stand by one another, support each other as to secure their livelihoods.

## 5. Discussion

The aim of this paper was to bring to the foreground how musicians experienced COVID-19 and indicate how it impacted them in various levels of their livelihoods such as the professional, economical and psychological level. Lastly, another aim of this study was to reveal the ways with which musicians tried to cope and surpass those difficulties.

Beginning from the *professional level*, musicians faced similar issues, among them, the cancellation of their activities, the inability to plan their future and the shrinking of possibilities for future work. Additionally, musicians faced difficulties to meet and practice with their co-workers and connect with their audience. This inability to practice and communicate robbed them of this feeling of companionship which is important both for their professional development but also their psychological wellbeing (Nielsen et al 2010, Aucoutourier & Cannone 2017). Aside from the present difficulties, COVID-19 is very likely to impact musicians on the long run. Participants excepted harsher working conditions after the pandemic due to the economic crisis they expect it will follow, which will cause more competition, compression of wages, cutting down of subsidies from organizations and closing down of their working spaces. In order to cope, musicians found alternative pathways such online lessons and digital lives.

The repercussions on an *economical level* were severe. As pointed out by Baym (2018) the most important source of income for a musician is their live events. Thus, the cancellation of all their scheduled events brought them to a grave position. The work they were able to do in studios, or the digital lives did not constitute an important revenue to cover their expenses. In order to economically sustain themselves some of them relied on delivering online lessons and others pursued other daily jobs. Receiving the subsidy was a small help as it only covered their basic needs as it was not accompanied by additional measures for economic relief. Furthermore, it was not easy to get it as some of their colleagues had problems meeting the prerequisites. The fact that there was a lot of bureaucracy complicated things even more. Most of the participants expect that after the end of the lockdown a grave economic crisis will follow which will put them at disadvantaged position because music will be regarded as kind of luxury. This belief also resonates with the prediction of Eikhof (2020) who supports that without further policies and legislation it is probable that individuals

especially those of underrepresented social groups may drop out of the cultural workforce.

The difficulties that musicians encountered on economical and professional level also impacted them emotionally and thus affected them on a *psychological level*. Except of the first stage of anxiety and uncertainly they felt about the cancellation of their shows and the way with which they would sustain themselves, they were also seriously impacted from the loss of connection with their audience. Their inability to share their love and their passion for what they do, provoked a sense of a void which was difficult for them to fill. The individuals' feelings of social isolation and the inability to enact their professional identity affected both their sense of self but also their feelings of motivation, as mentioned also in the study of Spiro et al., (2020)  This was something expected since music is for musicians a means of self-realization and self-validation (Baym, 2018). Furthermore, the inability to meet with their colleagues whom they considered essential both on practical and emotional level (Arditi, 2020) impacted greatly. This was evident also form the fact that participants referred to music art as the result of a collective effort. This period of uncertainty and change also probed them to reconsider and reevaluate their working identity (Beech 2008; Pratt 2000). Prevalent were also the feelings anxiety about societal repercussions of COVID-19, feelings of imprisonment, anger and also resentment towards the state due to the lack of essential support.

Concerning their coping mechanisms musicians indicated an interesting combination of practices which had as a foundation either internal belief systems or were based on external factors. Concerning the latter, musicians displayed intense feelings of hope for the future and also a gratitude for what they already had in their life (Snyder, 2002). These mechanisms along with the resilience they had developed due to the dedication and effort they put in order to master their art through the years (Smith & Twaites, 2018) along with the previous difficulties they had experienced, helped them cope with the feelings of insecurity. The entrepreneurial mindset they seemed to possess indicated them the need to go forwards, adapt, find new practices and evolve through the encounter with obstacles (Haynes & Marshall, 2018). Thus, they developed a program, and set personal goals which helped them remain productive. The external mechanisms which helped during this difficult period were the support of their loved ones and the need of their audience which they felt they had to satisfy mainly due to their own internal need to fulfill their social role (Baym, 2018). Lastly, exercising in

nature helped them greatly as it kept them not only energized and healthy but also gave them the opportunity to relax and find their balance (Shanahan et al., 2020).

Despite all difficulties, musicians found ways to take advantage of the time they were given and dedicated it to activities such as studying and exploring new music. This extra time gave them the opportunity to harness their skills, dwell into their art and discover things that made them more skilled and literate as musicians. Almost all participants at some point in their interviews referred to their long working hours, the "boulimic schedule" (Gill & Pratt, 2008) and the tiredness that comes after frequent touring activities. The relaxation and calmness freed their imagination as to create in a way they had not done before, prompted them to think more consciously about their career choices and re-think their working identity. Furthermore, the difficulties they faced made them come up with alternatives such as online music lessons and digital live streams. Lastly, their own mobilization enabled them to organize themselves, set the foundations for better future working conditions and created among them a sense of solidarity.

This study promotes a deeper understanding of the concept of identity struggle in times of crisis. The hardships that musicians underwent, affected their personal and psychological development which in its' turn affected their professional development and vice versa. This fact further delineates the interrelation of personal and professional identity for creative workers (Smith & Thwaites, 208). COVID-19 served as the circumstance and contextual element which made musicians reconsider their position in the working field as it showed them how special but also how precarious is their position in society. Furthermore, the interviews revealed how multi-faceted and context dependent is the identity of the musician and also indicated that despite their idenity being shaped by external forces such as the creative industry's working conditions or the current pandemic, its core remains unaffected due to its strong roots. Above all, their art will always remain a source of life, a form of love, a means of communication and a way of self-actualization.

This research also points out the importance of developing personal coping strategies as they enable the individual to deal with either personal, emotional or work identity struggle in times of crisis. Musicians discovered that indeed they may not have had the ability to change the situation they found themselves in, however, they had the ability to control to a degree the way this situation affected them. They tried to tackle problems regarding their identity and their overall well-being by developing and

upholding a specific kind of mindset which enables them to move forwards. The thought that the difficulties they encounter will make them stronger, their belief in their inner strength and their confidence on the fact in essence, themselves are the only responsible for their development, helps them retain an opportunistic approach. This reveals not only their entrepreneurial mindset but also proves that struggles concerning identity can be used as a fuel for development. This development in the case of musicians concerned more artistic and creative content, more authenticity towards themselves and their audience and a deeper realization of their role as social actors.

