Motivation of high-achieving athletes and musicians: A person-context perspective.

Susan Beltman

B.A. (Hons) Dip.Ed. M.Ed. (Hons)

This dissertation is the report of an investigation submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Murdoch University.

2005
I declare that this dissertation is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary institution.
Abstract

This research explores how motivation is shaped at the interface of person and context, with a focus on motivation in sport and music. From a social cognitive perspective, motivation research traditionally focuses on factors within the individual, whereas a more situated conceptualisation requires that motivation be studied within a person in context perspective. This study combines elements of both perspectives. It is proposed that motivation is shaped at the interface of person and context, where individuals make appraisals of social (other people) and structural (physical or organisational) aspects of their environments. A holistic view of motivation is adopted that incorporates initial engagement, ongoing involvement and persistence.

One challenge in current motivation research is to develop appropriate methods to capture such a dynamic, complex construct. In this study, semi-structured interviews and innovative tasks are used to gather biographical and longitudinal data about high-achieving athletes and musicians from diverse settings.

The findings reveal that complex personal and contextual factors operate reciprocally and dynamically as individuals make ongoing appraisals of their current situations. For example, personal factors such as aptitude, and contextual factors such as the existence of community programs, operate in a reciprocal way to shape participants’ initial engagement in sport or music. Complexity is highlighted when examining the role of a unique group of others in sport and music.
- onlookers (spectators or audience). A powerful effect on continuing involvement occurs when communities overlap and family members take on roles associated with onlookers. Participants face a range of potential problems in their lives and there are variations in the way these are perceived, in strategies and resources used, and in their impact on persistence. An important finding is the dynamic nature of motivation as the nature and extent of participants’ involvement in sport or music changes over time.

In addition to deepening our understanding of how motivation is shaped at the interface of person and context, the study offers a unique methodological contribution and the findings have implications for enhancing motivation in applied settings.
Acknowledgements

Many people have helped, encouraged and supported me in the completion of this dissertation. My supervisors, Professor Simone Volet and Dr Judith MacCallum, have continually challenged me while providing ongoing support and invaluable feedback. Colleagues and fellow students at Murdoch University as well as at other local, interstate and overseas locations have shown interest in my progress and always been willing to discuss ideas and issues. In particular Stephen Billett, Marold Wosnitza and Roger Vallance asked important questions and made helpful suggestions in the early stages of the research. Eve Ruddock, Linley Hann, Caroline Mansfield and Mary-Ellen MacDonald have provided practical assistance along the way.

Without the support of my family, completion of this research would not have been possible. So special thanks to Bert for everything, to Mum and Dad for their encouragement, and to John, Darren, Scott and Carol for making sure I kept things in perspective.

Finally I would like to acknowledge the participants who willingly gave of their time to share their dreams and disappointments.
Short Contents

ABSTRACT ....................................................................................................................... i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ....................................................................................................... iii

PART I: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY .............................................................................. 1
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH.......................................................... 2
CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ..................................................................... 25
CHAPTER THREE: THE PERSON-CONTEXT INTERFACE: LITERATURE REVIEW AND
RESEARCH QUESTIONS........................................................................................................ 51
CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY: RESEARCH METHODS AND VERIFICATION
STRATEGIES ..................................................................................................................... 90

PART II: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY ............................................................................... 142
CHAPTER FIVE: PERCEPTIONS, APPRAISALS AND MOTIVATION .................................. 143
CHAPTER SIX: SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND MOTIVATION ............................................. 198
CHAPTER SEVEN: PERFORMER-ONLOOKER INTERACTIONS AND MOTIVATION.... 234
CHAPTER EIGHT: PROBLEMS AND MOTIVATION............................................................ 266

PART III: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS................................................................ 310
CHAPTER NINE: DISCUSSION .............................................................................................. 311

REFERENCES ................................................................................................................... 350
APPENDIXES .................................................................................................................. 372
# Expanded Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABSTRACT</th>
<th>i</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SITUATING THE RESEARCH</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PART I: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

| CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH | 2 |
| SITUATING THE RESEARCH | 2 |
| PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER | 5 |
| THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESEARCH | 6 |
| **INCORPORATING A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE** | 6 |
| **AN INSPIRATIONAL STUDY** | 6 |

## FEATURES OF THE RESEARCH

- **Crossing Domains** 8
- **Qualitative Methods** 10
- **A Longitudinal Perspective** 13
- **A Focus on Experts** 15
- **Social Aspects of Motivation** 16
- **Emotional Aspects of Motivation** 18
- **Multiple Levels of Context** 19

## SUMMARY AND SIGNIFICANCE

22

## STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

23

## CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

25

| PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER | 25 |
| CONCEPTUALISATION OF MOTIVATION | 26 |
| **Different Theoretical Perspectives and the Person-Context Relationship** | 26 |
| **Different Theoretical Perspectives and Motivation** | 28 |
| **Motivation in this Research** | 28 |

## THE MODEL OF MOTIVATED ACTION: AN OVERVIEW

32

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODEL

34

- **Schunk** 35
- **Genovese** 36
- **Biggs** 37
- **Boekaerts** 37
- **Billet** 38
- **Volet** 39

## KEY FEATURES OF THE MODEL

40

- **The Person** 41
- **The Context** 43
- **The Person-Context Interface** 48
CHAPTER THREE: THE PERSON-CONTEXT INTERFACE: LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS 50

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER 50

PERCEPTIONS, APPRAISALS AND MOTIVATION 51
  Importance of Perceptions and Appraisals 51
  Appraisals of Multiple Levels of Contexts 52
  Perceptions are Affected by Unique Characteristics of Individuals 57
  Contexts Offer Affordances and Constraints 59
  Summary of Research Regarding Perceptions and Appraisals and Motivation 60

INTERACTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS AND MOTIVATION 61
  Importance of Interactions and Relationships 61
  Different Roles Played by Others 62
  Positive and Negative Outcomes of Social Interactions 68
  Social Relationships are Dynamic 69
  Summary Regarding Research on Social Interactions and Relationships 71

PROBLEMS AND MOTIVATION 73
  Importance of Problems 73
  Review of Research Regarding Different Types of Strategies 75
  Summary of Strategy Use 80

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RELATING TO PERSON-CONTEXT INTERFACE 82

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS 83
  Perceptions and Appraisals 83
  Interactions and Relationships with other People 84
  Problems and Strategies 85

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY: RESEARCH METHODS AND VERIFICATION STRATEGIES 88

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER 88

RESEARCH DESIGN 88
  Overview of the Research Design 88
  The Use of Qualitative Research Methods 89

PARTICIPANTS 92
  Sampling Decisions 92
  Overview of the Participants 93
  Details of the Participants 95

DATA PRODUCTION 98
  Sources and Types of Data 98
  The Interviews 101
  The Tasks 104

PROCEDURES 112
  Pilot Study 112
  Main Study 112
  Ethical Procedures 113
# DATA ANALYSIS

| Managin the Data | 117 |
| Organising the Data | 118 |

## METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

| Validity | 121 |
| Reliability and Generalisability | 131 |

## SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

| Presentation of the Results | 134 |

## PART II: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

## CHAPTER FIVE: PERCEPTIONS, APPRAISALS AND MOTIVATION

### PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

| Initial Engagement | 141 |
| Categorising the Factors Relating to Initial Formal Engagement | 145 |
| Personal Factors | 147 |
| Contextual Factors Relating to Family and Friends | 149 |
| Contextual Factors Relating to Community and School | 151 |
| Subgroup Analysis and Initial Engagement | 153 |
| Individual Variations and Initial Engagement | 159 |
| The Relationship Between Factors Relating to Initial Engagement | 164 |
| A Discussion of Perceptions and Appraisals and Initial Engagement | 165 |

### APPRAISALS AND INITIAL ENGAGEMENT

| Initial Engagement | 141 |
| Categorising the Factors Relating to Initial Formal Engagement | 145 |
| Personal Factors | 147 |
| Contextual Factors Relating to Family and Friends | 149 |
| Contextual Factors Relating to Community and School | 151 |
| Subgroup Analysis and Initial Engagement | 153 |
| Individual Variations and Initial Engagement | 159 |
| The Relationship Between Factors Relating to Initial Engagement | 164 |
| A Discussion of Perceptions and Appraisals and Initial Engagement | 165 |

### APPRAISALS AND ONGOING INVOLVEMENT

| Definitions and Data | 168 |
| Subgroup Analysis and Ongoing Involvement | 172 |
| Individual Variations and Ongoing Involvement | 174 |
| A Discussion of Perceptions and Appraisals and Ongoing Involvement | 188 |

## CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

| What Characteristics of Persons and What Characteristics of Contexts are Important and What is the Nature of the Interrelationship Between These? | 191 |
| How Do Individuals’ Appraisals of Aspects of Context Shape their Motivation in Sport and Music? | 192 |
| Are these Findings Similar Across Domains, Across Individuals and Over Time? | 193 |

## CHAPTER SIX: SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND MOTIVATION

### PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

| The Nature of Participants’ Interactions with Others | 194 |
| Who Were the Influential Others? | 196 |
| Dimensions of Social Influence | 201 |
| Subgroup Analysis and Interactions | 204 |
| Interactions with Others and Motivational Responses | 206 |
| Individual Variations and Interactions with Others | 209 |

## COMPLEXITY OF SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND MOTIVATION

| 212 |
## CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

What problems are faced by high-achieving individuals in sport and music and what strategies are used to deal with these?  
Are these findings similar across domains, across individuals and over time?  
How do problems shape individuals’ motivation in sport and music?

## PART III: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

### CHAPTER NINE: DISCUSSION

**Purpose and Structure of the Chapter**

Summary of results

Discussion of the major findings

Motivation is shaped by complex aspects of both person and context

Motivation is shaped by a reciprocal person-context relationship

The person-context relationship and motivation are dynamic

The revised model of motivated action

The person

The context

The person-context interface

Graphically representing a complex, reciprocal, dynamic construct

Methodological strengths and limitations

The use of qualitative methods including biographical and longitudinal data

Sampling decisions

The use of specially designed tasks

Strategies to enhance validity

Future directions and applications of the research

Performer-onlooker relations

Similarities between individual practice and homework

Overlapping communities

Importance of social interactions

The paradoxical nature of motivation

Significance of the research

Complexity and reciprocity of person and context

The dynamic nature of motivation and response to challenge

Conclusion

References

Appendixes

Appendix A

Appendix B

Appendix C

Appendix D

Appendix E
List of Tables

Table 3.1: A Social Cognitive Analysis of Primary Influences on Students' Self-Regulatory Development .................................................................71
Table 3.2: Research Questions for the Study ........................................................87
Table 4.1: Characteristics of Participants ...............................................................94
Table 4.2: Details of Adolescent Participants .......................................................96
Table 4.3: Details of Adult Participants .................................................................98
Table 4.4: Sources of Data Linked to the Research Questions ...............................99
Table 4.5: All Available Types of Data .................................................................100
Table 4.6: Overview of Interviews One and Two ...............................................102
Table 4.7: Methodological Issues and Verification Strategies ............................135
Table 4.8: Summary of the Results Chapters ......................................................137
Table 5.1: Adolescent Participants’ Formal Engagement in Sport and Music ........143
Table 5.2: Adult Participants’ Formal Engagement in Sport and Music ...............144
Table 5.3: Factors Influencing Participants’ Initial Formal Engagement in Sport and Music .........................................................................................146
Table 5.4: Extent of Reported Involvement of Adolescents in all Settings ..........169
Table 5.5: Extent of Reported Involvement of Adults in all Settings ....................170
Table 6.1: Categories of Influential Others ........................................................198
Table 6.2: Frequency and Percentage of Positive and Negative Influences ..........200
Table 6.3: Summary of Frequency of People of Influence Nominated by Subgroups 205
Table 6.4: Participants’ Motivational Responses ................................................207
Table 6.5: Types of Influences Nominated as Both Positive and Negative ..........213
Table 6.6: Categories of Longer-Term Motivational Responses with Initially Negative Responses .................................................................218
Table 8.1: Rating of Issues Relating to Individual Training or Practice ..................265
Table 8.2: Rating of Issues Relating to Group Training or Rehearsal .....................265
Table 8.3: Rating of Issues Relating to Group Performance .................................266
Table 8.4: Rating of Other Issues .......................................................................266
Table 8.5: Motivational Strategies Used by Participants ......................................279
Table 8.6: Decision Points and Illustrative Examples ........................................293
Table 9.1: Summary of Results .......................................................................306
List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Significant Features of the Research ............................................................ 8
Figure 1.2: The Structure of the Dissertation ............................................................... 24
Figure 2.1: Model of Motivated Action ........................................................................ 33
Figure 2.2: Influential Authors and their Models ......................................................... 35
Figure 2.3: Components Analysis of Context ............................................................... 47
Figure 4.1: How Recent Methodological Changes are Reflected in the Study .......... 90
Figure 4.2: Time Line Task ....................................................................................... 105
Figure 4.3: Overall Time Frame of the Study ............................................................. 113
Figure 5.1: Personal and Contextual Factors Relating to Initial Formal Engagement 165
Figure 5.2: Congruence Between Appraisals by Person and by Context ................. 178
Figure 6.1: Dimensions of Social Influence ................................................................ 201
Figure 7.1: Types of Onlookers in a Performance Setting ......................................... 232
Figure 7.2: Onlooker Data Available for Analysis ..................................................... 240
Figure 8.1: Problems and Persistence Over Time - a Flow Chart ......................... 295
Figure 9.1: Model of Motivated Action (Revised) ...................................................... 318
Part I: Background to the Study
Chapter One
Introduction to the Research

SITUATING THE RESEARCH

The present research is situated in a time of changing views on how best to conceptualise and examine motivation. In brief, views of motivation have shifted from being primarily focused on “cognition” to more social views incorporating “context.” Termed the “first wave of the cognitive revolution” (De Corte, Greer, & Verschaffel, 1996, p.497), cognitive approaches to learning focused on the internal processes of the mind (Billett, 1998a) and have been criticised for not attending to the “personal, motivational, social, and historical factors” influencing student learning (Pintrich, Marx, & Boyle, 1993, p.170). For example, Csikszentmihalyi (1988) had maintained that psychological models in the previous fifty years were developed in laboratory or experimental settings and tended to be "mechanistic, reductive, and biased in favor of pathology" (p.15). In his seminal paper, Weiner (1990) argued against the current dominance of the psychology of the individual and for consideration of social aspects such as the goals of the superordinate culture and the values of those with whom individuals interact. He made a concluding comment that foreshadowed later developments: "school motivation cannot be divorced from the social fabric in which it is embedded" (p.621).
In the final decade of the last century and in current times, the major focus in research on motivation has been how to incorporate the notion of context to gain a more comprehensive understanding of motivation (see, for example, Urdan, 1999; Volet & Järvelä, 2001). So the "the second wave of the cognitive revolution" has aimed at relocating “cognitive functioning within its social, cultural, and historical contexts" (De Corte et al., 1996, p.497) and has focused on person-in-context and motivation-in-context. There are different views on how best to conceptualise context and the nature of the relationship between the person and the context. This relationship has been conceived "in diverse and multiple ways" (Branco, 1997, p.304) and this relationship between person and context is the main area of inquiry in the present research.

Examples of different theoretical approaches to the study of learning and motivation and the way the relationship between person and context is understood will be discussed in more detail later (Chapter Two). The main point here is that a current issue in educational theory and research is how to reconcile different views of cognition and motivation in context. Focusing on the individual or person and their understandings and other characteristics could be said to be the “traditional” view, where people are regarded as separate entities from the social context in which they function (Jackson, MacKenzie, & Hobfoll, 2000). Other, more “social” views are seen to be in opposition to this (Valsiner & Van Der Veer, 2000) as they suggest that the person and the environment cannot be considered separately.

In particular social cognitive and sociocultural perspectives have been seen as contrasting and have been the subject of recent debate with various attempts to explain,
reconcile and move forward from different viewpoints (Anderman & Anderman, 2000; Anderson, Greeno, Reder, & Simon, 2000; Billett, 1998a; Elliott, 1999; Hickey, 2003; Packer & Goicoechea, 2000; Vosniadou & Halldén, 2003). Volet (2001b) discussed the potential tension between these two perspectives, saying that there is a conceptual difference between being prepared to take into account contextual influences on individual motivation, and taking on a situative view where the individual is subsumed by the context. Similarly, Turner suggested that "the present challenge in motivational research is to integrate the notions of self and context" (Turner, 2001, p.85).

In the present research, the starting point is a person-in-context perspective in which individuals are regarded as complex and are understood to live and act within multiple, complex, dynamic contexts (Volet, 1999). Although persons always exist within contexts, in order to understand the relationship or interface between person and context, elements of each are considered separately. That is, the person and the context co-exist and in reality are inseparable. It is possible, however, to focus attention on one or the other, or, from the perspective of the individual, on the interface between them, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the whole.

The aim of this study is to examine the relationship between person and context with regard to motivation. Elements and assumptions from both a social cognitive and sociocultural perspective are incorporated in order to gain a better understanding of how both personal and contextual factors shape motivation. Research findings from different theoretical perspectives are used to gain a broad, holistic view of the person, the context and their interrelationship. The aim is to understand how characteristics of
the person and characteristics of the context together shape the motivation of individuals. Specifically, the motivation of athletes and musicians is examined.

Focusing mainly on the reported perceptions and experiences of individuals, the research does reflect a social cognitive framework as its starting point. This framework has underpinned much of the extant research on motivation. Widening this view by gaining a more comprehensive picture of individuals’ experiences within multiple contexts, the study aims to take a person-context perspective and incorporate more sociocultural ideas about how constructs such as motivation are shaped. The term “person-context” is deliberately used, rather than “person-in-context” as the aim is to explore the relationship between person and context, rather than merely acknowledging that a person lives and acts within certain contexts. By taking a broad, holistic, qualitative approach, the study aims to contribute to and extend current understandings of motivation in context.

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER
The purpose of this chapter is to give the background to the present research. The above discussion indicated that the research is situated in a time when studies of motivation include an examination of the contexts in which individuals learn and develop. The next section includes an explanation of how the researcher’s personal perspective and a particular study contributed to the development of the research. The chapter details and provides a rationale for seven key features of the research. A summary of its significance is given and the chapter concludes with an overview of the structure of the dissertation.
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESEARCH
Incorporating a Personal Perspective

This section incorporates a discussion of personal experiences and understandings that have contributed to the present research. Research design is influenced by a number of factors including the personal experiences of the researcher (Maxwell, 1998). Experiential knowledge and other aspects of what the researcher brings to the research process were seen in the past as bias to be eliminated (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), but others have suggested that this knowledge needs to be made explicit and incorporated into the inquiry process (Chenail, 1997; Maxwell, 1998; Stake, 1994). The position of the researcher influences all aspects of the research process and this view is supported by Altheide and Johnson (1994, p.486) who stated that "the scientific observer is part and parcel of the setting, context, and culture he or she is trying to understand and represent." Therefore personal experiences that have contributed to the nature of the present research are included where relevant in the following discussion.

An Inspirational Study

One of the major influences in the development of the present research was the study of talent development by Bloom and his colleagues (Bloom, 1985c). In this comprehensive work, one hundred and twenty highly talented individuals, and some of their parents and teachers, were interviewed in order to examine “the processes by which individuals who have reached the highest levels of accomplishment in selected fields have been helped to develop their capabilities so fully” (Bloom, 1985b, p.3). The participants were concert pianists, sculptors, research mathematicians, research
neurologists, Olympic swimmers, and tennis champions. There were great individual differences in many areas. For example, when describing the concert pianists, Sosniak (1985a) said that apart from being professional, expert, classical musicians, “in most other ways they are as different from one another as they are different from people in general” (p.21). Yet despite the differences within and across talent fields, there were also “striking similarities in the process of talent development” (Bloom, 1985b, p.17) such as the crucial roles played by families and teachers in various phases of development.

Reading about Bloom’s study and its findings raised for me the question of whether motivation could be examined in such a way. Would it be possible to look back at the lives of motivated individuals and trace the way their motivation had been shaped by their own characteristics, by their experiences and by relationships with others? So Bloom’s work, in conjunction with other literature and personal experiences inspired the present research in a number of ways. Figure 1.1 summarises the significant features of the present research and provides examples of supporting literature, including Bloom’s study where appropriate.

The following section is structured around the features listed in Figure 1.1. Those that specifically relate to Bloom’s study are: crossing domains, using qualitative methods, taking a longitudinal perspective, focusing on experts, and examining social aspects of motivation. Two further key features are described which are not directly attributable to the influence of Bloom’s work. They are those of considering emotional aspects of motivation and considering multiple levels of context.
### Features of the Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Examples of supporting literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crossing domains: sport and music</td>
<td>Bloom (1985c); Brophy (1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative methods</td>
<td>Bloom (1985c); Dowson &amp; McInerney (1997); Krane, Anderson &amp; Stream (1997); Regnier, Salmela &amp; Russell (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A longitudinal perspective</td>
<td>Bianco (2001); Bloom (1985c); Davidson, Howe &amp; Sloboda (1997); MacCallum (1997); O’Neill (1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A focus on experts</td>
<td>Bloom (1985c); Resnick, Harris &amp; Blum (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social aspects of motivation</td>
<td>Bloom (1985c); Davidson (1997); Juvonen &amp; Wentzel (1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional aspects of motivation</td>
<td>Csikszentmihalyi (1988); Ferris &amp; Gerber (1996); Graham (1996); Pintrich, Marx &amp; Boyle (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple levels of context</td>
<td>Anderman &amp; Maehr (1994); Anshel (1994); Billett (1996; 1998b); Tudge &amp; Putnam (1997)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1.1: Significant Features of the Research*

### Features of the Research

**Crossing Domains**

One feature of the present research is that it moves beyond the academic domain in its examination of motivation. Bloom found similarities across both academic and nonacademic fields of study. In an even broader sense it has been argued that researchers in psychology and education can benefit from contributions of other disciplines such as sociology and anthropology (Billett, 1998a). In specific areas of practice such as adult learning, cross-disciplinary perspectives can also be helpful as
maintained by Mezirow (1991) who said that those interested in adult learning "often find themselves trapped within the framework of particular theories and paradigms such as the behaviorist or psychoanalytic; they seldom communicate with each other, let alone with educators" (p.xi). Youniss (1997) also discussed the benefits of integrating psychology and social science in order to benefit from the "rich scholarship that the other social sciences provide" (p.340).

Others have suggested that research in motivation has focused primarily on achievement motivation and that there is a need to extend this to other contexts (Brophy, 1999). Given practical limitations, it was decided that the present research would examine motivation in two domains – sport and music. These domains have some interesting similarities. Both require the ongoing development of skills, have an element of individual practice or training, have a performance component (competitions and concerts), and can have an individual or group (team or ensemble) focus. In western society special programs are offered in both sport and music in schools and in the wider community, and experts in both domains are highly regarded.

There are also personal reasons for the choice of these domains. Like many other parents and community members in our society, I would wish my children to have access to sporting and musical activities. Some children enjoy these and persist for many years, whereas others refuse to join organised sporting groups or avoid practising their instrument. Others begin with enthusiasm but then drop out. An examination of motivation in music and sport while assisting people involved in these
domains will lead to a broader understanding of motivation in general and in the academic domain.

Qualitative Methods

A second feature of the present research is the exclusive use of qualitative methods of data production and analysis and Bloom’s study also used these. From a personal perspective, I began my academic career studying psychology at a time when “rats and stats” were the primary component of the course, at least in the initial stages. Even when we actually talked about people, it was usually in an experimental sense such as examining their retention of nonsense syllables. We studied “subjects” rather than “participants”, and it was refreshing to read of research where a person is no longer regarded as “a distant, aseptic, quantified, sterilized, measured, categorized and catalogued faceless respondent, but has become a living human being” (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p.373).

Although statistical data produced from quantitative methods of research do provide a succinct summary of major patterns, these may lack meaning for individuals or may not be appropriate if there is a wide range of individual differences (Patton, 1990). Naturally occurring phenomena are seen to be complex and more than a sum of their parts, so reducing them to a few discrete variables may lead to an oversimplification of real-world experiences and miss important factors that are not easily quantifiable (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Supporters of quantitative methodologies would argue, on the other hand, that qualitative research relies on “softer, interpretive
methods” that are “unreliable, impressionistic, and not objective” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p.5). A more detailed consideration of issues relating to the validity of qualitative research in general, and to the validity of the present research in particular, is found in the discussion of the methodology of the study (Chapter Four).

An examination of studies in various domains indicated support for the incorporation of qualitative methodologies in areas where quantitative methods may have been more usual. Working within a goal theory perspective of motivation, Dowson and McInerney (1997) suggested that qualitative methodologies are particularly appropriate for research aiming to more clearly specify students’ goals and used a series of structured, semistructured and conversational interviews with students and teachers to do this. When reviewing literature related to the concept of self-regulation, Zimmerman (1998) included in his review the analysis of extensive anecdotal evidence and of numerous texts, as well as findings from experimental studies. He concluded that experts in diverse disciplines used similar self-regulatory processes during the initial development of a skill and during its subsequent performance in naturalistic settings. Incorporating qualitative findings from non-educational domains made for a broader understanding of the concepts under examination.

Researchers have also discussed the need to incorporate qualitative methods into research in sporting contexts. For example, Regnier, Salmela and Russell (1993) argued that rather than relying solely on the “top down” approaches of “orthodox science”, researchers needed different methods to gain a better understanding of the processes by which talented athletes developed their psychological, physical,
physiological and technical abilities: "to find out what reported features talented performers cite in any specific domain to explain their exceptional performances" (p.294). Krane, Anderson and Stream (1997) also supported the notion of using participants’ own voices as a starting point for analysis, suggesting that “we need to be open to and accepting of new and diverse methodologies to help us advance our understanding of psychological phenomena in sport" (p.213).

Qualitative methods such as interviews, observations, and specially developed tasks in nonacademic domains have also been used when exploring areas such as: peer relationships in sport and the arts (Patrick, Ryan, Alfeld-Liro, & Fredricks, 1999), learning in the workplace (Billett, 1996), mentoring (Philip & Hendry, 1996), young people’s social networks (Bø, 1996), and the effectiveness of programs in community settings (Yancey, 1998). O’Neill (1997) used methods such as interviews, questionnaires, diaries and videos in a longitudinal study of children’s music practice. Reviewing such studies contributed to the design of the present research and supported its reliance on qualitative methods.

There were not many examples of the use of qualitative methods in research focusing on motivation when the present research was designed in 1999. One influential example was a study by Locke Davidson and Phelan (1999). They used an “educational anthropology” approach to provide an insider or emic perspective in their examination of the contextual features of classrooms and school environments affecting student motivation to learn. The authors’ belief was that “students draw meanings from their various and principal social contexts (i.e. their family, peer, and
school worlds) and that these meanings combine to influence students’ willingness and motivation to succeed academically” (p.235). The authors used in-depth interviews, observations and informal interactions with students and significant others over a two and a half year period. They stressed that “incorporating students’ perspectives into the discourse on human motivation is critical to understanding this multifaceted and complex aspect of human behaviour” (p.266).

The present research uses mainly interviews and specially designed tasks. In addition, observations, documents and audio-visual material such as press releases and media interviews are used. These data gathering methods are explained fully later (see Chapter Four), but the overall aim of these is to capture participants’ experiences and understandings through their own voices.

A Longitudinal Perspective

A third feature of the present research is that it takes a longitudinal perspective. Bloom’s study used a biographical approach with retrospective accounts to examine changes over time. Findings across talent areas indicated that there were distinct phases of development of the talented individuals at different stages of their careers. The roles of parents, teachers and coaches changed with changing needs of the individuals. An example in the sporting domain of research incorporating a longitudinal aspect is the use of interviews at different time points during the recovery process to examine how athletes coping with injury used social support. The methods used generated rich detail which “allows the researcher to consider the essence of the
experience in a holistic context to better understand the complex relationships among influential variables” (Bianco, Malo, & Orlick, 1999, p.3 of 17).

Interviewing young people on different occasions has also seen to be a realistic way of exploring musical learning experiences over time (Davidson, Howe, & Sloboda, 1997). O’Neill (1997) too used a variety of methods such as interviews with children and teachers, practice diaries, and parent questionnaires and videos, at different points in time, to investigate "cognitive, motivational, social and educational factors influencing the early development of children's musical performance skills" (p.57). She suggested that despite the importance of motivational factors, they have received little attention in the music domain, perhaps because they are so difficult to analyse and measure.

In academic contexts, it is well documented that motivational constructs change over time as the nature of beliefs change, the social organisation of classrooms change, and school structures change (see Wigfield, Eccles, & Rodriguez, 1998 for a comprehensive review). Few researchers, however, have examined motivational change in longitudinal studies, with cross-sectional methods being more common (MacCallum, 1997). In the design of the present study, biographical methods are used to capture details of prior history, life events and any changes in involvement in sport and music through participant recollections. Longitudinal data are also gathered at different points in time to examine changes during the period of investigation.
A Focus on Experts

A fourth feature of the present research is its focus on experts. Bloom and his colleagues interviewed carefully selected experts in their fields and this was logical given that his area of inquiry was the development of talent. It seemed to me that this could be a way of studying motivation. That is, to identify and select individuals who could be said to be highly motivated, and then to examine how their motivation developed and what were the key positive and negative influences (from a social cognitive perspective), or affordances and constraints (from a sociocultural perspective) over time. There are both personal and conceptual reasons for the decision to address motivation in this way, as explained below.

When conducting the research project for my Masters Degree, I was interested in changes in the personal motivational goals of a Year 11 cohort, the second last year of secondary schooling in Western Australia (Beltman, 1996; Beltman & MacCallum, 1996). As a School Psychologist I was especially interested in those students who had work avoidance goals, but as most of these students left school or did not bother to come to the second data collecting session, it was difficult to draw any conclusions about the specific factors affecting their lack of engagement. I was also influenced by studies of resilience (see, for example, Resnick, Harris, & Blum, 1993) where the focus was on the characteristics of individuals who have succeeded despite difficulties, and of contextual factors contributing to this. I came to believe that it would be valuable to examine people who are engaged, who are participating, and who have persisted, and to consider the factors that have contributed to this, rather than focus on
individuals who are not participating. From a practical point of view it is also difficult to interview and follow up people who are not interested or engaged!

A more conceptual reason for the decision to focus on experts in motivation relates to the use of “theory based sampling” (Patton, 1990) which occurs when the researcher samples incidents or people based on their potential manifestation or representation of important theoretical constructs. In the present study, the construct of interest was that of motivation so the decision was made to sample people who demonstrated evidence of this. It was decided to use what have been called the traditional behavioural indicators of motivation: "choice of task, level of engagement or activity in the task, and willingness to persist at the task" (Pintrich et al., 1993, p.168). Participants were selected who had shown by their life choices that they were engaged in sport and music at a high level relative to others in the community, and who had persisted in this involvement over time. Decisions about how such participants were selected are fully explained later (Chapter Four).

Social Aspects of Motivation

A fifth feature of the present research is that it explicitly incorporates social aspects of motivation. The term social has two meanings in the literature with regard to motivation. Firstly, from a social cognitive perspective, an individual’s motivation is seen to be influenced by various interactions with other people and a number of writers have argued for a greater consideration of such influences (see, for example, Juvonen & Wentzel, 1996). Secondly, when considering the motivation of person-in-context,
the term social may refer to the broader sociocultural environment which has been considered to include both the “social milieu” and the learning tasks or activities (Brophy, 1999). This latter meaning will be discussed in the next section on “multiple contexts.” In this section social interactions are the focus.

Bloom’s study specifically explored the roles of teachers and parents, as well as interactions with peers, in developing talent. The influences were reciprocal. Not only did the talented individual grow and develop in certain ways, but the lifestyles of parents and siblings also changed to accommodate the particular needs of that child (Bloom, 1985a). Apart from Bloom’s study, there has been considerable research in academic, sporting and music domains, as well as in the general community, regarding social interactions and relationships with others, and this is reviewed more fully later (see Chapter Three). For example, in sport, coaches’ actions affect the perceived motivational climate (J.Duda, personal communication, September 1997) and other researchers have examined the roles of coaches, psychologists, and parents (Defrancesco & Burke, 1997) as well as peers in sport (Weiss & Smith, 1999; Weiss, Smith, & Theeboom, 1996) and in the arts and sport (Patrick et al., 1999). The relationship between teacher and pupil has been called "one of the most significant social relationships in music" (Davidson, 1997, p.214), and interactions and relationships with others such as parents, siblings, peers and professional performers also play a role in ongoing involvement (Davidson et al., 1997). In the wider community, or life in general, social networks and relationships have been examined with regard to their importance in adolescent development in particular (Bø, 1996; Gottlieb & Sylvestre, 1996; Greenberger, Chen, & Beam, 1998).
To summarise, social interactions and relationships have been examined in various areas for different purposes and one of the aims of the present research is to explicitly explore the role of social interactions and relationships with regard to motivation.

**Emotional Aspects of Motivation**

A further feature of the present research that was not a specific feature of Bloom’s study is that it incorporates a consideration of emotions. Various theoretical viewpoints have placed emotions in a prominent role in student learning. Flow theory stressed the “sense of exhilaration, energy, and fulfillment that is more enjoyable than what people feel in the normal course of life” (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988, p.29). Research from a social cognitive perspective also supports the crucial role of the affective responses of individuals in motivation to learn or perform (Graham, 1996; Pintrich et al., 1993) and different emotions are associated with different motivational goals (Boekaerts, 1993; Kaplan & Patrick, 1996; Roberts, Treasure, & Kavussanu, 1999). The importance of emotions in learning and performance is not confined to young learners (Ferris & Gerber, 1996) or to school learning. For example, arousal and anxiety control are topics of considerable research and discussion in sport (Anshel, 1994; Clews, 1996), and emotions are a crucial aspect of musical performance (Lund & Kranz, 1994).

It has been suggested that emotions have been neglected or considered as peripheral in educational psychology research in general (Schutz & Lanehart, 2002) and in motivation research (Meyer & Turner, 2002) in particular. Some current research in
different contexts supports a prominent role for emotions. For example, researchers have examined the range of emotions experienced by school and university students in various academic settings (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002b), students’ explanations of their emotional experiences during computer supported collaborative learning experiences (Järvelä & Järvenoja, 2003), and links between emotions and performance in sport (Hanin, 2002).

Emotions, or affective aspects, are in the forefront of current motivational research, as illustrated by the title of the 9th International Conference on Motivation: “Cognition, Motivation and Affect: Their Interdependence and Interrelation”, held in Lisbon in 2004. Therefore another aim in the present research is to be mindful of the importance of emotions and not to focus exclusively, for example, on events that have occurred or on particular interpersonal relationships. The interest is also in affective aspects of these experiences through a consideration of the emotions experienced by participants.

Multiple Levels of Context

The final important feature of the research is that it includes a consideration of multiple levels and aspects of contexts, and this is the second way that the term “social” is used when referring to the broader context or environment of learning. The next chapter (Chapter Two) will explain the conceptualisation of context in this study more fully but three points will be made here. Contexts change over time as individuals change schools, join new groups and move out into the workplace and such changes are explored through the planned biographical and longitudinal approach to
data collection in this study. Secondly, individuals may simultaneously belong to multiple contexts and although participants were athletes and musicians, the focus was not just on their experiences within these particular domains. Thirdly, contexts comprise different levels of specificity and this will be discussed more fully here.

Both cognitive and social cognitive views of learning and motivation in academic settings have included different levels of context, with the primary focus being on individuals’ perceptions of aspects of those contexts. Research relating to this is more fully reviewed later (see Chapter Three), but some examples are presented here. Research examining students’ personal motivational goals has led to the development of common principles, illustrated by the TARGET acronym (Epstein, 1989; Maehr & Anderman, 1993), to indicate how aspects of the classroom can be structured to enhance and support task or mastery motivational goals. School teachers and administrators influence the nature of student engagement through their organisation of classroom goal structures and broader school culture (see, for example, Brophy, 1987; Meece, 1991). Maehr and his colleagues have conducted a great deal of work in this area showing, for example, that effective school reform must consider the multiple contexts in which students interact (Anderman & Maehr, 1994). Changes at both the classroom instructional level and the school policy level were recommended to enhance student motivation (Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Maehr & Buck, 1993).

In the domain of sport, Anshel (1994) discussed how environmental influences or situational factors, such as features of sporting competitions, impact on athletes’ performance. Others have suggested the need to consider not only individual
psychological and physiological factors, but also contextual demands such as marriage, family, civic responsibility, financial status, career, and friendships when designing sport psychology interventions, as these all impact on individual motivation (Whelan, Meyers, & Donovan, 1995). Similar to classroom based research, the importance of the motivational climate perceived by the athlete, but determined by the coach, team structure and activities, has been found to be related to various motivational constructs (Kavussanu & Roberts, 1996).

In the domain of music, Davidson (1997) argued that psychological research has tended to reflect a cognitive perspective where minds are investigated, but where the notion of humans as social agents has largely been overlooked. She suggested that the composition, performance and perception of musical works depended on a number of complex social factors such as the size of an ensemble, the sociocultural traditions of musical form, and inter-performer, inter-audience and performer-audience behaviours. Olsson (1997) illustrated the importance of organisational structures in determining, for example, the types of teachers selected as appropriate for teaching music, as well as the structure of music education in a school, and decisions about who will have access to music programs.

