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Title: The UK’s first professional symphony orchestra cooperative: Musician’s hopes and fears.

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Abstract

This conference paper reports the results of the first phase of a three phase longitudinal research study designed to examine the initiation and development of the UK’s first professional symphony orchestra cooperative. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirty six professional musicians from a ‘pool’ of forty plus musicians. This ‘pool’ of musicians provides the cooperative with a resource that can be drawn on to form an orchestra to rehearse for and perform concerts and recordings. Preliminary results reveal four themes that emerged from the semi-structured interview data. These themes were interpreted by the researchers as: ‘commitment’, ‘democracy’, ‘optimism’ and ‘aesthetic aspirations’. The themes are presented along with supporting quotations from the interview data that illustrate the characteristics of these four emergent themes. The implications of the themes are then discussed within the context of the prior literature reviewed.

Introduction

There is evidence to support the notion that there is a reciprocal relationship between the provision of cultural experiences and the wellbeing of society (Dubina, 2013; National Endowment for the Arts, 2007). Historically, the provision of cultural experience in society is significantly influenced by financial contributions made by the state and private philanthropy, which has resulted in the providers of cultural experiences becoming reliant upon subsidy (Mariani and Zan, 2011). This reliance upon subsidy has left the providers of cultural experience subject to the prevailing economic and political climate in their recipient societies (Mariani and Zan, 2011). Professional symphony orchestras provide music cultural experiences for society and are responsible for maintaining historical and developing new musical culture (Pompe, Tamburri and Munn, 2011). In the current global financial crisis, levels of financial subsidy for professional symphony orchestras from state and philanthropy are declining resulting in a reduction of the number of professional symphony orchestras. In the current financial climate larger symphony orchestras, situated in major cities are able to survive more easily than smaller regional symphony orchestras, which means that population groups in society without access to these larger symphony orchestras may become culturally deprived (Dubina, 2013). Surviving professional symphony orchestras find that artistic and aesthetic decisions, such as choice of repertoire and the development of the art form, are being overly influenced by financial constraints imposed upon the management of those orchestras (Pompe, Tamburri and Munn, 2011). Management decisions on artistic and aesthetic matters directly impact upon the job satisfaction of the orchestral musicians and can
influence their career decisions and choice of orchestra (Smith and Murphy, 1984). Furthermore, as a result of current financial constraints, professional symphony orchestras must broaden their revenue generating activities and this situation is beginning to impact on the governance of professional symphony orchestras (Rosenbaum, 2011). A professional symphony orchestra based in Reading, UK, ‘Sinfonia Musicisti’ has reacted to current pressures by changing the governance of their orchestra and forming a producer cooperative (or not-for-profit mutual) in order to assist in securing its future financial security and facilitate more democratic, artistic and aesthetic decision making. Sinfonia Musicisti is the focus of the current research study that is the subject of this conference paper. The paper will begin by reviewing the relevant literature around the relationship between the prevailing political, economic climate and provision of cultural experiences. The literature review will examine how the current global financial crisis has impacted upon the governance of professional symphony orchestras and how this can impact upon the orchestral musicians involved. The review will also examine the rationale behind how some orchestras may look towards social enterprise as a way of securing their financial futures and assisting them to support their dual role of preserving and developing musical culture for the enrichment of society. The paper will continue by outlining the longitudinal current research project being conducted with Sinfonia Musicisti and report on the findings of the first phase of this research study. Finally, the preliminary results of the study will be presented and discussed in relation to the prior research reviewed in the literature review.

**Literature review**

The positive impact of art on society is expressed by the Arts Council, England on their website:

“*Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better.*” (Arts Council, England, 2013).