In conclusion this study points out some of the difficulties that musicians in Greece encountered during COVID-19 and their coping mechanisms. It showed how the uncertainty and anxiety that seemed to be embedded in the lives of all cultural workers, musicians included, were intensified even more (Communian & England, 2020), posing difficulties in all aforementioned layers. Lastly, it stressed the need for more legislation and policy which corresponds to their needs, not only on a professional level but also on a human one.
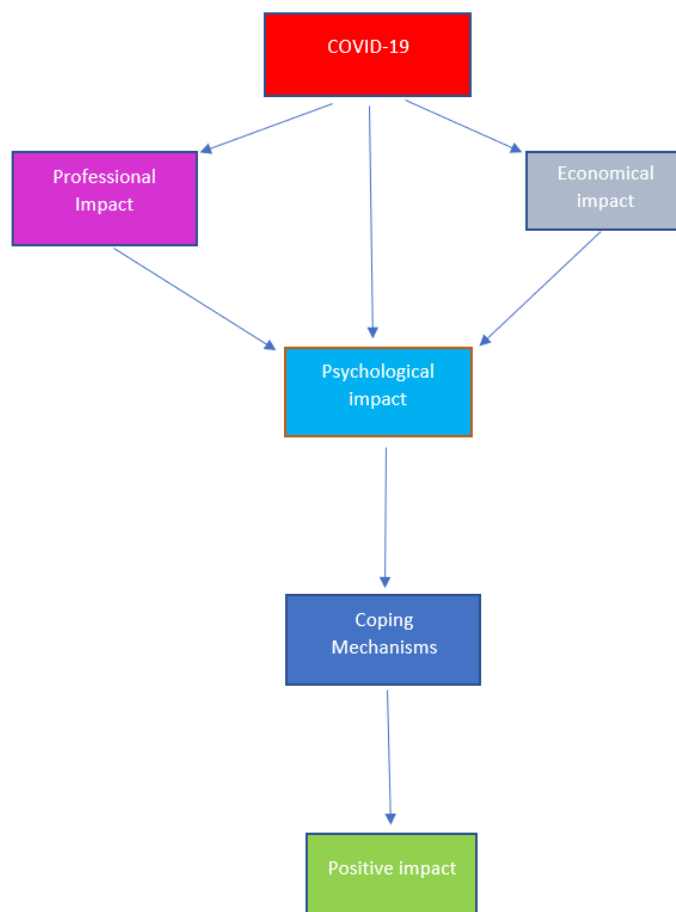


*Diagram indicating the effect of COVID-19 on musicians*

## 5.1 Limitations and Future Research

This research was not without limitations which are essential to be taken into account as they point out the possibility for further research. As this study remained quite general, its results could be further complimented with those of other studies which could have one level of focus at a time in order to analyze it in a more detailed manner. Another limitation was the small number of participants. The eleven interviews that were carried out, included musicians of both sexes, from various stages of their career as to gather adequate information. However, it would be inappropriate to proceed to an overgeneralization of the results. A future study could further add to the scope by adding more participants from different musical genres. An interesting case study would also be to also interview street musicians.

Furthermore, the case study of musicians was country specific so it would be useful if other studies were concluded in different geographic locations so as to add to this one. As it was mentioned form participants, other countries had other measures regarding the support of musicians during this difficult period. Additional studies on the issue could illustrate the right pathway as for governments to truly and effectively support the human force which sustains, creates, re invents and promotes the field of Arts and Culture. Lastly, further research should be carried out post lockdown as to investigate the working conditions of the musicians and generally of artistic workers and ensure that their rights will be protected, their art supported and their livelihoods respected.

## Bibliography

Abbing, H. (2008). Why are artists poor? The exceptional economy of the arts. Amsterdam University Press. https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/id/92339cef-c1e9-41fe-ade8-8dc95a67b948/340245.pdf

Adams-Prassl, A., Boneva, T., Golin, M., & Rauh, C. (2020). Inequality in the Impact of the Coronavirus Shock: Evidence from Real Time Surveys. in IZA - Institute of Labor Economics. Available online at:https://www.iza.org/publications/dp/13183/inequality-in-the-impact-ofthe-coronavirus-shock-evidence-from-real-time-surveys (accessed November 5, 2020).

Alvesson, M. & Willmott, H. (2002). Identity regulation as organizational control. Producing the appropriate individual. *Journal of Management Studies*, 39, pp. 619–644.

Americans for the Arts, (2020). UpToDate. Retrieved 6 February 2020 accessed on https://www.americansforthearts.org/news-room/americans-for-the-arts-news/covid-19-impact-on-the-arts-research-update-may-4-2020

Antonini, R., Schiavio A. & Biassutti, M. (2020). Adaptation and destabilization of interpersonal relationships in sport and music during the Covid-19 lockdown, *Heliyon*, doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e05212

Anderson, C. (2007). *The Long Tail: How Endless Choice is Creating Unlimited Demand*. London: Random House. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10824-007-9038-7

Arditi, D. (2020). We're Getting the Band Back Together: Social Cohesion and Solidarity in Bands, *Getting Signed*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-44587-4_6

Arendell, T. (1997). Reflections on the researcher-researched relationship: A woman interviewing men. *Qualitative Sociology*, 20(3), 341–368.

Armano, E., & Murgia, A. (2013). The precariousnesses of young knowledge workers: A subject-oriented approach. *Global Discourse*, *3*(3–4), 486–501. **https://doi.org/10.1080/23269995.2013.865313**

Ascenso, S., Perkins, R., & Williamon, A. (2018). Resounding meaning: A PERMA wellbeing profile of classical musicians. *Front. Psychol*. 9:1895. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01895

Ascenso, S., Williamon, A. & Perkins, R. (2017). Understanding the psychological wellbeing of professional musicians through the lens of positive psychology. *Psychol. Music* 45, 65–81. doi: 10.1177/0305735616646864

Ashforth, B. E., & Mael, F. (1989). Social identity theory and the organization. *Academy of Management Review*, 14, 20-39. doi:10.5465/AMR.1989.4278999

Aucouturier, J.J. & Canonne, C. (2017). Musical friends and foes: the social cognition of affiliation and control in improvised interactions. *Cognition* 161, 94–108. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2017.01.019

Babbie, E. (2013). *The basics of social research*. Cengage learning.