The notion of contexts comprising different levels of specificity is also supported by some more sociocultural views of learning and development. In this perspective patterns of individual behaviour are regarded to have their origin in the social action and activities of particular settings which are themselves embedded in cultural, institutional and historical contexts (Billett, 1996; Bonk & Kim, 1998; Winterhoff,
Within these broader systems, individuals engage in particular activities in what may be seen as the immediate learning environment or community of practice, each with its own norms and practices which contribute to individuals' developing life histories (Billett, 1998b). Because of the perceived relevance of sociocultural perspectives of learning (Brophy, 1999), there is now an emphasis on incorporating context into an examination of motivation (see, for example, McInerney & Van Etten, 2001; Volet & Järvelä, 2001), although at the time of designing the present study, few published empirical studies of motivation from this perspective were available.

Therefore this research aims to examine the nature of the various contexts in which athletes and musicians participate and how these contribute to their motivation. The multifaceted nature of context will be unpacked and important components teased out. In doing this, the study will contribute to the current challenge of how to more fully take account of and incorporate context into our understandings of motivation.

**SUMMARY AND SIGNIFICANCE**

This research aims to contribute to an understanding of the relationship between person and context with regard to motivation. Several key features of the research have been designed to do this. Examining the motivation of experts in the domains of sport and music will add to an understanding of motivation in those and other domains. Innovative qualitative methods, designed to capture the voices and experiences of participants in multiple contexts, will lead to a fuller understanding of their motivation, as will the production of longitudinal data. A comprehensive, holistic view of individuals will include social and emotional aspects, and a comprehensive view of
context will include its multiple levels. The focus in this research is on understanding the relationship between person and context. In other words: what is the nature of the person-context interface, and how does this relate to motivation? This question is considered in the next chapter (Chapter Two), which outlines the conceptual framework guiding the research.

STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

Figure 1.2 illustrates the overall structure of the dissertation, which consists of three main parts. Part One of the dissertation provides the background to the study. This chapter has introduced the rationale for the research and described its main features. The next chapter explains the conceptual framework and presents a Model of Motivated Action. Chapter Three reviews research related to various aspects of this model and leads to the main research questions of interest. Part One concludes with a description of the research methods and verification processes used (Chapter Four).

Part Two of the dissertation presents the findings of the research. In brief, Chapter Five focuses on how appraisals of contexts made by individuals shape the motivation of those individuals. In Chapter Six the focus is on how interactions with others shape motivation in positive and negative ways. Relationships between participants and one particular category of others, onlookers, are the focus of Chapter Seven. How participants deal with various problems is the focus of Chapter Eight. Part Three concludes the dissertation. Chapter Nine contains a brief summary of the findings of the research, and a discussion of its conceptual, methodological and applied
contributions. This discussion includes a number of issues arising from the study, implications for future research, and a concluding statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part I</strong></td>
<td>Background to the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter One</td>
<td>Background to the research and its aims and main features.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Two</td>
<td>Conceptual framework and model of the person-context relationship and motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Three</td>
<td>Review of literature regarding person-context interface and the research questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Four</td>
<td>Methodology: Research methods, issues and verification strategies.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Part II</strong></th>
<th>Findings of the study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Five</td>
<td>Results: Perceptions, appraisals and motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Six</td>
<td>Results: Social interactions and motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Seven</td>
<td>Results: Performer-onlookers relationships and motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Eight</td>
<td>Results: Problems and motivation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Part III</strong></th>
<th>Discussion of the findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter Nine</td>
<td>Discussion: Summary, conceptual, methodological, applied contribution of research.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 1.2: The Structure of the Dissertation.*
Chapter Two

Conceptual Framework

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

The purpose of this chapter is to explain how motivation is conceptualised in this research. As discussed in the introductory chapter (Chapter One), understandings of motivation have broadened from being mainly cognitive in focus to also taking account of social and emotional aspects of individuals, and of multiple levels of the contexts in which those individuals live and act. In order to depict this broader view of motivation, a Model of Motivated Action is presented which illustrates the relationship between person and context, and how this shapes motivation. A number of previous models that contributed to this model are outlined. Key features of the model are described. One of these is that person and context are in a reciprocal and dynamic relationship, and their interconnection or intersection may be conceptualised as different types of interface. Three types of interface are explained and this leads, in the following chapter (Chapter Three), to a review of related research and to the development of the questions guiding the study.
CONCEPTUALISATION OF MOTIVATION

Different Theoretical Perspectives and the Person-Context Relationship

Concepts and research findings relating to learning and motivation from different theoretical perspectives have been incorporated into the present research. How the person-context relationship is conceived in the various perspectives is discussed. Other similarities and differences between theoretical perspectives are not considered in detail.

Behaviourist, social cognitive and social constructivist perspectives all regard person and context as primarily separate entities - a dualist viewpoint. Behaviourist perspectives could be said to give contextual factors a central role (Schneider, 1993). All psychological activity is seen to be determined by environmental factors that can be controlled, and individuals are regarded as “subjects” of research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Social cognitive theory modifies this extreme stance and recognises the mutual influences on an individual's behaviour of their environment and of their intrapersonal characteristics such as abilities, beliefs and personality (Schneider, 1993). Pintrich, Marx and Boyle (1993) suggested that rational, “scientific” models represented “cold” models of conceptual change as they focused on behaviours or cognitions and did not sufficiently take into account the importance of the mediating role of individual motivational beliefs or of classroom contexts. In both behavioural and social cognitive perspectives, however, person and context are seen as distinct entities. Similarly, social constructivist perspectives, while focusing on the individual, also recognise that context has an important role (Mezirow, 1991). Complex behaviour is purposefully
constructed, with the locus of control residing within the individual. Such construction is seen to occur within particular contexts that influence individuals.

Sociocultural and participatory perspectives, which maintain that person and context cannot be considered separately, offer a different view about the relationship between person and context. In sociocultural perspectives individual meanings and understandings "arise from social activity taking place within socioculturally and historically organized systems" (Winterhoff, 1997, p.223). Higher mental functions such as thinking and memory are formed through engaging and participating in activities in the physical and social world. Participation models build on a sociocultural perspective and again person and context are inseparable. For example, Barbara Rogoff emphasised the unity of persons and their sociocultural contexts (Valsiner & Van Der Veer, 2000, p.394). According to Billett (1998d), however, although both person and context are considered, the focus in a sociocultural perspective is on the developing individual and how the construction and use of knowledge is shaped by social and cultural factors.

The position in this research may be said to be a middle ground in that a person-context perspective is taken. The starting point is a social cognitive one with a focus on the perceptions and understandings of individuals, and an incorporation of the breadth of research and knowledge about motivation gained from this perspective. It is recognised, however, that all individual activity is situated within multiple, layered and overlapping contexts. These contexts themselves offer affordances and constraints, which shape the nature of the activities and the way the person engages with those
activities. So there is an interest in both the person and in the context, and how together these shape motivation. Although in reality person and context cannot be separated, it is possible to examine each by focusing on different aspects of the person, of the context, and of the relationship between them. The primary focus in this research is the relationship between person and context and how this shapes motivation, as viewed through the lens of the individual person.

Different Theoretical Perspectives and Motivation

Different theoretical perspectives have different views about the nature of motivation, and even within similar perspectives, it has been suggested that “we simply do not agree on the definition and operation of key motivational constructs” (Schunk, 2000, p.116). With changes in the way learning and motivation and similar constructs are conceptualised, the whole field of motivation has been described as “a conceptual mess” (Bong, 1996, p.151) reflecting a lack of precision (Murphy & Alexander, 2000). In other words at present there is "no consensual definition" of motivation (Elliott, 1999, p.143).

Motivation in this Research

The present research takes an “integrative” (Bong, 1996, p.153) or “holistic” (Roeser & Galloway, 2002) approach. A comprehensive model is developed that proposes a way of conceptualising the person-context relationship with regard to motivation. In doing this, terms from both social cognitive and sociocultural perspectives are used.
When combining perspectives, clarity is needed to avoid misunderstandings about concepts and explanations (Lawrence & Dodds, 1997) as even similar terms may have important theoretical differences that underlie them (Bong, 1996; Pintrich, 2000).

How then has motivation been defined and conceptualised in the present research? Motivation is operationalised as an individual’s engagement, involvement and persistence in particular domains, settings and activities. This conceptualisation draws on both social cognitive and sociocultural theoretical perspectives. From a social cognitive perspective, operationalising motivation as engagement, involvement and persistence is consistent with the “traditional behavioural indicators” of motivation: "choice of task, level of engagement or activity in the task, and willingness to persist at the task" (Pintrich et al., 1993, p.168). The participants in the study were selected because they demonstrated these indicators. General texts for educational psychology students could be said to present the currently accepted view of a domain, and such texts contain similar definitions of motivation that include the ideas of initiation, direction and maintenance of behaviour (McInerney & McInerney, 2002; Woolfolk, 2004). The implication is that motivation is relevant at both the beginning and during the learning process, and is revealed in particular actions of individuals that persist over time.

More sociocultural perspectives view an individual as situated within multiple contexts. The situative view "focuses on the ways that social practices provide for the engaged or disengaged participation by members of communities" (Turner, 2001, p.88). From a “stridently sociocultural” viewpoint, learning occurs when individuals
participate in activities, and motivation is viewed as engaged participation (Hickey, 2003). The terms “engagement” and “participation” thus have somewhat different meanings from this viewpoint compared with the social cognitive meanings described above. Individuals are immersed within particular contexts which shape the nature of activities and the way individuals take part in, participate in, or engage in, those activities. The research tends to focus on the social practices and activities in which individuals participate, rather than on intrapersonal characteristics.

Motivation in the present research is operationalised as individual action and the term motivated action has three main components: engagement, involvement and persistence. As each of these terms may have somewhat different meanings within different theoretical viewpoints, for clarification purposes the use of each in this study will be explained in turn. Firstly, motivated action includes the idea of engagement in a quantitative, more social cognitive sense, where an individual initially chooses whether or not to carry out a task or activity. This is generally referred to as “initial engagement” in this dissertation, for example, in Chapter Five where factors contributing to participants’ initial engagement in sport and music are examined.

Secondly, motivated action includes involvement, which reflects a person taking part in tasks and activities associated with a particular domain. It includes a more qualitative understanding because when individuals are taking part in activities, that is, they have already engaged or chosen to be involved, the quality of this involvement can vary. From a social cognitive perspective the interest might be in whether an individual is exerting more or less effort while participating, or whether they are participating, for
example, in order to master new skills or to demonstrate their competence to others (Dweck, 1996). From a sociocultural viewpoint, the interest could be, for example, in whether an individual is involved in legitimate peripheral participation or marginal non-participation (Hickey, 2003). The present research encompasses all these ideas as, for example, the “nature” and “level” of involvement in different communities is examined (Chapter Five).

Finally, in the present research, motivated action encompasses the notion of persistence when activities associated with a domain or setting are carried out over time. This is not just continuing to be involved as time passes, but to maintain involvement more deliberately in the face of distractions or difficulties. This idea is generally discussed more in social cognitive literature in studies of volition (see, for example, Corno, 1993, 1994). The present research examines persistence through the way problems are dealt with by participants (Chapter Nine).

Motivation is not just observable action, however. It is also regarded as a dynamic process in which aspects of persons and of contexts, act reciprocally to shape or contribute to the nature of an individual’s observable participation or motivated action. To avoid any confusion again, it should be noted that the term “shape” is not used in a behaviourist sense where externally applied reinforcement is used to shape behaviour through successive approximations (LeFrançois, 2000). Rather, shaped means that motivation is mutually and reciprocally formed through the influence of “social and cognitive lines of psychological experiences” (Billett, 2001, p.6). This view of motivation is supported by Roeser and Galloway (2002, p.343) who suggested that
motivation "begins to be seen as an emergent property of the relation between the person and the environment, rather than solely a property of the individual." Turner (2001) contended that sociocultural theories of motivation were less well-developed than other views, and one of the aims of this study was to incorporate ideas from more sociocultural perspectives to broaden the conceptualisation of motivation.

THE MODEL OF MOTIVATED ACTION: AN OVERVIEW

One area where different current theoretical perspectives are in agreement is that in order to comprehensively examine constructs such as motivation, consideration is needed of multiple aspects of a situation. Brophy (1999, p.16) reviewed past and present research on motivation and stated that, although motivation is primarily a subjective experience, a complete model of motivation would need to incorporate the learner (with relevant dispositional and more situation specific traits), the social milieu (including supports or pressures) and the learning domain (the specific tasks or activity). In a similar way Tudge and Putnam (1997, p.254) suggested that the sociocultural viewpoint necessitates paying attention to three "interweaving levels of analysis" - the individual, the interpersonal, and the cultural. The Model of Motivated Action developed for this study incorporates all these components. The basic framework of the model was generated conceptually through an examination of six models that graphically represented the relationship between person and context. These models, and their relevance to the study’s conceptualisation of motivation are explained in the following discussion after a brief description of the Model of Motivated Action. Later (Chapter Nine) it will be seen that some changes were made to this model based on the findings of the study. It is presented here, however, in its
original form as this version of the model was developed from existing theory and research (reviewed in Chapter Three), and generated the research questions for the study.

![Figure 2.1: Model of Motivated Action](image)

The Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) has three main components: the context, the person, and the person-context interface or the relationship between person and context. In brief, context is continually being shaped by environmental events over time, and comprises various levels of specificity from broad macrolevels to particular tasks. Similarly, the person, shaped by previous life events and perceptions of these, is
seen to possess some more general stable characteristics and others that are more specific to a situation. The long, vertical arrows indicate that within the context and within the person, these various levels continually interact and shape each other.

The person-context interface, or relationship between person and context (where person and context intersect), is represented by three bidirectional arrows. It is proposed that appraisals, interactions with others, and dealing with problems occur at the person-context interface. Motivated action emerges at this interface, as evidenced by the nature of engagement, involvement and persistence. This motivated action in turn reciprocally shapes the nature of the person and of the context as indicated by the arrow between motivated action and the rest of the model.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODEL
A range of models drawn from various fields informed the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). Models graphically representing the person-context relationship have focused on specific aspects of the individual’s experiences (Järvelä & Järvenoja, 2003), on the relationship between specific variables (Wigfield & Eccles, 2000), or on the complexities of relevant contexts (Bronfenbrenner's model in Sugarman, 1986). Six models were particularly influential in the development of the Model of Motivated Action. These models reflect both social cognitive and sociocultural views of learning and motivation. All emphasise and illustrate particular aspects of the person, of the context, and of the relationship between person and context. All incorporate an active individual, in some cases making ongoing appraisals of context. Some include multiple aspects of the person and of the context, and see these to be in a reciprocal,
dynamic relationship. The models, listed in Figure 2.2, are presented and discussed below in chronological order of publication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key author</th>
<th>Key features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schunk (1989)</td>
<td>Social cognitive perspective; active individuals; reciprocal interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genovese (1991)</td>
<td>Social cognitive perspective; incorporates affect; reciprocal interactions; dynamic view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biggs (Biggs &amp; Moore, 1993)</td>
<td>Social cognitive perspective; multiple factors must be considered; systemic view; reciprocal and dynamic interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boekaerts (1993)</td>
<td>Social cognitive perspective; individuals make appraisals of aspects of context; incorporates emotions and coping strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billett (1998b)</td>
<td>Sociocultural perspective; includes multiple levels of context; importance of individuals’ histories; reciprocal interactions between person and context; knowledge co-constructed through problem-solving at the intersection of person and context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volet (2001b)</td>
<td>Social cognitive and sociocultural perspectives; includes multiple levels of context; multiple levels of individual: stable-responsive; explores person-context interface via appraisals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 2.2: Influential Authors and their Models*

**Schunk**

Schunk’s model (see Appendix A1) is grounded in social cognitive theory which views human functioning as “reciprocal interactions between behaviors, environmental variables, and cognitions and other personal factors” (Schunk, 1989, p.84). The aspect of this model which is especially relevant to the present model is that interactions are reciprocal. For example, not only are student beliefs affected by teacher feedback,
student responses may also lead to the teacher altering the instructional environment. In Figure 2.1 such interactions are conceptualised as occurring at the interface of person and context, with characteristics of the person and of the context relating in a reciprocal, dynamic way.

Genovese

While Schunk’s (1989) model focused on the observable behaviours and cognitions of individuals (in addition to aspects of the immediate learning environment), it did not specifically incorporate emotions. Another early model (see Appendix A2), CABCA (Changing Attitudes and Behaviour in Children and Adolescents) (Genovese, 1991) explicitly included affective aspects of learning. Also taking a social cognitive approach, CABCA postulated “an interactive process between the individual and the environment” (p.1). Genovese proposed that people develop “tracks” where patterns of beliefs and associated affect (emotions or feelings) and behaviour produce certain outcomes from the environment. These outcomes have affective consequences that reinforce the initial beliefs, and so a track develops. Two aspects of this model are relevant to the present model. Firstly, affect is a vital part of the learning process and occurs simultaneously with thinking and acting. Secondly, there is a developmental or dynamic ongoing aspect to the model whereby tracks develop over time and influence future responses to life situations.
Another model taking a social cognitive perspective (see Appendix A3) that highlighted the dynamic and interactive nature of learning was the 3P Model developed by Biggs and colleagues (Biggs, 1996; Biggs & Moore, 1993). In this model learning is seen as a system whereby characteristics of the teaching context and of the student influence each other, as well as the processes and outcomes of learning. Although Biggs’ model related to learning rather than to motivation as such, its representation of complexity informed the present model. The aspects of this model that are most relevant are firstly, that there are multiple factors of both the person and of the environment or context that need consideration, and secondly, that the whole process is interactive, dynamic and ongoing.

Boekaerts

Boekaerts’ (1993) model of adaptable learning also reflected a social cognitive perspective (see Appendix A4). Focusing on classroom contexts, learners were seen to continuously make appraisals of learning activities. Appraisals were conceptualised as “ongoing comparison processes between task or situational demands and personal resources to meet these demands” (p.8). Different appraisals coincided with different emotions. For example, when a threat appraisal was made (demands perceived as greater than resources), there were associated negative emotions such as anger, or anxiety and individuals may decide to avoid the stressful situation or use coping techniques to restore well-being. Boekaerts’ model has been refined over the years (Boekaerts, 2001, 2002a), but consistent features include an individual making
ongoing appraisals of self and context, and the importance of emotions and coping strategies. All these are features incorporated into the Model of Motivated Action.

Similar concepts are included in other models representing the primary, secondary and tertiary appraisals involved in coping (Frydenberg, 1997b), the subjective construal of complex situations (Schwartz, 2002), and environmental appraisals linking environmental affordances and motivational processes (Roeser & Galloway, 2002). In Figure 2.1 appraisals are conceptualised as occurring at the interface of person and context, with characteristics of the person and of the context relating in a reciprocal, dynamic way.

Billett

The work of Billett, taking a sociocultural perspective, has also been influential in developing the present model and he has graphically represented the person-context relationship in a number of publications (see, for example, Billett, 1997, 1998b, 1998c; Billett, 2001). In particular Billett (1998b, p.266) examined the multiple levels of context that contribute to vocational practice (see Appendix A5) and these are similar to the levels of context depicted in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). The most general level of context according to Billett is “historically-derived evolving knowledge”, corresponding to the most general macrolevel of context in Figure 2.1. This level of context interacts reciprocally with sociocultural practice (the domain and type levels of context in Figure 2.1). In Billett’s model this level of context also interacts with the level of community of practice – part of the microlevel in Figure 2.1.
Billett’s model includes individuals’ personal histories. Both the learner and the situation are reciprocally and mutually transformed through engagement in learning activities (Billett, 1998b). In Figure 2.1 this is represented by the arrow linking person and context, and labelled “problems.” In a later paper Billett (2001) proposed that learning, through engagement in problem solving, occurs “at the intersection of the trajectories of the evolving social practice of the particular workplace and individuals’ socially-shaped personal histories or ontogenies” (p.3). Billet’s focus was on the co-construction of workplace knowledge, so the problems referred to were related to everyday tasks in those settings. In the present research, with its focus on motivation, the “problems” are those that relate more to persistence. In Figure 2.1, problem-solving is conceptualised as occurring at the interface of person and context, with characteristics of the person and of the context relating in a reciprocal, dynamic way.

Volet

The final model (see Appendix A6) that played a major role in shaping the model presented in Figure 2.1, was that of Volet (2001b), who represented learning and motivation in context from a “multi-dimensional cognitive-situative perspective” (p.60). Like Billett’s model, Volet’s also included multiple levels of context, from general areas such as the value of education in society and the workplace (the highest level in Figure 2.1) to unique aspects such as a specific task. In addition to teasing out layers of context, Volet also represented various levels of individual learning-related cognition, motivation and emotions, ranging from more stable inclinations to more responsive tendencies, similar to the aspects of “person” in Figure 2.1.
Between the most specific levels of person and context was the dynamic experiential interface where individuals make “appraisals of the current activity in its real life social setting” (Volet, 2001b, p.69). These may result in “congruence”, if there is a match between learners’ and teachers’ perceptions of appropriate learning and motivation, or “ambivalence” and difficulties if a mismatch occurs (p.78). This model therefore incorporated multiple aspects of the person and of the context, as well as exploring the interface between them. These are also features of the model in Figure 2.1, with appraisals conceptualised as occurring at the person-context interface and represented as one of the arrows linking person and context in the model.

KEY FEATURES OF THE MODEL

The Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) has several key features that are similar to the models described in the above discussion. In summary, person and context interrelate in a reciprocal and dynamic way over time as individuals engage in appraisals and problem solving at the person-context interface, and so shape motivated action. Other people are an important aspect of context that is included to a greater or lesser extent in the above models and more explicitly dealt with in this study. Interactions with other people also occur at the person-context interface and shape motivated action. The following discussion highlights the key features of the Model of Motivated Action in more detail and indicates how these are similar to and different from features of the models described above. The discussion is organised around the three major components of the model: the person, the context and the person-context interface.
Multiple Aspects of the Person are Interrelated

All of the models described above, and the Model of Motivated Action, include cognitive aspects of the individual and, as discussed in Chapter One, these have in the recent past been the main focus in research on learning and motivation. Cognitive aspects include more general beliefs about the domain, as well as specific task-related beliefs and knowledge. Similarly, some of the above models include affective aspects of the person and further justification for attending to emotional aspects of learning was provided earlier when outlining the key features of the research (Chapter One). The Model of Motivated Action also incorporates behavioural aspects of the person which also are featured in some of the models discussed. These are considered to be, for example, a knowledge of particular learning or motivational strategies and so could also be seen as procedural knowledge (Bruning, Schraw, Norby, & Ronning, 2004). The focus here is on the interrelatedness of all aspects of the person, but as motivation research has primarily considered cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of the person, physical aspects are discussed separately in a later section.

In Figure 2.1, cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of the person are listed in what could appear a hierarchical manner, but the long bi-directional arrow is intended to indicate that these aspects interact with each other in a reciprocal manner. This illustrates one of the difficulties of representing interactive constructs in a two dimensional model (Frydenberg, 1997b).
The interrelationship of cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of motivation has been demonstrated in a number of research areas. For example, in studies from a goal theory perspective, conceptual and empirical work has linked beliefs about success (cognitions), with interest and enjoyment (affects) and with learning and study strategies (behaviours), and demonstrated that motivational goals may be both dispositional (within an individual) and situational (affected by the immediate learning environment). Research supporting this has been carried out in different contexts such as the academic and sporting domains (see, for example, Ames, 1992; Ames & Ames, 1989; Ames & Archer, 1988; Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Archer, 1992; Blumenfeld, 1992; Butler, 1987; Duda, Chi, Newton, Walling, & Catley, 1995; Duda, Fox, Biddle, & Armstrong, 1991; Kaplan & Patrick, 1996; Koller & Baumert, 1997; Maehr & Anderman, 1993; Meece, 1991; Nicholls, Cheung, Lauer, & Patashnick, 1989; Nolen & Haladya, 1990a, 1990b; Xiang, Lee, & Bennett, 2002).

The study of mental skills training is another area where cognitive, behavioural and affective aspects of the person are seen as being interconnected. When individuals use goal setting, stress management and similar strategies in a holistic way to enhance performance in sport and music, cognitive, behavioural and affective aspects of motivation are seen as interconnected (Bauman, 2000; Gordon, 2002a, 2002b; Hallam, 1997; Smith, Schutz, Smoll, & Ptacek, 1995). Similarly interrelated cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of the person are included in the present model and are seen to be interrelated.
Physical Aspects

Physical aspects of individuals were not specifically mentioned in the models discussed earlier, but with the aim of developing a more holistic view of motivation, are included within the Model of Motivated Action. They are included both in a more general way as part of a person’s general traits and features such as body type, as well as more specific psychomotor abilities. As the domains of interest in this study involve physical skills this is a particularly appropriate aspect to include.

There are some models of learning that do include more physical and physiological characteristics such as gender and biological disposition (Schoon, 2000), neurological structure and functioning (Porter, 1999), and physical health (Office of Youth Affairs, 1993; Santrock, 1996; Schoon, 2000). Research associated with these models has shown the relevance of including such factors in relation to general learning and development. It would seem likely that such factors in themselves, and through an individual’s associated beliefs and emotions about such factors, would be important in considering motivation. As Lemos (2001) stated, individuals function as holistic, total systems and one aim of the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) was to represent them as such.

The Context

Multiple Levels

The model in Figure 2.1 separates context into macrolevels and microlevels. Similar terms (macrosystems and Microsystems) were used by Bronfenbrenner (1976, p.3) who conceptualised the context or environment as comprising a “nested arrangement
of structures, each contained within the next.” Different levels were seen to interact 
over time with each other and with the characteristics of a person, located at the centre 
of the model’s concentric circles. Bronfenbrenner’s broadest level of macrosystems 
reflected the values and priorities of a society and included economic, educational, 
social, political and legal systems. This is represented in Figure 2.1 as the most distal, 
or remote, macrolevel of context. In Figure 2.1 the macrolevel further incorporates 
aspects of context such as domains (in this study sport and music) and types of activity 
(for example hockey, or classical music). Also incorporated into the macrolevel in 
Figure 2.1, as the organisational level, is what Bronfenbrenner referred to as 
exosystems or the major institutions of society.

The second broad level of context in Figure 2.1 is microlevels, a more proximal level 
of context, and the more immediate setting in which the developing person is situated. 
Microlevels, in a sociocultural perspective, comprise activities in which the person 
engages as well as interpersonal relationships between the person and others in that 
setting (Sugarman, 1986; Tudge, Gray, & Hogan, 1997). In this perspective, 
microsystems, such as schools or workplaces, are also known as communities of 
practice, where problem-solving activities occur, and where individual knowledge is 
appropriated (Tudge & Putnam, 1997). Each community of practice has its own norms 
and practices which contribute to individuals’ developing life histories (Billett, 1998b). 
In the Model of Motivated Action, however, larger more complex systems such as 
schools or organisations are regarded as being at a macrolevel of context, with more 
discrete “communities” at the microlevel. These communities generally consist of a
defined group of people, such as a family group, classroom, sporting team or musical ensemble, and include different settings and associated tasks or activities within them.

Although context is conceptualised in a holistic way, in that all aspects are interrelated (represented by a vertical bidirectional arrow), it can be useful to consider particular aspects separately for the purposes of data production or analysis. The way context is conceptualised in the Model of Motivation Action may be further broken down into finer grained levels. In Figure 2.3 the components of context are presented in a more detailed way with examples relating to the domains of sport and music provided although it is acknowledged that individuals also belong to other domains through work and community commitments. Each domain may consist of various types of sport or music genre (individuals may be involved in more than one of these).

Each type or genre has various associated organisations such as the Australian Institute of Sport, or a school offering a specialist music program. These include more specific communities and again an individual may belong to more than one team or ensemble (in addition to other communities such as family or work). Each sporting team or musical ensemble will work together in a number of different settings such as a training or rehearsal situation, and also perform together in a competition or at a concert. Each of these different settings also includes several specific activities or tasks that represent the finest grained level of context in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). The breakdown of the components of context illustrates the multifaceted, complex nature of context and teases out individual components that could shape motivation.
Level of Specificity in Figure 2.1 Examples in this study

Broad Social, Political and Economic Context  e.g. media coverage, popular sports or music types

Domain of expertise  e.g. sport, music

Type of sport or music genre

type 1  type 2  type 3  e.g. cricket, hockey, jazz, popular music

Organisation

organisation 1  organisation 2  organisation 3  e.g. sporting club, institute, school, university

Community

community 1  community 2  community 3  e.g. community team, state team, band, orchestra

Setting

setting 1  setting 2  setting 3  e.g. individual practice, group training competition, rehearsal, concert, recording

Task/Activity

task 1  task 2  task 3  e.g. scales, stretches, drills, pieces

Figure 2.3: Components Analysis of Context
Social and Structural Aspects of Context

Context consists of both social (other people) and material, physical (Gurtner, Monnard, & Genoud, 2001) or structural aspects and both these are included in the consideration of context in this study. Social aspects of context could be seen to include the presence of other people as well as interactions and relationships with them. For example, in a classroom, aspects such as class size as well as teacher-student relationships are important to consider in relation to motivation (Wosnitza & Nenninger, 2001). Social aspects of context are discussed more fully in the next chapter (Chapter Three).

Examples of structural aspects of context included in the Model of Motivated Action are broader organisational structures and resources, and at a more specific level, equipment, activities and tasks. To encompass all such aspects, the term structural rather than physical or material is preferred. Within a social cognitive perspective, individual perceptions of the structure of a setting, including the tasks within it, impact on learning and motivation (see, for example, Wosnitza & Nenninger, 2001), and literature supporting this will be reviewed in detail later (Chapter Three). Physical aspects of the environment are also important from a sociocultural perspective. Tools and signs such as written language and artwork are seen to mediate both social and individual psychological activity and these tools themselves change as learning environments change (Bonk & Kim, 1998; Packer & Goicoechea, 2000). So from both social cognitive and sociocultural perspectives, structural aspects of the environment, and individual perceptions of these, must be considered in a comprehensive model of motivation.
The Person-Context Interface

The Person-Context Interface is Reciprocal and Dynamic

Some of the models described earlier proposed that person and context interrelated in a reciprocal and dynamic way. As Volet (2001b) explained, during learning mutual, reciprocal interactions occur between aspects of persons and contexts, so motivation is an interactive experience with students and environments mutually influencing each other. Therefore motivation is "socially situated, dynamic, interactive and multi-dimensional" (Volet, 2001a, p.328). Contexts also change (Whelan et al., 1995) and situated motivation is unstable (Turner, 2000).

The reciprocal nature of the person-context relationship was also illustrated by Billett (2001). Learning more tacit kinds of workplace knowledge depended upon interactions with more experienced workers, and the opportunities provided in the particular community of practice. But context did not solely shape learning, and ultimately “individuals determine how they engage with the activities and guidance afforded by the workplace (i.e. whether it is full-bodied or superficial engagement)” (p.4). Similarly, Lemos (2001) stressed the need to include subjective perspectives as well as the whole context, because individuals play an active role. Incorporating the dynamic nature of motivation was also important as "the conditions of constancy and change necessarily involve both individual and contextual features, as well as contemporary and past influences" (p.131). If the relationship between person and context is reciprocal and dynamic, the question arises of how aspects of the person and of the context together shape motivation?
In this study, with its focus on motivation, there are three main ways that the person-context relationship is conceptualised and examined. Firstly, individuals make appraisals of aspects of their environment at the interface of person and context. Secondly, individuals interact with people within their social context at the interface of person and context. Thirdly, individuals engage in problem solving at the interface of person and context. Each of these types of interface reflects a coming together, or intersection, of the person and the context.

In the present study the aim was to examine these three types of person-context interface to understand how individual motivation, operationalised as engagement, involvement and persistence, was shaped by appraisals, interactions and problems. Each of these types of person-context interconnection has already been examined to some extent in the literature, although not always with the explicit purpose of understanding the person-context interface or in relation to motivation. In the next chapter (Chapter Three), theory and research examining these three types of interface will be reviewed. This forms a background to the research questions guiding the present study. The three types of interface also are used later to structure the results chapters (Chapters Five to Eight) of this dissertation.
Chapter Three
The Person-Context Interface: Literature Review and Research Questions

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER
The purpose of this chapter is to show the development of the research questions for this study. This is achieved by reviewing literature related to motivation and the three types of person-context interface identified in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1): perceptions and appraisals, social interactions and relationships, and dealing with problems. As previously explained, the way motivation is conceptualised in the present study has borrowed from both social cognitive and sociocultural views of learning and motivation. One of the features of the research is that it goes beyond the academic domain. Similarly, the literature reviewed is drawn from social cognitive, sociocultural and other theoretical perspectives, and research examples are included from various domains. The aim is to take a holistic approach and to build on available knowledge to develop a deeper understanding of motivation.

The literature review is structured around the three types of interface of interest. The literature relating to perceptions and appraisals and motivation is discussed first and is organised around the macrolevels and microlevels of context illustrated in Figure 2.1. Secondly, the literature relating to social interactions and relationships and motivation
is discussed, and this is organised around the different roles played by others with regard to motivation. Thirdly, the literature relating to dealing with problems and motivation is discussed. This is organised around the different bodies of research relating to strategies used when dealing with problems: cognitive, motivational and volitional, self-regulatory, and coping strategies. The chapter concludes with a statement of the research questions developed as a result of the literature review. These also are organised around the three types of interface: appraisals, interactions and problems.

PERCEPTIONS, APPRAISALS AND MOTIVATION

Importance of Perceptions and Appraisals

The first type of person and context interface considered is when individuals perceive and make appraisals of aspects of their environment. Such perceptions and appraisals are seen to occur at the interface of person and context. Research examining the perceptions individuals have of certain aspects of their environment reveals a number of important points. Firstly, individuals make appraisals of different levels of context. Secondly, perceptions are affected by unique characteristics of individuals such as beliefs and prior experiences. These first two findings are evident in studies that take a social cognitive perspective on motivation where the focus is on individual constructs. Thirdly, an important finding, derived from a sociocultural perspective, is that contexts offer affordances and constraints to individuals. The following discussion illustrates each of these findings with examples drawn from motivation literature in academic, sporting and music domains.
Appraisals of Multiple Levels of Contexts

Recent research has considered how individual motivation is affected by perceptions of various contextual factors, and has indicated the need to simultaneously consider multiple levels of context. For example, MacCallum (2001b) suggested that schools need to take account of more levels of context at the same time because broad school policies, curriculum issues in different subject areas, and relationships among students and between teachers and students are all important. As different studies tend to focus on a particular level of context, the macrolevels and microlevels of context represented in Figure 2.1 are used below as a way of grouping research findings about perceptions, appraisals and motivation.

Appraisals of Macrolevels of Context

Macrolevels in this study refer to general social or cultural factors, domains, types of endeavour, and organisational systems (see Figure 2.1), and the way these are structured and perceived affects individual motivation. An example of research that includes the macrolevel of broader cultural context is that of Volet (2001b) whose model was influential in the development of the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). In her research international students from Singapore and Hong Kong experienced congruence when their learning practices were perceived as appropriate in the different Australian university context. Students whose practices were perceived by themselves and teachers as being inappropriate, experienced ambivalence, difficulty or incongruence, indicating the importance of considering broader cultural factors as well as more proximal factors when examining motivation to learn.
Recent debate in the music domain centres around the relative influence of innate biological factors and the immediate, microlevel of context (Howe, Davidson, & Sloboda, 1998), but there is also evidence that broader cultural factors are important in the nature of involvement in music. For example, Sloboda, Davidson and Howe (1994) found that the concept of being “non musical” did not exist in Nigerian culture. Davidson (1997, p.211) described how “the perceptual experience and production of works has changed as a result of emerging cultural values and practices: there is an interaction between the past and present.” Davidson also discussed how different broad cultures and sub-cultures within Western society can involve different musical etiquette on the part of performers and audiences. So perceived cultural factors, at the macrolevel of context, shape the nature of involvement in various domains.

Goal theory research discussed earlier (see Chapter Two) has shown the importance of student perceptions of organisational aspects of schools (see, for example, Maehr & Midgley, 1991). Other examples of the relationship of macrolevels of context and motivation are differences in aspects of individual motivation between academic and sporting domains (Duda & Nicholls, 1992), between different types of sports (Halvari & Thomassen, 1997), and between different competitive and recreational sporting leagues (Ryska & Yin, 1999).

Appraisals of Microlevels of Context

Microlevels of context in this study refer to communities, settings and specific tasks or activities (See Figure 2.1). For convenience, the research relating to microlevels of
context is divided into the level on which the research appears to mainly focus: community, setting or task.

**Community**

In a school setting a community, as conceptualised in Figure 2.3, would refer to classrooms. Different classrooms, in middle and secondary schools in particular, are often linked to different subject areas and so also reflect higher levels of context - the type level in Figure 2.1. Turner (2000), taking a sociocultural perspective, highlighted the need to study motivation in classroom contexts as each content area has different ways of knowing and different instructional practices. Because contexts vary, researchers need to pay attention to the varying interpretations students make of their different classrooms. These then shape how students' learning and motivation develop.

The importance of perceptions of the immediate environment in relation to involvement and persistence is also evident from research findings in the domains of sport (see, for example, Steinberg, Singer, & Murphey, 2000) and music (see, for example, Kennedy, 2002).