Professional symphony orchestras play a significant role in providing an important cultural, social and economic service to society and any reduction in the number of professional symphony orchestras will result in society being less enriched by the benefits derived from cultural experience (Dubina, 2013). Evidence supporting this viewpoint has been demonstrated by prior research, which found a correlation between attendances at performing arts events and increased health and heightened community involvement and volunteerism (National Endowment for the Arts, 2007). This perception of the positive influence the performing arts has on society is supported by the prior willingness of governments, companies and philanthropists to provide financial support for them. This financial support has obvious benefits but can result in performing artists becoming too reliant on it for their survival. Prior research into symphony orchestra organisation reveals a history of long-term reliance upon state and/or regional subsidy or company and/or individual philanthropy to secure the continuity of professional symphony orchestras (Mariani and Zan, 2011). However, in the current global financial crisis, these sources of financial support for orchestras are declining. Set against this, labour costs associated with the production of artistic performance continues to increase and productivity remains unchanged resulting in financial difficulties for the orchestra (Besana, 2012).
Prior research into political systems and orchestra governance (Hannan and Freeman, 1977, 1989; Aldrich, 1979; Tushman and Anderson, 1986; Allmendinger, 1990; Zimmer, 1990; Möller, 1991; Mehner, 1990; Allmendinger and Hackman, 1996) described how political and financial policies impacted on German symphony orchestras during two different political periods (post WW2 and post reunification). Socialist policies in East Germany post WW2 sought to increase music cultural experience in society and the number of orchestras increased from 48-76 as the state sought to bring German musical tradition to all the people (Mehner, 1990). The East German state implemented low wages for orchestral musicians (four times less than players in West German orchestras) but also introduced flat wage structures and job security, which resulted in positive relationships between the musicians and increased their job satisfaction. When the political system changed after reunification, supporting the increased number of orchestras proved to be financially unsustainable and differentiation within orchestras (e.g., principal players earned substantially more than section players) and between orchestras emerged. In the post reunification political system, some orchestras flourished and others ceased to exist. The more successful orchestras had players who became involved in the organisation of the orchestra.

Orchestral musician’s willingness to become involved in the organisation of their orchestra can be driven by aesthetic and financial motivations mediated by individual feelings of job satisfaction. Ironically, many musicians begin their musical training expecting to live out a rich and creative life but find that having trained for solo performance, playing in a symphony orchestra is perceived as a disappointment (Sternbach, 1993b; Mogelof and Rohrer, 2005). Some orchestral musicians regard their playing as more of a ‘job’ than a fulfilment of their ‘passion’ (Atik, 1992). As a result, orchestral musicians stopped thinking about contributing to administrative and financial decisions and repertoire choice because the management offered limited (if any) promotion or organisational involvement (Broksy, 2006). Management decisions over the choice of repertoire may be influenced by advancing the art form but repertoire choices are more likely to be influenced by the necessity to generate revenue, which can produce a conflict between programming innovative compositions and income generation. Therefore, the reduction of grants and donations for symphony orchestras in the current economic downturn has led to greater conventionality in programming in an attempt to maintain the audience base (Pompe, Tamburri and Munn, 2011). This conventionality can influence musicians to take positions in less prestigious orchestras because they find the musical work more interesting (Smith and Murphy, 1984). Sometimes musicians are prepared to work for less money than they could potentially earn in more prestigious orchestras because of their emotional commitment to the genre (Cornwall and Perlman, 1990). This emotional commitment is an intangible aspect of working in an artistic environment along with others such as interpersonal relationships, for example, friendship and informality (Brkic, 2009). If during the current period of financial constraint, lesser known symphony orchestras are to survive and musical culture is to be both preserved and developed, traditional autocratic governance of orchestras needs to change to a more democratic form of governance that can encourage collective enterprise.