Bailey, T. C., Eng, W., Frishch, M. B., & Snyder, C. R. (2007). Hope and optimism as related to life satisfaction. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 2*(3), 168–175. DOI:10.1080/17439760701409546

Bartleet, B.-L., Ballico, C., Bennett, D., Bridgstock, R., Draper, P., Tomlinson,V., et al. (2019). Building sustainable portfolio careers in music: insights and implications for higher education. *Music Educ. Res*. 21, 282–294. doi: 10.1080/14613808.2019.1598348

Baumeister, R.F. (1986). Identity, Cultural Change and the Struggle for Self. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Baym, N. K. (2018) Playing to the Crowd, Musicians, Audiences, and the Intimate Work of Connection, *Postmillennial Pop,*14, New York University Press. doi:  https://doi-org.eur.idm.oclc.org/10.18574/9781479815357

Beech, N., Gilmore, C., Cochrane, E., & Greig, G. (2012). Identity work as a response to tensions: A re-narration in opera rehearsals. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, *28*(1), 39-47. doi:https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scaman.2011.12.005

Bensimon, M. (2012) 'The sociological role of collective singing during intense moments of protest', *Sociology* 46(2): 241–57. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038511416160

Beech, N. (2008). On the nature of dialogic identity work. *Organization, 15*, 51-74. doi: 10.1177/1350508407084485

Biasutti, M. (2013). Orchestra rehearsal strategies: conductor and performer views. *Music. Sci*. 17 (1), 57–71. 10.1177/1029864912467634

Bodner, E. & Gilboa, A. (2009) 'On the power of music to affect intergroup relations', *Musicae Scientiae* 13(1): 85–115. https://doi.org/10.1177/1029864909013001004

Brattico, E., Brattico, P., & Jacobsen, T. (2009). The origins of the aesthetic enjoyment of music. A review of the literature. *Music. Sci.* 13, 15–39. doi: 10.1177/1029864909013002031

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 77-101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). *APA handbook of research methods in psychology, 2*, 57-71. http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/13620-004

Brennen, B. (2017). Qualitative research methods for media studies: Second edition. New York, London: Routledge.

Bridgstock, R. S. (2005). Australian Artists, starving and well nourished: What can we learn from The Prototypical Protean Career, *Australian journal of Career Development* 14 (3), 40-48. doi: 10.1177/103841620501400307

Brown, A.D. (2015). Identities and Identity Work in Organizations. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 17(1), 20-40. doi:10.1111/ijmr.12035

Brown, A. D. (2020). Identities in Organizations. In A. D. Brown (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Identities in Organizations,* Oxford Univesity Press, 1-31.

Burrows, S. (2013). Precarious work, neo-liberalism and young people's experiences of employment in the Illawarra region. *The Economic and Labour Relations Review: ELRR*, *24*(3), 380–396. https://doi.org/10.1177/1035304613498189

Cabedo Mas, A., Arraga-Sanz C. & Moliner-Miravet, L. (2021) Uses and Perceptions of Music in Times of COVID-19: A Spanish Population Survey, *Front. Psychol.*, (2021) | https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.606180

Chi, M. T. H. (1997). Quantifying qualitative analyses of verbal data: A practical guide. *Journal of The Learning Sciences, 6,* 271–315.

Chiu, R. (2020) Functions of Music Making Under Lockdown: A Trans-Historical Perspective Across Two Pandemics, *Front.Psychol.,* doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.616499

Comunian, R., & England, L. (2020). Creative and cultural work without filters: Covid-19 and exposed precarity in the creative economy. *Cult. Trends* 29, 112–128. doi: 10.1080/09548963.2020.1770577

Coulson, S. (2012). Collaborating in a competitive world: musicians' working lives and understandings of entrepreneurship. *Work, Employment and Society, 26*(2), 246–61. doi:https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017011432919

Croom, A. (2011). Music Neuroscience and the Psychology of Well-Being: A Precis *Front Psychol*, 2, 393, doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2011.00393

Darker, T. (2013). 'The Rise of the Musicpreneur', available at: http://www.tommydarker.com/musicpreneur/ [last accessed 11 February 2020]

DeNora, T. (2000). Music in Everyday Life, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press doi: https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511489433

Dubois, A., & Gadde, L.-E. (2002). Systematic combining: an abductive approach to case research. *Journal of Business Research, 55*(7), 553-560. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0148-2963(00)00195-8

Durkheim, E. (1995 [1912]). The Elementary Forms of Religious Life, New York: Free Press.

Eikhof, D. R. (2020). COVID-19, inclusion and workforce diversity in the cultural economy: what now, what next? *Cult. Trends* 29, 234–250. doi: 10.1080/09548963.2020.1802202

Ekinsmyth, C. (2002). Project organization, embeddedness and risk in magazine publishing. *Regional Studies* 36, 229–243. doi: https://doi.org/10.1080/00343400220122043

Etikan, I., Musa, S. A., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1-4. doi:10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11

Farrokhi, F. & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, A. (2012). Rethinking Convenience Sampling: Defining Quality Criteria. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 2*(4), 784- 792. doi :10.4304/tpls.2.4.784-792

Fever, A., Roziner I. & Ofer A. (2020). Songbirds Must Sing: How Artistic Voice Users Perceive Their Voice in Times of COVID-19, *Journal of Voice,* doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvoice.2020.07.030

Folkman, S., & Mosckowitz T. (2000). Positive Affect and the Other Side of Coping, *American Psychologist* , 55(6): 647-54. doi: 10.1037/0003-066X.55.6.647

Freidson, E. (1990). Labors of love in theory and practice: a prospectus. In: Erikson, K.T., Vallas, S.P. (Eds.), The Nature of Work: Sociological Perspectives. Yale University Press, New Haven.

Frith, S. (1998). Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Fuchs, C. (2020). Everyday life and everyday communication in coronavirus capitalism. tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique. *Open Access Journal for a Global Sustainable Information Society* 18(1):375–399.

Fukui, H., & Toyoshima, K. (2014). Chill-inducing music enhances altruism in humans. *Front. Psychol.* 5:1215. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01215

Garland, E. (2020). The impact of the coronavirus outbreak on the independent music industry has been swift and devastating. Vice. Available at: https://www.vice.com/en_uk/article/akw8xk/how-to-support-indepen dent-music-coronavirus (accessed on 15 March 2020).