One example of motivation research from a social cognitive perspective at the community level of context is on classroom goal structures. Teachers, through the way they manage various aspects of their classroom, are perceived to create mastery or performance oriented learning environments. At a more macrolevel of context, organisations such as schools may also create such environments (Ryska & Yin, 1999). Similar findings have emerged across a number of different domains. When classroom teachers or team coaches are perceived to emphasise mastery rather than
performance goals, their students are more likely to themselves adopt mastery goals and show, for example, greater persistence in various activities. This finding is consistent across classrooms (Meece, 1991; Nolen & Haladyna, 1990b), for coaches in sport (Kavussanu & Roberts, 1996; Seifriz, Duda, & Chi, 1992), and for teachers of music (Keele University, 2001).

Setting

Boekaert’s work is included here because, although situated in classrooms, her studies focus on appraisal of particular settings. Her work also contributed to the development of the Model of Motivated Action (see Figure 2.1). She suggested that more attention needs to be paid to both the immediate context where students make appraisals and experience emotions, and also to the current concerns that impact on their learning and motivation (Boekaerts, 2001). Researchers need to address context sensitivity and "the complex interactions between personal variables and subject-matter domains" (p.20). Her recent studies (see, for example, Boekaerts, 2002a, 2002c, 2003) have explored the links between aspects of the learning situation, students’ motivational goals, and the strategies used to attain learning goals – or the decision to pursue alternative goals. It is important to highlight then that context does not merely act on an individual in a unidirectional manner; rather motivation changes as a result of students appraising learning situations (Boekaerts, 2001). Subjective perceptions of the same environment can be different for different individuals. This point is discussed further in a later section of this chapter.
The task level is the most specific microlevel of context and various scholars have examined perceptions of task characteristics and the impact of these on the nature of involvement. One example of research illustrating the importance of the activity or task level of context comes from research based around Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory. Flow is described as "a sense of exhilaration, energy and fulfilment that is more enjoyable than what people feel in the normal course of life" (1988, p.29). Although motivation is essentially determined by individual needs and the focus is on the subjective experience of individuals, the availability of particular types of activities is crucial. Flow activities, where people achieve optimal experiences, require a challenging level of activity in relation to an individual's current level of skill. Activities also need to be within the control of the person and must not be trivial (Mitchell, 1988). In educational settings, flow theory suggests that teachers should use a variety of teaching strategies, that novel and interesting tasks be developed, that students be allowed to make decisions about the instructional process, and that cooperative learning techniques be employed (Nichols, 1995) in order to maximise engagement. Interestingly, although coming from a different theoretical and research base, these suggestions are very similar to those derived from the TARGET framework (task, authority, recognition, grouping, evaluation and time) used by Epstein (1989), Maehr and Midgley (1991), and others.

Another example of research examining perceptions of the task level of context is a series of studies by Ainley and colleagues (see, for example, Ainley, 2002; Ainley, Corrigan, & Richardson, 2003; Ainley & Hidi, 2002) who examined individuals’
perceptions of interest in computer-based tasks, and their decisions about whether or not to engage with and persist with the tasks. They examined how features of tasks interact with other variables to contribute to decisions about initial engagement and the nature of involvement. A final example of the importance of perceptions at this level of context comes from the domain of music. The way choral rehearsals are structured in terms of the particular tasks used (providing an interesting, challenging but attainable repertoire) impacts on students’ motivation to persist (Stamer, 1999).

Perceptions are Affected by Unique Characteristics of Individuals

In addition to individual perceptions being affected by aspects of different levels of context, perceptions are also affected by unique characteristics of individuals. Students appraise learning situations through selectively attending to or ignoring environmental cues and their motivation changes as a result of such appraisals (Boekaerts, 2001). The relevant point here is that there are differences in appraisals between individuals within the same contexts. For example, in the academic domain, MacCallum (2001a; 2001b) found that students with different personal motivational goals attended to different aspects of the environment. There were differences in perceptions of different contexts at the institutional level (primary and secondary school), at the domain level (mathematics and writing), and at the specific classroom level (community) where the teachers and other students were perceived differently depending on the goals individuals had expressed. Perceptions were also related to other contexts, such as the family, within which the student lived.
An example in the sporting domain of the differences between individuals when perceiving aspects of the context was given by Coppel (1995), who discussed athletes’ motivational responses to media coverage of their personal relationships. For some athletes, it is “extremely distracting, disorienting (the focus is not on athletic performance as they are used to), and intrusive.” For other athletes, media coverage might “increase focusing efforts to a higher level” (p.196). In the music domain, the nature of involvement in individual practice may differ not only with contextual factors such as the characteristics of the instrument and the nature of parental and teacher support, but also on the level of expertise of the individual (Hallam, 1997). Reviewing studies about practice in music from different paradigms and using different methodologies, Hallam concluded that: “The level of individuality in learning far exceeds anything conceived within the psychometric tradition” (p. 218).

It is beyond the scope of this review to discuss the many features of individuals that might determine the different ways they perceive different features of their environments. The point being made is that there are variations between individuals and that these differing perceptions must be considered in order to gain a full understanding of motivation. This has had an impact on the methodologies used to examine motivation. Studies examining motivation have consistently used self-reports "as it is argued motivation is based on reality as perceived by the students" (MacCallum, 2001b, p.166). The starting point, as MacCallum and others (for example Brophy, 1999) have suggested, must be the subjective meaning of the self in a particular situation, as well as the subjective meaning of that situation to the
individual. Therefore this study aimed to understand the perceptions of various individuals.

Contexts Offer Affordances and Constraints

From a sociocultural perspective, the social and physical aspects of an environment “are ultimately responsible for scaffolding the learner's participation in inquiry and learning” (Hickey & McCaslin, 2001, p.43). Person and context are seen to interact with individuals operating "through attunements to constraints and affordances" (Packer & Goicoechea, 2000, p.230). Hickey and McCaslin (2001) stated that knowledgeable individuals have "become familiar with (i.e., attuned to) the constraints and affordances that simultaneously bound and scaffold successful participation. Knowledgeable individuals use the physical and social tools that maximise successful participation and overcome the limitations of the mind" (p.41).

Billett (2001) used Gibson’s 1969 term of “affordances” to explain how an individual’s participation at work was shaped by the affordances or invitational qualities of the workplace. Brophy (1999) also used this term and said that learning situations involve affordances such as experiencing satisfaction or obtaining rewards. In this view, motivation is an interactive experience "depending on the influences of students and their environments on each other, although different students will make different contributions and may also have different interpretations of the context" (Turner, 2001, p.90). So although the starting point here is the context, whether qualities are perceived as “invitational”, or whether “satisfaction” is experienced,
depends on the interpretation made by an individual of certain aspects of the context. Such perceptions or interpretations seem similar to the concept of appraisals. Different individuals could have different experiences, different interpretations or appraisals, and so engage with their context in different ways.

Summary of Research Regarding Perceptions and Appraisals and Motivation

Theory and research relating to multiple levels of context suggests that all levels from the broadest, macrolevel of culture to the finest microlevel of task are crucial in shaping an individual’s motivation. From a social cognitive perspective it is the individual’s perceptions and active appraisals of context that are the focus of research, and the nature of such appraisals is affected by various characteristics of the individual making the appraisal. From a sociocultural viewpoint the community, setting and tasks are seen to be the most salient in relation to the nature of participation. Both theoretical perspectives include the person and the context, but the research focus is different. By considering theory and research from both perspectives, a more complete understanding of motivation may be gained.

Individuals make appraisals of both physical and social aspects of the context that provide affordances (positive) or constraints (negative) with regard to participation or motivated action. The need to consider both positive and negative aspects of the context is highlighted in the later discussion of social interactions. Individual appraisals of multiple levels of context occur at the interface of the context and the person, and shape the nature of motivation.
The second type of interrelationship between person and context occurs when an individual interacts with and forms relationships with people within their social context. Such interactions occur at the person-context interface. In this type of interface the focus is on the social context rather than the physical or material context. As the term suggests, relationships are reciprocal. From a social cognitive perspective, however, an interaction such as observing or reading about a celebrity may impact on an individual’s motivation without any actual face-to-face interaction or personal relationship developing. So the term *interaction* is generally used, with the understanding that a reciprocal *relationship* may or may not develop.

Conceptualising social interactions as an example of person-context interface may assist in the clarification of the person-context relationship - an endeavour Valsiner and Van Der Veer (2000) suggested has been around for a long time. From the perspective of these authors the crucial question is: "How to construe persons as being social without abandoning their obvious personal autonomy, separateness from any social unit (group, crowd, community), while being members of such units?" (p.6). Other people are a crucial component of the social contexts within which individuals participate. Yet individuals also choose to engage in relationships and contribute to their success or otherwise. Examining social interactions may assist in understanding how aspects of the person and of the context intersect to shape engagement, involvement and persistence - the motivated action in Figure 2.1.
Individuals exist within a variety of communities such as the formal learning settings of classrooms, sporting teams and musical ensembles, and less formal ones such as peer groups, families and friends. Other people are a crucial element of these and play a variety of roles such as teachers, coaches, teammates, friends or parents. Other people also fulfill certain functions. For example, they may provide emotional support and nurturance; they may form sources of information relating to one’s self, or to the expectations and values of others; or they may provide information on how to accomplish specific tasks (Wentzel, 1996a).

A holistic examination of motivation needs to include a comprehensive consideration of the role of relationships with others. The following review of literature relating to the importance and nature of social interactions with regard to motivation therefore draws on different theoretical perspectives and on research from different domains such as the community, education, sport and music. A more detailed account of these different roles and theoretical views may be found elsewhere (MacCallum & Beltman, 2002). The following discussion is organised around the different roles others are seen to play with regard to motivation. Then research is reviewed that suggests that social relationships may be positive or negative, and they are dynamic.

Different Roles Played by Others

Providing Feedback

An important role that other people play from a social cognitive perspective is that of providing feedback. When teachers and others give timely, self-referenced feedback
linking effort and improvement, positive motivational outcomes are likely to result. When feedback is other-referenced or linked to lack of ability this may lead to a low perception of personal competence, learned helplessness and increased anxiety. This finding is consistent across domains and includes the role of feedback from classroom teachers in schools (Brophy, 1987; Elliott & Dweck, 1988), from support staff and coaches in sport (Amorose & Weiss, 1998; Schinke & da Costa, 2001), and from music teachers (Stamer, 1999).

Not only do teachers and coaches play an important role in providing direct feedback, they can also intentionally or unintentionally, along with parents and peers, represent sources of information that individuals use to make judgments about their competence. Perceived competence is an important construct in relation to motivation as "individuals who have high perceptions of their ability in a particular achievement domain will be more motivated to participate in activities in that domain, will work hard to achieve competence, and will enjoy their participation" (Horn & Amorose, 1998, p.49). The sources of feedback and the perceived nature of that feedback have a significant effect on perceptions of competence and subsequent involvement.

**Modelling**

The notion of modelling features prominently in social cognitive perspectives where others act as models, and provide feedback and reinforcement (Zimmerman, 1998). The degree of perceived similarity between the model and the observer (e.g. in gender, study area, background) is particularly important. The more salient the models, the more effective they are believed to be. As Lockwood and Kunda (1997, p.98) found,
“a role model whose achievements seem attainable can help individuals develop their goals in more practical, task-oriented ways.” This is even more important when an individual holds doubt about his or her own ability to perform well (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1996).

Teachers, parents, more capable peers, experts and celebrities can demonstrate skills and values and can give inspiration to engage in and persist in activities as well as provide a “blueprint” for how to achieve success. A negative effect on persistence may occur, however, if the task seems unachievable or if the role model does not value education or other areas considered to be important to mainstream society. Research supporting the importance of modelling in relation to the nature of involvement in activities exists in the domains of education (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997, 1999; Ryan, 2000; Schunk, 1989; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1996), sport (McCullagh, 1993; Weiss, McCullagh, Smith, & Berlant, 1998), and music as illustrated in studies conducted by Hallam (1997) and at Keele University (2001).

**Providing Social and Emotional Support**

Relationships with others are seen to be important from theoretical perspectives that focus on affective aspects of learning. For example, relatedness refers to “the interpersonal attachments and bonds developed between individuals, and is based on a fundamental striving for contact and alliance with others, enhancing the well-being of all involved” (Hymel, Comfort, Schonert-Reichl, & McDougall, 1996, p.317). The concepts of affiliative motivation (Barry & King, 1998) and social motivation (Wentzel, 1996a) along with research examining the development of resilience in
children and adults (Resnick et al., 1993; Zubrick et al., 1995), reiterate the importance of feelings of caring and connectedness developed through relationships with significant others. Research which examines social networks between adults and young people and between young people and their peers, suggests that relationships may provide social support which can prevent or alleviate the negative effects of stress (Jacobi, 1991; MacCallum & Beltman, 1999). Peer relationships are seen by some as “the primary context for the social and emotional growth of the individual, because it is within these relationships that students develop the concepts of co-operation, mutual respect, and interpersonal sensitivity, and experience companionship, intimacy, and affection” (Jordan & LeMétais, 2000, p.11).

Social, emotional and practical support can be provided by a range of others such as parents, teachers, coaches, support staff, fellow team members and peers. Lack of such supports can lead to lack of involvement and of persistence. Once again consistent findings emerge across the domains of education (Gottlieb & Sylvestre, 1996; Withers & Russell, 2001), sport (Bianco, 2001; Evans & Hardy, 2002; Patrick et al., 1999; Prochaska, Rodgers, & Sallis, 2002; Schinke & Tabakman, 2001), and music (Chadwick, 2000; Davidson et al., 1997). Bloom’s study reported that successful individuals developed feelings of conviction and self-trust in “the context of supportive and encouraging adults who often had confidence in them before they had confidence in themselves” (Sosniak, 1985b, p.501). The issue of social support will be discussed again later when considering coping strategies.
Guiding and Scaffolding

In sociocultural perspectives “individuals construct meaning for themselves but within the context of interaction with others” (Kerka, 1998, p.2). Experts or more able others assist learners by jointly solving problems or guiding learning. Scaffolds or aids are gradually withdrawn until the learner is able to independently perform an action or use a cultural tool such as language; that is, the new knowledge has been internalised or appropriated. Peers are also important. For example, when interacting within each others’ zones of proximal development, peers are in the process of “negotiating and sharing culture, and in the process of making it their own, of joint culture creating” (Renshaw, 1992, p.4). For cultural practices to be shared, there is a need for “authentic, experiential learning opportunities as well as an intense interpersonal relationship through which social learning takes place” (Kerka, 1998, p.2).

Therefore from sociocultural perspectives guided practice, scaffolded by more capable others and occurring in authentic social situations, enables the skills and norms of particular communities of practice to be appropriated. Motivation is shaped through such guiding and scaffolding. Less research has been conducted from this perspective but once again there are findings that support this view of motivation in education contexts (Nolen, 2001; Turner, 2000), in workplace contexts (Billett & Rose, 1997), in sport (Gould, Greenleaf, Chung, & Guinan, 2002; Whelan et al., 1995), and in music (Davidson, 1997; O’Neill, 1997).
Other Roles

The above roles described are those most commonly encountered in the psychological and educational literature, but there are other roles or functions played by significant people in the lives of individuals. For example, other people have provided inspiration (Sosniak, 1985b). One study of young people categorised roles played by unrelated adults as mentor, supporter, companion, dependent, antagonist, and challenger, and also found that parents teach, challenge and provide a set of admired values (Hamilton & Darling, 1989). Other roles have been categorised as challenger, controller-antagonist and pal-companion (Scales & Gibbons, 1996). Although personal and practical support were the most common functions reported by young people with regard to VIPs (Very Important Person apart from parents), VIPs also offered companionship and fun (Greenberger et al., 1998). Simply doing things together with someone with similar interests was one important role reported by male university students recollecting significant adults in their lives (Galbo & Mayer Demetrulias, 1996). Research on child and adolescent friendships indicates that having quality relationships with both best friends and a wider peer network is important in life in general (Kindermann, McCollam, & Ellsworth, 1996) and in sport (Weiss et al., 1996). Spectators and audiences, although not discussed in this review, are also important in the domains of sport and music and research regarding this particular social group will be reviewed in a later chapter (Chapter Eight). In conclusion, a range of other people may perform many different functions in relation to engagement, involvement and persistence in a number of areas.
Positive and Negative Outcomes of Social Interactions

Roles described above generally focused on the positive motivational outcomes of social interactions with others. The role others play in motivation can also become negative if, for example, they stress performance goals, model negative attitudes to learning, or do not provide social, emotional and practical support. Working with peers is not necessarily helpful and may enhance or impede student learning (McCaslin, 2004). Other people may be involved in risk factors affecting young people’s participation in education. These include permissive or over-protective parents, high parental or sibling conflict, antisocial parental values or behaviours, minimal interaction at school between teachers and peers, teachers’ lack of respect for or understanding of students, and lack of staff to provide counselling or academic support (Withers & Russell, 2001). In addition: “A growing body of literature indicates that problematic peer relationships in childhood and adolescence are predictive of both academic and behavioral problems at school” (Kupersmidt, Buchele, Voegler, & Sedikides, 1996, p.66).

Even when the intention of an intervention is to encourage appropriate values and behaviours, the effect on individuals may be unintentionally negative. For example, it is generally assumed that observing successful others will motivate individuals to achieve similar success. When considering the influences of high achievers or “superstars”, however, Lockwood & Kunda (1997, p.91) made the point that “superstars can demoralize and deflate less outstanding others.” For example, an athlete or musician may compare him or herself unfavourably with a more skilled or more successful peer or adult and so believe themselves to be less likely to achieve
success. The standards set by an expert may be perceived as being too high, or the
distance between one’s own performance and that of a model may be perceived as
being too great for the achievement of similar success (Marqusee, 1995).

Similarly, programs designed to use other people to assist young people may actually
be ineffective or harmful (Withers & Russell, 2001). This is an issue not often dealt
with in the literature and these authors reviewed programs which, although designed to
promote resilience in young people, have actually been counterproductive. For
example, programs offering gang members educational or recreational activities
increased contact with core gang members and so reinforced the negative behaviours
of high-risk peers. In mentoring programs, a breakdown in the mentor-mentee
relationship may be harmful for young people already at risk because they lack
supportive relationships with adults (Rhodes, 2002; Struchen & Porta, 1997).

Interactions with others occur at the interface of person and context, and this study
aims to examine how these shape motivation in both positive and negative ways.

Social Relationships are Dynamic

Another important aspect of social interactions and relationships is that they are
dynamic and the role of others can change over time. For example, in Bloom’s
(1985c) study, common phases of development in talented young people were
identified, with each phase having different implications for the characteristics of
others who would be influential as well as for the nature of their influence (Sosniak,
These phases were linked to the development of expertise rather than age and were found to be common across the various domains included in the research. The phases were called initiation, development and perfection, and the role of the teacher or coach changed in each phase. In all three phases parents played a supportive role, which varied over time, and could include seeking appropriate teachers and mentors, providing financial and emotional resources, and sharing in the excitement of their son or daughter’s progress.

A range of literature supports the dynamic nature of the roles of others and their relationships with particular individuals. The common idea, consistent with various theoretical perspectives, is that with increasing age or expertise of the individual, the other person needs to gradually withdraw support and encourage autonomy: “For all the dedication of their coaches and parents, eventually the athletes have to do this work by themselves and for themselves” (Sosniak, 1985b, p.436). The mentoring literature, often taking a humanist perspective, also suggests handing over responsibility and encouraging autonomy as an important final stage in mentoring relationships (Mentoring Works, 1999; Pascarelli, 1998). In a sociocultural perspective knowledge becomes internalised or appropriated as the more able other gradually removes scaffolds (Kerka, 1998). Similarly from a social cognitive perspective Schunk and Zimmerman (1996) emphasised that adults must gradually fade social and instructional supports and encourage students to work on tasks on their own. The authors proposed that academic competence develops from social sources of academic skill and shifts to self-sources (see Table 3.1).
Table 3.1: A Social Cognitive Analysis of Primary Influences on Students’ Self-Regulatory Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>levels of development</th>
<th>social influences</th>
<th>self-influences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>observational</td>
<td>modeling, verbal description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imitative</td>
<td>social guidance, feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-controlled</td>
<td>internal standards, self-reinforcement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>self-regulated</td>
<td>self-regulatory processes, self-efficacy beliefs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: from Schunk & Zimmerman (1996, p.155, Table 7.1).

With greater levels of expertise, individuals are more able to manage their own learning, although others still play an important role. For example, Zimmerman (1998) stated that "socially self-regulated students are aware of how study partners, coaches, or instructors can help or hinder their learning, and they can be readily identified by their sensitivity and resourcefulness in seeking help” (p.75). Such learners respond to social support in a confident and selective way. Boekaerts (1997) suggested that with regard to both cognitive and motivational aspects of learning, students who have naïve models of motivation strategies “must rely on external regulation to sustain their motivation” (p167). Self-regulated learners may still seek assistance, but do so in an “adaptive” way to maintain their autonomy (Karabenick, 2003, p.37). These final points are also relevant to the later discussion regarding the use of strategies such as social support.

Summary of Research Regarding Social Interactions and Relationships

To summarise the literature reviewed above, many different people may perform a variety of different functions in relation to motivation and learning. For example,
parents can model values and provide financial, practical and emotional support. Teachers and coaches can model and demonstrate skills and values and also offer emotional support. Peers may also fulfill these roles as well as providing fun and companionship. These findings are consistent across different domains such as classrooms, communities, sport and music. There is also research that suggests that there are negative aspects of social interactions and relationships. People of importance and the nature of their roles can also change over time for a particular individual.

Most of the above research focuses on a limited range of particular others or on a specific context such as teachers or peers in classrooms, parents or peers in the community, or parents, teachers or coaches in sport and music. There are some exceptions to this. For example, as already discussed, Bloom’s study considered the role of parents, teachers and coaches across domains. Another example taking a broader approach was when Greenberger et al. (1998) asked 11th graders about VIPs (Very Important Persons), or significant adults in their lives and fifteen categories emerged. Such exceptions tend to use a grounded approach with categories emerging from data gathered in relation to real world settings rather than within formal institutions (see also Bø, 1996; Gottlieb & Sylvestre, 1996; Philip & Hendry, 1996).

In view of these diverse findings, one of the aims of the present study is to consider both the range of other people who might be significant in an individual’s engagement, involvement and persistence, and the range of positive and negative roles or functions played by those people. Adopting a broader perspective allows interactions with a
variety of others in a variety of contexts to be examined with regard to how they shape motivation in positive and negative ways. Such interactions occur at the interface of person and context.

PROBLEMS AND MOTIVATION

Importance of Problems

The third type of the person-context interface that can assist in understanding the relationship between person and context is when individuals use particular strategies to deal with, manage and solve problems within their immediate context. As discussed in Chapter Two when explaining the development of the Model of Motivated Action, Billett (2001) suggested that learning occurred at the “intersection” of person and context as individuals engaged in everyday problem solving in the workplace. It seemed that this idea could be applied to motivation. That is what could be termed motivational problem solving occurs at the person-context interface. Examples of such problems could be facing challenging activities or tasks, difficult situations involving other people, or the inability to engage in tasks because of factors such as personal injury or environmental constraints. Encountering such problems and making decisions about how to deal with them would have implications for whether individuals persisted in that situation. Little research has focused on the extent and nature of such problems, but rather the focus has been from a social cognitive perspective on the perceptions and strategy use of the individual. The present research aims to examine both problems encountered and strategies used to deal with them.
Motivation in the present research is conceptualised as an individual’s engagement, involvement and persistence in particular domains, settings and activities. These are shaped both by characteristics of that person and of the contexts in which that individual acts. Incorporating persistence, or volition, within motivation implies that having particular motivational beliefs about one’s abilities or about a task is not necessarily enough to ensure ongoing involvement over time. Individuals must continue to learn and develop skills, they must persist at tasks even when difficulties or distractions are encountered, and they must find ways of dealing with associated emotions such as anxiety or frustration. The link between motivation and volition was described by Corno (1993) who maintained that motivational factors are those that help determine goals, whereas volition's primary role is in the management and implementation of goals: “Volition can be characterized as a dynamic system of psychological control processes that protect concentration and directed effort in the face of personal and/or environmental distraction, and so aid learning and performance” (p.16). So as individuals encounter distractions, difficulties or problems, in order to persist, or maintain their motivation, the implementation of volitional processes is required. In this research, such volitional strategies are incorporated within the broad term of motivational strategies.

There is a wide body of research relating to the use of motivational and volitional strategies and these are also sometimes encompassed within studies of self-regulation. Studies of coping strategies are also represented in the literature and all the above types of strategies have been examined within education, community, sporting and music settings. The classification of different types of strategies outlined above is
used to structure the following review of research, although to some extent the
distinctions are arbitrary and there is overlap between the different categories. The
term motivation is used in this research in a holistic way that includes persistence, and
the understanding of what constitutes motivational strategies is also understood in a
broad, comprehensive way. Therefore in this study the term “motivational strategies”
includes what are generally called motivational and volitional strategies, as well as
self-regulatory strategies and coping strategies.

Review of Research Regarding Different Types of Strategies

*Motivational and Volitional Strategies*

As explained above, the term motivational strategy encompasses volitional strategies
which may be categorised in different ways. For example, Corno (1994) suggested
two categories. Motivational control strategies are those which act to enhance or
strengthen an individual’s motivational goals such as: setting self-rewards or penalties,
visualising doing work successfully, finding ways to make the work more fun or
challenging, or self-instructing. A second group of volitional strategies refers to
emotion control strategies. These are used to manage emotional states, such as
feelings of inadequacy, anxiety, or other emotions tied to past experiences that might
inhibit or disrupt action. Such strategies could include controlling breathing,
visualising doing work successfully, and recalling strengths and available resources.

Research in the domain of sport extensively discusses the nature and use of
motivational (including volitional) strategies. An example of the importance with
which they are regarded is their prominence in sport psychology texts (see, for example, Anshel, 1994; Clews, 1996). Strategies include goal setting, relaxation, positive self-talk, creating confidence, appropriate direction of attention, arousal regulation, concentrating and staying focused, the use of mental imagery, and making accurate attributions. Another important aspect of the use of motivational strategies in sport psychology is the intense individualisation of the use of such strategies, particularly with regard to maximising the potential of elite athletes (Gordon, 2002b; Humara, 1999). Few direct discussions of the use of motivational strategies by musicians were located. Rather, the discussion focused on strategies teachers and others could use to motivate students although a study by Lund and Kranz (1994) is an exception to this, and they reported musicians using strategies such as meditation, self-hypnosis, self-talk, creating diversions and developing rapport with colleagues.

**Self-Regulatory Strategies**

Motivational and volitional strategies have a prominent place in the construct of self-regulation. According to Schunk and Zimmerman (1996, p.154), self-regulation “refers to processes students use to activate and sustain cognitions, behaviors, and affects, which are oriented toward the attainment of goals.” Self-regulated learners are proactive and show personal initiative, resourcefulness, persistence, a sense of responsibility and are self-motivated (Zimmerman, 1998). In order to maximise their learning outcomes, self-regulated learners use a range of strategies that may be categorised in various ways. One distinction is that made between cognitive, metacognitive and resource management strategies (Pintrich & Garcia, 1991). Some categorisation systems distinguish between cognitive and motivational strategies with
volitional strategies considered part of the latter (Zimmerman, 1998), and others distinguish between strategies relating to task, to self and to the environment (Styles, Beltman, & Radloff, 2001).

The relationship between motivational and volitional strategies and self-regulation is not clear in the literature and has been conceived in various ways. For example, Corno (1994, p.230) discussed the idea that volition is a central aspect of self-regulated learning which "reflects students' deliberate use of higher level strategies to direct and control their concentration on academic tasks; subsets of these strategies are volitional." Boekaerts (1997) proposed a model in which cognitive and motivational (including action control or volitional strategies) aspects of self-regulation were linked, and discussed some ways these links may operate. The definition and position of different strategies in the above taxonomies varies, but across the taxonomies there are some commonalities. Self-regulated learners have knowledge of a range of strategies. They are able to apply these strategies appropriately to their learning environment and to the task at hand, in order to maximise their learning outcomes. Finally, self-regulated learners are metacognitive. They are able to plan and monitor their learning, using experience and feedback to adapt to differing circumstances and requirements.

The research findings about self-regulatory and volitional strategies come from a social cognitive perspective and the whole notion of self-regulation has been critiqued as coming from a Western cultural tradition that focuses on the self, whereas: "Seen from a more collectivist perspective, communal regulation recognizes that individuals self-regulate and monitor their actions within a network of socially mediated factors,
such as family, organizational, and group-based needs, goals, and desires." (Jackson et al., 2000, p.276). Similarly, the idea of co-regulation, from a sociocultural perspective, focuses on “relationships, social supports, opportunity, and emergent interactions that empower the individual to seek new challenges” within scaffolded learning environments (Hickey & McCaslin, 2001, p.48). When seeking to combine perspectives, the view in this research is similar to that expressed by Wigfield et al (1998) who said that crucial aspects in co-regulation include opportunities made available in classrooms, the kinds of tasks presented and the degree of choice within these, as well as students’ own goals and self-evaluations. An examination of strategies in isolation is inappropriate as aspects of the person and of the context work together and the importance of the social nature of learning, as already discussed, is stressed.

Coping Strategies

The final body of literature that has informed the view of strategies held in the present study is that relating to coping strategies. Again it is not the intention to provide a complete review of this literature here (see Frydenberg, 1997a for a comprehensive discussion), but rather to indicate the major ways studies of coping strategies relates to the conceptual background to this study. Most importantly, the examination of coping has been explicitly seen as “a conceptual framework or heuristic device that allows us to explore the relationships between persons and their environment” (Frydenberg, 2002b, p.220). Frydenberg based her work on the transactional model of Lazarus which “views the person and the environment in a dynamic, mutually reciprocal, bi-
directional relationship” (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, p.293). In other words person and context are in a reciprocal relationship with each shaping the other.

Another interesting feature of the coping literature from the viewpoint of the present study, is that coping takes a holistic view of the person as it explicitly includes cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of individuals as illustrated by the following definition: “Coping is made up of the responses (thoughts, feelings and actions) that an individual uses to deal with the problematic situations that are encountered in everyday life and in particular circumstances” (Frydenberg, 1997b, p.25). Coping strategies have been categorised into various taxonomies (Frydenberg, 1997b). Broader categories include productive and non-productive strategies (Frydenberg, 1999) and approach and avoidance strategies (Anshel, Williams, & Hodge, 1997). Taxonomies also relate to specific situations such as the categorisation of strategies used by injured athletes: instrumental coping, negative emotion coping, distraction, and palliative coping (Udry, 1997).

Another aspect of coping in relation to the present study is that it is a dynamic process involving ongoing appraisals of stressors in the environment, and appraisals of intrinsic and extrinsic resources available to deal with such stressors (Frydenberg, 1997a; Lazarus, 2000; Udry, 1997). Udry reported that stressors such as the pain of injury and related emotions change over the rehabilitation period, and while individuals used a similar pattern of strategies, the degree to which they were used changed in response to the degree of stressors. In the domain of music, Lund and Kranz (1994) found that during different stages of a performance musicians’
perceptions of the situation changed, as did their associated emotions. They used different strategies at the different stages and the effectiveness of these affected the nature of later involvement.

A further relevant point is that the use of coping strategies has been examined across a number of domains such as sport (Anshel et al., 1997; Bianco, 2001; Bianco et al., 1999; Evans & Hardy, 2002), music, (Hallam, 1997) gifted education (Frydenberg & O'Mullane, 2000), young people at risk (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1999) and various other domains where individuals have achieved well (Frydenberg, 2002b). Finally, it is the process of implementing coping strategies that is important. Removing a problem may be an outcome but it is not necessarily the end point if an individual has learnt to cognitively reframe an experience and manage the associated emotions in such a way that he or she can continue to participate in related activities.

Summary of Strategy Use

To summarise the above review of literature relating to cognitive, motivational, volitional, self-regulatory and coping strategies, three points may be made in relation to the conceptual framework for this study. Strategies are complex, strategy use is a dynamic process, and strategy use reflects a reciprocal person-context relationship. Each of these points will be discussed briefly.
**Strategies are Complex**

As illustrated in the above discussion, strategies include cognitive, affective and behavioural components. There are various taxonomies of strategies which in the present study are encompassed under the broad term motivational strategies, as all have an impact on engagement, involvement and persistence in particular settings. Adopting a more holistic conceptualisation also entails considering both positive and negative aspects as strategies may be more or less appropriate, and outcomes in terms of solving the problem may be more or less successful. Examining strategies used to deal with or solve various problems faced by individuals in their contexts in a holistic way allows a deeper understanding of the complexity of strategy use.

**Strategy Use is Dynamic**

In addition to being complex, strategy use is also dynamic in a number of ways. Individuals make continual appraisals of a problem situation and of the resources available for managing or solving that problem, and so may modify their choice or use of strategies. For example, over time as individuals become more expert in a particular domain they gain knowledge of a wider range of strategies that they can use more effectively.

**Strategy Use Reflects a Reciprocal Person-Context Relationship**

The complex nature of strategies and the dynamic way they are used illustrate the continual interplay between the demands of the context (such as challenging tasks) and the perceptions of an individual about those task demands and the available resources
both in the context and within themselves. In other words, the strategies used to deal with problems and the resulting decisions about involvement occur at the person-context interface.

**SUMMARY OF RESEARCH RELATING TO PERSON-CONTEXT INTERFACE**

This chapter has reviewed research examining three types of person-context interface: the perceptions and appraisals individuals make of different aspects of their contexts, the nature of interactions and relationships with other people, and the strategies used to deal with problems. The role of all of these in relation to motivation, seen as engaging in, being involved with, and persisting in various activities, has been discussed. Literature reviewed has come from different perspectives and from different domains such as education and community settings, as well as the domains of interest in this study - sport and music. The complexity of persons and of contexts has been stressed, as has the dynamic nature of all of the types of interface.

Separating the research findings into the divisions of the three types of interface is somewhat arbitrary as there are connections between them all. For example, other people are the focus in the discussion of interactions and relationships as a type of interface because they model, teach and support individuals in their involvement in various activities. Other people, however, also play a role in the appraisals individuals make because they provide direct feedback or indirect sources of information about individual competence. Other people may also be part of the problem or part of the solution when considering problem solving strategies. For example, they may set up competitive environments or inappropriate activities that place demands on
individuals. On the other hand they may also offer social support and other resources that enable individuals to cope with and perhaps overcome difficulties.

The distinction between the three types of interface, however, is seen to be a useful one to conceptualise person-context interface and to frame the research questions for the present study. In the following section limitations in the research reviewed and areas that need to be explored further are discussed. The three types of interface are used to organise this discussion.

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question guiding the present inquiry is: How does the person-context relationship shape motivation in sport and music? This question is examined by focusing on the three types of person-context interface in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). The overall aim of the study is to understand, from the perspective of athletes and musicians, how their engagement, involvement and persistence in sport and music has been shaped by appraisals of aspects of their contexts, by interactions with people in those contexts, and by problems encountered in those contexts. Each type of interface provides a different approach to addressing the broader question about the way the person-context relationship shapes motivation.

Perceptions and Appraisals

The research reviewed above suggests that individuals live and act within complex contexts comprising different levels of specificity. The way tasks, settings and
organisations are structured, for example, has been shown to affect individual perceptions and appraisals. These are also affected by characteristics of individuals resulting in great individual differences in the nature of appraisals and of the nature of resulting involvement. Many studies examining context have focused on school classrooms or on the nature of a specific task. This study aims to incorporate multiple levels and aspects of the person and context to gain an understanding of how they shape motivation. Examining the relationship between individuals’ perceptions and appraisals and their engagement, involvement and persistence, across the domains of sport and music, and at the microlevels of community, setting and task within those domains, will lead to a broader understanding of the construct of motivation.

The research question related to this type of person-context interface is therefore: How do individuals’ appraisals of aspects of context shape their motivation in sport and music? To answer this question it is necessary to establish what characteristics of persons are important, what characteristics of contexts are important, and the nature of the interrelationship between these. Also of interest is whether these findings are similar across individuals, across domains and over time.

Interactions and Relationships with other People

The research reviewed above indicated that a variety of other people could play a range of positive and negative roles with respect to individual motivation. Much of the existing research regarding the importance of social interactions examines the role of particular types of other such as parents or peers, or is limited to aspects of a single
theoretical perspective such as modelling or providing social support. One of the aims of the present study is to broaden the consideration of who might be important and of what roles such people might play in relation to motivation in sport and music. In addition, relationships with others are dynamic, and further exploration is needed of changes over time and how these relate to individual motivation. Both structures and people can provide affordances such as social support or constraints such as conflicts that shape individual motivation in positive or negative ways. There has been relatively little research explicitly examining both positive and negative relationships and motivation, and further exploration of these is one of the aims of the study.

The research question related to this type of person-context interface is therefore: How do interactions with a range of other people shape individuals’ motivation in sport and music in positive and negative ways? To answer this question is it necessary to examine who are the people perceived to be of influence and the nature of the roles they play. Also of interest is whether these findings are similar across individuals, across domains and over time.