Prior research has identified nonprofit arts organisations as social enterprises (Social Enterprise Alliance USA, 2011; Pomerantz, 2006; Brkic, 2009; Palmer, 1998; Dimaggio, 1987). More than 90% of American orchestras, opera companies and chamber groups are nonprofits (Hager, 2001). Therefore, at a time of shrinking financial subsidy, the entrepreneurial activities of performing arts organisations are crucial to their survival (Rosenbaum, 2011; Di Domenico, Haugh and Tracey, 2010). The advantages of generating revenue through trading rather than receiving subsidy are: autonomy, the flexibility to adapt
to the needs of the local community and the potential to apply innovative business models (Austin, Stevenson, and Wei-Skillern, 2006; Borzaga and Defourny, 2001). Prior research by Di Domenico, Haugh and Tracey, (2010) established a theoretical framework of social bricolage with the key constructs of, ‘making do’, ‘a refusal to be constrained by limitations’, ‘improvisation’, ‘social value creation’, ‘stakeholder participation’ and ‘persuasion’. According to Di Domenico, Haugh and Tracey (2010), ‘Making do’ is when bricoleurs acquire resources and they recombine them in novel ways to solve problems and respond to opportunities. ‘Refusal to be constrained by limitations’ is when bricoleurs respond to increasing pressures with creative responses such as generating new revenue streams to replace funding cuts. ‘Improvisation’ is applying creative thinking to adapt standard ways of working initiating a range of projects to overcome the constraints of limited resources. ‘Social value creation’ is what social enterprises do by creating a tactical response to resource scarcity. ‘Stakeholder participation’ is the involvement of stakeholders in the creation, management and governance of their social enterprise. ‘Persuasion’ means harnessing social assets such as friendship, liking, trust, obligation and gratitude in co-opting resources into an entrepreneurial venture. Stakeholder-based governance structure of social enterprises is at the heart of persuasion and can result in increased autonomy leading to a reduction in the reliance on grants and donations (Di Domenico, Haugh and Tracey, 2010). Performing arts organisations can take a bricolage perspective to achieve financial sustainability by applying resourcefulness and adaptability to deploy strategies such as new organisational combinations (Ciborra, 1996) and refuse to be constrained by the resource limitations imposed by institutional and/or political settings (Baker and Nelson, 2005; Weick, 1995). Orchestras have a ‘product’ that bears some similarity to a public good, they often receive a subsidy from the state and their players aspire to having a ‘voice’ or influencing the nature of the service provided. These criteria fulfil those for forming a producer co-op (or a not for profit mutual) (Spear, 2000). Cooperatives exist to serve their members and to reduce inequalities amongst members enabling them to monitor the enterprise, communicate amongst themselves and make collective decisions (Spear, 2000). In addition to these qualities cooperatives espouse the ethical values of self-help, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity and the principles of openness, autonomy and independence, education and concern for the community (Spear, 2000).

The current research

The professional symphony orchestra involved in this research study has taken the unique step of forming a cooperative to try to secure the financial future for the orchestra and to support the continuing provision and development of classical music culture for all sectors of society. The current research examines motivations and expectations of the musicians in the newly formed orchestral cooperative. It also seeks to plot the changes in the musicians’ motivations, expectations, financial and aesthetic outcomes and social impact over a two year period as the orchestra is initiated, developed and consolidated. The research methodology is longitudinal, employing a mixed quantitative, qualitative design. There will be three data collection points: 1) ‘initiation’; 2) ‘development’; and 3) ‘consolidation’. Data collection at all three points in time will include qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data will be collected through individual, semi-structured interviews with the 40+ ‘pool’ of professional freelance musicians designed to elicit their motivations, expectations and reflections on their experiences as they initiate, develop and consolidate their symphony orchestra cooperative. Quantitative data will document numbers of concerts played, audience numbers, ticket receipts and financial outcomes for the musicians and the cooperative. Social impact will be sought from audience members through a questionnaire to be administered at concert venues
and other performance events. All interviews will be recorded and transcribed for analysis employing qualitative analysis procedures based on ‘Grounded Theory’ and results of this qualitative analysis will be triangulated with the results from the analysis of the quantitative data from the cooperative’s financial records and the audience survey. The process of ‘member checks’ will be conducted with key members of the orchestra to ensure researcher interpretations of the qualitative data represent the musicians ‘view of reality’.

Research questions:

RQ1: To reveal the motivations and expectations of the orchestral musicians as they form a professional symphony orchestra cooperative.
RQ2: To reveal the aesthetic impact of the cooperative governance on the orchestra’s performances.
RQ3: To plot the financial success of the cooperative.
RQ4: To measure the social impact of the cooperative.

Method

Participants

The Cooperative orchestra

The cooperative orchestra is called *Sinfonia Musicisti* and is based in Reading, UK. The cooperative have a pool of 40+ freelance professional musicians that can be called upon to form a symphony orchestra to rehearse and perform concerts and make audio and visual recordings. The governance structure of the orchestra is an Industrial Providence Society (IPS), which is basically a co-operative registered as a limited company. The IPS has the ability to engage supporters who are able to invest time or money in the company. There is a board of five members (soon to be increased to six) who hold board meetings at which various management tasks are distributed between board members. In the future, members of the co-operative will also be asked to help with these tasks. Booking concerts is a specialised task and the cooperative hopes to employ a specialist person to handle concert bookings in the future but currently board members are responsible for bookings.