Gecas, V. (1982). The self-concept. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 8, 1-33.

doi:10.1146/annurev.so.08.090192.000245

Gergen, K.J. & Gergen, M.M. (1988). Narrative and the self as relationship. Social Psychological Studies of The Self: Perspectives and Programs, 21, 17-56. doi :10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60223-3

Gill, R. & Pratt, A. C. (2008). In the social factory? Immaterial labour, precariousness and cultural work. *Theory, Culture and Society,* 25 (7-8), 1-30.

Golafshani, N. (2003). Understanding Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *The Qualitative Report, 8*(4), 597-607. Retrieved from link.

Gross S.A, Musgrave, G., & Janciute, L. (2017). Well-being and Mental Health in the Gig Economy, Policy Perspectives on Precarity, Camri University of Westminster, accessed on https://eur-on-worldcat-org.eur.idm.oclc.org/oclc/1054250493

Guersen, G., & Rentschler, R. (2003). Unraveling cultural value. *The Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society,* 33(3), 196–210.

Habe, K., Biasutti, M., Kajtna, T. (2019). Flow and satisfaction with life in elite musicians and top athletes. *Front. Psychol.* 10, 698.

Hall, D.T. (2004). The protean Career A quarter century journey*, Journal of Vocational Behavior,* 5(1), 1-13

Hallam, S., Cross, I., & Thaut, M. (Eds.) (2016). Oxford handbook of music psychology (2nd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Haynes, J. & Marshall, L. K. R. (2018). Reluctant entrepreneurs: musicians and entrepreneurship in the 'new' music industry. *British Journal of Sociology*, 69(2), 459-482. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468- 4446.12286

Hermanowicz, J. (2002). The great interview: 25 strategies for studying people in bed. *Qualitative sociology*, 25(4), 479-499.

Hesmondhalgh, D. & Baker S. (2010). A very complicated version of freedom': Conditions and experiences of creative labour in three cultural industries, *Poetics,* 38 (1), 4-20. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2009.10.001

Holstein, J.A., & Gubrium, J. F. (1999). Active interviewing. In A. Bryman & R.G. Burgess (Eds.), *Qualitative research* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 113-129.

Holt, F. (2010). 'The economy of live music in the digital age', *European Journal of Cultural Studies,* 13(2): 243–61. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549409352277

Horsfall, S.T. (2016). 'Music as ritual: A hotline to the collective conscious', in: S.T. Horsfall, J. Meij and M.D. Probstfield (eds.), Music Sociology: Examining the Role of Music in Social Life, London: Routledge, 51–59.

Hove, M. J., & Risen, J. L. (2009). It's all in the timing: interpersonal synchrony increases affiliation. *Soc. Cogn.* 27, 949–960. doi: 10.1521/soco.2009.27.6.949

Hunter, D. (2020, April 1). *Coronavirus: If we are in a war against COVID-19 then we need to know where the enemy is*. Retrieved June2021, from The Conversation:

https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-if-we-are-in-a-war-against-covid-19-then-weneed-to-know-where-the-enemy-is-135274

Ibarra, H., & Barbulescu, R. (2010). Identity as Narrative: Prevalence, Effectiveness, and Consequences of Narrative Identity Work in Macro Work Role Transitions. *Academy of Management Review*, 35(1), 135-154. Retrieved from http://amr.aom.org/content/35/1/135.abstract

Jackson, D. (2020). Manchester's Deaf Institute and Gorilla music venues are closing for good. Manchester Evening News. Available at: https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/whats-on/music-nightlife-news/manchesters-deaf-institute-gorilla-music-18608539 (accessed 31 January 2020).

Jeanotte, S. (2021) When the gigs are gone: Valuing arts, culture and media in the COVID-19 pandemic, *Social Sciences and Humanities Open,* doi: 10.1016/j.ssaho.2020.100097

Van der Hoeven, A. & Hitters, E. (2019). The social and cultural values of live music: sustaining urban live music ecologies. *Cities* 90, 263–271. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2019.02.015

Johnson, J., (2002). Who Needs Classical Music?: Cultural Choice and Musical Value. Oxford University Press.

Johnson, J. M. (2011). In depth interviewing in Gubrium, J. F., Holstein, J. A., Marvasti, A. B., & McKinney, (Eds). *Handbook of interview research*. Thousand Oaks, CA. SAGE Publications.

Juslin, P. N. (2013). From everyday emotions to aesthetic emotions: toward a unified theory of musical emotions. *Phys. Life Rev*. doi: 10.1016/j.plrev.2013.05.008.

Kenny, D., Ackermann, B. (2015). Performance-related musculoskeletal pain, depression and music performance anxiety in professional orchestral musicians: a population study. *Psychol. Music* 43 (1), 43–60. https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735613493953

Kioussi,V. (2020). Rebetiko. accessed on https://www.fractalart.gr/rempetiko/

Kostandinidis, P. (2013). When progress fails, try Greekness: From Manolis Kalomiris to Manos Hatzidakis and Mikis Theodorakis.The national element in Music, International Musicological conference, Athens, January 2013, accessed on http://nem2013.music.uoa.gr/NEMproc2013.pdf

Kuehn, K., & Corrigan, T. F. (2013). Hope labor: The role of employment prospects in online social production. *The Political Economy of Communication*, *1*(1), 9–25.

Lofland, J. & Lofland, L.H. (1995). Analyzing Social Settings. 3d ed.Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Marotto, M., Roos, J., & Victor, B. (2007). Collective virtuosity in organizations: A study of peak performance in an orchestra. *Journal of Management Studies*, *44*(3), 388–413. doi: https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2007.00682.x

McNiff, S. (1981). The arts and psychotherapy (1st ed.). Charles C. Thomas Publishing.

McRobbie, A. (2002). Clubs to companies: notes on the decline of political culture in speeded up creative worlds. *Cultural Studies* 16, 516–531

McRobbie, A. (2015). Be creative: Making a living in the new culture industries. Cambridge:Polity.