Problems and Strategies

Individuals use many strategies to solve what may be termed motivational problems. Research reviewed relating to the use of various motivational strategies, particularly with regard to coping strategies, has often focused on those experiencing difficulties such as young people at risk of depression or delinquency. Other studies have focused on how self-regulated individuals who have achieved at high levels have dealt with
difficulties and problems. The present study aims to extend such research by exploring the problems faced and strategies used by high-achieving athletes and musicians. It is also evident that as individuals and contexts change, affordances and constraints may change, and the difficulties and problems faced and the ways they are dealt with could also change. The present research also aims to explore such changes.

The research question related to this type of person-context interface is therefore: How do problems shape individuals’ motivation in sport and music? To answer this question it is necessary to determine what problems high-achieving individuals in sport and music encounter, and what strategies they use to deal with these. Also of interest is whether these findings are similar across individuals, across domains and over time. Table 3.2 lists the research questions of the study in relation to the three types of person-context interface in the Model of Motivated Action.

In conclusion, through the examination of the above questions, the research aims to explore the nature of the person-context relationship and how the proposed types of interface shape motivation. The next chapter (Chapter Four) describes and discusses the methods used to do this.
### Table 3.2: Research Questions for the Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of interface</th>
<th>Research question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Main question:</strong> How does the person-context relationship shape motivation in sport and music?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appraisals</strong></td>
<td>1. How do individuals’ appraisals of aspects of context shape their motivation in sport and music?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What characteristics of persons and of contexts are important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is the nature of the interrelationship between these characteristics?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are these findings similar across domains, across individuals and over time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interactions</strong></td>
<td>2. How do interactions with a range of other people shape individuals’ motivation in sport and music in positive and negative ways?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Who are the people of influence and what is the nature of the roles they play?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are these findings similar across domains, across individuals and over time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Problems</strong></td>
<td>3. How do problems within the context shape individuals’ motivation in sport and music?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What problems are faced by high-achieving individuals in sport and music and what strategies are used to deal with these?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are these findings similar across domains, across individuals and over time?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Four

Methodology: Research Methods and Verification Strategies

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research methods used in the study. An overview of the main features of the research design is given, including the rationale for using qualitative methods. The methods and procedures used are explained, including the selection and characteristics of participants, and details of interviews and tasks. Ethical issues associated with planning, conducting and publishing the research are discussed. Methods used to manage, organise, analyse and interpret the data are explained. Finally, issues related to validity, reliability and generalisability are raised and the chapter concludes with a discussion of how these issues have been addressed in the research through the use of selected verification strategies.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Overview of the Research Design

Qualitative data, primarily through semistructured interviews with thirty athletes and musicians, were gathered over three time points. The design of the research reflected features of the study discussed in the introduction to the dissertation (Chapter One). These are combined here into three main features. Firstly, motivational experts in the
domains of *sport and music* were selected. Secondly, a holistic approach to motivation was taken by considering *multiple features of both person and context*. For example, emotional and social aspects of participants were explored and different levels of specificity of context were considered. Finally, *longitudinal and biographical data* were produced using *qualitative methods* with interviews and special tasks developed to gain an understanding of participants’ experiences. The use of exclusively qualitative research methods to examine motivation is an important feature of this study and the rationale for this decision is explained below.

The Use of Qualitative Research Methods

It was argued in the introduction to the study (Chapter One) that qualitative research methods are appropriate when the aim of research is to understand “how events, actions, and meanings are shaped by the unique circumstances in which these occur” (Maxwell, 1998, p.75). The aim of this research was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the way participants’ motivation has been shaped by characteristics of themselves and of their contexts, so qualitative methods of inquiry are appropriate here. Quantitative methods have been the focus of much research in motivation but as Patton (1990) suggested, quantitative and qualitative methods are “alternative, not mutually exclusive, strategies for research” (p.14), and different methods are appropriate for different situations. There is no “best choice” - just alternatives, all of which have merit (p.166). Nevertheless, quantitative research methods have dominated motivation research and been privileged in psychological academic presentations and journals, where using qualitative methods has been perceived as
"risky" (Turner, 2001, p.100). Yet with a situated view of motivation, the need to consider both individual perceptions as well as cultural context, and the need to understand the reciprocal relationship between persons and contexts, Turner suggested that not using qualitative methods might be risky. Volet (2001a) proposed that when motivation is conceptualised in a more situative way, eight methodological implications arise which have led to methodological changes in the way researchers examine motivation. Figure 4.1 shows how these are reflected in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methodological changes</th>
<th>How reflected in this study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A change from the use of quantitative to qualitative or mixed methods.</td>
<td>Qualitative methods only used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A change from the use of single to multiple data sources.</td>
<td>Interviews, specially designed tasks, written documents and observations used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A change from positivist to a combination of positivist and experiential approaches.</td>
<td>Focus on the subjective and emotional, not just the externally observed and interpreted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From one-off to longitudinal and online data collection.</td>
<td>Data gathered at three time points and current concerns explored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A change from single to multiple perspectives.</td>
<td>Detailed views of diverse individuals. Some perspectives of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A change from single to multiple contexts.</td>
<td>Participants drawn from diverse contexts and different levels of context examined.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A change from variable to person centred analyses.</td>
<td>A holistic view of the person rather than an examination of specific isolated variables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A change from single level to multilevel designs and analyses</td>
<td>Examination of different levels of context through rich, qualitative descriptions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.1: How Recent Methodological Changes are Reflected in the Study*
Other recent studies and discussions about motivation and methodology lend support for this study’s emphasis on understanding participants’ perspectives about motivation and how these may have changed or developed over time, and for the use of qualitative methods to examine such perspectives and changes. For example, according to Järvelä (2001) applications of current motivation theory to real learning environments have been limited by inadequate deductive and quantitative methodologies, inadequate research designs using only one or two points of data collection, and a lack of descriptions of what is actually happening in those environments. Others have suggested that there has been little explanation of the how and why of motivation in real life situations (Blumenfeld, 1992; Turner, 2000). Lemos (2001) advocated a more grounded or “bottom up” strategy where researchers begin with student motivation and work up to find the contexts that shape it, and Gurtner, Monnard and Genoud (2001) suggested that new qualitative methodologies were needed to capture changes and regularities in motivation. Various authors have also supported the incorporation of qualitative methods into research in sport (see, for example, Krane et al., 1997; Regnier et al., 1993; Schinke & da Costa, 2001), and music (see, for example, Davidson, 1997; Oura & Hatano, 2001). Therefore qualitative research methods were selected as being the most appropriate way to gather the data needed to address the research questions in this study.
PARTICIPANTS

Sampling Decisions

As explained in the introduction to the study (Chapter One), the sample included individuals who demonstrated evidence of motivation. That is, they had shown by their life choices to have engaged, been involved and persisted in sport or music over time. Patton (1990) described this as theory based sampling. Sampling focused on those who belonged to teams or ensembles rather than those who were involved in individual sports or were soloists in music. This was done in order to maximise opportunities to examine interactions with others which was one type of interface proposed in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). Participants were also selected because they demonstrated success in the domains of sport or music as evidenced by their achievements. That is, the individuals selected were good examples of the phenomena of motivation, reflecting intensity sampling (Patton, 1990). They may be considered to be experts in their domain when compared with the general population, but, unlike Bloom’s (1985c) cohort, were not necessarily the most outstanding performers in that field.

The sample was diverse in that participants were selected from a variety of backgrounds rather than from just one group or setting. A small but diverse sample reflects maximum variation sampling and allows two main outcomes: high quality detailed descriptions of each case that document uniqueness, plus shared patterns or themes that cut across cases (Patton, 1990). In other words selecting individuals with different experiences allows the researcher to "more thoroughly describe the variation in the group and to understand variations in experiences while also investigating core
elements and shared outcomes" (p.172). This strategy was also supported by Locke Davidson and Phelan (1999, pp.247-8) who suggested that a diverse sample gives “a more in-depth and comprehensive understanding of contextual factors that impinge on students’ motivation to succeed.”

The selection of the final sample also reflected practical issues such as ease of access and availability. As Berg (1995) suggested, although elites are visible and easy to locate, they may be difficult to study because they are more able to establish barriers and obstacles to protect their privacy, or more able to limit the demands made on their time. This was an issue in this study as were other practical concerns such as geographical proximity and busy participant lifestyles. Convenience sampling, although the least desirable strategy from a theoretical perspective, is often a crucial strategy in selection decisions (Patton, 1990), and partly determined the final sample.

Overview of the Participants

Thirty participants from the domains of music and sport were selected through approaching specialist school programs, community music and sporting organisations and through personal contacts. All were Australian born and interviewed in Perth, Western Australia. At the time of the first interview all lived in Perth except one who was visiting family in Perth. The relevant characteristics of participants are summarised in Table 4.1. Originally it was planned to have three in each cell of Table 4.1, making a total of twenty-four participants. When additional people offered to take
part they were included in the sample to account for the expected loss of participants. There was no attrition, however, so the number of participants remained at thirty.

Table 4.1: Characteristics of Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Music</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescents (15-16 yrs)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults (20-31 yrs)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15 males 15 females 15 athletes 15 musicians 30 participants

There was equal representation in the sample according to domain (sport and music), age (adolescent and adult) and gender (male and female). The study aimed to move beyond traditional academic settings and the two domains under investigation, sport and music, both provided 15 participants. Adolescent and adult participants were equally represented in the sample (15 of each), in order to explore any age related differences as found in the literature in the development of motivation (Wigfield et al., 1998) or in the development of expertise (Ericsson, 1996b; Sosniak, 1985c). The terms adolescent and adult are used as these are standard terms for the respective age groups used in the developmental literature (see, for example, Arnett, 2004; Peterson, 2004). Although not a particular focus for this study, gender has been associated with differences in motivation (see, for example, Beltman, 1996; Duda et al., 1991), so equal numbers of males and females were included.
The aim was to select a diverse sample in order to capture multiple perspectives, and the sample was diverse in a number of ways apart from the major selection criteria of domain, age, gender and involvement in team sports or musical ensembles. The athletes played cricket, hockey, Australian Rules football, and beach volleyball, and some were rowers. These were the major sports that led to their selection. Many participants had also played other sports at various times and some played with more than one team in their major sport. The musicians played a variety of instruments: violin, cello, clarinet, tuba, trombone, euphonium, guitar and percussion. Some musicians played more than one instrument and others also belonged to choirs. The musicians played a variety of types of music in different sorts of ensembles with most being in more than one group. Orchestras, bands, wind and string ensembles, and chamber groups of varying sizes were featured, as were different types of music including classical, jazz, Latin and rock.

Details of the Participants

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 summarise details of individual participants and indicate the pseudonyms used throughout the dissertation, the major sport or instrument that formed the basis of their selection, their status (amateur, semiprofessional or professional), and the highest level of performance they had attained at the first interview (local, interstate or international). Some have played at higher levels since the first interview.
Table 4.2: Details of Adolescent Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Major sport/instrument</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Highest level of performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Athletes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>cricket</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>interstate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron</td>
<td>cricket</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>interstate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiden</td>
<td>cricket</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>interstate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carly</td>
<td>hockey</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>interstate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine</td>
<td>hockey</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>interstate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cara</td>
<td>hockey</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy</td>
<td>hockey</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musicians</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>percussion</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damien</td>
<td>percussion</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>tuba</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>clarinet</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sasha</td>
<td>violin</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha</td>
<td>clarinet</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally</td>
<td>trombone</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvia</td>
<td>euphonium</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The adolescent athletes came from two different government schools and were all in specialist sport programs with selection processes for entry. The boys at one of the schools played cricket, and the girls at the other school played hockey. All were in school teams in their respective sports, and also belonged to community sporting organisations, often playing in more than one team with that organisation. Some had gained state team selection in their sport, and some played other sports either at the time of the interviews or previously.
The adolescent musicians came from two government and two non-government schools. All were studying music as a school subject, either Tertiary Entry Examination (TEE) Music or Music in Society, a less theoretical course. Students at one school were in a specialist program with stringent selection criteria. All participated in their school music programs and this entailed playing in various groups including orchestras, wind ensembles, jazz or brass bands, and singing in choirs. Most learnt their instrument through the school program – only one, Sasha, learnt privately. Some were also involved in community musical groups. One played in a state Youth Orchestra and two had toured internationally with their school’s music program.

The adult athletes played their sport at the highest level of local or community competitions (A-Grade or First Division), at state level in national competitions, or at international level. Two had competed in the 2000 Olympics and three were full-time professional athletes. Overall they relied on various sources of funding such as payments from professional clubs, Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) scholarships, part-time work, or full-time work in other professions.

Of the seven adult musicians, only one was a full-time professional musician. Two part-time professionals and one amateur had full-time music-related occupations such as teaching music. The others had full-time non-music related occupations and performed in a mostly amateur way – they were only occasionally paid for performances. All except Jake and Jordan played in more than one ensemble. Some had formerly played internationally – only Jake had recently performed overseas.
Table 4.3: Details of Adult Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Major sport/instrument</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Highest level of performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Athletes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brad</td>
<td>Australian Rules football</td>
<td>semiprofessional</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byron</td>
<td>cricket</td>
<td>professional</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brett</td>
<td>rowing</td>
<td>semiprofessional</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blake</td>
<td>Australian Rules football</td>
<td>professional</td>
<td>interstate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret</td>
<td>hockey</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>beach volleyball</td>
<td>professional</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>rowing</td>
<td>semiprofessional</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moira</td>
<td>rowing</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musicians</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon</td>
<td>clarinet</td>
<td>semiprofessional</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob</td>
<td>trombone</td>
<td>semiprofessional</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>guitar</td>
<td>semiprofessional</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jake</td>
<td>guitar</td>
<td>professional</td>
<td>interstate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tania</td>
<td>violin</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa</td>
<td>cello</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>cello</td>
<td>amateur</td>
<td>local</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DATA PRODUCTION
Sources and Types of Data

The data required to understand how the person-context relationship shaped motivation in sport and music were determined by the research questions linked to the types of interface. So data were needed about participants’ appraisals, their interactions with others, problems encountered and how these were addressed. Table
4.4 indicates the research questions, the nature of the data needed and the specific data sources used.

**Table 4.4: Sources of Data Linked to the Research Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research question</th>
<th>Nature of data required</th>
<th>Main data sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How do individuals’ appraisals of aspects of context shape their motivation in sport and music?</td>
<td>Characteristics of persons. e.g. life histories, cognitive and affective aspects of motivation.</td>
<td>Time Line Task Settings Chart Task Day in the Life Task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Characteristics of contexts. e.g. key events and tasks in past and present.</td>
<td>Interview Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How do interactions with a range of other people shape individuals’ motivation in sport and music in positive and negative ways?</td>
<td>Perceived positive and negative influences of a range of others in past and present contexts.</td>
<td>Circles of Influence Task Day in the Life Task Issues Sorting Task Interview Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How do problems within the context shape individuals’ motivation in sport and music?</td>
<td>Problems encountered, strategies known and used and factors involved in decision making processes.</td>
<td>Issues Sorting Task Settings Chart Task Circles of Influence Task Interview Questions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All data sources contributed to each research question, but questions and tasks were designed to explicitly address each one. Two interviews were conducted with all participants and Table 4.5 indicates all types of data gathered for the study and the participants for whom additional data were available.
Table 4.5: All Available Types of Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of data gathered</th>
<th>Participants involved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview One</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Timeline Task</td>
<td>30 (all participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Circles of Influence Task</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview Two</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Settings Chart Task</td>
<td>30 (all participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Issues Sorting Task</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Observations</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• direct observation of performances</td>
<td>2 adult athletes; 1 adolescent musician; 4 adult musicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• videos of performances, activities</td>
<td>1 adult athlete; 1 adult musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• television programs of performances</td>
<td>3 adult athletes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Written Documents</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Day in the Life Task</td>
<td>24 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• notes to researcher</td>
<td>2 adolescent musicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• newspaper, newsletter, magazine articles</td>
<td>1 adolescent athlete; 7 adult athletes; 1 adolescent musician; 2 adult musicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• internet reports on performances and activities (as of 5-11-2003)</td>
<td>3 adolescent athletes; 7 adult athletes; 2 adolescent musicians; 2 adult musicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Informal discussions with significant others</strong></td>
<td>3 adolescent athletes; 1 adolescent musician; 3 adult athletes; 1 adult musician</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sources of data used include three of the main types of qualitative data: in-depth open-ended interviews, direct observations and written documents (Patton, 1990). Two in-depth, standardised interviews, which included the administration of the specially designed tasks, formed the main source of data. When opportunities arose,
informal interviews were conducted with family members or teachers, and direct observations of actual performances or recordings of performances made. Written documents included media reports from newspapers or internet sites, a diary task, and field notes. These notes comprised written observations made about the interviews, about performances observed, and about discussions held outside the formal interview situation.

Observations, written documents and interviews with significant others were available for twenty-one participants. The amount of this additional data available varied. For example, a brief newspaper report might be available for one participant, whereas for another there might be extensive material in both the print and electronic media. Adults were more likely to feature in media programs and reports. This additional data could be questioned with regard to validity and reliability because, unlike the interviews and tasks, they were gathered in a nonsystematic way. Single observations are also less valid and reliable than those from multiple occasions or from multiple observers (Adler & Adler, 1994). Such data allow insights and additional illustrations to enhance the researcher’s understandings of participants’ lives (Adler & Adler, 1994; Patton, 1990) but because of the unsystematic nature, must be interpreted with caution.

The Interviews

*Overview of Interviews One and Two*

A similar structure was used for both interviews. They began with an explanation of the areas to be covered. During the interviews participants were encouraged to
elaborate on responses with prompts such as “please give me an example of that.” Each interview closed with open-ended questions, took about one hour and was conducted by the researcher, audio taped and transcribed. Adult participants in particular continued to talk after the interviews had concluded and comments were noted as soon as possible and included in the transcripts. Table 4.6 summarises the content of the interviews. The complete schedules appear in Appendixes B1 and B2.

Table 4.6: Overview of Interviews One and Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview One</th>
<th>Interview Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Gathering demographic data</td>
<td>• Explanation of the areas to be addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explanation of the areas to be addressed</td>
<td>• Discussion of any alterations needed to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Time Line Task</td>
<td>summary of Interview One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Circles of Influence Task</td>
<td>• Follow up of the plans stated in Interview One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Questions about motivation and plans for the</td>
<td>• Settings Chart Task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next twelve months</td>
<td>• Issues Sorting Task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Open-ended questions to conclude</td>
<td>• Questions relating to impact of the research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Open ended questions to conclude</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Between Interviews</th>
<th>Ongoing Collection of Other Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Day in the Life Task</td>
<td>• Informal discussions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Written summary of Interview One sent to</td>
<td>• Written documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>participants</td>
<td>• Observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Standardised Interviews

Interviews One and Two were designed as standardised interviews (Patton, 1990). That is, a set of carefully worded questions was arranged so that each respondent could be taken through the same sequence using essentially the same wording. Because they
were standardised, interviewer effects were minimised and data analysis simplified. However, as Fontana and Frey (1994) suggested, interviewers must be aware of and flexible enough to make adjustments for unanticipated developments, and this occurred from time to time in the present study.

The sequence of questions was designed to allow participants to feel comfortable in the interview situation. For example, prefatory statements were used at the beginning of each interview in a general way, as well as at the beginning of each section of the interview. Alerting respondents to what will come next can alleviate their anxiety (Patton, 1990). The sequence of questions was also designed to raise certain information in a descriptive way before participants reflected on it. For example, the Time Line Task in the first interview included a chronological description of past experiences. Having activated memories of key events, participants were then asked, in the Circles of Influence Task, to focus on people who they perceived had helped or hindered them significantly during their development.

Probing questions were used to deepen participants’ responses, to increase the richness of the data, and to give cues about the desired level of responses (Patton, 1990). For example, detail oriented questions were used at all stages of the interviews in order to obtain as clear an understanding as possible about participants’ activities and perceptions. Extensive probing was avoided, however, as this can make an interview appear like an interrogation or give the message that the respondent is not giving the interviewer what is wanted (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Participants also asked questions of the researcher when they were, for example, not clear about what was required in a
task or when they were unsure of whether their responses met the interviewer’s expectations. In this latter case, they were always reassured that their responses were interesting and helpful.

The Tasks

Five separate tasks were developed to address the research questions for this study: the Time Line Task, the Circles of Influence Task, the Day in the Life Task, the Settings Chart Task and the Issues Sorting Task. The tasks served two main purposes: to gather information about the activities and perceptions of the participants, and to provide stimulus materials and practical activities to accomplish this in an interesting way that provided a break from face-to-face questioning.

*The Time Line Task*

The Time Line Task was developed in order to gain data relating to Research Question 1 (see Table 4.4) that is about how participants’ appraisals of aspects of their context shaped their motivation in sport and music. Data were needed about each participant’s life history in relation to his or her initial engagement, involvement and persistence in sport or music and the Time Line Task gathered information about individual life histories as well as key events and activities. The contribution of previous experiences to later involvement in the domains of sport and music has been shown to be important (see, for example, Sosniak, 1985b, 1985c). This task was also useful in Interview One as it activated memories of key people from the past and present in preparation for the Circles of Influence Task.
The Time Line Task followed a logical order and began with questions about getting started and concluded with questions about current involvement. The Task used a visual representation of chronological stages of development (see Figure 4.2) on a sheet of paper in conjunction with the question: “Can you remember the different stages of your involvement with sport/music?” Details about involvement in school and community activities, about teachers and coaches, about the involvement of family and friends, and about special programs or awards were elicited where necessary in order to gain a comprehensive picture of development in the relevant domain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRE-SCHOOL YEARS</th>
<th>PRIMARY SCHOOL YEARS</th>
<th>SECONDARY YEARS</th>
<th>EARLY ADULT YEARS</th>
<th>LATER ADULT YEARS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGES: 0-5</td>
<td>AGES: 6-12</td>
<td>AGES: 13-17</td>
<td>AGES: 18-21</td>
<td>AGES: 21+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 4.2: Time Line Task*

*The Circles of Influence Task*

The Circles of Influence Task was developed in order to gain data relating to Research Question 2 (see Table 4.4) that is about how interactions with a range of other people positively and negatively shaped individuals’ motivation in sport and music. Specifically it was used to determine who were the influential people (both past and present) in participants’ development as athletes and musicians, and the nature of this influence. Appendix B3 contains a copy of the task used with the instructions included, although participants did not receive a written copy of these. The task consisted of four parts. Participants first wrote the names of influential people in concentric circles. They then described the nature of their relationship with all those
named (e.g. friend, teacher, family member etc) and gave an example of how that person had influenced them. A list of additional categories was then shown and participants were asked if there was anyone else who came to mind from those categories who may have been influential. Finally they were asked to think about anyone who might have had a negative influence – who had made it more difficult for them to continue in sport or music.

Zimmerman (1998) suggested that socially self-regulated students are aware of how others could have a positive or negative impact on their learning, and the questions designed for this study assumed such a level of awareness. Using concentric circles as a tool to develop a visual representation of social networks has been used by a number of researchers (see, for example, Neilsen & Bowes, 1996; Pearpoint, Forest, & O’Brien, 1996). Questions similar to those developed for this task have also been used extensively for the similar purpose of determining different sorts of social networks (Bø, 1996; Galbo & Mayer Demetrulias, 1996; Greenberger et al., 1998; Hamilton & Darling, 1989; Patrick et al., 1999; Philip & Hendry, 1996; Sosniak, 1985c; Weiss et al., 1996).

The task in the present study differed from the above in three main ways. It focused on the domains of sport and music rather than asking, for example, about life in general or about a particular type of relationship such as friendships. Another difference was that as well as unprompted recollections, specific categories of “others” were used to broaden the range of people who participants might consider as being in
their networks of influence. A final unique feature was that both positive and negative influences were elicited in the same task.

The Day in the Life Task

The Day in the Life Task (see Appendix B4) was developed in order to gain data relating to Research Questions I and 2 (see Table 4.4) and so tapped into information such as the nature of current activities, participants’ perceptions of these, and which other people were involved in these activities. The task served other purposes in the study. Because it was completed between the two interviews, it acted as a bridge between them, and was specifically referred to where appropriate in both interviews. Participants took control of this part of the data production as they could choose any day to complete the task.

The task was given to participants at the end of Interview One with an explanation of its purpose. Those who had not returned the task in the prepaid envelope provided were sent another copy with the letter explaining the aims of Interview Two. If participants still had not completed the task no further reference was made to it. Asking for a third time, it was felt, would compromise the researcher-participant relationship. Twenty-four of the thirty participants completed the activity. Those who did not were two adolescent musicians, two adult musicians and two adult athletes. Where completed, questions and comments about the task were incorporated into the second interview, for example, as a way of introducing the Settings Chart Task.
In the Day in the Life Task the participants in a sense acted as observers in that they recorded their activities of a particular day and their perceptions of those activities. Because of the impossibility of a researcher observing every setting or everything within a particular setting (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983) and the difficulty of observing perceptions and understandings (Berg, 1995), it is legitimate to ask participants about their everyday activities and about their perceptions and understandings of those activities (Altheide & Johnson, 1994; Fetterman, 1998). Personal diaries have also been used to record experiences in order to examine motivation over time (Ng, 1998). Although only referring to one day, the Day in the Life Task was similar in nature to a diary activity, and participants were asked how typical this day was for them, thus capturing some sense of activities over time.

The Settings Chart Task

The Settings Chart Task was developed in order to gain data relating to Research Question 1, in particular focusing on characteristics of the settings, activities and tasks in participants’ current communities, and on their perceptions of these. To complete the task participants were presented with an A3 sized chart representing the various settings in which they played sport or music (Appendix B5 contains a reduced version of the actual task used). They were asked to explain what should be in each section of the chart for each setting in which they participated. The researcher wrote brief comments in relevant sections to use as a visual prompt for the later questions comparing each setting. A “setting” referred to individual practice, to team training or ensemble rehearsal, and to competitions or concerts for each community – that is each
team or ensemble. For some adult musicians, a further category of setting was included – that of “recording.”

During the second round of interviews it became apparent that the Settings Chart Task was going to take more time than was available. This was especially so for adolescent participants who were involved in up to ten different teams or ensembles, and for whom the interview time had to be tightly scheduled to fit in with certain school activities. Therefore it was decided to gain the desired descriptive information in a more individualised way similar to what Patton (1990) called the general interview guide approach. In this the interviewer begins with a set of issues to be explored but does so in a conversational way, framing the questions spontaneously and adapting them to the specific respondent. Collecting the data in a less systematic way had implications for its analysis as the same data were not available for every participant.

Various questions were used to gain descriptions of the settings. The sections at the top of the chart (when?, where?, who?, what? and why?) aimed at gaining a comprehensive picture of each setting and were based on ideas from a number of sources. For example, Zimmerman (1998) used the categories of “why? how? when? what? and with whom?” when examining the dimensions of self-regulation across different disciplines. When examining any social situation, Tripp (1994) suggested that there are at least five key components that must be considered and these may be expressed as a four part question: (a) who, (b) with what? (c) experiences what? (d) when, where and with whom? The Settings Chart Task used a combination of these categories in order to gain a complete picture of the settings in relation to their
physical and organisational structure, the activities undertaken, and the people involved.

The questions eliciting perceptions about the settings were asked of all participants, even if details of all sections of the chart had not been completed due to time restrictions. These questions required participants to compare the different settings in relation to such aspects as enjoyment and interest, and to justify their comments. Various types of questions have been identified in the literature and some of these were used in this part of the task. For example, questions about opinions and values aim to understand cognitive and interpretive processes (Patton, 1990) such as when participants were asked which setting was the most important. Feelings questions focus on understanding the emotional responses participants have to their experiences, and in the Settings Chart Task they were asked which setting was most enjoyable or interesting.

The Issues Sorting Task

The Issues Sorting Task was developed to gather data in relation to Research Question 3 (see Table 4.4) that is about how problems shaped individuals’ motivation, revealed as persistence, in sport and music. It generated information about problems encountered, strategies known and used, and factors involved in decision making processes. During Interview One various issues, difficulties or problems faced by participants during their lives as athletes and musicians emerged. The Issues Sorting Task was specifically designed to gauge to what extent these were common across participants and across domains, and as a stimulus for discussion about motivational
strategies known and used by participants. The questions used in the task were
designed to tap into declarative, procedural, conditional and metacognitive knowledge
about such strategies, as participants recalled how they had dealt with various
problems.

The Issues Sorting Task followed the Settings Chart Task and used the same
distinction between the three main settings of individual practice, group practice and
group performance. A further group was included of “other” issues that were
applicable across all settings. Participants were given a set of paper slips with one
issue written on each. They sorted these into categories of never, occasionally and
regularly encountered by placing each slip on a sheet of paper divided into these
categories. Blank slips were available if other issues were raised, but none was
suggested. Appendix B6 contains the issues presented, the category-sorting sheet and
the discussion questions used. The actual questions used varied depending on
participants’ previous responses and generally issues said to occur most often were
discussed. If participants said no issues occurred frequently for them then possible
reasons for this were elicited.

Problem-solving tasks have been widely used in research to tap into different types of
expert knowledge (see, for example, Billett, 1996; Regnier et al., 1993), and this task
presented problems or issues that had been encountered by participants in the study.
The task also aimed to elicit participants’ reported knowledge and use of strategies. It
was again assumed that they would be to some extent self-regulated learners who are
able to systematically adapt strategies to changing personal and contextual conditions.
and able to independently choose when and how to use particular strategies (Zimmerman, 1998), and that they would be able to report these.

**PROCEDURES**

**Pilot Study**

In preparation for the first interview, a prospective schedule of questions and tasks was piloted with two people who agreed to be interviewed and give feedback. They were a female dancer (part-time professional) and male athlete (full-time professional) aged 18 years and therefore between the age groups in the main study. Their responses and feedback about Interview One and the proposed Day in the Life Task led to modification of the nature of the questions and tasks, and the order in which they were given to produce a more logical structure and to allow opportunity for more varied responses. Interviews and tasks for the second interview were not trialled. Experience and feedback from the first interview were used to develop tasks and questions that seemed appropriate for the participants and for the nature of the data required.

**Main Study**

In summary, thirty participants were interviewed on two occasions in 2000 and 2001. The first interviews were conducted over a period of ten months because of the time taken to locate participants, and the second interviews over a period of three months. The interval between interviews ranged from five to fourteen months with a mean interval of nine months. Figure 4.3 illustrates the time frame of the study and the data gathered at each of the three time points. A summary of the complete sequence of
procedures relating to selecting participants and conducting the interviews appears in Appendix B7. Slightly different procedures were used for the school students as permission to approach and interview them was obtained from the school principal, course coordinator, class teacher and parents, as well as the students themselves.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time One</th>
<th>Time Two</th>
<th>Time Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview One</strong></td>
<td><strong>Between Interviews</strong></td>
<td><strong>Interview Two</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Time Line Task</td>
<td>• Day in the Life Task</td>
<td>• Settings Chart Task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Circles of Influence Task</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Issues Sorting Task</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other data gathered over time of study e.g. observations, media reports, websites

Figure 4.3: Overall Time Frame of the Study

Ethical Procedures

Ethical issues associated with the study are discussed in this section because such issues are related to procedures used at the three stages of the research process – planning, conducting the research, and publishing and disseminating findings (Fontana & Frey, 1994), and so relate directly to the research processes and methods. The following discussion raises the ethical issues most relevant to each stage of the research process and explains how they have been addressed in this study.

Planning the Research

All prospective participants received a letter (Appendixes B8 and B10) explaining the aims of the research, the anticipated requirements (two or three interviews), the nature
of the interviews (topics covered and that they would be taped), and that they could withdraw at any point. Approved by Murdoch University’s Human Research Ethics Committee, the letters also included contact details of the researcher and others if there were any questions or concerns. All participants also then signed a consent form to indicate that they had understood this (see Appendix B9). The researcher also signed the forms, indicating that a reciprocal agreement had been made. The concept of “informed consent” refers to participants’ right to be informed that they are being researched, to be informed about the nature of that research, and to be informed that they have the right to withdraw from that research at any time (Punch, 1994), and these letters ensured that participants gave informed consent.

If observations were made without the participants’ direct knowledge, this occurred at a public concert or a sporting event, and the researcher was part of the audience. When this happened before the second interview, the participant was told about it and observations made were discussed during the Settings Chart Task. When “subjects” are viewed as informed and active “participants” in the research process, there is a greater emphasis on trust and empathy (Punch, 1994) and no place for deception such as covert observations or recordings (Sieber, 1998).

Working with school-aged students presented extra responsibilities relating to research ethics. The adolescents in this study were all over 15 years of age and could be considered to be mature minors, able to decide for themselves whether or not they participated. They were therefore given the same consent form as the adult participants (see Appendix B9); however, they received a different letter (Appendix
B10) and a letter was also sent to their parents (Appendix B11). When students were contacted through a school, written permission to conduct the research in the school was obtained from the principal. The principal, sport or music course coordinator and all parents received copies of the students’ letter and consent form with an appropriate covering letter. Written consent was obtained from all parents (Appendix B12).

Conducting the Research

Where research aims at gaining the honest views of participants, it is important that they trust the researcher and that the researcher honours that trust (Punch, 1994). Trust may be both explicit and implicit (Fetterman, 1998) and trust issues were explicitly dealt with in this study through the use of the letters and consent forms described above. Because the study was conducted over time, participants were also sent a letter explaining the content of the second interview and reminding them that they had the option of withdrawing. Another example of the way trust was explicitly encouraged was by giving participants a summary of their responses in the first interview. This served a number of functions related to validity discussed later in this chapter, but one aim was to reassure the participants that the researcher wanted to understand their perspective and was willing to correct any misunderstandings or misinterpretations made.

Within the interview situation itself, participant trust was implicitly encouraged by several means. The adult participants were given complete choice as to when and where they would prefer their interview to be conducted. Sometimes this led to less than desirable settings from the interviewer’s perspective – for example, when the
participant preferred to sit outside and recordings had traffic noises and bird songs in the background. School students had fewer options but were given the choice of whether to miss lunchtime or a particular school lesson in an effort to respect their wishes. Privacy is an important ethical issue impacting on participants’ trust in the researcher (Sieber, 1998) and every effort was made to keep the interviews private. Whether they were conducted in a school office, in a house or workplace, the interview was stopped if anyone else came into the room.

The handling of potentially sensitive questions during interview situations is another area where ethical issues may arise and both interviews contained such questions. For example, participants were asked about people who had made it more difficult for them to continue in sport or music. For some participants this highlighted memories of times when they had felt discouraged or even devastated. That participants felt able to discuss sensitive or painful issues, however, indicated that the efforts made to gain their trust by responding in an accepting, affirming way were successful. Each situation was handled as sensitively as possible by listening to the concerns and reflecting the participants’ feelings without embarking on any problem-solving processes or counselling. The aim was to remain true to the role of a researcher while responding to particular situations in a real, empathic and hopefully helpful way.

**Publishing the Research**

The final part of the research process involves disseminating findings and the main ethical issue in this study was the protection of participants’ identities through privacy and confidentiality. As Punch (1994, p.92) suggested there is a strong feeling “that
settings and respondents should not be identifiable in print and that they should not suffer harm or embarrassment as a consequence of research.” Possible identification of participants is especially an issue when there are small numbers in a study, when direct quotations are used to illustrate findings, and when those involved are public figures. As these were all features of the present study, anonymity was therefore a major issue and every effort has been made to protect the identity of individuals and of the specific organisations to which they belonged. The dilemma is to fully report findings and be comprehensive and transparent, while at the same time protecting the privacy of participants (Huberman & Miles, 1994).

DATA ANALYSIS
Managing the Data

Large amounts of data were produced in the study. For example, the 60 interviews generated 41,422 text units for analysis (each text unit was one line of text in the NUD*IST documents – details of the software are given later) and in the Circles of Influence Task over three hundred and fifty examples were given describing how other people had been important in participants’ lives. Patton (1990, pp.371-2) said that the challenge in qualitative research is "to make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify significant patterns, and construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal." This challenge was very real in the present study.
Data analysis was an ongoing, dynamic process, with a constant moving between inductive and deductive approaches, a strategy supported by several authors (Fetterman, 1998; Huberman & Miles, 1994; Maxwell, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1994). This can, however, also contribute to obtaining large amounts of data that then need to be reduced as "the more one investigates, the more layers of the setting one discovers" (Huberman & Miles, 1994, p.431). In order to manage the amount of data produced and to make interpretations and draw conclusions, various processes of analysis were used and these are described in the following section.

Organising the Data

Data Reduction

All interviews were conducted by the researcher, recorded, transcribed in full and coded using the NUD*IST software program (see below for details). Coding is a form of data reduction and, according to Huberman and Miles (1994), the first sub-process of data analysis. Both deductive and inductive coding procedures were used (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Patton, 1990). An example of deductive coding was that the interview questions and tasks were developed largely through constructs shown to be important in theory and research, and comments relating to each interview question and to each part of every task were first coded separately in accordance with the predetermined questions and tasks. Inductive coding was then used to identify themes, within and across questions and tasks, arising from the actual responses of participants.
To facilitate management and analysis of qualitative data, computerised data processing programs allow rigorous analysis of large amounts of data and ease of cross-classification and cross-comparison (Patton, 1990), and NUD*IST 4.0 (Non-Numerical Unstructured Data Indexing Searching and Theory-building) (QSR NUD*IST 4, 1997) was used to achieve this. As with other strategies to assist coding and interpretation of the data, there are potential pitfalls and problems in the use of computer systems. For example, one issue in the use of computer software for data analysis is that removing physical data sorting restraints increases the possibilities for analysis and "the software offers many ways for the researcher never to finish a study" (Richards & Richards, 1994, p.458)!