Procedure

During this ‘initiation’ phase of the research study, 36 of the 40+ musicians forming the ‘pool’ of musicians were involved in individual semi-structured interviews with a researcher. Because the musicians lived over a wide geographical area and had busy lifestyles, interviews were conducted via the telephone with a researcher and the length of the interviews ranged from 48m.00s to 10m. 21s. All 36 interviews were recorded for future transcription.

Results

This conference paper reports the preliminary results of Phase 1 ‘initiation’ only.

Four main themes emerged from the interview data at this phase of the research and were interpreted by the researchers as: ‘commitment’, ‘democracy’, ‘optimism’ and ‘aesthetic aspirations’. The following quotations from the semi-structured interview data characterise the emergent themes.
Theme A ‘commitment’

Examination of the data revealed three levels of musician commitment to the cooperative, (1) total commitment, (2) guarded commitment and (3) disconnect with the cooperative.

Total commitment to the cooperative

‘I do feel more a part of it [the orchestra cooperative] rather than just an employee, I think that's the main thing. It's a good and a different feeling to be part of a self governing group and knowing that all the profits are actually going back into the system rather than being siphoned off somewhere else. I think that's the main difference, it is a very, very different feeling.’ (P17)

‘I think it is an ideal opportunity to actually be involved and be a part of something more than a normal orchestra is I would say. You know an average orchestra in terms of the way it is run, and I guess for me, the fact that you have got the freedom to use what not every orchestra will give you, the fact that you have got opportunities to speak up if you need to or if you feel the need over something not going right or actions can be taken into consideration.’ (P1)

Guarded commitment to the cooperative

‘It's [the orchestra cooperative] quite nice because everyone is there kind of out of good will, as much as because they are being paid. Because obviously we're trying to build a kind of cooperative thing, people are willing to just stick with it at the beginning even if they're not entirely sure what the future of the orchestra will be.’ (P21)

‘In some ways it's just like any other job. You know we work as freelancers and it's just another job. But I think it's nice to know that to some extent we are all getting involved in the management to some degree. Although I suppose that's up to us how much we get involved.’ (P14)

Disconnect with the cooperative

‘Well, I’m not actually a member, I’m just being asked to play. So, I’d have to say [I play] because I’m a freelance musician who needs money, and if they’re offering the money then it means it’s a good offer; if you see what I mean by that? Sorry for a bit of a cold answer, but it’s kind of reality. As long as I’m being offered work; I’m freelance after all and if they offer work it’s very difficult to say no to it.’ (P23)

‘I must admit, I just sort of like bypassed the e-mails on the cooperative thing because I've got too much going on in my life at the moment to get too involved in anything else. It's not that I disapprove or I'm not interested, it's just right now you know, right now it's elderly parents blah, blah, blah you know, that sort of thing.’ (P13)

Theme B ‘democracy’

There was a recurring emergent theme of democracy. Musicians talked about having a sense of ownership and having the opportunity to influence the organisation of the orchestra. There was also a perception of reduced fear of the orchestra management, having a sense of team spirit and willingness to play for reduced fees to help the cooperative establish itself.
‘The members have a sense, of well, not just a sense of ownership of the thing, but a very real ownership of it really. And you know it’s democratically run, people have a voice in the decision making. I mean actually there is a sense in which you kind of buy into it.’ (P20)

‘But it has given me a sense of ownership of the orchestra in a way that I don’t necessarily feel with other orchestras. In terms of my relationship with the other players in the orchestra for example, within a woodwind section I play the oboe and you would sit in your chair and play your part and you’d stay on that part. And I’m normally second oboe but the principle oboe of Sinfonia Musicisti has very kindly said that this is a cooperative orchestra, we’re all kind of all in it together, why don’t we do some swapping from time to time? So we both ended up playing on different parts at different times and that’s made me kind of feel grateful to her and kind of valued by her and the rest of the section.’ (P4)

‘Okay when you are working with an orchestra of which you are not a member. I tend to find I am constantly looking over my shoulder, a little bit concerned about if I’m doing absolutely everything right, and I’m not upsetting anybody either, and they’re not going to be able to criticise my playing. A small element of fear a lot of the time and you might not be asked again.’ (P3)