Menger, P. (2001) 'Artists as Workers: Theoretical and Methodological Challenges', Poetics 28: 241–54

Menger, P.M., (2006). Artistic labor markets: Contingent work, excess supply and occupational risk management. In Ginsburgh, V.A., Throsby, D. (Eds.), Handbook of the Economics of Art and Culture, *Elsevier,* 765-811. Doi: 10.1016/S1574-0676(06)01022-2

Nielsen, S.G., Johansen, G.G., Jørgensen, H., (2018). Peer-learning in practicing. *Front. Psychol.* 9, 339. doi: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00339

Obschonka, M., SilberEisen, R.K., Cantner, U., and Goethner, M. (2015). Entrepreneurial Self-Identity: Predictors and Effects Within the Theory of Plannen Behavior Framework. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 30(4), 773-794. doi:10.1007/s10869-014-9385-2

O'Neill, S. (2002). The Self-Identity of Young Musicians. In MacDonald, R., Hargreaves, D. and Miell, D. (Eds.), *Musical Identities,* 80-95. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/562310/The_self-identity_of_young_musicians

Office for National Statistics, (2020.) Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 16 April 2020. Accessed on https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/coronavirusandthesocialimpactsongreatbritain/16april2020

Moisander, J., & Valtonen, A. (2012). Interpretive marketing research: Using ethnography in strategic market development. *Marketing Management: A Cultural Perspective. New York: Routledge*, 246-260.

Pachon, G. (2012). Tendencies in the psychological investigation for unemployment and health, *Ibero-american journal of Psychology, Sciences and Technology*, 17-30.

Palinkas, L., Horwitz, S., Green, C., Wisdom, J., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2013). Purposeful Sampling fro Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health, 42*, 533-544. doi:10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y

Paterson, R. (2001). Work histories in television. *Media, Culture & Society* 23, 495–520. doi: https://doi.org/10.1177/016344301023004005

Pereira-Sanchez, V., Adiukwu, F., El., H. S., Bytyçi D. G., Gonzalez-Diaz, J. M., Kundadak, G. K., … da, C. M. P. (2020). Covid-19 effect on mental health: patients and workforce. *The Lancet. Psychiatry*, *7*(6), 30. https://doi.org/10.1016/S2215-0366(20)30153-X

Pratt, M.G., Rockmann, K.W. & Kaufmann, J.B. (2006). Constructing professional identity: the role of work and identity learning cycles in the customization of identity among medical residents. *Academy of Management Journal*, *49*, 235– 262.

Reena, D. (2020). Covid-19 and mental health. *Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care*, *9*(8), 4489– 4489. doi: https://doi.org/10.4103/jfmpc.jfmpc_812_20

Rendell, J. (2020) Staying in, rocking out: Online live music portal shows during the coronavirus pandemic, Convergence: *The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies* 1–20, doi: 10.1177/1354856520976451

Riessman, K. (1993) Narrative Analysis, Thousand Oaks CA, Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Ross, A. (2003). No-Collar: the Humane Workplace and Its Hidden Costs. Temple University Press, Philadelphia.

Roy, W. G. & Dowd, T. J. (2010) 'What is sociological about music?', *Annual Review of Sociology* 36, 183–203.

Rubin, H. J. & Rubin, I. S. (1995). Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Roulston, K. & Choi, M. (2018). Qualitative Interviews. In U. Flick, *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection,* 233–249.

Sakka, L. S. & Juslin, P. N. (2017). Emotional reactions to music in depressed individuals. *Psychology of Music*, doi:10.1177/0305735617730425

Sandford, A. (2020). Coronavirus: Half of humanity now on lockdown as 90 countries call for confinement. Euronews. https://www.euronews.com/2020/04/02/coronavirus-in-europe-spain-s-death-toll-hits-10-000-after-record-950-new-deaths-in-24-hours (accessed March 21, 2020).

Saundry, R., Stuart, M. & Antcliff, V. (2007). Broadcasting discontent—freelancers, trade unions and the Internet. *New Technology, Work & Employment,* 22, 178–191. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-005X.2007.00192.x

Scharff, C. (2017). "Difficult, fickle, tumultuous" and yet "the best job in the world" Analysing subjective experiences of precarious work Gender, Subjectivity and Cultural Work, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315673080

Schreier, M. (2013). Qualitative Content Analysis. In Flick, U. *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis,* London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 1770-1783.

Schultz, M., Maguire, S., Langley, A., & Tsoukas, H. (2012). Constructing Identity in and around Organizations: Introducing the Second Volume of "Perspectives on Process Organization Studies". In M. Schultz, S. Maguire, A. Langley & H. Tsoukas (Eds.), Constructing Identity in and around Organizations, Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1-18.

Skjuve, M. & Brandtzaeg, P. B. (2019). 'Facebook live: A mixed-methods approach to explore individual live streaming practices and motivations on Facebook', *Interacting with Computers* 31(6): 589–602.

Smith, T.N. & Thwaites R. (2019). The composition of precarity: 'emerging' composers' experiences of opportunity culture in contemporary classical music The British Journal of Sociology, 70 (2) doi: https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12359

Snyder, C. R. (2000). The past and possible futures of hope. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 19*(1), 11–28. http://dx.doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2000.19.1.11

Spiro, N,, Perkins, R., et al. (2020). The Effects of COVID-19 Lockdown 1.0 on Working Patterns, Income, and Wellbeing Among Performing Arts Professionals in the United Kingdom, *Frontiers in Psychology*, doi: https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.594086

Standing, G. (2016). The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Street, S. (2017). Searching for the sound of the Self. *Sound Poetics*, Palgrave Studies in Sound, doi:10.1007/978-3-319-58676-2_6

Sullivan, J. R. (2012). Skype: An appropriate method of data collection for qualitative interviews?, *The Hilltop Review,* 6, 54–60.

Sveningsson, S. & Alvesson, M. (2003). Managing managerial identities: organizational fragmentation, discourse and identity struggle. *Human Relations*, 56, 1163–1193.

Throsby, D. & Petetskaya K. (2017). Making Art Work: An Economic Study of Professional Artists in Australia, *Australia Journal of Career Development*, accessed on: https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/research/making-art-work/

Towse, R. (1992). The labour market for artists. *Richerce Economiche* 46, 55–74.

Umney, C. & Kretsos, L. (2014). 'Creative Labour and Collective Interaction: The Working Lives of Young Jazz Musicians in London', *Work, Employment and Society* 28(4): 571–88. doi: 10.1177/0018726715596803

UNESCO, (2020). In moments of crisis, people need culture. [accessed on 30 January 2020] https://en.unesco.org/news/moments-crisis-people-need-culture.