A further limitation with the use of computer programs such as NUD*IST is that most are designed for categorisation analysis, rather than for contextual analysis, and so "may distort your analysis strategy toward such approaches" (Maxwell, 1998, p.91). Although data may be reduced using various coding or categorising strategies, contextualising strategies are also important and Maxwell suggested looking for "relationships that connect statements and events within a particular context into a coherent whole" (p.90). One way this was achieved was by writing a brief case summary, or trajectory, of each individual participant after all data were collected. These trajectories were examined for common themes as well as for connections between ideas and events.
Data Display

Data display, a second sub-process of data analysis, is "an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing and/or action taking" (Huberman & Miles, 1994, p.429). In this study tables, matrices and other visual tools were developed to reflect the coded data and the researcher’s conceptual framework. They supplemented the use of NUD*IST which, apart from a coding index tree, does not allow a visual display of conceptual networks. Matrices provide a way of comparing and contrasting data and assist in identifying emerging patterns (Fetterman, 1998). Similarly, flowcharts can represent changes over time. Huberman and Miles suggested the use of a metamatrix where basic information from each case is placed onto one big chart. All these tools were used in the present study to assist in the process of data analysis.

Interpreting the Data

The final sub-process of data analysis, as articulated by Huberman and Miles (1994), is interpreting the data and this involves the development of patterns or themes, developing explanations and drawing of conclusions. Memos are one way of displaying developing ideas, tentative interpretations and conclusions, and, by making ideas and analyses visible, facilitate thinking about relationships in the data. When written frequently they "stimulate and capture your ideas about your data" (Maxwell, 1998, p.91). Memos in the NUD*IST software program as well as notes and ideas in the researcher’s journal were used throughout the research process to facilitate interpretation of the data. Despite the ease of data organisation and management provided by software such as NUD*IST, the researcher still plays a crucial role and it
is still necessary to think through “the analytic and theoretical relationships between original conceptualizations and eventual empirical evidence” (Berg, 1995, p.196). Issues related to the validity, reliability, and generalisability of interpretations and conclusions made as a result of these data analysis processes will be considered in the remainder of this chapter.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

This section of the chapter raises possible issues associated with the methods used to produce, analyse, and interpret the data. In particular it discusses in detail possible threats to the validity of the study and how these threats have been minimised. Issues of reliability and generalisability are also discussed. Making such issues explicit is important for a number of reasons. In general, qualitative research has been criticised as relying on “softer, interpretive methods” that are “unreliable, impressionistic, and not objective” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p.5). According to Altheide and Johnson (1994) one criterion of verisimilitude in qualitative research is learning about how the researcher resolved issues encountered during the research process. For example, openly identifying and minimising potential threats to validity allows readers to make their own judgments about the credibility of the research process and the resultant findings presented. The following discussion aims to allow readers to do this.

Validity

The following discussion outlines what are seen to be the major threats to the validity or credibility of the present study and specific ways these were addressed in the
research through various verification processes. The issue of validity is a particular concern in relation to the credibility of qualitative research findings, because as Patton (1990) stated, the validity of findings depends on the skill, competence and rigour of the researcher rather than on the rigour of the measurement instruments – the researcher “is the instrument” (p.14). In general validity refers to whether a measure or procedure actually measures what it purports to, and whether the conclusions or inferences drawn from that measure or procedure are appropriate (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1981). Various authors have suggested ways of addressing potential threats to validity (see, for example, Huberman & Miles, 1994; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Maxwell, 1998; Patton, 1990; Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1994; Yin, 1998). The discussion below includes reference to the influence of the researcher, the use of self-reports and retrospective accounts, the issue of reflection as an intervention, the need for triangulation, obtaining feedback and member checks, and the gathering of rich data.

_Researcher Influence and the Interviews_

When conducting interviews the researcher can exert a powerful influence on the data collected and resulting bias and reactivity may be the main threat to validity in qualitative research (Maxwell, 1998). The aim in this study was to minimise negative aspects and capitalise on positive aspects of researcher influence during the interviews. Rather than trying to eliminate researcher influences, "evaluators should strive neither to overestimate nor to underestimate their effects but to take seriously their responsibility to describe and study what those effects are" (Patton, 1990, p.475). As Fetterman (1998, p.473) suggested, researchers enter the field "with an open mind, not
an empty head." In order to maximise positive aspects of researcher influence the aim was to establish a positive relationship with participants, and to allow them to contribute to the research process.

To develop a positive relationship with participants it was important to be friendly and open with them, to display a real interest in their experiences, and to allow opportunities for them to include other issues they wished to discuss. Such positive relations allow participants to take some control over the research process and this can provide greater insights into their perceptions and the phenomenon under examination (Fontana & Frey, 1994) as well as minimise researcher influences. It was also important to be neutral and accepting in order to encourage participants to be open and to avoid the possibility of them trying to please the interviewer or censoring their responses (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Communicating personally with students to arrange interviews, conducting a second interview, and giving them an opportunity to change or clarify information given in the first interview, were ways of showing an interest and willingness to understand their experiences. Similarly, incorporating questions or comments relating to topics relevant to them, such as the pressures of doing the Tertiary Entry Examination or the task of learning to drive in the case of the school students, assisted in establishing a friendly open atmosphere.

Participants may also be encouraged to contribute ideas, concepts and perspectives to an analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1994), again increasing the influence of the participants. In order to accomplish this, open questions were used such as: “Is there anything else you think it is important for me to know about you as an
athlete/musician?” Being open, friendly and neutral while conducting interviews requires the suspending or setting aside of the researcher’s own biases – a concept referred to as bracketing. This allows the focus to be on the way members of a particular life world perceive and explain that world (Fetterman, 1998; Holstein & Gubrium, 1994).

Self-Reports and Retrospective Accounts

The main data sources for this study, the interviews and tasks, were in effect self-reports that included retrospective accounts. For example, participants were asked to provide their perceptions of key activities and important people in their lives as athletes and musicians. Such rich descriptions are important in qualitative research because they use the actual words of participants, provide depth and detail, and are seen to have face validity and credibility (Patton, 1990). De Groot (2002, p.203) wrote of "the power and utility of interviewing as an approach to inquiry into issues related to motivation and learning in educational contexts." Lemos (2001) also discussed the suitability of semistructured interviews for capturing subjective perspectives and Maxwell (1998) suggested that self-reports are appropriate when the interest is in addressing questions such as “how?” or “why?”

Concerns have been raised about the validity of asking individuals about past events because there is often a difference between perceptions of events as they occurred and perceptions of the same event after the occurrence (Galbo & Mayer Demetrulias, 1996). A research model using recollections of the past, however, “is interpretative and concerned less with the actuality of experience than with the conceptual evaluation
of the subjective structure of one’s life story” (p.407). Recollection is thus seen to provide a more comprehensive picture of past events because it incorporates influences of the participants’ additional age and experience – variables of interest in this study. While self-reports are therefore appropriate, various strategies have been used to ensure that the accounts provided represent as complete and accurate a picture as possible. For example, the interview process was made open and friendly as discussed above, and as explained later member checks were used.

**Reflection as Intervention**

The interview questions required participants to reflect on their past and present experiences. Self-reflection is one of the processes used as a strategy to assist in the development of self-regulation, and some questions took participants through the self-regulatory cycle proposed by Zimmerman (1998). At the end of Interview One participants were asked to state goals they wished to achieve; then at the start of the second interview they were asked whether they had achieved these or not, and to reflect on why. According to social cognitive theory, self-regulated learners engage in the processes of self-observation, self-judgment, and self-reaction. Encouraging learners to engage in self-monitoring and self-evaluation activities enhances their ability to be self-regulated learners (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1996). So a situation was created where the questions and tasks used in the interviews were simultaneously examining the degree of participants' self-regulatory processes, whilst also possibly developing those processes. Asking participants about their goals at the end of the first interview could have stimulated them to reflect on this and create or change any goals they may have had.
In order to address this possibility, participants were asked directly at the end of the second interview if they felt that participating in the study had influenced their thoughts, feelings or behaviours in any way. Only four participants replied that the interviews had no effect on them. Most replied that the questions and tasks had led to some additional reflection and made them more aware of their own motivational beliefs or strategies. Four other participants were able to indicate more specific changes they had made as a result of participating. For example, one adult musician said that he realised after being asked about his plans for the coming year that he had none, and so stimulated him to form a wind quintet. All the responses made to questions about the influence of the research were included as data.

**Triangulation**

Triangulation strengthens the credibility of research by reducing the risks associated with systematic bias from using one specific research method, one researcher, or one theoretical interpretation (Chenail, 1997; Maxwell, 1998; Patton, 1990). Although sometimes seen as referring only to the use of multiple data-gathering methods, triangulation can also include the use of multiple theories, multiple methodologies, multiple researchers, or combinations of these (Berg, 1995). Triangulation in any form is seen to add validity and credibility to a research inquiry as it “prevents the investigator from accepting too readily the validity of initial impressions; it enhances the scope, density, and clarity of constructs developed during the course of the investigation” (Goetz & LeComte, 1984).
One type of triangulation is that of checking the consistency of what people say about the same thing over time (Patton, 1990). This was possible in the present study because participants were interviewed about similar issues on two separate occasions. Perspectives of people with different viewpoints may also be compared to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena or situation being examined. So by selecting a diverse sample with people who met certain criteria yet came from a variety of settings, it was possible to gain multiple “lines of sight” on the phenomenon of motivation.

Another form of triangulation used in the present study was that of multiple analysts where sections of the data were coded separately by another researcher, the categories compared and discrepancies discussed and resolved. The data used for this were the participants’ responses to the question about who had made it more difficult to continue in sport or music (in the Circles of Influence Task). These data were selected as it was an area not often considered in the literature and inductive, open coding was used. An initial comparison of coding categories revealed a perfect agreement between coders on 71% of the categories. Discussion of the discrepancies led to the elimination of one coding category used by the researcher that contained only four responses. Other discrepancies were resolved. A further interesting point was that most discrepancies occurred because the researcher was interpreting the responses in the light of other information gained throughout the study. The verification coder only had the set of responses in isolation and commented that sometimes there was not enough information to make a confident coding decision. This reinforces the importance of contextualising data that was discussed earlier, and also highlights the
potential influence or bias inherent in any study conducted by a single researcher. Gaining feedback from others was therefore another important verification strategy.

Feedback

Researcher bias and hidden assumptions as well as flaws in logic, methods or interpretations may be addressed by soliciting feedback from others (Maxwell, 1998; Patton, 1990), and feedback was obtained in a number of ways. The principal source of feedback throughout the project was the researcher’s two supervisors who both were familiar with the area of motivation and experienced researchers. Their input and feedback was obtained at all points of the research process. A panel of experienced researchers provided feedback at the proposal stage of the research, particularly in relation to sampling, data gathering and data analysis. Attending and presenting at various research conferences allowed further opportunities for obtaining feedback. Finally, feedback was obtained through informal discussions with other experienced researchers who were sought out because of their particular interests or expertise. For example, meetings were organised with visiting scholars and correspondence exchanged with overseas and interstate researchers. Such peer review is regarded as an important way to strengthen a study’s validity (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982).

Member Checks

Member checks, another form of feedback, are the systematic soliciting of the views of participants with regard to the accuracy of data gathered and of interpretations and conclusions drawn from that data (Maxwell, 1998). Generally participants are given
material written about them or their activities and comment on the accuracy of the facts and interpretations portrayed (Patton, 1990; Yin, 1998). Member checks occurred in a number of ways in this study, with the main one being the structured use of summaries of Interview One that were sent to all participants before Interview Two. They were invited to make any alterations or additions necessary to accurately reflect their responses and these were incorporated into the transcripts. Nine participants made no changes. The most common forms of alterations were of minor biographical details such as the spelling of a team or band name, or the year in which a particular event occurred, and sixteen participants made such changes. Five participants made more significant changes such as additions or alterations to the Circles of Influence task. Some commented that the summary fairly represented what they had said or made some other comment such as that it was interesting to see their ideas written down. All participants were invited to, and did, sign a statement at the end of their amended summary as being an accurate reflection of their ideas: “I agree that this summary fairly represents the ideas expressed in my first interview.”

Member checks were also formally solicited in the Issues Sorting Task. This gave all participants a direct opportunity to give their position on issues that had been raised in the first interview – to what extent they were issues for themselves, or indeed “issues” at all. Some time after Interview Two when analysis of results had begun, all participants were posted a summary of some overall findings and invited to comment on this. Only one participant responded, perhaps indicating that they were satisfied with the summaries. Alternatively, creating a face-to-face or more personal situation, similar to the previous interviews, may have produced more feedback.
The final question in both interviews allowed for member checks in that it allowed participants to introduce topics or information they thought relevant. The extent and nature of participants’ comments were also taken as evidence that rapport had been developed between the researcher and participants. For example, at the end of Interview Two participants were asked: “Is there anything else you think it is important for me to know about being an athlete/musician? Or about which you think ‘I wonder why she hasn’t asked me about this?’” Although sixteen participants had no further comments and five made a brief statement reiterating a point they had already made, nine (eight adults) gave a lengthy reply and introduced new ideas. These comments gave a greater insight into the views of those participants as they raised matters that were of particular significance to them. One athlete spoke about the difficulties he had experienced throughout his career because of his parents’ divorce. A musician began his reply by saying: “You haven’t asked me if I’m happy with what I’m doing” and this led to a discussion about his current dissatisfaction with his life.

Finally, member checks were informally conducted as participants provided input during the research process in a number of ways. Some participants offered the researcher extra information related to the interview questions. For example, an athlete lent a video of television coverage of one of his games that included an interview with him. One musician brought to the second interview a commercially produced video of his band on tour and a copy of tour details. Others contacted the researcher in writing or by phone to clarify points made in their interviews. In the second interview some participants asked detailed questions about the research project and all said they would be interested in receiving information about the findings –
especially about what other people had said. In other words data gathering occurred as a reciprocal process, with participants encouraged to take an active part. Participant contributions enhanced the richness of the available data and cross-checking strengthened the study’s credibility.

**Rich Data**

Gathering rich data is another way of enhancing the credibility of research findings (Maxwell, 1998). Data produced need to be detailed and complete enough to provide a full picture of the phenomenon under examination. For example, Maxwell suggested that using verbatim transcripts of interviews (as was done in this study) for data analysis, rather than researcher notes, reduces the possibility that the researcher will only record and analyse that which supports their prejudices and expectations. As already explained, large amounts of data were gathered and participants went beyond the set questions and tasks in order to explain and illustrate their perceptions and understandings, providing not only extensive, but also rich data.

**Reliability and Generalisability**

Qualitative research has often been accused of being unreliable (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). Reliability is concerned with the consistency of findings, but if measures are valid, they are also reliable (Graziano & Raulin, 2004). Having taken care that valid data have been gathered, there can be some assurance of its reliability. A greater concern in this study is the generalisability of findings across different populations. Generalisability refers to the extent to which information gathered, for example, about
a program in one setting “can be used to reach a valid judgment about how it will perform in other settings” (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 1981, p.152). This study focused on capturing the experiences of a relatively small number of individuals from a diverse but limited range of settings. With small samples and a variety of qualitative data, issues of generalisability arise. Without statistical analysis to confirm the significance of observed patterns or trends, it cannot be assumed that findings are "real and not merely the effects of chance" (Adler & Adler, 1994, p.381). However, authenticity and authority, rather than typicality are generally the focus in qualitative research, with the emphasis on capturing the unique character of a person or group. This is seen to be of sufficient interest in its own right and it is not necessary to go beyond the particular case (Hammersley & Gomm, 2000).

In a sense in the present study, because of the diversity of sampling, each participant may be regarded as a separate case. Case studies give access to the inner lives of people and the underlying causal mechanisms that generate human behaviour (Hammersley, Gomm, & Foster, 2000). The interest is not on whether any results are necessarily typical of larger or of other populations. As Stake (1994, p.245) suggested: "The purpose of the case study is not to represent the world, but to represent the case." As in this study, generalisations are therefore not based on sampling of a defined population, but arise from the development of theory that may then be extended to other cases (Hammersley & Gomm, 2000; Maxwell, 1998).

Despite such reservations, case study researchers gathering data about specific people or settings, can and do draw conclusions about a phenomenon or about members of a
wider population (Gomm, Hammersley, & Foster, 2000). Most researchers "appeal to the general relevance of the cases they study in order to establish the value of their work" (p.99). These authors also suggested that to some extent generalisations are always implied or present in case studies. When researchers make judgments about which case to select initially or to use as an example, assumptions are made about the relationship between that case and others. A case is seen to be a microcosm of a larger system or society, and readers themselves will make generalisations as they try to apply findings to their own experiences.

Given then that some degree of generalisation of findings may occur, what supports are needed for this? To ensure claims are transferable Goetz and LeCompte (1984, p.9) said it is necessary that "research methods, analytic categories, and characteristics of phenomena and groups are identified so explicitly that comparisons can be conducted confidently and used meaningfully across groups and disciplines." This chapter and the following chapters describing results and interpretations, attempt to provide such detail. Patton (1990, p.471) reinforced this point by saying that any conclusions must be limited to “those situations, time periods, persons, contexts, and purposes for which the data are applicable." Corroboration from other studies may also lend credibility to generalisations made (Maxwell, 1998), and references are made to relevant literature when discussing specific findings in the chapters presenting results of the study. The view in this study therefore is that it is useful to generalise findings to other groups and contexts, but that any such generalisations must be made with caution. It is recognised that qualitative analysis emphasises “illumination,
understanding and extrapolation, rather than causal determination, prediction and generalization” (Patton, 1990, p.423).

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER
A description and discussion of the methods of research used in the study have been provided in this chapter. An overview of the main features of the research design was followed by some discussion of the use of qualitative research methods. Details of the way participants were selected and their main characteristics were given. Sources and types of data were outlined including details of the interviews and the five tasks designed for the study. The procedures carried out were described and ethical issues associated with planning, conducting and publishing the research discussed. Methods used to manage, organise and interpret the data were explained. Finally issues related to validity, reliability and generalisability were raised and how potential issues of concern were addressed in the study explained. A summary of all the issues discussed in the chapter, and how these were addressed is presented in Table 4.7.

PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS
The presentation and interpretations of results are also open to the issues affecting validity discussed in this chapter. To counteract threats to analytic validity, Berg (1995, pp.192-3) suggested that "every assertion made in the analysis should be documented with no fewer than three examples." Where practicable this suggestion has been implemented. Descriptive statistics and visual displays are also used to summarise findings and clarify interpretations. Using descriptive statistics such as
frequency distributions may be helpful as a finding is "more convincing" when it appears in a large proportion of the data under examination (Berg, 1995, p.176).

Table 4.7: Methodological Issues and Verification Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues and verification strategies</th>
<th>How addressed in this study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonsystematic additional data</td>
<td>• Used as illustration and interpreted with caution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>• Informed consent obtained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trust developed and privacy respected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher influence and the interviews</td>
<td>• Researcher experiences and beliefs made explicit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Developed rapport with participants e.g. maximise choices, acknowledge value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bracketing – separated researcher and participant views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-reports and retrospective accounts</td>
<td>• Focused on participants’ interpretations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflection as Intervention</td>
<td>• Asked explicitly about effect of research process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triangulation</td>
<td>• Views of diverse sample gathered over time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Used an independent coder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>• Actively sought feedback from supervisors, colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member checks</td>
<td>• Interview summaries given for feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific questions asked, additional input encouraged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich data</td>
<td>• Verbatim transcripts and additional data used for analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>• Focused on authenticity of findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Generalisations made with caution</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When presenting results the aim was to adhere to recommendations that "participants' experiences must be presented in their own voices" and that analysis must begin from the perspectives of the participants before presenting the researcher's own analysis and interpretation of the data (Krane et al., 1997, p.216). Direct quotations from the interview transcripts will be used to illustrate interpretations made. Separating description from interpretation is also seen by Patton (1990) as a way to focus an analysis. The researcher's interpretations incorporate personal and conceptual background because as researchers "we are always engaged in living, telling, reliving, and retelling our own stories" (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p.418). The writer's experiences are crucial in shaping a "field text" into a "research text." It is the researcher's responsibility then to include both the perspectives and voices of the people studied as well as the researcher's interpretations (Strauss & Corbin, 1994).

In addition when disseminated, research findings are always interpreted and understood by an audience. Clandinin and Connelly (1994) nicely expressed the dilemma for a constructivist researcher gathering qualitative data. They described the struggle to express one's own voice in an inquiry that is designed to represent participants' voices and experiences, while all the time "attempting to create a research text that will speak to, and reflect upon, the audiences' voices" (p.423).

The general background to the study, the conceptual framework, related research, and methods and methodological issues have been presented and discussed. The next four chapters (Chapters Five to Eight) present the findings of the study and these are
organised around the three types of person-context interface. Table 4.8 indicates the relevant research questions and key findings.

Table 4.8: Summary of the Results Chapters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research question</th>
<th>Key findings presented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Five</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. How do individuals’ appraisals of aspects of context shape their motivation in sport and music?</td>
<td>Person-context factors and matrix relating to getting started. Person and community both make appraisals. Motivation is reciprocally shaped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapters Six and Seven</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How do interactions with a range of other people shape individuals’ motivation in sport and music in positive and negative ways?</td>
<td>Dimensions of positive and negative influences of others. Same others can be seen as both positive and negative. Communities can overlap</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Eight</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How do problems within the context shape individuals’ motivation in sport and music?</td>
<td>Problems, strategy use and nature of involvement change over time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results presented in Chapter Five relate to appraisals, the first type of person-context interface, and illustrate the reciprocal nature of the person-context relationship. Both personal and contextual factors shaped participants’ appraisals of, and thus initial engagement in, sport and music. It was also found that motivation was reciprocally

constructed as communities and individuals both made mutual appraisals that shaped the nature of ongoing involvement.

Results relating to social interactions, the second type of person-context interface, are presented in Chapters Six and Seven and illustrate the complex nature of the person-context relationship. Dimensions of positive and negative interactions are outlined in Chapter Six. Some people were perceived as having both a positive and a negative influence. Adding to the complexity, individuals could also belong to overlapping communities. An examination of interactions between participants and onlookers, a particular group of “others” in sport and music (Chapter Seven) further illustrates the way such social interactions with others shaped motivation.

Chapter Eight focuses on the third type of person-context interface, problems faced by participants, and how these shaped motivation. The results presented illustrated the dynamic nature of the person-context relationship. Participants’ motivation changed over time as their personal and contextual circumstances changed.
Part II: Findings of the Study
Well what I really wanted to learn was the flute. I had my heart set on learning the flute. … but … my body just wasn’t suited to the instrument. So the school was very generous enough to offer me an alternative in the form of the clarinet. … That’s the beginning of a long relationship. (Jon, adult male musician)

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss findings that address the research question relating to how individuals’ appraisals of context shape their motivation in sport and music (Research Question 1, Table 3.2). Literature reviewed earlier (Chapter Three) indicated that an individual’s appraisals are shaped by characteristics of that individual and by perceived characteristics of that context. So it is necessary to examine what characteristics of persons and what characteristics of contexts are important in making appraisals, and the nature of the interrelationship between these. A further question of interest is whether there are differences across domains, across individuals, and over time in appraisals and the nature of resultant involvement. These questions are addressed in this chapter through an examination of two sets of findings: the first relating to participants’ initial engagement in sport or music; and the second relating to participants’ ongoing involvement in their sporting and musical communities. The results relating to initial engagement and to ongoing involvement are considered in turn.
Firstly, the characteristics of persons and of contexts relevant to initial engagement are examined. Overall findings regarding participants’ initial engagement in sport and music, differences between subgroups (domain, age and gender) and individual variations are then discussed. Then the relationship between participants’ appraisals and their initial engagement in their major area of sport or music is considered.

The second part of the chapter presents data regarding the nature of participants’ ongoing involvement in their communities. Subgroup and individual differences in the extent and nature of ongoing involvement are presented first as they illustrate the diversity of data. How persons and contexts make appraisals of each other is discussed next. Individual case studies are presented that illustrate the reciprocal, complex and dynamic nature of these appraisals in relation to ongoing involvement. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of the findings which are discussed in relation to prior research.

APPRAISALS AND INITIAL ENGAGEMENT

Initial Engagement

One aspect of motivated action is initial engagement. Examining participants’ descriptions of how they became involved with their major sport or instrument enabled the relevant personal and contextual factors to be teased out, and the role of perceptions and appraisals in that initial involvement to be better understood. The Time Line Task was the main source of data used to examine initial engagement as
participants were asked in the task to describe their involvement over the years, and were also asked specifically about how they got started in sport or music.

Two types of initial engagement were evident from participants’ responses: exposure and formal engagement. Exposure to sport or music occurred in two ways: through the observation of others, or through involvement in general school sport and music programs. Only six adolescents reported not seeing others involved in sport or music as preschoolers, and all participants took part in their general school sport and music programs. The focus in this chapter is on formal engagement which was defined differently for sport and for music. In sport it meant joining a community sporting organisation, and for music, commencing individual or small group instrumental lessons. When beginning formal involvement, not all participants began with the sport or instrument that became their major focus – the sport or instrument relating to their selection as participants in this study. Seventeen participants began their formal involvement in one area then changed to the sport or instrument that was regarded as the major focus in this study.

Tables 5.1 and 5.2 indicate, for adolescent and adult participants respectively, the age of their initial formal engagement in sport or music, the age at which they began playing their major sport or instrument, and the length of time they had played their major sport or instrument at Interview One. Participants' formal engagement in sport and music began at varying times and the tables illustrate the variability in the sample of participants, indicating that that selecting people from a range of backgrounds and experiences led to a breadth of available data.
Table 5.1: Adolescent Participants' Formal Engagement in Sport and Music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age (in years) at start of initial formal engagement (15-16 yrs)</th>
<th>Age (in years) at start of major focus</th>
<th>Years at Interview One with major focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Athletes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6 (cricket)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6 (cricket)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiden</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5 (cricket)</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carly</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7 (hockey)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine</td>
<td>5 (athletics)</td>
<td>7 (hockey)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cara</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7 (hockey)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy</td>
<td>6 (various)</td>
<td>9 (hockey)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musicians</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12 (percussion)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damien</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8 (percussion)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12 (tuba)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>9 (piano)</td>
<td>11 (clarinet)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sasha</td>
<td>3 (keyboard)</td>
<td>9 (violin)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha</td>
<td>7 (singing)</td>
<td>10 (clarinet)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12 (trombone)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvia</td>
<td>10 (trumpet)</td>
<td>12 (euphonium)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants varied in the time they had spent with their major sport or instrument as well as with the amount of overall experience in sport or music in general. Gauging the extent of experience and expertise was a complex issue and is discussed in more detail later. Despite variations among participants, it was possible to identify personal and contextual factors across participants relating both to initial engagement in sport or
music in general, as well as to initial engagement in the sport or instrument that became the major focus. The next section explains how data relating to factors affecting initial engagement were analysed.

Table 5.2: Adult Participants’ Formal Engagement in Sport and Music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Age (in years) at start of initial formal engagement</th>
<th>Age (in years) at start of major focus</th>
<th>Years at Interview One with major focus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Athletes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brad</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6 (Aust. football)</td>
<td>18 (4 yr break)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byron</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10 (cricket)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brett</td>
<td>9 (swimming etc)</td>
<td>15 (rowing)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blake</td>
<td>5 (little athletics)</td>
<td>5 (Aust. football)</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret</td>
<td>6 (netball etc)</td>
<td>11 (hockey)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>4 (swimming etc)</td>
<td>20 (beach v’ball)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>4 (gymnastics etc)</td>
<td>13 (rowing)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moira</td>
<td>4 (gymnastics etc)</td>
<td>27 (rowing)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musicians</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon</td>
<td>9 (piano)</td>
<td>10 (clarinet)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10 (trombone)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>9 (clarinet)</td>
<td>16 (guitar)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jake</td>
<td>5 (piano)</td>
<td>11 (guitar)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tania</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7 (violin)</td>
<td>20 (4 year break)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa</td>
<td>3 (violin)</td>
<td>9 (cello)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy</td>
<td>8 (piano)</td>
<td>12 (cello)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Categorising the Factors Relating to Initial Formal Engagement

The existing literature (reviewed in Chapters Two and Three), and the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) informed the analysis of participants’ responses regarding their initial engagement in sport or music. It was expected from prior research that initial engagement would involve factors relating to both the person and the context. For example, in the domain of sport, researchers such as Helsen, Hodges, Van Winkel and Starkes (2000) and Williams and Reilly (2000) argued that programs designed to detect talent should not be based solely on the presence of certain physical and psychological characteristics in individuals, when it is known that participating in deliberate practice and other activities of the domain is crucial to develop elite athletes. Similarly, with regard to the development of musical skills, there is increasing support for the idea that individual cognitive ability alone is insufficient, and that motivational, social and educational factors are also involved (see, for example, O'Neill, 1997).

Responses relating to personal factors such as interest were initially coded deductively into a category called “self-starts”, and all other responses, relating to various aspects of the context, into a category called “other-starts.” Responses in this second category were then coded into two factors of family/friends and community/school. The three factors were then coded inductively into further subcategories or elements that emerged from the data. These categories (factors) and subcategories (elements) are summarised in Table 5.3. Although it will be seen that the elements within the contextual factors of family/friends and community/school are identical, it was decided to code them separately as they reflected different levels of context in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). Family and friends were seen to be at the microlevel of
community, whereas the wider neighbourhood and school were regarded as being at the macrolevel of organisational system.

Table 5.3: Factors Influencing Participants’ Initial Formal Engagement in Sport and Music

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor of Influence</th>
<th>Element</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>• Interest, aptitude or preference expressed or demonstrated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Willingness to accept an invitation or openness to other options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Physical characteristics including age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/Friends</td>
<td>• Environment conducive to sport or music through the prior involvement of parents, siblings and/or friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific invitation to participate or a recognition and acting upon an expressed interest, aptitude or preference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Resources available and provided to support an individual’s involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/School</td>
<td>• Environment conducive to involvement in sport or music through general and specific programs and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific invitation to participate or a recognition and acting upon an expressed interest, aptitude or preference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Resources available and provided to support an individual’s involvement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although these factors are important and relevant to those interested in encouraging individuals to engage in sport and music, the relationship between them is more important in terms of this inquiry. Therefore illustrations of each factor and its separate elements, rather than being included here in the main presentation of results, appear in Appendix C where examples are provided across domains, age groups and
genders to illustrate the similar patterns across these subgroups. Although responses are given to illustrate one particular characteristic, the examples in Appendix C often illustrate the presence of other characteristics, and this will be discussed in more detail later. A brief overview of each of the factors and elements is provided below.

Personal Factors

Examining the data relating to initial engagement revealed that for each participant there were personal or individual factors involved and these could be categorised according to three main elements: showing an interest or aptitude, making a decision or accepting an offer to play, and having the appropriate physical characteristics. The same characteristics were evident both with regard to initial formal engagement as well as when participants changed their focus and examples of both are provided in Appendix C.

Interest, Aptitude or Preference Expressed or Demonstrated

Many participants expressed positive perceptions or made positive appraisals of playing sport or music (in general or of a particular type). For some participants this occurred from an early age such as Brad, an adult athlete, who said that as a preschooler he was “obsessed with kicking a football.” The presence of the element of expressing or demonstrating interest, aptitude or preference, is supported by considerable research discussing the important role of interest in relation to initial engagement, involvement and persistence (see, for example, Ainley, 2002; Ainley et al., 2003; Ainley & Hidi, 2002; Pekrun, Goetz, & Titz, 2002a).
Willingness to Accept an Invitation or Openness to Other Options

Most participants appeared to be open to accept offers made or options available, illustrating that a reciprocal interrelationship was needed between person and context. That is, when the context provides various options, the individual must be open to these and respond to them in order for engagement to occur. For example, at school, Mary, an adult athlete, said she was involved with “pretty much everything that existed” in relating to sporting activities. The quote at the beginning of the chapter indicated that Jon was prepared to consider an alternative instrument to his first preference. This study did not formally examine personality types and research has not demonstrated convincingly that any particular personality characteristics are associated with playing sport (Williams & Reilly, 2000) or music (Cribb & Gregory, 1999). This willingness to accept or be open to options, however, was an important personal characteristic of the participants in this study.

Physical Characteristics Including Age

For some participants finding a match between their own physical characteristics and the physical demands of particular sports or instruments seemed important. For example, Theresa, an adult musician, said that she stopped playing the piano because “the whole two hands thing didn’t happen for me.” Age may be considered as a critical physical characteristic of an individual in terms of the continuing development of strength and skills, and this is important, for example, in sports such as rowing. As argued when explaining the development of the Model of Motivated Action in Chapter Two, physical factors need to be included when examining motivation and some existing research supports this idea (Williams & Reilly, 2000).
Contextual Factors Relating to Family and Friends

The broader roles played by family and friends are discussed in more detail when presenting results relating to interactions and motivation (Chapter Six). The examples in Appendix C briefly illustrate their role in initial engagement. Once again the reciprocity of personal and contextual factors is evident either implicitly or explicitly in the responses. For example, although family and friends may have initially created a supportive environment, without an interest or a willingness on the part of the individual to become involved, that is they made a positive appraisal of the situation, formal engagement would not have occurred.

An Environment Conducive to Sport or Music Through the Prior Involvement of Parents, Siblings and/or Friends

Many of the participants reported that they had older siblings, parents or friends who were involved in sport or music and for some there was a natural progression into similar areas. As Cara, an adolescent athlete, said, “it’s just kind of the thing to do.” Theory and research reviewed in Chapter Three showed how people such as family members could, for example, act as models to demonstrate skills or values. Not all participants had early exposure through their family, but all had their support. The findings of this study are therefore consistent with research indicating the importance of family in the development of talent (Freeman, 2000; Sloane, 1985).
A Specific Invitation to Participate or a Recognition and Acting Upon Expressed Interest, Aptitude or Preference

Another role that families and friends played was to offer a specific invitation to play, or to act upon expressed interests or observed aptitudes. For example, friends sometimes invited participants to join in a sporting team with them, and some parents bought their son or daughter their own instrument after they had begun learning on a school one. It could be said that the individual’s context (family or friends) perceived an interest or made a positive appraisal about him or her in relation to sport or music. Talent development literature discusses how individuals may be identified and so be invited to participate in activities, as well as other implications of being identified as gifted (see, for example, Frydenberg & Lewis, 1999; Greenspon, 2000) and this element was relevant for some participants in this study.

Resources Available and Provided to Support an Individual’s Involvement

For all the participants in this study, parental support and resources had been available at the early stages of their formal involvement, and for most during their school years. The parents of participants provided practical and emotional support. Apart from Sasha, who explained later in the interviews that the decision to make the violin her major focus was made in part because of the financial cost to her family, no participants suggested that resources or support from family or friends, or lack of these, guided their decision to change their major focus. In general, families and friends were happy to support the participants in whatever they chose to do and many participants commented on this in their later responses in the Circles of Influence Task. The presence of this element is consistent with research relating to continuing
motivation in sport and music (Patrick et al., 1999). The nature of support provided will be examined in more detail when discussing the results relating to interactions and motivation (Chapter Six).

Contextual Factors Relating to Community and School

*An Environment Conducive to Involvement in Sport or Music Through General and Specific Programs and Activities*

Schools in Western Australia provide opportunities both for general and for more intensive involvement in sport and music. In addition many community groups run sporting programs and organise teams, and music teachers and programs are available in the community. All the athletes had participated in community sporting programs as well as taking up opportunities in their schools. All the musicians had been involved in some form of music program at their schools and many had also been involved in community groups. So in this study this was an essential element for initial engagement.

As already discussed, participants needed to be willing and able to take up opportunities in their schools and communities. Some had moved from the country to the city and to other states to take up such opportunities, but no information was obtained in this study relating to individuals who would have liked opportunities but were unable to access them. Some participants did refer to a lack of opportunities, but it was beyond the scope of this study to examine these in detail. Some reference to this issue appears later when discussing issues or problems faced by participants (see Chapter Eight).
A Specific Invitation to Participate or a Recognition and Acting Upon Expressed Interest, Aptitude or Preference

Invitations to participate were offered in a general way when schools asked classes of students if they wanted to play a particular sport or learn a musical instrument. Invitations could also be made on an individual basis in response to an expressed or perceived interest or aptitude. In other words another person made a positive appraisal or judgment of a participant’s ability or interest and acted upon this. For example, Jake’s music teacher developed a specific course for him and his friends in high school. Such invitations prompted some participants to decide on their major focus. Little research relating to talent development specifically examines this element. Research related to acting upon expressed preferences, however, has demonstrated the importance, for example, of teachers choosing appropriate music that matches their students’ preferences (Kennedy, 2002).

Resources Available and Provided to Support an Individual’s Involvement

The element of available resources in the community or school is implied in many of the examples in Appendix C. The existence of adequately resourced community and school sporting and music programs was essential for new opportunities to be considered and interests pursued. Daniel was regarded as a musician in the study because he played in his school’s music program. He also played sport at school and in the community and his comments about joining community sporting clubs indicate the importance of such resources and support.