‘The community organisation is that I feel there is more openness between players. There’s more, you have more right to speak or you feel you can talk to what we call maybe management or our committee in our case. Whereas, if I’m in another orchestra situation or another freelance situation, I never dare try to say what I want or what I wanted from the orchestra for the fear of not ever being asked again. So this is much more a community where I feel I’m heard and don’t run the risk of anybody saying “Why did she say that?” or “We had better not book her again because she’s a danger or she’s a troublemaker”. I feel I can say things, what I think should be said and it’ll be taken in and people are talking to each other without having to be afraid that there’s a hierarchy of people, you know of players or management pushing you out. So it’s a nice feeling, it’s a nice feeling of thinking “Oh there’s something, there’s a community, we all want the same. We all want music, we want to play. We want to try and earn some money and play good music and we’re all in the same position” and that makes it a nice feeling. ’ (P10)

‘We could probably, you know, push our fee aside for maybe a concert or two just to get it [the cooperative] moving. I think people would probably be willing [to do that], the sort of hardcore anyway. I think there are some players who still see it just as another professional job and haven’t quite grasped the ethos. But I think they’re coming round to it, the more.’ (P14)

Theme C ‘optimism’

In this theme musicians expressed their optimism for the future of the cooperative orchestra. The orchestral musicians were very optimistic about ‘growing’ a future audience by involving young people in their rehearsals for the concerts. They were also optimistic about fulfilling their social mission of preserving and developing classical music culture and engaging in spreading musical culture more widely in society by performing in smaller community based theatres.
‘I think I'm more hopeful that more concerts will come in and that people would have a greater say and there would be a greater sense of discussion. I like the way that money and monetary concerns are always expressed naturally before we actually even go into rehearsal. So I think it's done in the right way.’ (P18)

‘My greatest hope is that we can actually explore some areas of performance, which haven't been performed, or haven't been explored really in this country, probably ever, but certainly not for a very long time. I mean I think it would be an exciting prospect for the orchestra to try at some point in its future, to actually work without a conductor.’ (P19)

‘One of the concerts I did with the orchestra there were some local school children that came to watch the rehearsal and they actually stood among us so as we played one of the pieces so they could really feel part of the orchestra. It’s by becoming a part of the community that people get to know about an orchestra or ensemble and feel if they’re not necessarily knowledgeable or used to listening to classical music they feel like they know what they’re coming to see and it’s a way of building audiences as well as giving something back to community groups regardless of age.’ (P4)

‘I think it’s a huge future on that [involving young people from the local community in the orchestra rehearsals] and I think this cooperative orchestra could be involved. I mean you know you can do projects obviously in schools but I think just, musicians being involved and running the workshops themselves and then inviting maybe other peers who form the rehearsal, from the practice of the orchestra. There could be projects in hospitals or prisons or, I actually have experience and I’m sure most of my colleagues have that experience so we could put ideas together and do projects along that line.’ (P7)

‘Well I think so. I mean, you have the same feeling [feelings of collective enterprise] in a chamber group, don't you? I mean, a chamber group, you all want the chamber group to be a success because you stand to benefit and so I would imagine that once people are feeling that the orchestra is really on song and playing really well, they will themselves promote the orchestra through their actions and words, I would've thought.’ (P32)

Theme D ‘aesthetic aspiration’

This theme was characterised by the musicians talking about experiences of ‘Empathetic Creativity’ [a term proposed in Seddon (2005, 2009a, 2009b) to describe the non-verbal creative communication between musicians during rehearsal and performance]. The musicians also discussed the potential to have a collaborative choice of repertoire and a more democratic relationship with the conductor with even the possibility of playing without a conductor.

‘Certainly the musicians around me, we're starting to get to know each other very well and we're starting to get to know each other's playing and we're starting to enjoy [playing]. [name of the conductor], who is conducting us, he's aware that we are keen to be able to be as expressive as possible and I think he is allowing the orchestra to grow organically in a way and be able to, yeah, be able to communicate musically with each other in the same way as an ensemble would, so the people really start to play. I think what you'll notice in that situation is that your players will play far
better. You'll get a much more exciting performance in the end because people will really play and perform rather than just play, they'll perform, and I think that will be the big difference ultimately.’ (P32)

‘I think one of the most interesting things is to be able to have the participation in artistic decisions. Because most of the orchestras, actually every orchestra I’ve played with, do not have any [opportunity for] artistic decision [making]. You just play what you are told to play, being able to actually have an input on the artistic direction of the orchestra. [For example] If you go to an orchestra and you don’t like the conductor then there’s nothing you can do. But I believe in this orchestra there could be a consensus or there could be at least a way where you could actually say look, I don’t think this is working with this particular conductor or I think you know, things like that. I think that’s a very interesting, that’s a very interesting thing’ (P7)