Ursell, G. (2000). Television production: issues of exploitation, commodification and subjectivity in UK television labour markets. *Media, Culture & Society* 22, 805–825.

Van der Hoeven, A. & Hitters, E. (2019). The social and cultural values of live music: sustaining urban live music ecologies. *Cities*, 90, 263–271. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2019.02.015

Vandeberg, F. (2020). The 'lonely raver': music livestreams during COVID-19 as a hotline to collective consciousness? European Societies in the Time of the Coronavirus Crisis*,* accessed on https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2020.1818271

Van der Wielen, W. & Barrios, S. (2020). Economic sentiment during the COVID pandemic: Evidence from search behaviour in the EU. *Journal of Economics and Business,* https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeconbus.2020.105970

Watson, T. J. (2009). Entrepreneurial Action, Identity Work and the Use of Multiple Discursive Resources: The Case of a Rapidly Changing Family Business. *International Small Business Journal*, *27*(3), 251-274. https://doi.org/10.1177/0266242609102274

Weber, W. (2004). 'The Musician as Entrepreneur and Opportunist' in W. Weber (ed.) The Musician as Entrepreneur, 1700–1914: Managers, Charlatans and Idealists, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 3–24.

Wieland, S.M.B. (2010). Ideal selves as resources for the situated practice of identity. Management Communication Quarterly, 24, 503–528.

Wilkstrom, P. (2009). The Music Industry. Cambridge: Polity.

Willis, S., Neil, R., Mellick, M. C., & Wasley, D. (2019). The relationship between occupational demands and well-being of performing artists: a systematic review. *Front. Psychol.* 10, 393. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00393

Winkler, I. (2018). Identity Work and Emotions: A Review. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *20*(1), 120-133. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12119

World Health Organization, (2020). Mental health and psychosocial considerations during the COVID-19 outbreak accessed on https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/mental-health-considerations.pdf?sfvrsn=6d3578af_10

World Economic Forum (2020). This is how COVID-19 is affecting the Music Industry. https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/05/this-is-how-covid-19-is-affecting-the-music-industry.

Zapf, D. (2002). Emotion work and psychological well-being: A review of the literature and some conceptual considerations. *Human Resource Management Review*, *12*(2), 237-268. https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822(02)00048-7

Zendel, A. (2020): "There are no days off, just days without shows": precarious mobilities in the touring music industry, *Applied Mobilities*, DOI: 10.1080/23800127.2020.1827516

Zhang, J.D., Susino, M., McPherson, G.E., & Schubert, E. (2020). The definition of a musician in music psychology: A literature review and the six-year rule. *Psychology of Music*, 48(3), 389-409. doi:10.1177/30575618804038

**Appendix I:**
<u>CONSENT REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATING IN RESEARCH</u>

**FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STUDY, CONTACT:**

Maria Zografini, Larisis 4, <u>583389mz@eur.nl</u>, 6981738149

**DESCRIPTION**

You[1] are invited to participate in a research about the effect of COVID-19 on musicians. The purpose of the study is to understand the how COVID-19 has impacted musicians on economical, professional and psychological level as well as understand how they cope with the experienced difficulties.

Your acceptance to participate in this study means that you accept to be interviewed. In general terms,

-   the questions of the interview will be related to the effects that COVID-19 has on various spheres of your life as a musician.

Unless you prefer that no recordings are made, I will use a video recorder for the interview.

You are always free not to answer any particular question, and/or stop participating at any point.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS**

  As far as I can tell, there are no risks associated with participating in this research. Yet, you are free to decide whether I should use your name or other identifying information not in the study. If you prefer, I will make sure that you cannot be identified, by using a pseudonym, or general identification only mentioning age and gender, etc.

I will use the material from the interviews and my observation exclusively for academic work, such as further research, academic meetings and publications.

**TIME INVOLVEMENT**

Your participation in this study will take 1 hour. You may interrupt your participation at any time.

**PAYMENTS**
There will be no monetary compensation for your participation.

---

[1] In the case of minors, informed consent must be obtained from the parents or other official carers. They will have to sign this form. Please make sure to adjust this form accordingly.

**PARTICIPANTS' RIGHTS**

If you have decided to accept to participate in this project, please understand your participation is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw your consent or discontinue participation at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. If you prefer, your identity will be made known in all written data resulting from the study. Otherwise, your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

**CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS**

If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact –anonymously, if you wish— Pr. Sven-Ove Horst, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Department of History, Culture and Communication, horst@eshcc.eur.nl  +31104089113.

**SIGNING THE CONSENT FORM**

If you sign this consent form, your signature will be the only documentation of your identity. Thus, you DO NOT NEED to sign this form. In order to minimize risks and protect your identity, you may prefer to consent orally. Your oral consent is sufficient.

I give consent to be audiotaped during this study:

 Name                                    Signature                                    Date

I prefer my identity to be revealed in all written data resulting from this study

 Name                                    Signature                                    Date

This copy of the consent form is for you to keep.

**Appendix II**

Before we start I would like to aks you of it okey with you for me to record this meeting and some of your personal information such as you name, surname and age to be used and published for research purposes.

Could you please tell me your full name, age and music genre with which you are engaged?

1. Is music your part time or full time profession? Which were your plans before Covid hit and how has the virus impacted them?
2. Did you manage to get the governmental aid (Artist's subsidy)? is that sufficient? Do you think you would get it without the Support Art Workers movement?
3. Could you describe how you are holding up financially?
   (The main income of the musicians comes from performances. Due to covid-19 restrictions they are temporarily cancelled.
   - How do you manage to cover your needs now?
   - Is there any additional source of income that helps you cope with economic difficulties?
4. How does it feel to be an artist to you?
5. How does it feel to be an artist right now? What is different now?
   (We all know the insecurities and precarity that come along when someone chooses to become an artist. Covid however has shown and intensified those even more.
   - Did you feel the need to develop a backup plan?
   - Could you describe this backup plan a bit?