Yeah opportunity again. Because by joining them, it's like a domino thing. Or maybe not. Like an explosion chart kind of thing. You join one and that then like opens up other choices. And if you join them that opens up more choices. So it's like you go to a club, say for soccer, and then you go district and then that opens up the state, and then
you like get recognised at high school 'cause you're in the state team. Then that brings you to the Firsts and then the Firsts might bring you to other stuff. (Daniel, adolescent male musician)

Subgroup Analysis and Initial Engagement

The personal and contextual characteristics identified above were common across all subgroups of participants. There were, however, some differences in initial engagement and change of focus between the subgroups of domain, age and gender. These are discussed in this section of the chapter.

Domain

Participants’ responses about their initial engagement and how they changed to their major focus were remarkably similar in nature across the domains of sport and music. For example, in Tables 5.1 and 5.2 it may be seen that the age of commencing formal involvement ranged from the ages of 4 to 10 years for the athletes and 3 to 12 years for the musicians. The most noticeable difference between domains was the range of starting ages for the major sport or instrument. For athletes the range was from 5 to 27 years. The musicians' starting age for their major instrument was less varied and ranged from 9 to 15 years. Some possible differences between the nature of different sports and instruments, as well as contextual opportunities could account for this. In the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) context was seen as comprising different levels and this discussion illustrates the way that domain, type and organisational levels of context can shape the nature of involvement.
One difference between domains already highlighted was that organisational structures in sport and music meant that the term formal engagement needed to be defined differently for athletes and musicians. All Western Australian students participate in general physical education classes in primary school and in the first three years of secondary school. Opportunities to compete in school teams and competitions are also available for interested students. Specialist sporting programs are offered in some Western Australian schools at secondary school level (generally the year students turn thirteen). All the adolescent athletes in this study were in such programs, but none of the adult athletes had been as they were a relatively recent provision. Although all the athletes were exposed to sport during regular school programs, they all began their first formal involvement in community sporting groups.

Music is organised differently. Primary schools offer general class music lessons about once a week but this depends on the availability of a teacher. At secondary level music may be compulsory for the first year but is generally optional after that. Most government and non-government schools, certainly in the metropolitan area of Perth, and in larger regional centres, offer primary school students the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. Generally a form is sent home, either to every student in a particular year group or to those who are interested. A selection process then determines who is offered individual or small group tuition. Five of the adolescent musicians and two adult musicians began their formal engagement in this way; the others had commenced private lessons in the community on another instrument. So differences in organisational structure led to some differences in the way initial formal engagement occurred in the domains.
A further point about the different domains of sport and music and initial formal engagement, relates to the particular types of sport and instruments – another level of context in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). Different sports and instruments require different cognitive and physical characteristics, and some are more expensive than others or require special facilities. For example, Australian Rules football and hockey are widely available in both city and country locations and have modified versions for younger players (Auskick and Minkey respectively) that place less cognitive and physical demands on young players. Rowing, on the other hand, is generally not available until the second year of secondary school, Year 9 (around 14 years), because of its physical demands. It is also an expensive sport in terms of resources so would not be available in many schools. A sport like beach volleyball also requires special facilities. Such sports as these are less likely to be available to children and younger adolescents, and to those living in less affluent communities, so the age of initial engagement in such sports is likely to be older than with more prevalent ones.

A similar point may be made about opportunities available in school music programs. Offers to learn stringed instruments tend to be made earlier (to start learning in Year 4, the year students turn nine) than for brass or wind (to start learning in Year 6, the year students turn eleven), since these instruments require greater physical capacity. Stringed instruments may also be reduced physically in size for younger players so can be started earlier. Other instruments such as percussion are more expensive and so less available for most schools and individuals.
In summary, there were differences at the domain, type and organisational levels of context (macrolevel) that related to the method and location of initial engagement, and the age at which a particular sport or instrument could be taken up. There were other age-related differences in the findings and these are discussed in the next section.

**Age**

*Age and initial exposure.*

One difference between the two age groups in the sample was in the amount and nature of initial exposure in the relevant domain. As already explained, exposure to sport or music occurred in two ways. One type of exposure occurred through involvement in general class sport or music lessons in primary school and all participants reported this type of exposure. In the second type of exposure, participants may have observed parents, siblings, other family members, friends or peers, participating in activities related to sport or music. All of the adult participants reported this type of exposure as preschoolers. Nine adolescent participants reported this type of exposure but six said they had none, or could remember none before they went to school. So from the responses in this study, it could be argued that some of the adolescent participants came from home environments perhaps less conducive to involvement with sport or music.

This finding could be related to the actual experiences of the participants or it could be related to the methodology used. One of the purposes of the Time Line Task was to build rapport and activate memories so probing was minimal, especially at the
beginning of the task. Adult participants were more likely to elaborate on their answers, so later responses sometimes informed earlier questions. Without corroborating information from others such as parents, it is not possible to state emphatically whether all participants were exposed to the domain as very young children, but it seems this was less likely for the adolescent participants in this study. Research suggests that family and friends play an important role in the initial engagement, involvement and persistence in domains such as sport and music (see, for example, Chadwick, 2000; Davidson et al., 1997; Patrick et al., 1999; Sloane, 1985). It would be interesting to follow up and see if the adolescent participants without early exposure still persist in the domain as adults. The point here is that early exposure was a contributing factor to initial engagement for some, but not all, of the participants.

*Age and experience.*

Participants were selected from two age groups and it was expected that there would be a difference in the amount of experience, and therefore the extent of their involvement, with the adult participants having persisted over a longer period of time. This was not necessarily the case. There were some indications that the adult group did have more years of overall experience than the adolescent group. For example, the average number of years of involvement in the major area was 13.5 years for the adult group compared with 5.5 years for the adolescent group. Ten adults had also participated in a considerable amount of formal activity prior to commencing in their major area. For example, the two adult female athletes who had begun their major sport after leaving school had both been involved in organised sport since preschool age. Two other adult participants (one athlete and one musician) had taken breaks
during their high school and university years and had concentrated on formal involvement in another area of the domain during this time.

Although adult participants as a group had more experience on average than the adolescents, there were considerable individual variations in the number of years each participant had played his or her major sport or instrument (see Tables 5.1 and 5.2). For example, Moira had commenced her major sport at the age of twenty-seven and so had only four years’ experience, whereas one of the adolescent athletes, Aiden, had been playing his major sport since the age of five i.e. for eleven years. Similarly one adolescent musician, Sasha, began learning the piano at the age of three (no longer her major focus), whereas others did not begin formal lessons until their first year of high school at the age of twelve or thirteen.

A further factor impacting on the experience versus expertise issue is that many participants, both adolescent and adult, were or had been actively involved in playing more than one sport or instrument, and participated in more than one team or ensemble. So they had a wide range of related experience in the domain, even though it may not have been in their area of major focus. This issue was explored by Ericsson (1996a) who discussed the difficulties of producing reliable, reproducible descriptions and measures of expertise, and in this study it was also found that experience-expertise links were complex and not as straightforward as expected.
Gender

Differences attributable solely to gender in relation to initial engagement or change of focus were not evident in this study. Given the small sample size and the fact that participants came from diverse areas, it is not possible to say that gender differences would not be found between male and female athletes and musicians. Gender and other factors were, however, confounded in the present sample. For example, all the adult male musicians played their instruments professionally or semiprofessionally, whereas all the adult female musicians interviewed were amateurs. All adolescent female athletes played hockey, and all the adolescent male athletes played cricket. Therefore any observable differences between genders could be attributed to other factors.

In summary, data analysis based on the subgroup characteristics revealed individual variation in the extent of participants’ early exposure to the domain, in their ages of commencing formal involvement, and in the extent of their experiences. Despite such differences between subgroups the same broad personal and contextual characteristics related to initial engagement emerged. Different factors, however, were relevant for different participants. The following discussion illustrates how these factors operated to shape initial engagement in different ways for different individuals.

Individual Variations and Initial Engagement

Both personal and contextual factors have been identified that were important in relation to initial engagement with sport and music in general and with the sports or
instruments that were participants’ major focus (see Table 5.3). Individuals perceived sport or music to be interesting or enjoyable, perceived options offered as acceptable, and perceived that they could physically play the respective sport or instrument. Contexts, in the form of family, friends, communities or schools promoted or responded to such personal characteristics through the provision of environments conducive to involvement, through specific invitations, and through the provision of resources and support. In order to understand how such personal and contextual factors worked together or were interrelated, the experiences of individual participants were examined.

Two case studies are presented here to illustrate the different ways personal and contextual factors operate in relation to initial engagement. These case studies show how two participants began their initial engagement with sport and music in general, and with their major sport or instrument in particular. Early analysis of participants’ initial engagement included grouping participants according to two broad categories of “self starts” and “other starts.” These categories were derived from an impression of whether personal or contextual factors seemed more important in a participant’s initial engagement. The first case study, relating to Moira, a female athlete, on initial examination, seemed to emphasise the role of personal characteristics. The second case study describes the experiences of Jake, a male musician, and initially appeared to show the prime importance of contextual factors in relation to initial engagement. Both case studies, however, when analysed in more detail could be seen to illustrate that personal and contextual factors operate in a reciprocal way.
Moira: An Adult Female Athlete

Moira began rowing at the age of twenty-seven and so had only four years’ experience at the first interview, but she had participated in various sports before making rowing her major focus. She had competed in state regattas and her goal was to represent the state in national rowing competitions. While pursuing this goal, she had deferred university studies and reduced her work at a Recreation Centre. The greatest factor affecting Moira’s continued involvement in rowing was personal enjoyment; she loved it and said: "I've never enjoyed a sport as much as this."

Moira was in different circumstances from other participants as both her parents had died and she had no siblings. Her mother’s support in her early years did seem to have been important, but subsequently family factors became negligible. Her interest in sports in general, and her determination and love of rowing in particular, are evident throughout her responses. It was clear that personal factors were the main reason both for her initial engagement in sports, and for the change to rowing as her major focus. Moira’s description of and reflection on her involvement through preschool, school and early adult years illustrate her efforts to find the right match between her own personal interests and characteristics, and a particular sport.

I know I did gymnastics in the preschool years. And I wasn't very good so I didn't do it for very long (laughs).

… So through the primary school years I played tennis for three years. And I wasn't very good at that either (laughs)! But I mean I enjoyed all the sports. I have to say I enjoyed them all… I played just normal school sports. You know school carnivals. Running. I quite enjoyed sprinting and long jumps. And I played netball. And I was really bad at netball.

… So by the time I got to my secondary years, I decided that I was going to be a netballer by hook or by crook. Because all my friends were really good and I was really bad. So I kept at it through to my early adult years. So I really - I played netball for about nine years - and by the time I finished I was playing A Grade netball. Yeah
and I was pretty happy with that. All my friends had stopped and I kept going (laughs) just to show them that I could. … netball was like the sport that I was playing seriously but I also swum and played squash.

… And then it was mainly social things like beach volleyball and indoor cricket. So nothing - it was more for fun. Definitely more for fun than for fitness. So I probably wasn't as fit as I had been years previously but it was something to do. Like I can't not play sport. (Moira, adult female athlete)

In the above quotes, although a prevailing theme is individual interest and persistence, opportunities to play various sports were available in Moira’s schools and communities. Her mother’s early influence and her friends also played a role and Moira’s change to rowing came about because of the actions of a particular friend.

I've always been fairly sporty. I've always participated in sports. But my girlfriend, who is not sporty, and who smokes, decided she wanted to participate in a sport. And I said whatever she did, I'd do it with her. And after seeing rowing at the Atlanta Olympics, actually it was just prior to that with the whole sort of Olympic build up, she thought, "rowing's it." So we went down and yeah, that's been it….All the exercise I do now is towards rowing. I wish I hadn't wasted my years playing netball when I could have been rowing (laughs). (Moira, adult female athlete)

So although Moira found that she was physically suited to rowing and that she loved it, her change to rowing as her major focus came about because of a friend’s suggestion, and the fact that rowing was visible and available in her environment. Both personal and contextual factors were therefore operating reciprocally, each contributing Moira’s initial engagement, the nature of her involvement, and her persistence in sport.

Jake: An Adult Male Musician

Jake, aged twenty-three years at the time of the first interview, played guitar in a popular "alternative rock" band that had performed internationally and released successful recordings. The members of the band were still the same original four who had been friends throughout school and had begun playing together six years earlier.
When the band signed up for a recording contract at the end of his second year of university study, Jake stopped studying and became a professional musician.

Jake’s decision to become a professional musician had happened gradually and reflected the importance of contextual factors such as interest and support shown by family, friends and teachers. His comments below indicate his family’s interest in music, and the support of his parents through buying him an electric guitar. He began his major instrument through a school program but he did not enjoy this. It was not until another school program became available, instigated by a music teacher in response to students’ interests, that he became more fully involved.

Yeah. I've always been involved with music….I remember taking piano lessons before I started school. Or around the same time as I started school. My elder sister was doing them as well and mum you know offered them to me as well. So I remember having a few. We've always had a piano in the house or a pianola. My parents have always played that.

… I first had guitar lessons when I was 11. At school. That was classical guitar. And that was only for a term….but it was all very…I can remember feeling uninspired about it at the time. You know being into modern music and then playing some older piece of music on the classical guitar wasn't really kind of the excitement I'd hoped it would be.

… my parents bought me an electric guitar when I was 13.

…And in year 10 there was a course offered - and I think it was only ever offered that one year that we got to do it - called Popular Band - at school. And [teacher] introduced and it was um being able to bring whatever instrument you enjoyed playing in. And most of us were guitarists or you know sort of rock band instruments. And just doing covers of bands' songs. And then at the end of the term doing a performance. And I think that was the first time I performed on my electric guitar. (Jake, adult male musician)

Jake had strong family support during and after his school years and later in the interviews he said that when his band started playing at pubs, he was underage and his parents had to come as well. He was able to live at home when the band was just
starting, and unable to make a living from their music, as well as later when buying or renting accommodation was not feasible because they were away touring and recording for extended periods. It could appear therefore that contextual factors were the primary reason for his initial engagement and ongoing involvement in music. Jake also indicated, however, that music was his “passion.” For example, he said:

> And I really got interested in playing [the guitar] around about 15-16. It sort of became my main interest and my main hobby. Before that I sort of had other sports and stuff going. But yeah round about 16. The end of school - year 11, year 12 - music became my main passion. And I've been playing it pretty much since then every day. (Jake, adult male musician)

The strength of his personal interest, and that of his peers at high school, was enough to prompt a teacher to develop a course for them. Jake had also been willing to take up offers and to take risks in order to fulfill his dream of being a professional musician. So once again personal and contextual factors were operating in a reciprocal manner.

The Relationship Between Factors Relating to Initial Engagement

The above examples indicate that the factors involved in initial engagement operated in a complex interplay between person and context. Figure 5.1 represents the elements involved as a person-context matrix and illustrates their reciprocal relationship. Although initially family and community factors were coded separately because they reflected different aspects of context, in Figure 5.1 they are combined as the elements within each factor are the same. Not all factors were present for all participants, and for some, personal or contextual factors seemed more prominent. For all participants, however, at least one personal and one contextual factor were present. That is, for each participant, with regard to initial engagement, at least one cell in the matrix would
be applicable, where a personal and a contextual factor operated in a reciprocal way. To illustrate this, the experiences of some participants have been entered into the cells as examples.

*Contextual factors (family/friends or community/school)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a) Environment conducive to sport or music</th>
<th>b) Invitation or recognition and acting on expressed interest, aptitude or preference</th>
<th>c) Resources available and provided to support individual’s involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) Interest, aptitude or preference expressed or demonstrated</td>
<td>Brad: “obsessed” with football; brothers played with him</td>
<td>Tania: “I was musical”; gifts of toy instruments and parents offered violin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal factors</td>
<td>Mary: tried many different sports available in high school and university</td>
<td>Brett: looking for alternative; sister and coach introduced to rowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Willingness to accept invitation/openness to alternatives</td>
<td>Michelle: “loved all different sports”; gymnastics available for preschoolers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Physical characteristics including age</td>
<td>Jon: couldn’t play flute but accepted teacher offer of clarinet</td>
<td>Moira: loved sports but not suited until friend invited to row</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christine: minkey available when too young for hockey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 5.1: Personal and Contextual Factors Relating to Initial Formal Engagement*

A Discussion of Perceptions and Appraisals and Initial Engagement

Examining the relationship between personal and contextual factors in relation to initial engagement has stressed how both are important, and how they operate in a reciprocal way, as illustrated in Figure 5.1. The role of perceptions and appraisals in
initial engagement is evident as individuals make appraisals of themselves and specific sports or instruments. If such appraisals are positive, then engagement occurs. In a similar way, contexts may provide appropriate opportunities and when people or organisations respond to perceived individual characteristics or actions, the context may be said to be making an appraisal of that person. If the appraisal by the context were positive, resources or support would be provided to the person. In other words personal-contextual appraisals could be considered as reciprocal in nature, with motivation being shaped by aspects of the person and the context.

The main data produced focused on gaining participants’ remembered reasons for initial engagement, and views of parents or school personnel were not obtained. In the discussion of factors relating to initial engagement it is evident, for example, that families and schools played an important role but this was often implicit in the responses. Directly asking parents, teachers and so on about how their children or pupils became engaged in sport or music might well have revealed the presence of beliefs or philosophies that support these activities as other studies have found (Chadwick, 2000; Davidson et al., 1997; Sloane, 1985). That is the beliefs or values of organisations and other people in a person’s context, would help shape the nature of that person’s initial engagement.

A final point relates to the question of whether perceptions and appraisals changed over time. The findings provided evidence that initial engagement was dynamic. As individuals developed physically, met new peers and entered different contexts, interests and abilities changed and new opportunities and resources became available.
The fact that over half the participants changed their major focus illustrated the dynamic nature of their involvement in sport or music. When examining participants’ experiences over time, it became evident that reciprocal appraisals, as well as shaping initial engagement, also shaped the nature of ongoing involvement. This is discussed in the next part of the chapter.

APPRAISALS AND ONGOING INVOLVEMENT

In this study, motivation was operationalised not only as initial engagement, as discussed above, but also as involvement and persistence. The idea of ongoing involvement and persistence are similar but are conceptualised differently. Persistence is seen as deliberate, continuing involvement in the face of difficulties or distractions, rather than just ongoing involvement in activities over the passage of time, and is dealt with more specifically in Chapter Eight when discussing problems. In this chapter the focus is on involvement over time in the more general sense of just keeping on with the activities of a particular community (team or ensemble).

The findings already presented in this chapter related to the role of appraisals in initial engagement with sport and music, and the results presented in this part of the chapter focus on their role in ongoing involvement in sport and music. In order to examine this, data were gathered and analysed in relation to participants’ appraisals of the various settings in their current communities. This provided an understanding of how participants made appraisals of contexts and how such appraisals related to continued involvement. It will be shown that such appraisals were reciprocal as people and structures within those communities also made judgments about the participants.
The findings presented relating to appraisals and ongoing involvement first indicate the relevant available data. Secondly, there is a discussion of subgroup differences in ongoing involvement – in this case domain differences were evident. The relationship between personal and contextual factors was found to be reciprocal and evidence to support this, including individual case studies, is presented. Thirdly, the section ends with a broader discussion of the findings about appraisals and ongoing involvement, showing that as well as being reciprocal, they are also dynamic and complex.

Definitions and Data

Ongoing involvement was examined by considering the extent and nature of participants’ current activities in various communities and settings in sport and music. In the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) a community is regarded as a team or an ensemble and these comprise different settings. There were three main settings of interest in this study. Within each team or ensemble individuals would be involved in the setting of group performance defined as a competition (sport) or a concert (music). A second setting was that of group training (sport) or rehearsal (music) where the whole group worked together towards these competitions or concerts. The third setting, related to both of these, was individual work, defined as individual training in sport and individual practice in music.

The Settings Chart Task required participants to report the amount of their regular, and additional (V or variable) involvement in sport or music throughout a typical week in all settings and for all communities in which they were involved. Tables 5.4 and 5.5
present the extent of all reported involvement by adolescent and adult participants respectively.

**Table 5.4: Extent of Reported Involvement of Adolescents in all Settings (hours per week)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Major focus</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Group training</th>
<th>Group performance</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Athletes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adam (4) *</td>
<td>cricket</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>9 + V ≠</td>
<td>14.5 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron (4)</td>
<td>cricket</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9 + V</td>
<td>24 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiden (6)</td>
<td>cricket</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7 + V</td>
<td>9 + V</td>
<td>17 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carly (4)</td>
<td>hockey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9 + V</td>
<td>1.5 + V</td>
<td>11.5 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine (3)</td>
<td>hockey</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5 + V</td>
<td>9 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cara (2)</td>
<td>hockey</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5 + V</td>
<td>7.5 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cathy (2)</td>
<td>hockey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5 + V</td>
<td>8.5 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musicians</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel (3)</td>
<td>percussion</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5 + V</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>6.5 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damien (4)</td>
<td>percussion</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>9.5 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David (2)</td>
<td>tuba</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>8 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean (5)</td>
<td>clarinet</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>23 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sasha (3+)</td>
<td>violin</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1 + V</td>
<td>19.5 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha (2)</td>
<td>clarinet</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>6.5 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sally (2)</td>
<td>trombone</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>5 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sylvia (3)</td>
<td>euphonium</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>12 + V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* (N) = total number of different teams or ensembles in which participating over the year
≠ V = variable number of additional hours
### Table 5.5: Extent of Reported Involvement of Adults in all Settings (hours per week)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Focus</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Group Training</th>
<th>Group Performance</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Athletes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brad (1) *</td>
<td>Aust. f’ball</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9 + V ≠</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byron (3)</td>
<td>cricket</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10 + V</td>
<td>6 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brett (1)</td>
<td>rowing</td>
<td>0-V</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blake (1)</td>
<td>Aust. f’ball</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9 + V</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret (2)</td>
<td>hockey</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary (1)</td>
<td>beach v’ball</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle (1)</td>
<td>rowing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moira (1)</td>
<td>rowing</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Musicians</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon (4)</td>
<td>clarinet</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacob (3)</td>
<td>trombone</td>
<td>4 + V</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4 + V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan (1)</td>
<td>guitar</td>
<td>7 + V</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jake (1)</td>
<td>guitar</td>
<td>V+</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tania (3)</td>
<td>violin</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>4.5 + V</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theresa (3)</td>
<td>cello</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tracy (1)</td>
<td>cello</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>2.5 + V</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* (N) = number of different teams or ensembles in which participating  
≠ V = variable number of additional hours

Both tables use the same format. The first column gives the participant’s pseudonym and the number of different teams or ensembles in which they reported participating (with regard to their major focus) over the course of the research. For example, Adam played in four teams. He played cricket in his school team, and occasionally played for the junior state team. In his community cricket club he played with both the Under
17 and Senior teams, making a total of four teams. Daniel played in three musical ensembles. He was in his own small band as well as two different musical groups at his school. Nine of the adult participants only performed with one team or ensemble. Brad only played football with his semiprofessional club, and Jake, a professional musician, only played with his band.

The second column of Tables 5.4 and 5.5 reminds the reader of the major focus of the participants (earlier illustrated in Tables 4.2 and 4.3). The next three columns indicate the number of hours each participant reported spending per week in individual training or practice, in group (team or ensemble) training or rehearsal, and in group performance (competitions or concerts). All adolescent musicians had an individual or very small group music lesson once a week and although not strictly individual practice, this was incorporated into the “individual” column, as was some adult athletes’ work with a personal trainer.

Many participants said that the time they spent in group training or in group performance varied. Similarly, many musicians in particular said the amount of their individual practice varied and were not willing to give a set amount for each day or week. When participants indicated this, the table represents these variable hours by the letter “V.” The final column gives the total of all involvement over a week, and all participants indicated that some of their involvement varied from week to week.

It had been anticipated that reporting the extent of involvement in different settings would be a fairly straightforward activity on which discussion of perceptions of these
settings could be based. This was not the case and as may be seen from Tables 5.4 and 5.4, there were large differences between individuals in the extent and nature of their involvement. Although it was expected, when developing the Settings Chart Task, that individuals could belong to a number of different communities, the extent of this was not anticipated. Most participants belonged to more than one team or ensemble at the time of the interviews. For example, within an organisation such as a community cricket or hockey club, an adolescent could belong to a team for their particular age group, as well as to an open age group team. In addition some belonged to state level teams. Similarly in music, a school student could belong to several ensembles within that school such as a concert band and an orchestra, as well as to a local community ensemble. Many adults also belonged to a number of different teams and ensembles. The extent of individual variation in the number of hours of involvement as well as in the number of different groups was surprising.

Subgroup Analysis and Ongoing Involvement

Examining differences between the subgroups revealed that, as with initial engagement, any differences between the subgroups of age and gender were confounded by other factors such as whether participants were amateurs or professionals. There were, however, clear domain specific contextual differences affecting the nature of involvement, and differences between types of sport and music, and these are discussed in this section.
In sport, the extent and nature of involvement varied considerably depending on the time of year and the type of sport, reflecting macrolevels of context. Some participants were in the "off season" when interviewed, and two athletes were taking a complete break from organised sport after competing in the 2000 Olympics so they reported the extent of their involvement when they were preparing for the Olympics. Different sports, by the nature of their organisational and structural factors, also used different time frames in competitions. For example, team sports such as hockey and football had one competition each weekend during their season with matches lasting between one and two hours. Cricket matches in community club competitions were spread over two half days on consecutive weekends. In professional competitions cricket matches could last one (a day-night match), four (state) or five (international) days. Rowing was different again with regattas held on irregular occasions. Each race would only last the relatively short time of a few minutes. Rowers might be in one or more of these races with different combinations of other rowers depending on whether the event required one, two, four or eight team members. Training requirements were therefore different between different sports and within different sports depending on the level of performance (amateur or professional) and whether it was on or off season.

In music, concerts for large community groups and school ensembles tended to be widely spaced and irregular over the year. Professional groups, on the other hand, could perform every week, and one professional musician interviewed had recently toured internationally and performed ninety-two shows in less than four months. The frequency and intensity of rehearsals for all ensembles generally increased as performance dates approached.
There were also some domain differences in the amount of individual work reported. The amount of regular individual practice reported by participants varied from 0 to 14 hours per week across all participants. In sport, seasonal factors, as well as the type and level of sport being played, affected how much and what type of individual training athletes did. Two professional rowers had the largest total regular involvement of any participants in either domain (45+ and 24+ hours per week over all settings), but both said they did no individual training as such. For all the musicians, performances were on an irregular basis compared with sport, and adult musicians in particular said the amount of individual practice they did varied from day to day. Two of the adolescent musicians, Dean and Sasha, did more individual work than any other musician or athlete.

In other words, despite some differences attributable to domain, every participant appeared to have a different schedule that was shaped by all levels of context identified in Figures 2.1 and 2.3. So it was not possible or meaningful to aggregate and compare the degree of involvement across domains, across settings or across participants. Once again responses were considered across all individuals with a search for common themes or patterns.

Individual Variations and Ongoing Involvement

When examining individuals’ involvement in and perceptions of the activities of different settings, it became evident that as well as the expected finding of individuals
making appraisals of particular communities, those communities also made appraisals of individuals. In other words reciprocal appraisals were made.

Appraisals are Reciprocal

As with initial engagement, analysis of the diverse extent and nature of individuals’ ongoing involvement indicated that it was shaped by the reciprocal relationship between person and context. Findings showed the importance of the extent to which the aims and expectations of an individual were appraised as being congruent with the aims and expectations of a particular community. The following discussion first explains how appraisals are made by persons and then how appraisals are also made by contexts. Individual case studies are provided as examples to illustrate how ongoing involvement is shaped by these reciprocal appraisals.

Individuals Appraise Communities

Participants varied in what they wanted to gain or achieve from involvement in the domains of sport or music. Although not a main focus in this study, a goal theory perspective was a useful way of interpreting the data. From this perspective there are several possible goals that individuals may want to achieve in order to feel successful and these may be termed mastery, performance, work avoidance, social responsibility or prosocial goals (Beltman, 1996). Although participants were not given a questionnaire to determine their personal motivational goals, there were questions in the interviews that tapped into these, and other comments could be interpreted from a goal theory perspective.
For example, some participants wanted to develop skills and so expressed mastery
goals. Others wanted to gain recognition (performance goals), to contribute and be part of a team or group (social responsibility goals), and yet others just wanted to have fun and enjoy the company of their friends (prosocial goals). Many participants expressed more than one of these goals, a finding consistent with research relating to multiple goals (see, for example, Ainley, 1993; Boekaerts, 2003; Dowson & McInerney, 1997; MacCallum, 2001b; Steinberg & Maurer, 1999; Steinberg et al., 2000; Wentzel, 1993). In addition, goals may be conceptualised as being more comprehensive than in an achievement goal perspective (Ford & Nichols, 1992) and many participants discussed broader goals that they had in life or things they wanted to achieve in other organisations and communities such as school, university, work, or family. Depending on such goals, participants had differing expectations as to what would be a desirable community, and differing views as to what would be a desirable degree of involvement in the activities associated with that community.

Individuals therefore made appraisals or judgments of a context (community) based on their own goals and needs, and on their perceptions of the characteristics of that particular community. As a result of these appraisals involvement in that community was either “desired” or “sought” or not by individuals.

*Communities Appraise Individuals*

Communities varied according to the way they were structured and in the demands they placed upon participants. For example, the extent of team training and competitions in a professional sporting body was more frequent and rigorous than in
an amateur group. Communities were also selective in who could participate and in the nature of that involvement. For example, to be awarded scholarships from the Australian Institute of Sport, athletes needed to demonstrate a certain level of achievement, as did those hoping for state, national or international selection. Specialist school sport and music programs selected students from a range of applicants. Auditions were used to determine whether musicians could belong to some ensembles and what position they would have in that ensemble, such as first or second desk of the violins, or leader of a wind section.

Different amounts of resources (material and social) were made available to participants depending on the nature of the community and on the perceived skills and commitment of participants within it. Communities may therefore be said to make appraisals or judgments of individuals, based on the needs and goals of that community, and its perceptions of the characteristics of particular individuals. As a result of these appraisals, involvement was “offered” or “available” or not, to a particular individual.

**Congruence**

The relationship between the appraisals made by an individual and by a community may be represented as a matrix outlined in Figure 5.2. The left hand columns represent a person making an appraisal of a context, and the extent of involvement sought by that person. Appraisals by a person of a community can be conceived as being along a continuum of positive to negative, and the level of desired involvement can also be conceived as being along a continuum from high to none. If the degree of
involvement sought by an individual matches that perceived as being required or available in a team or ensemble, an individual would make a positive appraisal of that community.

The top rows of Figure 5.2 represent a community (context) making an appraisal of an individual (person) and the extent of involvement required by that community. The appraisal can again range from positive to negative, and the extent of offered involvement can range from high to none. If the degree of involvement required or available by a community matches what a particular individual is perceived as being capable of attaining, a positive appraisal is made of that person.

![Figure 5.2: Congruence Between Appraisals by Person and by Context](image)

Various combinations of the meeting of the seeking and offering described above lead to various patterns of congruence as illustrated in the cells of the matrix. When a
person makes a positive appraisal of a context, and seeks a high level of involvement in sport or music, this is represented in Cells A, B and C. If a particular context (such as a sporting team or musical ensemble) also offers that person a high level of involvement, as in Cell A, then congruence between the appraisals results. If the context offers a lesser degree of involvement or no involvement to that person, then there is less (Cell B) or no (Cell C) congruence between the appraisals of the person and those of the context. Similarly if a person does not desire to participate in a particular context (Cells G, H and I), but that context does offer that person a higher level of involvement, then there will not be congruence between the appraisals (Cells G and H). Only if the context does not offer involvement to that person would there be congruence (Cell I). These reciprocal appraisals and their degree of congruence for individuals’ ongoing involvement are illustrated in the next section.

Individual Case Studies and Ongoing involvement

To illustrate the relationship between appraisals and ongoing involvement, the experiences of individual participants were examined. Cells in Figure 5.2 that reflect congruence (cells A, E, and I) and no congruence (cells C and G) will be illustrated through case studies of individual participants. The degree of congruence in these reciprocal appraisals shaped the nature of the individual athletes’ and musicians’ ongoing involvement in specific communities.
Cell A Michelle - Congruence: an individual seeks high involvement and a suitable community is available.

In this cell there is congruence between the appraisals made by an individual and the appraisals made by a community. In this situation an individual desires intense involvement in a particular community. The person is also positively appraised and selected or recognised by that community which then places high demands on the individual. There were several examples of congruence between an individual's desire for a high level of involvement and the high demands made by a community.

Michelle, at the time of Interview Two, was a professional athlete in that she was the recipient of a full AIS (Australian Institute of Sport) scholarship for rowing and had moved to Canberra to take this up. Her schedule there involved at least 24 hours of training per week although she did not engage in any individual training:

We do hardly any individual training in rowing. A crew goes fastest when it does everything as a crew! (Michelle, adult female athlete)

Michelle began rowing while at school where she sought out and participated in as many sports as possible. After leaving school her active seeking of involvement in rowing continued and she found out about available scholarships. Successful achievements in rowing automatically meant that she was offered a higher level of scholarship that included use of coaching and laboratory facilities and equipment. Certain communities were available for her because she was perceived as having a high level of ability, and in addition she actively sought out such communities. Interpreting her actions from a goal theory perspective, she could be said to be mastery
oriented. Her response to the question about why she continued to be involved in rowing reflected such goals:

I think the reason I do it at such an intense sort of level is 'cause I just love um the fact that it is such a commitment. And such, just involves such dedication. So it's a challenge I think. (Michelle, adult female athlete)

Her desire for extensive involvement was matched by the high demands and expectations of the community, congruence was achieved, satisfaction was high, and ongoing involvement resulted.

*Cell E Theresa - Congruence: an individual seeks intermediate involvement and a suitable community is available.*

Congruence does not necessarily mean a high level of involvement. The desired level of involvement for an individual and the demands of contexts differ and if both these levels are congruent then the personal and the contextual demands are met - whether both are high, low, or in this case, intermediate. As was the case with all cells, for ongoing involvement, individuals seek out a particular community that they perceive as being congruent with their needs or goals. In this intermediate situation these goals could be described as perhaps less intense, and communities, although in some cases being available for a greater level of involvement, tended to encourage rather than enforce or demand involvement. So an intermediate degree of involvement was possible. Participants in this cell were generally adolescents or adult amateurs who were satisfied with the situation they were in. Their communities also appeared to be satisfied and there was congruence between the reciprocal appraisals.
Theresa, a cellist, played in a large community symphony orchestra, in a smaller chamber orchestra, in a string quartet, and was also a bell ringer. She had a full-time career not related to music. Once again motivational goals could be seen to be important in relation to the type of community sought. Theresa saw music as a way of expressing herself, but she mostly enjoyed the social experience of making music with her husband and close friends (prosocial goals). She was on committees for all the groups with which she was involved and her desire "to give something back" reflected a social responsibility personal motivational goal. The best experience for her was being “a part of something that's much bigger than just you - that's special I think.”

Theresa took an active role in the communities to which she belonged, but it was very much on her own terms, and this autonomy seemed to be a feature of the adult musicians. Theresa’s response to a question about who selected the music played by the chamber orchestra illustrated this.

… um there's not really anybody who'll dictate. And probably if they did I'd automatically not do it (laughs). So yeah it's not like that. It's self-regulated. (Theresa, adult female musician)

Such communities in turn seemed to respect and encourage this self-regulation. Indeed, many of the ensembles were formed and organised by groups of musicians who decided they needed a particular group in which to perform. Personal and contextual factors were reciprocal as both shaped the nature of involvement. Satisfaction was evident in this cell and ongoing involvement resulted.
**Cell I Brett - Congruence: an individual is not seeking and a suitable community is not available.**

Because of the sampling procedures used in the present study there were no participants permanently in a situation where no involvement was desired or required. There were probably other teams and ensembles in which participants did not wish to play and did not do so, and some referred to such situations. The closest example to the situation reflected in Cell I was that of Brett who was taking a break after competing as a rower in the 2000 Olympics. In this case the community acknowledged that a break might be needed and permitted it. Rowers in this situation were able to pursue other interests but were still able to have access to facilities to do some training and to enjoy rowing socially until they felt ready to resume competition.

For Brett, being in this situation affected the extent of his involvement at the time of the interviews. When completing the Settings Chart Task he had described his involvement in the lead up to the Olympics and had, for example, been doing over 45 hours per week of team training. During his break, however, Brett was concentrating on doing all the things he had wanted to do but had not been able to because of his previous focus on rowing and the high demands placed on an Olympic team member (a situation reflected in Cell A). Activities during his break included university study, snow skiing, and trekking. He was still rowing but because he was no longer fully participating in the community, he did not have a squad with whom to train, and any rowing was on a much more casual basis. His comments reflected mastery goals that were evident throughout his interviews. When asked if he was doing any rowing during his break he said:
Yeah I have been. I’ve been rowing in club level. Just relaxing in it. … You know I was there for a purpose, but now I go down in the morning and I just chat with the other guys. Or I just, you know, go for a short row. It doesn’t make any difference. …Although it’s not like a serious training in terms of physically out there doing it … you can still make some improvements or you can still have some work benefit, you know, even though it’s just really casual. I find that’s what I like about it. (Brett, adult, male athlete)

Although Brett and the rowing community (at a broader, organisational level than his particular squad) were satisfied with this situation, the understanding was that it was only temporary. Brett had to make a decision about his future involvement with rowing. He had just applied for and received another scholarship at the time of the second interview and how this would be used had yet to be negotiated.