‘I mean I think it would be an exciting prospect for the orchestra to try at some point in its future, to actually work without a conductor.’ (P19)

Discussion

The emergent themes from the semi-structured interviews demonstrate that, at this ‘initiation’ phase of the research study, although the cooperative has now been established the individual members of the cooperative displayed differing levels of commitment to it. Those musicians displaying total commitment to the cooperative lend support to prior research that demonstrated cooperatives exist to serve their members, reduce inequalities and increase motivation to communicate amongst themselves in order to make collective decisions when monitoring the progress of the cooperative (Spear, 2000). It will be interesting to track changes in the overall levels of musician commitment, as the research study progresses, to reveal any potential relationship between that commitment and the success of the orchestra in both financial and aesthetic terms. The feelings of democracy expressed by the participant musicians revealed their enthusiasm to be involved in decision making, which lends support to prior research reporting that when not included in decision making, orchestral musicians can become less motivated and perceive their involvement in the orchestra as a ‘job’ and not a fulfilment of their ‘passion’ (Atik, 1992; Brodsky, 2006). Player involvement in orchestra organisation could lead to the orchestra being more successful in the future as demonstrated by prior research (Hannan and Freeman, 1977, 1989; Aldrich, 1979; Tushman and Anderson, 1986; Allmendinger, 1990; Zimmer, 1990; Möller, 1991; Mehner, 1990; Allmendinger and Hackman, 1996). It will be interesting to discover at later phases in the research study if this is the case. The reduced levels of fear and willingness to play for reduced fees described by some of the musicians in the theme ‘democracy’ resonates with the low wages, flat wage structures and job security that promoted positive relationships and job satisfaction for orchestral musicians in post WW2 East Germany (Hannan and Freeman, 1977, 1989; Aldrich, 1979; Tushman and Anderson, 1986; Allmendinger, 1990; Zimmer, 1990; Möller, 1991; Mehner, 1990; Allmendinger and Hackman, 1996).

The optimism the musicians displayed in the future of the orchestra cooperative was related to their perception of the financial and aesthetic future of the orchestra and the fulfilment of their social mission. By becoming an orchestra cooperative and generating revenue, through trading a ‘product’ that is similar to a public good, the symphony orchestra could over time develop the opportunity to break away from a culture of grant dependency and become more autonomous and therefore more flexible to the needs of the communities they wish to serve. This finding lends support to research that identifies some cooperatives as social enterprises
If successful in increasing the number of occasions the orchestra rehearses and performs together, the musicians believed that the orchestra could achieve ‘Empathetic Creativity’ (Seddon, 2005, 2009a, 2009b). The democratic nature of the orchestra would improve the potential of being able to achieve empathetic creativity with or without a conductor. The orchestra’s performances would then improve in an aesthetic sense, which could enhance its financial success. The interactive nature of the aesthetic and financial outcome could be described as a form of empathetic enterprise. The future phases of the current research could establish the concept of empathetic enterprise.

The findings of this ‘initiation’ phase of the research project resonate with the theory of social bricolage (Di Domenico, Haugh and Tracey, 2010). The musicians’ actions in forming a cooperative can be described as ‘making do’ because they are combining their resources in a novel way to solve the problem of diminishing subsidy and responding to new opportunities. The musicians are demonstrating a ‘refusal to be constrained by limitations’ by attempting to generate new revenue streams to replace diminishing funding opportunities as a result of financial constraint. The reconfiguration of the governance of the orchestra as a cooperative demonstrates ‘improvisation’ by applying creative thinking. The orchestra is creating a tactical response to the scarcity of music cultural experiences in some sections of society, which demonstrates ‘social value creation’. There is stakeholder participation for the musicians, demonstrated in the cooperative nature of the orchestra and the development of future audiences in the orchestra’s commitment to working with young people in local communities. ‘Persuasion’ is evident in the way the musicians are harnessing social assets such as friendship, liking, trust, obligation and gratitude in co-opting resources into an entrepreneurial venture. In this case, the cooperative orchestra may be described as a social enterprise seeking to increase its autonomy and reduce its reliance upon grants and donations. This finding lends support through providing a practical example of social bricolage (Di Domenico, Haugh and Tracey, 2010).

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