6. How do you expect Covid-19 to impact you in the long run?
7. Do you feel you have already changed because of it? Could you describe how you feel you changed?
8. What do you expect to be the impact on the cultural sector in the months to come?
9. What are some changes that you think are going to stay?
10. Many venue experts talk about hybrid venues how do you feel about that?
11. Have you thought about any digital alternatives to being "live on stage"?
12. Many musicians try to do "digital lives" Have you tried it yourself or will try in the future?
13. Which are your current or near future plans?
14. Which were some difficulties you expected you would experience and which were the unexpected ones?
15. How do you manage to maintain your relationship with you co-workers but also with your audience? (Messages of support?)
16. How did you handle stay at home restrictions? How do you feel about them?
17. What do you miss more about being on stage and gigging?

18. Which are your daily activities during the series of lockdowns?

19. How do you manage to decompress from everything happening right now and how do you manage to stay creative and keep working and practicing?

20. Do you feel that lockdown inhibited your career, plans and development? Or maybe it gave you some time to discover other parts of your identity as a musician? More time to practice, lean new things and create?

21. What is that keeps you going?

**Appendix III**

Πριν αρχίσουμε θα ήθελα να σας ρωτήσω αν είναι εντάξει να ηχογραφήσω αυτήν εδώ τη συνέντευξη και για κάποια προσωπικά σας στοιχεία όπως ονοματεπώνυμο, ηλικία και φύλο να μπορούν να χρησιμοποιηθούν και να δημοσιευθούν για λόγους διπλωματικής

Για αρχή θα ήθελα να μου πείτε ονοματεπώνυμο, ηλικία και τομέα της μουσικής με τον οποίο ασχολείστε.

1. Είναι η μουσική part-time ή full time ενασχόληση?
2. Ποιά ήταν τα πλάνα σου πριν από τον κόβιντ? Πώς ο ερχομός του τα επηρέασε?
3. Πήρες το επίδομα «καλλιτεχνικού σκοπού»? Πιστεύεις ότι ήταν αρκετό για να καλύψει τις ανάγκες ενός μουσικού?
4. Πιστεύεις θα υπήρχε αυτή η στήριξη αν δεν γινόταν το κίνημα #Support Art Workers movement?
5. θα μπορούσες να μου περιγράψεις πώς συντηρείς οικονομικά τον εαυτό σου αυτό τον καιρό? έχεις κάποια άλλη πηγή εισοδήματος που σε βοηθάει να ανταπεξέλθεις?
6. τι σημαίνει το είμαι καλλιτέχνης για σένα? πώς είναι το να είσαι καλλιτέχνης τώρα αυτήν την περίοδο? (νιώθεις ότι κατι έχει αλλάξει?)
7. Όλοι ξέρουμε Τις δυσκολίες που υπάρχουν οταν διαλέγει κάποιος να ακολουθήσει επαγγελματικά το κομμάτι μουσικής. Ο κοβιντ φαίνεται να τις έχει οξύνει ακόμα περισσότερο. Αισθάνθηκες την ανάγκη να βρεις κάποιο backup Plan? θα μπορούσες να μου το περιγράψεις?
8. πώς πιστεύεις ότι ο Κοβιντ θα σε επηρεάσει σε βάθος χρόνου?
9. Πιστεύεις ότι εξαιτίας της κατάστασης έχεις ήδη αλλάξει? Μπορείς να μου περιγράψεις λίγο αυτή την αλλαγή?

9) Ποιο πιστεύεις ότι θα είναι το αντίκτυπο του κόβιντ γενικά στο χώρο των Τεχνών και του πολιτισμού? ποιες από αυτές τις αλλαγές Νομίζεις θα μείνουν?
10) Κάποιοι λένε για Hybrid Venues (οι μισοί θα παρακολουθούν λάιβ, και οι υπόλοιποι διαδικτυακά) Πώς νιώθεις για αυτό?
11) έχεις σκεφτεί για εναλλακτικές μορφές live παραδείγματος χάρη livestreaming το έχεις κάνει ή θα το έκανες?
12) ποια είναι τα τωρινά και ποια τα μελλοντικά σου σχέδια?
13) ποιες δυσκολίες που συνάντησες ήταν αναμενόμενες και ποιες από αυτές δεν περίμενες?
14) Πώς καταφέρνεις να διατηρείς τη σχέση σου με τους συνεργάτες σου και με το κοινό? αισθάνεσαι τη στήριξη του κόσμου?
15) Πώς αισθάνεσαι με την όλη κατάσταση, αυτό το μένουμε σπίτι και όλους τους περιορισμούς? Πώς νιώθεις αυτή την περίοδο?
16) Ποιες είναι οι ασχολίες σου μέσα στην ημέρα?
17) τι είναι αυτό που σου λείπει περισσότερο από το να είσαι στη σκηνή και γενικά?
18) πώς καταφέρεις να χαλαρώσεις/ να ηρεμήσεις αλλά και να παραμείνεις δημιουργικός αυτή την περίοδο?
19) αισθάνεσαι ότι ο κόβιντ έβαλε φρένο στην στην εξέλιξη σου σαν μουσικός ή το είδες σαν ευκαιρία να ανακαλύψεις κι άλλες πλευρές σου?
20) Τι είναι αυτό που σε κρατάει και σου δίνει δύναμη να συνεχίσεις?