So it means I’ve got $5000 to use for the next twelve – for the next financial year. On rowing stuff and trips and things. I mean whether I use it or not I don’t really know because obviously you know my commitments won’t be as big. But I have to speak to them about it and just sort it out. But yeah they’ve been supportive so it’s really good. (Brett, adult male athlete)

In fact Brett did return to rowing in an intensive way after his break, earned selection in the 2004 Olympic squad, and returned, still with mutual satisfaction, to the congruence reflected in Cell A.

Cell C Jordan - No Congruence: an individual seeks involvement but a suitable community is not available.

In Cell C the characteristics of an individual and of a community are not congruent. An individual seeks more intense involvement in a community in order to meet his or her goals, but the relevant community does not reciprocate to the same degree, so an equivalent degree of involvement is not available or not offered. All of the participants who had unsuccessfully tried out for teams or auditioned for ensembles
had experienced this situation. The result of this lack of congruence appeared to be frustration. Participants in this study responded to this frustration by actively seeking congruence - either by changing their own characteristics and developing more skills, or by changing the characteristics of the community they were seeking to join - to find one which "desired" their involvement. Some did both.

Jordan began playing the guitar around the age of fifteen and progressed to playing in a group in pubs. One of his first bands was very popular and toured nationally playing as a support for bigger bands. He reported that he has been part of different groups over the years and was continually searching for the ideal mix - the perfect community for him. This was a constant theme in his interviews:

…the luck involved in meeting the four right people – the right bunch of guys - seems to be the hardest thing to do;

…you need that special buzz that everybody gets from playing together - that spark;

…it's how the group ends up sounding - not the individual;

…music is really a team sport. (Jordan, adult male musician)

The desire to contribute to the music industry and to keep being involved with music led him to undertake a range of projects from obtaining a formal tertiary qualification in music, owning a recording studio, managing a music store and music school, teaching TEE music, writing songs, and playing and recording with his band. So Jordan had sought out various settings and communities to match his goals, which, from a goal theory perspective, seemed mainly performance oriented. He did feel that his purpose had changed over the years as he said: "it used to be to get into the limelight and maybe make some money, but now my motivation is ending up with
some sort of respect" and that he wanted "to be remembered as a good player or a good musician who has contributed to keeping the music industry going." He said, "I still really want to make a million bucks but that's not my main motivation!" The changing nature of motivation is discussed more fully when considering how participants dealt with potential problems (Chapter Eight).

Despite his daily involvement professionally with music, Jordan still practiced alone for one or two hours every night. His practice was something he loved doing and reflected mastery goals: "I just love playing the guitar." He believed commitment, demonstrated by individual practice, was essential in achieving both the mastery and the recognition he desired: "if you want to know all there is to know and be able to teach it, you have to show the same commitment as anything else." Jordan was continually looking for the “right” combination of people and activities that would match his own goals, and continually striving to improve his own skills in order to maximise the level of community in which he could participate. That is the resultant incongruence shaped the nature of Jordan’s ongoing involvement.

**Cell G Sasha - No Congruence: a suitable community is available but an individual is not seeking involvement.**

In this cell there is also no congruence. The community is offering involvement, but the individual does not wish to engage with that community. Being placed in this situation appeared extremely dissatisfying. A frustrating situation emerged for Sasha, a talented adolescent female musician. She belonged to a state youth orchestra, to her school orchestra, and busked with a friend on weekends. Sasha’s comments reflected
mainly a performance goal orientation. Although she knew talent, passion and dedication were important for success, her motivation was primarily from external sources.

When I perform at eisteddfods and competitions, after I perform there's always a whole group of people coming up to me and telling me how well I did. And that's really encouraging. (Sasha, adolescent female musician)

These goals translated into 13.5 hours a week (about two and a half hours a day) individual practice but Sasha never practiced music for the school orchestra as this music was seen as being too easy. The state orchestra and busking were enjoyable compared with her perceptions of the school orchestra and she had to develop strategies to cope with the situation.

Oh they're [state orchestra and busking] the most sociable and busking is a lot of fun. 'Cause it's like I'm performing and I love performing. And [state orchestra]'s challenging and I've heaps of friends there. I simply HATE school orchestra. I just hate it. It's just too - oh it's so bad. … It's not challenging. And I DON'T want to do it. (laughs). (Sasha, adolescent female musician)

Being a student at the school, however, she felt obliged to remain in the orchestra, and her teacher had said she should give something back to the school (reflecting social responsibility goals). In other words a community sought her out but she did not wish to participate. The lack of congruence between her own goals and the perceived characteristics of the school orchestra led to a frustrating situation for Sasha, because at this point in time she felt she could not leave the community. Her involvement continued but was characterised by reluctance and frustration.
A Discussion of Perceptions and Appraisals and Ongoing Involvement

*Appraisals and Ongoing Involvement are Reciprocally Constructed*

Both persons and contexts make appraisals of each other that shape the extent and nature of individuals’ involvement in particular communities. If congruence between appraisals does not occur, an individual or a community may change. For example, the rowers Brett, Michelle and Moira all changed their training regimes in response to the communities to which they belonged or desired to belong. There were also examples of communities changing in response to individuals. For example, the rowing community supported Brett’s need for a break, and Jake’s (a professional musician) school developed a course in popular band to cater for the interests of a particular group of students and in so doing created a community for them. So appraisals were reciprocal and characteristics of the person and of the community could change over time. From a sociocultural or situative perspective, the nature and extent of involvement are negotiated, or co-constructed, with person and context in a reciprocal, dynamic relationship.

Another form of reciprocity was illustrated at the most specific level of context within the different settings - the activity or task level. Activities of the individual and the context were mutually determined. This occurred to different degrees and in different ways in different communities. For example, Brad and Blake’s Australian Rules football teams both developed a committee of senior players who were given specific tasks. This enabled the management team to gain feedback about player issues and to know that newer, younger players were being assisted. It also gave the senior players a role in determining their own activities and in supporting younger players in a
mentoring role. A similar situation of mutuality existed for a professional musician interviewed. Although Jake and his band created the actual music, they needed the support of others such as the record company technicians, and producers. Decisions about concert times and locations, record releases, tours and so on, were made jointly, with persons and context each having a role to play. Again reciprocity was evident as the nature of involvement was negotiated and mutually constructed.

**Appraisals and Ongoing Involvement are Dynamic**

The nature of ongoing involvement is dynamic - it may vary for the same individual in different communities, or over time for the same individual in the same community. Most participants in this study belonged to more than one community within their domain so congruence may occur for one but not for another community. For example, Sasha experienced congruence (Cell A) for the state orchestra but a lack of congruence (Cell G) for her school orchestra. Over time, if a person's goals or needs change in relation to those of a community, then the degree of congruence will vary. For example, Moira's goals changed and she decided to put in intense effort to gain state selection in rowing. In doing this, her previous club was no longer seen as suitable, and she sought out a new one that she felt was more congruent with her personal goals. Such goals are broader than personal motivational achievement goals, and reflect the variety of goals such as those in Ford and Nichol’s (1992) taxonomy. This finding, however, is consistent with studies that show how motivational goals vary over time as well as across settings (see, for example, Wigfield et al., 1998).
As already stated, most participants belonged to more than one team or ensemble at the time of the interviews and all had belonged to other groups at some time. When individuals made appraisals they did so in the light of beliefs and experiences gained over a period of time and as a result of involvement in several prior communities. At any particular time an individual may also belong to several communities such as those connected to family, friends within and outside the domain, school, work, and other leisure activities. These communities may overlap and the amount of overlap varied between individuals. The issue of overlapping communities is discussed further when examining the role of onlookers in Chapter Seven.

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The findings presented in this chapter addressed the research questions relating to perceptions and appraisals and motivation. In order to examine how individuals’ appraisals of their context shaped their motivation, the results were presented in two sections: firstly, regarding the relationship between the personal and contextual factors that shaped initial engagement in sport and music, and secondly, regarding the role of appraisals in ongoing involvement. The following discussion specifically addresses the research questions of interest regarding appraisals and motivation.
What Characteristics of Persons and what Characteristics of Contexts are Important and what is the Nature of the Interrelationship between These?

The findings about appraisals extend those from previous research. For example, in talent development, research tends to focus more on whether an individual continues to participate in a domain, and at what level, rather than the factors surrounding their initial engagement (see, for example, Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Helsen et al., 2000). This study does consider initial engagement. The notion of individual or personal factors in this study went beyond physical or cognitive characteristics shown to be important in talent identification programs (see, for example, Williams & Reilly, 2000) and included the more affective elements of interest and of being open to opportunities.

Contextual factors such as the actions and support of families and friends, and of communities and schools were necessary for initial engagement to occur and this also supports existing research findings. The important part played by the family in both initial engagement and ongoing involvement in various domains was clearly illustrated in the work of Bloom and his colleagues (Bloom, 1985c). More recent studies have also suggested that the role of family is important and that indicators which could be interpreted as signs of inherent high ability or talent, could in fact be the result of greater exposure to music in the everyday environment (Davidson et al., 1997).

The findings relating to appraisals and motivation also contribute to an understanding of the relationship between personal and contextual factors in relation to initial engagement. Both personal and contextual factors were necessary for initial
engagement. Individuals also made appraisals that could lead to a change in their major sport or instrument, and these changes again required the presence of both personal factors such as a willingness to be open to alternatives, and contextual factors such as resources and support. It was found that these interrelated in a reciprocal, dynamic way, with at least one personal and one contextual factor operating together for initial engagement to occur.

How Do Individuals’ Appraisals of Aspects of Context Shape their Motivation in Sport and Music?

The focus in addressing this question was on the nature of ongoing involvement. Similar to initial engagement, and for changes in major focus, person and context acted reciprocally, in a dynamic, complex way. For ongoing involvement, congruence was needed between the appraisals made by individuals of communities, and the appraisals made of individuals by those communities. The findings support other research relating to appraisals (Chapter Three). For example, personal motivational goals were important in shaping the way individuals perceived and appraised contexts, a finding consistent with Boekaerts’ work (see, for example, Boekaerts, 2002a, 2002c, 2003).

The present research extends current understandings by exploring how contexts, here communities, also make appraisals of individuals, and of the importance of congruence between the appraisals. Echoing Volet’s research (Volet, 2001a, 2001b), the importance of congruence between personal and contextual features in relation to ongoing involvement has been demonstrated. If congruence did not occur, participants
became dissatisfied or frustrated and sought to terminate or change the nature of their involvement – reflecting the dynamic nature of motivation.

Are these Findings Similar Across Domains, Across Individuals and Over Time?

The extent and nature of involvement changed over time, across communities and across settings within those communities, a finding consistent with other research (for a discussion of motivational change see MacCallum, 2001a ; 2001b). In addition, communities responded to individuals and could change organisational aspects such as courses offered or tasks involved. The nature of ongoing involvement could be regarded as being mutually shaped by person and context.

Because participants belonged to different communities, they could have different experiences of congruence either simultaneously, or sequentially from prior experiences – so motivation, conceived as ongoing involvement, is also complex. The results presented in the discussion of interactions and motivation (Chapters Six and Seven) will highlight the complexity of motivation. In conclusion, an important aspect of context is the people within it, such as family, friends, teachers, or others. For example, the findings in this chapter demonstrated the importance of families and teachers who set up certain environments or who responded to demonstrated interest of individuals. The next two chapters examine in more detail the roles such people play and how interactions with others shape individual motivation to engage, be involved and persist in sport and music.
Chapter Six

Social Interactions and Motivation

… he is just an amazing coach. Like I feel that I've improved so much under his tutelage. You know just techniques and ways of dealing with things. And yeah he's just made a huge difference. … He's the one who's been very positive … he's always believed in me. (Mary, adult female athlete)

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter presents and discusses findings that address the research question relating to how interactions and relationships with a range of other people shape individuals’ motivation in sport and music in positive and negative ways (Research Question 2, Table 3.2). Previous research (reviewed in Chapter Three) has indicated that a wide range of other people could play a number of different positive and negative roles with regard to learning and motivation in academic and community settings as well as in sport and music. This study builds upon and extends such findings.

Various questions are addressed in this chapter primarily through an examination of the social interactions described by participants in the Circles of Influence Task. It is important to determine whom participants regarded as people of influence, as well as the nature of the roles they were perceived to have played. A further question of interest is whether there are differences across domains, across individuals and over time with regard to the nature of interactions and resultant motivation.
The results are presented in two parts, firstly, examining the nature of social interactions and motivation or the roles others play, and secondly, the complexity of the relationship between social interactions and motivation. The first set of results indicates who were perceived as influential. A set of dimensions is used to represent both the positive and negative nature of their influences. Differences across subgroups are discussed and the complexity of motivational responses shaped by interactions is illustrated through examples of individual participant’s responses.

The second set of results focuses on the complex relationships between social interactions and motivation. The same “other” could sometimes be perceived as a positive and sometimes as a negative influence, and several possible explanations for this finding are explored: that motivation is dynamic, that motivation is shaped by individual perceptions and strategy use, and that motivation is paradoxical in nature. The chapter concludes with a brief summary of the findings which are discussed in relation to the relevant research questions.

THE NATURE OF PARTICIPANTS’ INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Other people are a crucial element of the contexts in which individuals live and learn. As illustrated in the review of literature (Chapter Three) and when presenting the contextual factors that contributed to initial engagement (Chapter Five), people such as teachers, coaches, team mates, friends and parents play an important role in shaping motivation. Other people fulfill certain types of functions. In relation to initial engagement, for example, others could provide practical and emotional support. Some other functions reported in the review of literature involve providing feedback,
modelling skills and values, guiding and scaffolding, and offering companionship and fun. The findings of the study regarding people of influence and the nature of their influence, or the roles they play, are presented in the following sections of the chapter.

The data relating to interactions was obtained primarily from responses to the Circles of Influence Task (see Appendix B3) where participants provided the names of influential others, and gave a specific example of how each person had influenced them in positive and negative ways. Data relating to who were influential and the nature of their influences were examined separately. The data were extensive and rich, with over three hundred and fifty examples given describing how other people had been important in participants’ lives. The examples were considered as a total data set, across all participants, and examined for common patterns and themes to understand the nature of these influences.

Who Were the Influential Others?

Number of Others Nominated as Influential
A total of 309 “others” were nominated as positive influences with an average of 10.3 others nominated per participant (range 5 to 22). A total of 54 others were nominated as negative influences, with an average of 1.5 per participant (range 0-4). Six musicians (five adolescents and one adult) said they had experienced no negative influences. There were clearly more positive than negative influences nominated. The methodology did favour the elicitation of positive responses in that participants were asked to write the names of those having a positive influence in the three circles
provided, and then to consider positive influences from a list of further categories. Negative influences were only elicited verbally through one additional question. Participants were, however, able to add or change the people in their Circles Task and discuss these at the start of the second interview, so there were other opportunities to add negative (and positive) influences if desired. Due to this opportunity and since at that point of the first interview participants appeared to understand the task and speak relatively freely, it is felt that this does reflect a real difference. That is participants did perceive that a greater number of people had been a positive influence in their endeavours to be athletes or musicians, than had been a negative influence.

_Categories of People of Influence_

The people nominated as being of influence in positive or negative ways were categorised as in Table 6.1. Although participants were asked about “others”, the category of "self" was added as some participants asked if they could nominate themselves. Other participants described organisational features rather than individuals so this category was also added. Initially celebrities were coded into those who were known or not known, but this difference was abandoned because as some adult participants had become more expert in their field, people who had once been admired from afar became known team mates, coaches or friends. The final coding categories used are those shown in Table 6.1 and these are broadly grouped according to “self”, family, others in sport and music settings, people in the wider neighbourhood community, onlookers, celebrities and fictional characters. The order of these categories generally moves from more proximal to more distal in terms of the extent of likely face-to-face social interaction or contact.
Table 6.1: Categories of Influential Others

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Other</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. self</td>
<td>self-motivation, self-belief, or lack of these</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. immediate family</td>
<td>partner, mother, father, step father, siblings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. extended family</td>
<td>grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a. in context - close, extended association</td>
<td>instrument teachers, conductors, team/individual coaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b. in context - less close or less extended association</td>
<td>officials and support people in an organisation such as program head, district coach, psychologist, umpires etc, school music/physical education teachers, trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c. in context - peers/colleagues</td>
<td>team mates, fellow band/orchestral members, accompanist, older musicians/athletes, friends who are musicians/athletes, opposition team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d. in context - organisational structures</td>
<td>school programs, structural features such as travel, team selection processes etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a. wider community - friends</td>
<td>friends out of the music/sport contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b. wider community - others</td>
<td>general school teachers, university tutors, school peers, people in the community such as neighbours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. onlookers</td>
<td>fans, supporters, audience, spectators, parents of other team members, media reporters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. celebrities - well known people either known personally or not by participant</td>
<td>international and national sports stars, musicians such as Bach or Mozart, material written by or about such people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. fictional characters</td>
<td>characters in novels, cartoon, movies or TV shows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the question of who was influential seemed to lend itself to a relatively simple quantitative analysis, the counting of categories was not straightforward. For example, it was assumed when developing the task that participants would name individual people, but this was not the case. Apart from the categories of self and
organisations that did not refer to other people in the expected sense, some participants named a particular individual whereas others named a collective – e.g. "mum" versus "parents" or "Joe Green" versus "friends." Others mentioned specific names but grouped them together as "band members", "school friends" or "teachers" for example. The grouping used by participants was that used in the coding process. For example, "family" counted as one mention as did "grandfather" if these were the terms used by participants. The word “mention” or “other” is generally used in this discussion in preference to “person” for this reason.

**Frequency of Categories of Influential Others**

In order to examine which categories of influential others were nominated most frequently, the percentages of all positive and all negative nominations of each category were calculated and appear in Table 6.2. The order of categories in Table 6.2 follows the same pattern as in Table 6.1. The same three categories, although in a different order, were nominated most frequently for positive and negative influences, and these are shaded in Table 6.2. These categories were immediate family, people within the domain of sport or music with whom individuals had close contact (mainly teachers or coaches), and peers and colleagues within sport and music. Together these three categories represented approximately 60% of positive and 50% of negative nominations.
Table 6.2: Frequency and Percentage of Positive and Negative Influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Other</th>
<th>Total positive nominations</th>
<th>% of positive nominations</th>
<th>Total negative nominations</th>
<th>% of negative nominations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. self</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. immediate family</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b. extended family</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a. in context - close</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b. in context - less close</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c. in context - peers/colleagues</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d. in context - structures</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4a. community - friends</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4b. community - others</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. onlookers</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. celebrities</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. fictional characters</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The prevalence of these categories is not surprising as immediate family is the community in which individuals experience the greatest social contact, particularly in the early years. In the Circles of Influence Task participants were specifically asked to consider people in relation to their development as athletes and musicians, rather than about their lives in general, so it was also more likely that they would think about people within the domains sport and music. This finding supports research findings discussed in Chapter Three that highlighted the important roles played by parents, teaches, coaches and peers (see, for example, Amorose & Weiss, 1998; Bø, 1996; Chadwick, 2000; Davidson et al., 1997; Weiss et al., 1996).
Dimensions of Social Influence

To explore the nature of social influences, or the roles other people played, all the examples of interactions were analysed as a whole data set for common themes and patterns. The process was iterative, with categories constantly being examined and reexamined. The final interpretation of the coded data led to the development of a set of dimensions using higher order categories into which the earlier categories fitted. This interpretive approach took into account both the positive and negative responses, which previously had been coded separately. The set of dimensions, illustrated in Figure 6.1, was developed as the best “fit” to interpret the data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension of influence</th>
<th>Level of intensity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>decreasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabling (teaching)</td>
<td>poor teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging (supporting)</td>
<td>lack of support; lack of self-belief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extending (challenging)</td>
<td>lack of opportunities; blocking opportunities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 6.1: Dimensions of Social Influence*

The three dimensions of influence presented in the left hand column of Figure 6.1 are Enabling (teaching), Encouraging (supporting), and Extending (challenging). Each reflects different aspects of social roles or the social influence of others. Each
dimension was conceptualised as comprising different levels of intensity. The left hand end of the dimensions in Figure 6.1 could be conceptualised as a lack of an influence, such as lack of good teaching or of opportunities, and was perceived negatively by participants. The right hand end of each dimension, also perceived negatively, reflected a very high level of intensity. This end could be conceptualised as too much of an influence, such as giving negative feedback or pressuring. In between these extremes, the dimensions increased in intensity, and were perceived as positive aspects of interactions with others. The boundaries between positive and negative, and between different types of positive influences are fluid. Individual differences occurred in the way similar actions were perceived. Individuals also had different thresholds as to when an action moved from being perceived as positive to negative, or vice versa.

The dimension of Enabling, when perceived as negative at a relatively less intense level, was generally represented as poor teaching. This is considered as less intense because participants said that this was probably unintentional and it was only in hindsight that they realised this was a negative influence in their development. The three positive types of enabling, increasing in intensity, are demonstrating, coaching or direct teaching, and giving special treatment. Demonstrating could occur without the other person being aware of this, such as when an athlete watched a video of a player in another country, or when a musician listened to a recording of someone else’s work. Demonstrating could also be face-to-face and, along with coaching and giving feedback, reflects the process of learning through modelling from a social cognitive perspective (Schunk, 1989; Schunk & Zimmerman, 1996). Sometimes teaching or
coaching could become more intense with a participant seeing that they were receiving more individualised help than others. If a teaching situation involved feedback such as negative comments, or if negative comments were received from others such as parents or team mates, that person’s influence was perceived as negative. Examples of comments illustrating each of the levels of intensity of the Enabling dimension appear in Appendix D1.

The second dimension in Figure 6.1, *Encouraging*, reflects different aspects of support, and relates to more affective perspectives on learning and motivation. At the least intense and negative end of the dimension is an absence of support, generally from others who would be expected to provide this, but also from one’s self if the participant recognised that their own beliefs were preventing them from participating. At the opposite, most intense negative end of this dimension, others were perceived as being controlling or patronising. In some cases there had been direct conflict. The positive elements of the encouraging dimension involved simply showing an interest, such as when a university tutor not involved in sport asked a rower how she was progressing, to understanding and encouraging. Giving helpful advice or actively helping participants are more intense aspects of support. The elements of this dimension reflect the research reviewed in Chapter Three, where other people were seen to be able to provide such types of support to individuals in various contexts (see, for example, Bianco, 2001; Jacobi, 1991; Resnick et al., 1993; Sosniak, 1985b). Again examples of each of the levels of intensity of the Encouraging dimension appear in Appendix D1.
The final dimension in Figure 6.1 is that of Extending, or challenging. At the less intense end of the dimension are negative aspects such as a lack of opportunities. This was generally attributed to organisational factors rather than specific individuals and so was not regarded as an intensely negative type of interaction. A perception of pressure from others is at the most intense end of the dimension and was also seen as negative. The positive aspects of the dimension of extending include inspiring, inviting, extending and then challenging so each action seemed to push the participant into a higher level of involvement. There is less literature in teaching and learning contexts that directly examines this role of others. Finding the appropriate level of challenge in tasks has been seen to be important in motivation (see Turner & Meyer, 2004 for a brief discussion) and there is some evidence of the importance of others inspiring (Lockwood & Kunda, 1999) and challenging (Hamilton & Darling, 1989; Scales & Gibbons, 1996) in relation to the nature of involvement. Specific examples to illustrate each level of intensity of this dimension appear in Appendix D1.

Subgroup Analysis and Interactions

The above dimensions were developed using the whole data set rather than examining each subgroup separately for two main reasons. Firstly, the emerging themes were clearly evident across all participants and the examples provided in Appendix D1 cover the range of sample subgroups. Secondly, the only major difference noted between subgroups occurred between age groups in relation to the number of responses and this difference will be discussed here.
In order to compare the frequency of responses relating to interactions with others between athletes and musicians, between adolescent and adult participants, and between genders, totals and average were calculated for each subgroup for all positive and for all negative responses (Table 6.3). Because each broad subgroup of participants was of equal size (n=15), these could be directly compared. There was little difference between domains (between athletes and musicians) or genders in the reported number of positive influences. Females did report more negative influences than males, although numbers were small.

**Table 6.3: Summary of Frequency of People of Influence Nominated by Subgroups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant subgroup</th>
<th>Total positive</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Total negative</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total adolescent participants n=15</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total adult participants n=15</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total nominations n=30</td>
<td>309</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total athletes n=15</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total musicians n=15</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total nominations n=30</td>
<td>309</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total male n=15</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total female n=15</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total nominations n=30</td>
<td>309</td>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The biggest overall group difference in the frequency of positive influences occurred between the age groups. Adult members of each subgroup nominated more positive influences and more negative influences than adolescents. These differences are
assumed to have occurred because older participants would have had a wider range of experiences in which they encountered more people, and so would have had the opportunity to interact with more people who could have influenced them. Although there were differences between age groups in numbers of influences, the nature of these influences was similar across all subgroups and was adequately represented by the three dimensions described above.

Interactions with Others and Motivational Responses

In the data reported so far, the focus has been on who other people of influence were, and the nature of their influence. The dimensions described in Figure 6.1 use terms that describe the actions of the “others.” Participants were asked to provide examples of people they perceived had been positive or negative influences in their involvement in sport and music. Therefore it could be assumed that the interactions described had shaped participants’ motivation in positive and negative ways. In order to examine in detail in what ways, or how, the nature of involvement was shaped by the interactions described, all the examples provided in the Circles of Influence Task were coded again, this time with a focus on the nature of participant responses.

In the Model of Motivated Action (see Chapter Two) it was shown how physical, cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of individuals were important when considering their motivation. This distinction was useful for coding the examples of interactions, and all were coded according to being cognitive (e.g. a response relating to understanding or self-belief), affective (e.g. a response relating to enjoyment or
interest) or behavioural (e.g. a response reflecting taking some kind of action). Responses that appeared physical in nature are incorporated into the behavioural category, as listening, watching and other “behavioural” responses could be seen as physical in that they included observable actions rather than the more internal processes of thinking and feeling. The types of participant responses in these different categories are illustrated in Table 6.4. Two examples, one in sport and one in music, are provided below to illustrate each of the types of participants’ motivational responses.

Table 6.4: Participants’ Motivational Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Affective</th>
<th>Physical/Behavioural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>believing in ability; deciding;</td>
<td>enjoying; feeling proud,</td>
<td>starting; resuming; persisting;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dreaming; realising; admiring;</td>
<td>deserving, confident, supported,</td>
<td>developing; improving;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning</td>
<td>comfortable, privileged,</td>
<td>producing; overcoming;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>encouraged, inspired</td>
<td>listening; watching</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cognitive Motivational Responses

Aiden explained how the coach of the senior team at his cricket club had helped him make the transition from juniors to seniors. It was coded as a cognitive response because Aiden had changed the way he thought about playing cricket.

He [coach] just told me... I guess at one time he told me a bit about the way sort of you got to play to … play with purpose. You know you just can't go out and sort of bat the ball around and bowl and muck around. You go out there to sort of do something for your team or for yourself. That you've got to do it with a purpose. And that's about it because I hadn't really thought about it that way until I started playing seniors. You're playing a lot more to win and stuff like that. (Aiden, adolescent male athlete)
Although two musicians reported being devastated after receiving negative appraisals in music examinations, another musician, Jon, gave this as an example of a positive influence as it made him think about what being a musician meant.

… the reasons why I failed were fundamental to the principles of music performance and sort of brought me back from the sort of romantic idea of being just a really good player and just playing, to actually thinking just fundamentally about what does make a good instrumentalist and what are the ingredients. You know, what's important - what is it that makes you a good player, I suppose instead of being just someone who plays for fun. (Jon, adult male musician)

_Affective Motivational Responses_

Moira had been training hard, aiming to represent the state in rowing, but when selection time came, she was in a different age group to other rowers. Her explanation of lack of opportunities as a negative influence was given in Appendix D1. Her response to this situation was coded as affective as she “felt” her year had been “wasted”, was “devastated” and found it “hard” to be in this situation. Interestingly, in the middle of the example is a positive affective response, “great”, to the potentially negative event of an injury.

So I felt like that whole year had been wasted. 'Cause that was in July I did the very first one, and then I was about to do the second trial which would have been for state representation, and he said "Don't bother. There's no crew to put you in." So I was just devastated from that. And sort of half-heartedly got back into training around December. And then injured my foot so I couldn't row which was great. 'Cause I've you know a year off and it's renewed my enthusiasm. … But it's hard having to rely on someone else to achieve your goals. (Moira, adult female athlete)

One of the adults, Jacob, was an instrumental music teacher who taught some of the adolescent participants in the study. Sally was one of these and named him as a positive influence. Her response was coded as affective as she referred to the way learning was “fun” and “pressure free.”
Well whenever we did like solos and that, and were just learning, you just know really young, he'd show us like the capability of the instrument by really giving it like a lot. 'Cause he'd been playing it since he was about fifteen and he's like thirty or something now. Yeah. And just in lessons keeping us motivated. Like there was a couple of times in Year 9 that I was just like "I want to quit it. I can't be bothered any more." He'd just make sure like it wasn't always "you have to do it." It was like fun. And made it pressure free. (Sally, adolescent female musician)

**Physical/Behavioural Motivational Responses**

Responses were coded as physical/behavioural when the participant described an action they had taken as a result of another’s influence. Byron talked about his batting coach primarily in these terms as his game had been “transformed” into one that he saw as “substantial” and “consistent.”

He's my batting coach. … Just a guy who transformed my game into something a little bit more substantial than just a flashing sort of player. Sort of got me a lot more consistent and tried to get my game a lot more consistent. You know very good to talk to. Just to sit and chat. He's very good. (Byron, adult male athlete)

Dean also gave the example of a person in a teaching role, his current clarinet teacher, who had helped him improve his technique.

He's helped with my technique and he's sort of, he's really helped me get to the style of the pieces I'm playing and getting me through them. He's a really great teacher. And he shows me - he shows me everything the way to do it. And he always plays things himself which always helps. (Dean, adolescent male musician)

**Individual Variations and Interactions with Others**

Although there were common categories into which motivational responses could be coded, interpreting the data was complex in various ways. Attempts to code every motivational response into only one category proved impossible for many of the examples given by participants. Individuals sometimes reported a number of combinations of responses such as a change in beliefs being accompanied by a change
in action. Similarly, coding the responses in relation to the influence of others was difficult as some responses reflected more than one type of influence. An attempt was made to separate participant responses into combinations such as cognitive only, cognitive and affective, cognitive and behavioural, and so on, in relation to different combinations of types of influence reported. This led to so many possible combinations of interactions that this analysis was not helpful in reducing the data. So despite overall common categories, there was considerable individual variation within the examples provided by participants. The following example illustrates some of the complexity of the relationship between interactions and motivation. The actions of others were complex, as were the responses of the participant.

Mary: An Adult Female Athlete

Mary had recently competed in the 2000 Olympics when interviewed. She described a coach whose influence could be coded as coaching/teaching skills as he helped with “techniques” and “flaws” in her game. But he also gave feedback (“he tells it like it really is”) and provided emotional support that validated her decision to be an athlete. In addition to Mary describing her coaches’ influence, it may be seen that the example also contains different types of motivational responses. Cognitively, the coach helped Mary believe in herself, and she felt “deserving” (affective). As a result of his coaching her techniques improved and “weaknesses” were removed (physical/behavioural). So the example illustrates both the complexity of others’ influences and of participants’ motivational responses.

But also he is just an amazing coach. Like I feel that I've improved so much under his tutelage. You know just techniques and ways of dealing with things. And yeah he's just made a huge difference. You know you realise you can't... He's the one who's
been very positive but not I mean... He sort of tells it like it really is but also keeps you - he's always believed in me. It's like you know, I guess that's one of the big issues. 'Cause I've always of had trouble believing (laughs). It's weird. I think it's a real personality trait that I have to worry about (laughs). I mean you're there. You're amongst the best in the world. And you still don't believe so... (laughs).

INTERVIEWER: CAN YOU THINK OF AN EXAMPLE OF SOMETHING SPECIFIC IN THE WAY HE'S HELPED OR IS IT JUST GENERAL SUPPORT AND TECHNIQUES?

Um. I think it's the general stuff. It's just the being there and being able to take something that you're not good at and work - have strategies to work at it so that you don't have these flaws in your game. You know you don't have these weaknesses. And it just makes a big difference in looking at the big picture. He's just been able to make me feel like deserving I guess. That I belong there. (Mary, adult female athlete)

*Further Examples of Individual Variations*

There appeared to be no direct relationship between a particular type of action of others and the type of individual motivational responses. So it could not be assumed that a particular action by another could lead to a particular motivational response. Individual perceptions of a particular action are crucial and would have to be sought, as in this study, in order to understand their impact. For example, Jon’s positive response, described earlier as an example of a cognitive response, to a failed music examination was different from that of Tania who was majoring in singing and received what she considered to be a poor mark.

I've never sung really properly since. I won't open my, well I open my mouth for teaching, but I think I've only performed twice after that. That completely crushed me you know. So having received that mark, course I don't sing now. (Tania, adult female musician)

Similarly, different athletes responded differently when different coaches took similar actions. Moira described a rowing coach as a positive influence although it seemed others would not.

He was the one that said to me: "You're a really good rower and age isn't a factor. And you can go as far as you want to if you put the work in." ...And that said to me only a few months ago that, when I was thinking about quitting, "you're as technically good
as any of the rowers that rowed in the Sydney Olympics, you just need that grunt behind it." (laughs). So that just makes me feel like I can do anything. So he's just so, he's so hard. Like so many people would not want him as a coach. But his style of coaching really motivates me and like really pushes me. And yeah no-one could I suppose say a bad word. Or like no matter what anyone else thinks of him, I respect his opinions and his coaching ability. So yeah he's just been tremendous. Yeah unbelievable. (Moira, adult female athlete)

Michelle described another rowing coach as a negative influence (full example given in Appendix D1 as an illustration of “controlling”) because he would not speak or help sometimes. When Michelle said: “but luckily it doesn’t bother me. I just prove him wrong,” this illustrated that her initial perception of the interaction as negative did not necessarily have a long-term negative impact on her involvement. So there were inter-individual differences in that the same type of action by another could be perceived differently across individuals. There were also intra-individual differences in motivational responses, again illustrating their complexity, when the same “other” was perceived as having both a positive and a negative influence on their involvement in sport or music. This is discussed in the following section.

**COMPLEXITY OF SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND MOTIVATION**

An Unexpected Finding

When reviewing the literature related to interactions and motivation (see Chapter Three), it was demonstrated that from a social cognitive perspective, social relationships could be perceived as having positive or negative influences, and from a sociocultural perspective, social aspects of the context (other people) may provide affordances or constraints with regard to motivation. It was expected therefore that others would be regarded in positive or negative ways.
An unexpected finding, however, emerged from the data. Some of the others who were nominated as influential, were named in both the positive and negative sections of the task. A total of nineteen such nominations were made by over half (sixteen) the participants. This finding was noted when examining a chart that displayed all the people nominated for each participant in all parts of the Circles of Influence Task, supporting the usefulness of such analytic tools suggested by Huberman and Miles (1994) and discussed in Chapter Four. The data relating to this finding were examined separately in order to gain an understanding of their significance.

Types of Positive and Negative Influences

All the responses categorised as both positive and negative were examined as a total data set for common themes. Table 6.5 illustrates the different ways others were regarded both positively and negatively.

Table 6.5: Types of Influences Nominated as Both Positive and Negative

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of influence</th>
<th>Number of nominations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The same person or group of people can engage in different actions - some of these are positive and some are negative.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• On the whole a group of people has a positive influence but sometimes some members can have a negative influence.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The same person's actions or situation can simultaneously have a positive and negative influence.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A person's influence changes over time from positive to negative.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The unavailability of a positive influence becomes a negative.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There were no differences between subgroups in the number of participants making such nominations (8 athletes, 8 musicians; 8 males, 8 females, 9 adolescents, 7 adults). Fathers were nominated the most with five participants reporting them as having both a positive and negative influence. It would seem possible that a person’s influence could also change over time from negative to positive, but participants gave no examples of this kind. Illustrative examples of each type of positive and negative influence are provided in Appendix D2.

Because of the small data set available, it is not possible to draw general conclusions about this seemingly paradoxical finding, but some themes relating to the nature of motivation and how it is shaped through interactions with others emerged that could offer explanations for this finding. Three of these themes will be discussed: motivation is situated, motivation is shaped by dynamic individual perceptions and appraisals, and motivation has a paradoxical nature.

Motivation is Situated

Two examples will be presented to illustrate that motivation could change as the participants interacted with different people in different situations or settings. Both these examples reflect the category where: “The same person or group of people can engage in different actions - some of these are positive and some are negative.”
Sasha, an adolescent female musician, spoke about her school class music teacher, Mr. K. Like some other adolescent participants, she found it difficult to clearly articulate his influence.

