



Conference Abstract

# Exploring Identity and Possible Selves Across Ensemble Musicians

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## Abstract

This research reports initial results from a study focused on better understanding the formation of self-identity and possible selves amongst a sample of professional musicians, dancers, and actors of various ages. The study dives deeper into applying the original concept of possible selves to ensemble musicians.

Much literature concerns the development of self-identity and possible selves in adolescents, which is an important foundation for understanding the formation of identity. To dive deeper, this study also includes respondents of middle aged and elder respondents within performing arts.

The goal brings insight to how identity evolves throughout the entire lifespan of a performing artist with respect to their own attachment and conviction to the self. A secondary objective is to understand the extent to which perceptions of possible selves changes (typical of adolescents) amongst older respondents.

A survey consistent with meeting ethical standards is distributed electronically to a not-publicly available list of professional ensemble musicians, ballet dancers and actors. Twenty-five survey statements are presented in six categories: Association, Emotional Attachment, Conviction, External Factors, Goals and The Ensemble & Me. Five-point Likert scale responses are analyzed using conventional methods (i.e., correlation, cluster and

factor analysis). Further, a Musical Identity Measure (MIM) consistent with other researchers is applied to investigate an individual's self-identities and possible selves and consistency relative to the six categories of questions.

The authors expect the results will provide insights into respondent self-identity based motivations to engage with performing arts activities and to the extent these activities and associations regulate behavior. Furthermore, identifying areas that require additional support or guidance, and supporting future oriented decision making. The measure may also support educators and researchers to better understand and support processes of development and skill acquisition, while upholding modifications and new investigation into self-identity for performing artists.

To access the references mentioned in the full length text please see the document attached titled "Selected References".

## **Keywords**

Identity, Horizons, Possible Selves, Psychology, Psychological Stress, Health, Music, Performing Arts, Applied Management

## **Presenting author**

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## **Hosting institution**

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## **Conflicts of interest**

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.