**Appendix IV**

| Open codes | Axial codes | Selective codes |
|---|---|---|
| Cancellation of live gigs/tours<br>Closing down of conservatories<br>Closing down of studios/ working with precautions<br>Closing down of food/drink services/theatres<br>avoided doing plans/planning for summer<br>reduced work<br>  changing working identity<br>  loss of connection with audience<br>  difficulty of transport<br>  difficulty of connection with colleagues<br>  following protocols/often covid tests<br>  Use of social media<br>  Carreer change<br>lack of vision of colleagues<br>other job less time for music<br>sensation of losing time, affecting progress<br>much effort to realize their plans<br><br>  No ability to meet new people/colleagues<br><br><br>  Expecting Partial opening<br>  Thinking of alternatives<br>  Slow decompression<br>  Expecting harsher working conditions<br>  More competition | | Professional impact |
| Negative<br>  bringnig exhaustion<br>  difficult for non soloists<br>  lives not being lives<br>  no interpersonal connection<br>  no substitute<br>  not enough economic source<br>  not that effective<br>  not that fulfilling<br>  difficulty to cover a mistake<br>  lack of applause, feedback<br>  enjoying digital lives\<br>  lack of audience impacting performance<br>  expand audience<br>different connection with digital<br>feeling of a recording not a live show<br>Long shootings<br>need of organization, equipment, budget | Digital lives | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| numbers matter<br><br><span style="color:red">Positive</span><br>  gaining inspiration<br>  gaining new audience<br>Harnessing of technological skills<br>  keeping Connection<br>  keeping them motivated<br>  No need for human intermediaries<br>  More relaxed environment<br>     more artists<br>more freedom of expression<br>use for portfolio<br>possibility for interactivity<br>renewal of relationship with audience<br>connection with the whole world | | |
| <span style="color:red">Negative</span><br>Initial scepticism<br>Art as luxury- Loss of lessons<br>Time delay<br>Difficulty with young learners<br>No interpersonal connection<br>Impact on working hours<br>Difficulty of showing technique<br>Time to adapt<br>Equipment both the student/ teacher<br>Tiring<br><br><span style="color:red">Positive</span><br>Easiness, practicality<br>Means of connection<br>Form of psychotherapy<br>Time and money saving form transportation<br>Connection to the whole world<br>New practice<br>Worth maintaining<br>Brings solace happiness to musician<br>Harnessing of technological skills | Online lessons | |
| Finding of alternatives<br>Lost lives which are important source of income<br>Chain reaction (depending from food service…)<br>Digital lives not enough income to sustain<br>Not enough private lessons to cover needs<br>Support from parents<br>Current Closing down of spaces to work<br><br><br>enough to cover only the basic needs,<br>not enough for families, | Present difficulties<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Subsidy | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| not covering needs of the profession,<br>no additional economic relief<br>bureaucracy<br>inorganization/inconsistency<br>implications of black work | | Economic impact |
| Art as a luxury<br>Economic crisis<br>Uncertainty about economic stability in the future<br>Finding additional job in the future<br>Less opportunities for current/ future work<br>no sustainability of the sector<br>more antagonism<br>Fewer spaces that will work under protocols in the future<br>Wage compression<br>Cutting down of subsidies from organizations, municipalities | Future difficulties | |
| Loneliness<br>Sadness<br>Feeling of void<br>Restlessness<br>Loss of hope<br>Fear/ Panic about subsidy<br>Feeling of depression<br>Feeling of imprisonment<br>Reluctance towards state<br>Feeling of less productivity<br>Uncertainty<br>Psychological pressure<br>Missing normalcy/ being carefree<br>More intense the first lockdown<br>Uncertainty about future of arts<br>Uncertainty about professional development<br>Psychosomatic drain of energy<br>More anxiety when economic difficulties<br>Not programming so not to relive again frustration<br>Feeling of dead end<br>Psychological pressure when working in another job<br>Distancing from artistic nature<br>Eventual loss of stimuli<br>A lot of thought/ feelings processing<br>Missing their way of living<br>Economic need affecting their psychology<br>Feeling of imprisonment<br>Pressuring the self<br>Losing some times their willingness to work | Feelings | Psychological impact |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Anxiety/ sadness about performing with a mask<br>Lack of physical contact<br>Effect on health/weight gain<br><br><br>Slow decompression<br>Economic crisis<br>Chain reaction / Music as a luxury<br>Harsher Working conditions (compression of wages, fewer job positions, more antagonism)<br>Anxiety for Closing down of spaces to work<br>More effort to organize, schedule<br>Fear of covid-19 for their audience/ themselves /loved ones<br>Fear of changing profession<br>Fear of cancellation of festivals, reduction of subsidies form organizations<br>Anxiety for protocols<br><br>Fear of getting used to abnormal situation<br>Anxiety about Human relationships (more fighting, more loneliness)<br>Fear of institutionalization via the internet<br>Anxiety about fellow citizens | Anxieties<br>Anxiety about societal repercussions | |
| Missing interpersonal connection with audience<br>Missing applause, feedback<br>Missing their colleagues<br>Missing playing in gigs<br>Missing attending festivals<br>Missing their way of life<br>Missing communicating musically<br>Testing their limits, needs, wants<br>Thinking how to move on<br>Missing world's approval<br>Missing sharing their work with others<br>Missing what they had taken for granted<br>Thinking how to realize their identity<br>Not able to realize a psychic need<br><br>Feeling the need of the audience<br>Feeling their need for creation/music<br>Music as life saving for artist/ audience<br>Waiting for summer<br>Bad health condition, weight gain | Impacting working identity | |
| Resentment/Anger<br>Lack of understanding from state<br>Continuous alterations of protocols<br>Skepticism about measures effectivity<br>Indifference towards their needs<br>No general investment of the arts/no protection<br>Abandonment in times of need | Feelings towards the state | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Offering of the least possible<br>No additional measures for economic relief<br>Obsession about following not that effective measures<br>Needing pressure to claim their rights<br>A lot of Bureaucracy to get the subsidy<br>Inorganization | | |
| Hope<br><br>Resilience/ Inner strength<br><br>Program/ Creative routine<br><br>Personal Goal setting<br><br>Love for what they do<br><br>Adaptability<br><br>Entrepreneurial spirit<br><br>Gratitude<br><br>Previous difficulties as coping mechanism<br><br>Inspiration form colleagues<br><br>Self-motivation<br><br>Inner volition to evolve. Explore, learn<br><br>Self-distancing<br><br>Realism<br><br>Patience<br><br>Belief in their powers<br><br>The gift of life<br><br><br>Support from family/loved ones<br><br>Support, need from audience<br><br>Physical exercise in nature | Internal<br><br><br><br><br>External | Coping mechanisms |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Psychosomatic/phonetic rest<br><br>Practice of technique,<br><br>studying,<br><br>more creativity<br><br>discovering new music,<br><br>bettering of old ones,<br><br>contact with loved ones<br><br>Working/healing the self | Time | Positive impact |
| focus on the self<br><br>prioritizing<br><br>adaptability<br><br>testing their limits/abilities<br><br>figuring out their wants/needs<br><br>take important decisions,<br><br>reseting<br><br>evolving through difficulties<br><br>rethinking their role as artists | Impact on working identity | |
| online lessons,<br><br>digital live streams<br><br>Harnessing of technological skills | New practices | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Compassion for others<br><br>Sensitization for difficulties<br><br>Organization, mobilization<br><br> claiming their rights now<br><br>Fighting for better working conditions<br><br>Better information system | Solidarity | |