**Positive:**
This year I'm the only person in Year 11 doing music - TEE music. So it's like one on one. So our relationship is close. And he helps me. I don't know. (pause). I don't know what to say. (Sasha, adolescent female musician)

Sasha obviously thought about questions asked during the first interview and wrote afterwards to expand her responses. She explained how her teacher’s actions in one situation were perceived differently to those in another situation. In a general class teaching situation her teacher acted in what she perceived to be a helpful way. Later, however, when the same teacher gave her “negative marks” in an examination, she was angry. She sought and received support from her instrumental violin teacher (not her class music teacher), but still felt hurt by this action and unable in that sense to overcome it. Her written note to the researcher is reproduced below:

**Negative**
In Eisteddfods I have always received many encouraging comments and marks from adjudicators which have affected my motivation in positive ways, although I have not realised this until recently! For my performance at school that I did recently, I received discouraging comments from my examiners and equally negative marks from my school teacher Mr K. The results I got from this exam made me angry that my own teacher gave me these marks and that he agreed with one of the other examiners from another school who gave me negative comments. (There were three examiners altogether). My violin teacher thinks the comments have affected me considerably and she tells me to take no notice of them but I can't help it, I do it subconsciously. (Sasha, adolescent female musician)

Another example could also be seen to illustrate the situated nature of motivation. Brett spoke about his rowing friends, who although having a positive influence on him, could also, in a different setting, exert a negative one. His friends in rowing offered
companionship – they formed a “community.” They shared values as well as pushing each other in training, and he found them inspirational.

Positive
… people that I've learnt to row with and had fun rowing with. Things like that. …I see them more and I've spent more time with them. And we've sort of got a, you know it's a community we've got. It's an oh..... we've sort of got our own sort of values … you know those guys have been really influential. … because they're my actual peer group, you know it's been more actually who I am as a person. Whereas not actually my rowing ability or my training. Although we've pushed each other in training. …They've been more influential in just, as I probably have with them, in say not smoking or being able to balance going out and achieving or trying to achieve with study and things like that. … You know and they're all really successful guys. You can't help but be inspired and influenced by that. (Brett, adult male athlete)

In a different setting of touring for high-level competitions, however, Brett and his team mates trained even harder, became tired, and disagreements could occur leading to frustration.

Negative
But when we're training together for Olympics and world championships and living out of each other's pockets for months and months, training hard. You know you're always tired and you're bound to have you know the odd run-in. And sometimes they're a bit serious and sometimes they're not. That's been something that I - sometimes that gets on top of you a little bit especially if it happens to happen a couple of times in a row or something like that. You get a little bit frustrated. (Brett, adult male athlete)

These examples illustrated the situated nature of motivation in that the way an interaction with another person shaped motivation depended to a large extent on the specific situation in which that interaction occurred. This explanation of the way the same person could be viewed as both positive and negative reflects a situative or sociocultural perspective of motivation as being shaped by the nature of particular settings. As explained when discussing how motivation is conceptualised in the study (see Chapter Two), in this perspective an individual is seen as being situated within
multiple contexts which provide affordances and constraints and as Turner (2000) found, situated motivation is unstable. That is, motivation is also dynamic.

Motivation is Shaped by Dynamic Individual Perceptions and Strategy Use

The analysis of interactions that were perceived as both positive and negative may also be explained from a more social cognitive perspective in that motivation is mediated by individual differences in perceptions and in strategy use. There was considerable evidence in the data to support this explanation. Results related to perceptions and appraisals (Chapter Six) showed their importance in shaping motivation. Earlier in this chapter it was illustrated that while some participants may perceive a particular action as being negative, other participants did not necessarily perceive it in the same way. Research reviewed in Chapter Three also supported the importance of individual differences in the way actions or events were perceived. For example, Davidson (1997) explained how members of successful string quartets perceived conflict as a healthy part of the working process, whereas unsuccessful quartet members saw it as highly destructive. Literature reviewed (Chapter Three) also indicated that there were individual differences in the use of volitional (Corno, 1993) and coping (Frydenberg, 1997b) strategies to deal with difficulties or situations perceived as being negative in some way. These will be discussed more fully in Chapter Eight when focusing on problems, but it will be seen that participants’ perceptions and strategy use and resultant motivational response to interactions varied.
Motivation was also dynamic and an individual’s initially negative motivational responses could also change over time. Although a participant’s first reaction to a particular action by another may have been a negative one, the longer-term motivational response was not necessarily negative, and in fact was sometimes given as positive, thus leading to the same person being reported as positive and negative. When examining the examples coded as positive and negative, immediate responses varied but generally were affective, referring, for example, to feeling angry, disappointed or discouraged. Longer-term responses fell into five categories as indicated in Table 6.6. These categories were developed after being coded independently by another researcher (see Chapter Four for a detailed discussion).

Table 6.6: Categories of Longer-Term Motivational Responses with Initially Negative Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Longer-term response category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples of initial responses</th>
<th>Number of examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative not overcome</td>
<td>Situation still exists and negative feelings still exist</td>
<td>“pressure” “intimidated”</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative removed</td>
<td>Situation no longer exists because of a change in the other’s circumstances</td>
<td>&quot;off-putting&quot; “pressure”</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative disregarded</td>
<td>Situation reported as having no impact or not worth bothering about</td>
<td>“disappointed”</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative resolved</td>
<td>Situation resolved or neutralised because of participant’ actions</td>
<td>feeling “not supported”</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative turned to positive</td>
<td>Participant actively reframed action or situation so it is a positive one</td>
<td>“angry” “discouraged”</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.6 includes, for each category of longer-term motivational response, a description of that category, examples of initial negative motivational responses, and the number of nominations in that category. For example, in the eight examples of the category of longer-term response of “negative not overcome,” individuals initially said they felt pressured, intimidated or discouraged. This category was called “negative not overcome” because the situation where the negative action could occur still existed, and because the person’s negative affective responses were still evident. At the other end of the table there were four examples of interactions that were categorised as “negative turned to positive” where the initial motivational response was also negative. In these cases, however, the participant actively reframed the situation which was then perceived as having a positive influence on their motivation.

Although all initial motivational responses for all categories in Table 6.6 were negative, the longer term responses varied in the degree to which they were maladaptive or adaptive (Dweck, 1996), or dysfunctional or functional (Frydenberg, 1997b). Reading down Table 6.6, the longer-term responses become more adaptive or functional. For some participants a situation was perceived as negative over a period of time and they had not been able to overcome it. In contrast, some participants had been able to actively reframe a situation and turn it into something positive in relation to their involvement. Examples of each of the longer-term categories of motivational responses appear below, in the same order as presented in Table 6.6.
Negative not Overcome

Some participants seemed not to have been able to overcome a negative influence despite also having the experience of a positive interaction with that person. Influences such as Sasha’s description of her music teacher’s comments and their effect on her, represent the least adaptive response in terms of future involvement and persistence. Examples of this category were also evident in negative responses that were not also coded as positives. For example, when Tania was “devastated” by a negative appraisal, she gave up singing as a result. Responses were not always as dramatic, as illustrated by Cara’s explanation of how spectators could have both a positive and a negative influence on the nature of her involvement. In this situation her perception was that there seemed to be a balance between positives and negatives, even though the negative situations were still likely to occur and could not really be overcome.

Positive
Um spectators are also like a good thing on the sideline. When you do something good they like congratulate you and stuff. That also is like an extra boost for your confidence. So you always play a lot better after that. (Cara, adolescent female athlete)

Negative
And sometimes spectators get a little bit … You know if you miss something - you miss the ball or something, sometimes you have the odd one or two that you know don't say “oh bad luck.” They just criticise instead. That kind of gets you down. But then if you do something good, then the other people around - there's more of them so they kind of get you back up again. But yeah. (Cara, adolescent female athlete)

Negative Removed
For some participants the situation resolved itself when a negative influence was removed in a way that was outside the participant’s control. Adam explained that although his father had helped him with his cricket, he also put pressure on him to win
games. Now that his parents were separated, this negative influence was no longer present, and so he no longer experienced the negative motivational response.

Positive
My Dad has probably influenced me more with sports and stuff I do. "Cause he was right into them. And so I sort of got right into them as well. And he also used to coach us when we played cricket early on as well. So a lot of the way I play has come from him as well. (Adam, adolescent male athlete)

Negative
I suppose my Dad. He put a lot of positives but he's also had a bit of negatives. Like puts a lot of pressure on you to do well and make runs or whatever. But he's moved away so I only see him not much. So that sort of negative influence that was there isn't there any more. So there's no great pressure to do well. You sort of just play for fun now. That was probably the only real negative influence that I've had. (Adam, adolescent male athlete)

Negative Disregarded
Some participants said they deliberately did not take any notice of negatives. In the above example, Adam seemed upset by his father’s perceived pressure. Carly’s father had also been perceived as positive and negative, but her response differed. She was able to disregard his actions and so change her initially negative motivational response.

Positive
My Parents. Just helped me. Supported me all the way. They're just good. (Carly, adolescent female athlete)

Negative
Yeah. My Dad gives a few negative thoughts now and then. Because, yeah. He doesn't really understand the game but some people just think that they know a bit. But they don't.

INTERVIEWER: CAN YOU GIVE AN EXAMPLE?
Um. I was at State last year and he just said I didn't play a very good game. I thought I did. Obviously it wasn't good enough for him.

INTERVIEWER: SO WHAT KIND OF IMPACT DOES THAT HAVE ON YOU DO YOU THINK?
Well it was disappointing at the start but then I realised I couldn't worry about it. So I just forgot about it. (Carly, adolescent female athlete)
Negative Resolved

For some participants the negative situation was resolved because of a particular action on their own part. Jake’s explanation of how touring with his band affected his relationship with his girlfriend illustrates this and is also one example of how the summary of the first interview was used as for verification purposes (see Chapter Four for a detailed discussion). In the first interview Jake had given the following example as a negative influence.

Negative
I mean I think the only negative aspect of it was trying to maintain a relationship with my girlfriend while I was away for six months of the year. And that sort of ended up deteriorating and we're not together any more. But I guess that's the only one thing that I was not always 100% happy about being in a band. You have to tour all the time.

But I mean if it had've been such a problem, you know if it was more important to me to have my relationship than it was to have my band, then I 'd go with my relationship. But of course my band's the most important thing in my life so you know it is a pretty easy decision. I mean it's not like it didn't work out. We're really good friends now so that's fine. (Jake, adult male musician)

Thus Jake resolved a negative situation by thinking about his main goals and changing the nature of his relationship with his girlfriend to one of friendship. The researcher originally interpreted this example as meaning that his girlfriend was a negative influence. At the beginning of the second interview when discussing the summary of his Interview One, Jake corrected this and “touring”, an organisational factor, became the negative “other.”

Positive
And with this ... with the negative thing. I just wanted to clarify. It wasn't so much the girlfriend was a negative (laughs), it was more the fact that being in a band resulted in a negative effect on my relationship I guess. But she was also a good influence because she was inspirational to me I guess. You know a lot of the songs we write are love songs or whatever. So I thought I'd pop her back up the top (laughs). [into “positive influences”]
Negative Turned to Positive

The most adaptive category of longer-term motivational responses was when participants were able to reframe or change their perceptions of the situation in such a way as to make it a positive one. For example, Brad, an adult male athlete, also spoke about the influence of a girlfriend. When he lacked confidence to join a semiprofessional club, despite several offers, his girlfriend encouraged him, built his self-confidence, and played a role in his involvement at that higher level. Later, when they had broken up, he felt angry but was able to use this “emotional backlash” and redirect his energy into his training. And so he turned a negative situation into a positive one.

Positive
My girlfriend … got disappointed every time I turned back an offer when I was playing for amateur clubs. So she really tried to get me into …you know “If you’ve got a talent use it.” And so I think that she probably was a significant influence you know when I got involved with it at the start. (Brad, adult male athlete)

Negative
And she’s now my ex girlfriend so um you know we went through a pretty rough stage and that was at the start of this preseason. And I used a lot of the er I don’t know, the emotional backlash of breaking up with a girl after four years to really focus myself in my football at training and I guess I could use all my energy in training (laughs) Getting all that anger out. So I must admit this year I’m probably fitter than I ever have been. I attribute a lot of that to you know breaking up with my girlfriend and using that energy and that. I had a lot of energy and emotions to you know kill. So I used it doing weights or running. Whenever I was running and feeling tired I just used that sort of anger and everything to keep on running. So that was positive and negative definitely. (Brad, adult male athlete)

Individuals therefore perceived actions differently and used different strategies to think about or cope with negative interactions with others. Because of these individual differences, the same “other” could be perceived as being both a positive and a negative influence. In addition to illustrating the complexity of motivation, these examples also illustrate its dynamic nature as changes were made in participants’
coping responses. This finding is consistent with theory and research reviewed regarding strategy use (see Chapter Three). As Frydenberg (1997b, p.29) explained, coping is “as a process that changes over time during a particular encounter.”

The Paradoxical Nature of Motivation

A third way of interpreting the finding that the same “other” may be perceived as having both a positive and a negative influence is simply that it represents a paradox in relation to motivation. Some paradoxes regarding motivation have been described by Ames (1990). For example, according to Ames, although providing extrinsic rewards or persuading students to try harder could be expected to have a positive motivational impact, such strategies have been found to be counterproductive over time or may depend on the individual student’s perceptions of themselves and their learning. In a similar way, the present study showed that although an interaction or event may be perceived in a positive way, differences could occur across situations or times. In addition, when an interaction or event is perceived as negative, individuals may experience a negative motivational response, but this situation could change, or the individual could use strategies to perceive the situation differently. Rather than examine every interaction and event in minute detail, it may be sufficient to suggest that motivation is paradoxical in that people or situations can be perceived in ways that both positively and negatively shape involvement.

Support for the idea that motivation can be paradoxical, is found in some recent research in the sport and music domains. For example, Gould and colleagues (Gould
et al., 2002) examined variables influencing the performance of Olympic athletes. Media coverage was seen to be essential for individual athletes in order to raise the funds needed in preparation for the Olympics, but too much attention from the media was reported as having a negative influence. In another study, parents of young tennis players provided positive emotional support and financial help, but if they were too involved in training or offered unsolicited input, this became a negative influence (Defrancesco & Burke, 1997). Hellstedt (1995, p.122) wrote of the “paradox of the athlete’s family” where concerned parents with high expectations for their children acted as strong role models and provided “energy and motivation” for the young athlete. The children in these families, however, could perceive these aspects of the family as being a positive or a negative influence. Hellstedt’s research showed that “what is perceived as a positive encouragement by some athletes might be a negative, disabling, and damaging experience for others” (p. 122).

Similarly in the domain of music, Hallam (1997) described positive practical and financial support offered by parents, but suggested that supervision of practice, while it may improve performance in the short term, may lead to a longer term negative effect on intrinsic motivation. Others have suggested that parental support must be “sensitively offered” or it will be seen as interference and have a detrimental effect (Pitts, Davidson, & McPherson, 2000). Reflecting Ames’ (1990) discussion of classroom practices, these authors maintained that teachers need to express and model their enthusiasm for music, but that excessive and superficial praise can reduce motivation.
The existence of a paradoxical construct is supported by a postmodern theoretical paradigm where multiple perspectives are acceptable, as opposed to the “traditional” situation where "readers were presented with the researcher's interpretation of the data, cleaned and streamlined and collapsed in rational, noncontradictory accounts" (Fontana & Frey, 1994, p.372). Further research regarding this paradox is needed to specify the situations in which it can occur and the conditions under which adaptive responses can be maximised. Viewing motivation as a complex, paradoxical construct has implications for the way it is conceptualised and these will be considered in the final discussion chapter (Chapter Nine).

**CONCLUDING DISCUSSION**

The findings presented in this chapter addressed the research questions relating to social interactions between participants and a wide range of “others”, and participants’ perceptions of these. In order to understand how such interactions shaped the nature of individuals’ motivation, the results were presented and discussed in two main sections. The first set of results examined the types of influential others, the nature of their influences or roles played, and the nature of participants’ motivational responses. Complex individual differences were found, and the second set of results further explored this complexity through an examination of the finding that some people shaped participants’ motivation in positive and negative ways. The following summary is organised around the research questions of interest relating to interactions and motivation.
Who are the People of Influence and what is the Nature of the Roles they Play?

Other people named as most influential were participants’ immediate family, as well as those in sport and music with whom they had close contact (e.g. teachers, coaches, peers and colleagues). These findings were consistent with the existing literature about who are the most important people in learning and motivational contexts. The present study extended existing research by examining both positive and negative interactions, and by explicitly encouraging participants to consider broad categories of “other.” The nature of others’ influences was conceptualised as comprising three dimensions of enabling, encouraging and extending. These dimensions incorporated positive and negative aspects and elements from social cognitive, affective and sociocultural theoretical perspectives.

How do Relationships with a Range of Other People Shape Motivation in Sport and Music in Positive and Negative Ways?

Participants’ motivational responses to interactions with others were categorised as cognitive, affective and physical/behavioural. Complexity emerged as one interaction could lead to more than one type of response, and different participants could also respond differently to an apparently similar type of action by another. A further finding was that over half the participants nominated the same other as being both a positive and as a negative influence.

Several possible interpretations of this finding were discussed. Situations and the people within them were dynamic, and motivation was situated. That is, in one
situation the other person or group of people could be perceived as having a positive influence, and in another situation a negative influence. Another explanation related to the participants themselves and focused on their perceptions and strategy use. The findings supported the ideas that again individuals may perceive similar situations differently, and that individual responses may change in different ways over time as strategies were used to cope with negative influences. Finally, the presence of both positive and negative motivational responses could be an indication of the paradoxical nature of motivation. The results highlighted that motivation is complex and dynamic.

Are These Findings Similar Across Individuals, Across Domains and Over Time?

No differences were found between subgroups in relation to the nature of interactions, and the data were analysed as a complete set to develop the dimensions of influence and the motivational response categories. Despite common themes, there were many individual differences in perceptions of interactions and individual differences in the strategies used to deal with initially negative responses. The perceived nature of interactions could also vary across time as individuals came into contact with a wider range of people, as individuals and situations changed, and as individuals reflected on people in their lives and on the nature of their influences. To summarise, motivational responses were shaped in different ways for different individuals through complex positive and negative interactions with other people.

Social interactions between participants and others shaped motivation in complex and dynamic ways. Such interactions were located within situations or contexts which
were themselves complex and dynamic. These findings support the view of motivation as "socially situated, dynamic, interactive and multi-dimensional" (Volet, 2001a, p.328). These findings are consistent with classroom research by Turner (2000) and research by O’Neill (1997) who examined music practice and concluded that motivational processes are “varied and complex” (p.61) and “inextricably linked to the social and cultural environment” (p.62).

Participants used various strategies to deal with difficult situations. For example, they could change their perceptions about an interaction from negative to positive, or could disregard a negative influence. The use of such strategies is discussed in detail in Chapter Eight, where problems faced by participants are the focus. Before examining how participants dealt with such problems, one specific group of others will be considered in detail in Chapter Seven - the onlookers. How participants interacted with onlookers will further reveal the complexity of individual motivational responses, the dynamic, situated nature of motivation, and the reciprocity that occurred when individuals and others interacted.
Chapter Seven
Performer-Onlooker Interactions and Motivation

I like being in the spotlight when everything's going well. You know people are cheering for you. That's just a really great feeling. (Brett, adult male athlete)

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

The purpose of this chapter is to further explore the research question relating to how interactions with others positively and negatively shape motivation. In the previous discussion of results relating to this research question (Chapter Six), a broad perspective was taken with the focus on interactions with a wide range of others perceived by participants as being influential. In this chapter, the focus is on interactions with one group of others, namely onlookers. There are several reasons for this focus.

Firstly, an in-depth examination of this specific set of interactions highlights the complex, reciprocal and dynamic nature of the relationship between interactions and motivation. This relationship is explored and illustrated in more depth and detail. A further reason for the selection of onlookers as the focus of this chapter is that onlookers form a unique group. They are simultaneously part of the sport or music performance setting, as well as part of the wider community. They may come together only for a performance situation, or in the case of indirect onlookers, may not
physically come together at all, although they still view the performance. The relationship with onlookers may then not actually involve any direct verbal interaction or extended contact, as do the relationships with many others previously discussed. Interactions with onlookers could therefore be different in nature from interactions with the more significant others such as family and coaches or teachers. Although nominated less often than such groups (see Table 6.2), the nature of interactions with onlookers reflected many similarities to the interactions with others more generally. Finally, performer-onlooker interactions have not been widely examined with regard to performer motivation, although as discussed later, popular literature would indicate that they are important. Exploring these interactions therefore contributes to an understanding of how they shape performer motivation.

A conceptual framework depicting the nature of onlookers is presented first and then a brief overview of the existing literature relating to performer-onlooker interactions and their role in motivation is given. The data produced in this study relating to onlookers is summarised. Results reflected three themes that have already emerged in the study and will be discussed in turn. Firstly, motivational responses were complex and comprised cognitive, affective and physical/behavioural aspects. Further complexity emerged when different communities overlapped. Secondly, performer-onlooker relationships were reciprocal in that they both influenced each other. Finally, these relationships were dynamic as they changed over time. After the presentation of the main findings, some differences between sample subgroups are outlined. The chapter ends with a summary and brief discussion of the results.
WHO ARE ONLOOKERS?

This section explains how onlookers are conceptualised in this study. The domains of sport and music are similar in that they both have a performance component. For athletes this is generally a competition viewed by spectators and media. Musicians perform in concerts with audiences, or make recordings to be heard or viewed later or via the media. So in sport and music, onlookers are generally associated with the performance settings of competitions or concerts. They are therefore a limited group of “other”, connected to one type of setting (performance) in the microlevel of context in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). The different types of onlookers who may participate in a performance setting are illustrated in Figure 7.1.

![Figure 7.1: Types of Onlookers in a Performance Setting](image-url)
In this chapter the focus is on interactions between the players or actual performers and those who participate as onlookers, and who are outside the immediate sport or music community, represented by the large circle in Figure 7.1. There are four groups of onlookers outside the immediate sport (team) or music (ensemble) community: direct onlookers, indirect onlookers, the media, and family and friends. A fifth group that could be termed co-participants includes those who have a legitimate permanent role within a team or ensemble such as coaches, trainers, umpires, adjudicators etc. Interactions with these were discussed in the previous chapter (Chapter Six) and are not included here, although they may be conceptualised as partly being onlookers.

*Direct onlookers*, such as spectators at a sporting event and the audience at a musical concert, are the most obvious group of onlookers. These direct onlookers could be said to be a “naïve” audience who are there simply to enjoy the performance (Lund & Kranz, 1994), although this group can actually be very diverse in nature (Spargo, 2001). A further group of onlookers may be termed *indirect onlookers* and are members of the wider community who witness a performance via radio or television, or read or hear about it from media reports. Their involvement in the performance setting itself is therefore indirect. Another group of onlookers is people from the *media* – photographers, reporters and critics. Their role is to record, report on or review the performance event.

The players or performers are not only members of sporting teams or musical ensembles. They also are members of other communities such as family and friends who may form part of the naïve audience as they come to enjoy an event as direct
onlookers. It is also possible for family and friends to be more or less permanent participants in the performance settings as players or co-participants. For example, a spouse may play in the same ensemble or a father may be a coach. They may also informally take on the roles associated with other groups of onlookers when they act as a critic (media role) or coach (co-participant role) while not formally having these roles. The effect of such overlapping communities will be considered later in this chapter.

RESEARCH RELATING TO ONLOOKERS

Research and popular literature indicate that spectators and audience are important for multiple reasons and this contributed to the decision to focus on participants’ interactions with onlookers. The conceptualisation of onlookers illustrated in Figure 7.1 was informed by research in sport and music as well as in other domains such as drama. The research reviewed here firstly relates to the impact of a performance or of the performers on the onlookers, then to the impact of the onlookers on the performers, and finally to the interactions or relationships between the performers and onlookers.

Impact of Performers on Onlookers

Research reviewed relating to onlookers in sport and music generally has focused on the impact of a performance on the onlookers, or on particular characteristics of the onlookers. For example, some studies have examined sport fans’ reasons for attending events and considered aspects such as identification with a team (Laverie & Arnett, 2000; Wann, Royalty, & Roberts, 2000). Establishing why fans attend sporting events
can assist in understanding and promoting sport spectator consumer behaviour (Funk & Pastore, 2000; Trail & James, 2001; Williamson et al., 2001; Zhang et al., 2001). Examining fan attendance can also inform the broader organisational structures in sport such as where to locate new teams and the viability of existing ones (Dobson, Goddard, & Wilson, 2001; Jones, Scholfield, & Giles, 2000). Some studies in the arts have also examined the impact of performances on onlookers. Although the motive might be economic as in media ratings research (Napoli, 2001; Webster, Phalen, & Lichty, 2000) or in ensuring the survival of live theatre (Jones, 1999), there can be more altruistic aims such as improving college students’ appreciation of the arts (Jacobs, 2000).

Two large bodies of research that consider the impact of performers or performances on onlookers are only briefly mentioned here since they are outside the scope of the present study. Firstly, research that examines the impact of media on audiences, or onlookers, represents a large, important body of work and is an example of research focusing on onlookers. There are two main views. One supports the concern that particular groups of onlookers, especially children and lower socio-economic groups, are more vulnerable and susceptible to negative influences of media than others. Preventative and educational measures are recommended to reduce the likelihood of negative behaviours such as violence developing (see, for example, American Psychological Association, 1996). Others have suggested that such groups of onlookers may not be as vulnerable as this and are able to respond critically and appropriately to media such as video games, television programs and movies (Butsch, 2001; Gauntlett, 1999).
Secondly, research examining the influence of role models focuses on their influence on those who observe them. These may include onlookers as conceptualised in this study. Related literature was summarised elsewhere (Chapter Three). The main points to note here are that high profile performers, athletes or musicians, are seen to have an influence on onlookers. This influence may be positive or negative and may extend beyond a particular performance setting into other areas of life. This principle is behind role model programs for young people where high profile figures are used to help young people develop socially desirable behaviours and lifestyles (MacCallum & Beltman, 2002). Theory and research indicate that there is not a simple direct influence on onlookers, but that any effects depend on the characteristics of the role model, the characteristics of the young person, and the nature of the environment in which the onlooker lives and acts.

Impact of Onlookers on Performers

The next body of research to be considered relates to the impact of the onlookers on the performers. Little empirical research was located in the sporting domain relating to the impact of onlookers on the actual players, although popular literature and opinion would indicate that this occurs (Casellas, 2001; Cullen, 2001, 2002; Westcoasteagles, 2002). Popular literature also sometimes reports how fans’ behaviour can affect the lifestyle of high profile musicians or movie stars, especially if that behaviour goes beyond socially accepted boundaries and invades privacy such as through stalking or threats of kidnapping. Lund and Kranz (1994) focused on the emotional components of musical creativity and performance before, during and after a performance. They
found that the audience was seen as a distraction to performers who needed to use techniques to control their emotions. Their discussion also informed the present study’s conceptualisation of the various groups of onlookers (Figure 7.1).

The impact of onlookers on performers is not only negative. Again, popular literature and opinion supports this view. For example, the coach of a West Australian football (Australian Rules) team participating in a national competition used the media (newspapers and web-site) to exhort fans to support the team (Cullen, 2001, 2002; Westcoasteagles, 2002). The public has also been encouraged to support Australian athletes in a similar way in the Olympic and Commonwealth Games by sending “hero faxes.” Searches of journal databases, however, did not reveal any empirical studies relating to this type of impact of onlookers on the actual players. In the domain of music, Oura and Hatano (2001) found that novice and expert pianists developed different internalised mental models of audiences on which they based their performance. The most experienced pianists were able to take into account multiple possible onlookers while retaining their autonomy and creating something new for the community.

Relationship Between Performers and Onlookers

The third body of research focuses on the relationship between performers and onlookers. From the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) it would be expected that interactions at the person-context interface would shape performer motivation. That is, characteristics of both the performer and the onlooker would be important.
Limited research was located that examined how performer-onlooker interactions interrelated and affected motivation. One study did investigate factors affecting the performance of Olympians, and revealed the complexity of performer-onlooker interrelationships (Gould et al., 2002). Already given as an example of the paradoxical nature of motivation, media coverage was perceived in both positive and negative ways that shaped the nature of athletes’ involvement. Some research has examined performer-onlooker interactions in the music domain. Davidson (1997) comprehensively discussed the social aspects of music performance. She described research relating to negative and positive emotional responses by performers that may be elicited by audiences and emphasised “the critical role that the performer-audience interaction has in shaping the performance” (p.223).

In another domain, drama, conventions such as forms and structure, are seen to be shaped by contextual factors such as society and culture (Pascoe, 1999). A contract is made between the audience and performer – in the case of radio it is an imagined audience (R. Pascoe, personal communication, December 3, 2002). The relationship between the performers and audience is regarded as a reciprocal, negotiated one. Drama is seen to take place “in a sacred space where participants, both performers and audiences, collaboratively make meaning through the languages of drama” (Pascoe, 1999, p.131). Similar to Croteau and Hoynes’ (2000) discussion of the media, drama is seen to consist of “an intermeshing of the broad and the societal, the personal and the individual” (Pascoe, 1999, p.134). This is consistent with a sociocultural perspective. It echoes the view presented when developing the Model of Motivated
Action (Chapter Two) that a sociocultural viewpoint necessitates paying attention to the individual, the interpersonal, and the cultural (Tudge & Putnam, 1997).

To summarise, there is some support in the literature for the idea that the nature of performers’ involvement is shaped through interactions with onlookers, particularly direct and indirect onlookers as illustrated in Figure 7.1. In the present study, data relating to onlookers were analysed separately in order to explore how motivation was shaped by interactions with various types of onlookers. The next section of the chapter indicates the nature of the data analysed.

DATA RELATING TO ONLOOKERS
Data used to examine the role of Onlookers came from four main sources: the Circles of Influence Task, the Settings Chart Task, the Issues Sorting Task, and documents such as press reports and internet sites. Onlookers were represented in participants’ responses to each part of the Circles of Influence Task and their illustrative examples were used as data. In the Settings Chart Task, comments that referred to onlookers in performance settings were used as data. The Issues Sorting Task contained two specific issues relating to onlookers: receiving “negative feedback from spectators / audience”, and receiving “negative press reports / reviews / appraisals / adjudications.” Participants’ comments in response to these issues were used as data.

Finally, where available, additional sources of data such as direct and indirect researcher observations of performances, press cuttings, television reports, and internet sites were used to augment the interview data and provide triangulation of data.
sources. Separate internet searches (http://www.google.com) were conducted using each participant’s name on three occasions. The actual number of internet sites varied on each occasion a search was conducted but the relative proportions remained constant. A summary of the available data regarding onlookers appears in Figure 7.2. It indicates the extent of participants’ comments about onlookers, and the participants about whom media reports and internet sites were located. A breakdown of the available data is also given in relation to participant age, domain and gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of participants who made comments about onlookers:</th>
<th>28</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adolescent participants: 13; adult participants: 15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1 adolescent female athlete and 1 adolescent female musician made no comments)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of text units (one line) coded in NUD*IST relating to onlookers:</th>
<th>1476</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(adolescent participants: 247; adult participants: 1229)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(athletes: 714; musicians: 736)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(males: 824; females: 452)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of participants about whom media reports (newspaper and magazine articles; TV broadcasts) were located during times of interviews:</th>
<th>11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(approx. 124 reports)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2 adolescent participants: 3 reports; 9 adult participants: approx 121 reports)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8 athletes: approx 102 reports; 3 musicians: 22 reports)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6 males: approx 108 reports; 5 females: 16 reports)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of participants mentioned in internet sites (Google search, 22-1-04)</th>
<th>17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(approx. 3,255 sites)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6 adolescent participants: 11 sites; 11 adult participants: approx. 3,244 sites)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(athletes: approx 3,172 sites; musicians: approx 83 sites)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(males: approx 2,428 sites; females: approx 826 sites)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7.2: Onlooker Data Available for Analysis

Although most participants made some comments relating to onlookers, adult participants’ comments were much more extensive as indicated by the greater number of text units analysed via NUD*IST (247 text units for adolescents and 1229 for adults). The greater amount of media reports and internet sites for athletes (102 and
3,172) compared to musicians (22 and 83) reflects the characteristics of the particular sample selected. For example, five adult athletes were or had been full-time professionals whereas only one adult musician was currently a full-time professional. Three of the adult male professionals were involved in more popular types of sport (Australian Rules football and cricket) and music (alternative rock), both of which receive more media coverage in Western Australia than other types of sport or music. Differences between subgroups will be discussed later in this chapter after the main findings have been presented. The three main findings that will be outlined in turn are that performer-onlooker interactions are complex, they are reciprocal and they are dynamic.

PERFORMER-ONLOOKER INTERACTIONS ARE COMPLEX

The complexity of performer-onlooker interactions will be illustrated in two ways. Firstly, motivational responses of participants were complex, and reflected cognitive, affective and physical/behavioural components. Secondly, when the communities to which onlookers belonged overlapped, participants' motivation was shaped in complex ways. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

Complexity of Motivational Responses

Participant comments about onlookers were coded into cognitive, affective and physical/behavioural motivational responses, as part of the coding process of all interactions with others described previously (see Chapter Six). The following discussion is divided into these sections as a convenient way of presenting findings.
Once again there are links between the responses, as illustrated by individual case study of Mary provided earlier (Chapter Six).

Cognitive Responses

In the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) various characteristics of individuals are regarded as important in shaping their motivation. One type of cognitive motivational construct is that of self-efficacy, and its role in motivation to learn is well-documented (see, for example, Dweck, 1996; Pintrich et al., 1993). Several of the adolescent participants referred to their confidence or self-belief and how onlookers could positively affect this.

Like you get people like congratulate you and stuff. And you think "oh yeah." It like gets your confidence up a bit. Yeah 'cause I've had people like come up to me after the concerts and go "I like that" and stuff. So it's pretty good. (Damien, adolescent male musician)

When I perform at eisteddfods and competitions, after I perform there's always a whole group of people coming up to me and telling me how well I did. And that's really encouraging. (Sasha, adolescent female musician)

Adult participants did not appear to be as sensitive to onlookers to the same extent in relation to their self-confidence and referred more to the importance of internal standards and self-regulatory processes in relation to onlookers.

At this stage of my life it doesn't matter what anyone thinks. I'm sick of worrying about what other people think, say and do about me because I know where I want to go and you know it's just irrelevant what they think. As long as I'm doing myself and the team - all I can do, well that's all I can do. (Blake, adult male athlete)

I guess also that you're your own audience as well. ... That your own criticism and your own "oh that sounded really good" is quite central to whether you feel like picking the instrument up ever again. (Tracy, adult female musician)
These comments echoed Schunk & Zimmerman’s (1996) discussion of the increasing importance of self rather than social influences in self-regulatory development and Oura and Hatano’s (2001) finding that experts were more able than novices to retain autonomy and creativity while still taking into account the characteristics of their audience.

_Affective Responses_

One of the most striking findings when examining comments relating to onlookers, was the extent of affective responses. Particularly when discussing live performances, both adolescent and adult participants indicated that the performance setting itself, and positive responses from onlookers led to an affective response on their part.

I like playing on my own but I like it even more when I ’m performing to an audience. An adrenalin rush. (Dean, adolescent male musician)

You know it's great to be able to… it's fun rehearsing, and I love rehearsing with the band. But it's also great to get an audience reaction and see people enjoying your music. You know having a hundred or so people go off to your music is really great so I think that's where the biggest buzz comes from - the performance side of it. (Jake, adult male musician)

Participants also felt pleased, proud or inspired when the spectators or audience showed their approval through cheering or applause or through a large attendance. Indirect onlookers, for example, via fan mail, could also produce such an affective response.

For me I get a lot of inspiration in wanting to compete well in front of a crowd or something like that. So I just like that kind of thing. I like being in the spotlight when everything's going well. You know people are cheering for you. That's just a really great feeling. (Brett, adult male athlete)

In the World Championships you are playing for yourself - you have the support of family and friends; but for the Olympics I got fan mail. It was mind blowing. People want you to do well - you are playing for your country. (Mary, adult female athlete)
There is support in the literature (see discussion in Chapters Two and Three) for considering affective responses of individuals and for their crucial role in motivation to learn or perform (see, for example, Ainley & Hidi, 2002; Pintrich et al., 1993). The present findings, as illustrated in the above comments, support the view that affective aspects of individuals are important and that such responses to performer-onlooker interactions may shape the nature of ongoing involvement; that is, of motivation.

**Physical/Behavioural Responses**

Participants’ knowledge and use of various strategies in their interactions with onlookers, shaped the nature of their involvement and persistence. Strategy use will be discussed in more depth in the next chapter relating to problems (Chapter Eight), but here their use illustrates a behavioural motivational response to interactions with onlookers. It was mainly the adult participants whose comments revealed the deliberate use of motivational strategies in connection to onlookers and one participant’s experiences with the media will be used as an example.

Byron, a professional cricketer, was the participant for whom the greatest amount of internet sites and newspaper articles were located (see Figure 7.2). His comments reflected both positive and negative aspects of media attention, illustrating the paradoxical nature of motivational responses already discussed (see Chapter Six). He enjoyed playing at the “highest level” as part of state and national teams and wanted to keep doing so. He thought that reports of good performances could enhance his reputation and lead to sponsorship deals. On the day of the second interview, Byron had to decide whether he was staying in his current team or moving to another state to
play. He said the media would be very interested in his decision and they were – his decision, along with evaluative comments, was reported on the evening television news that night and in the next day’s paper. The number of internet sites and press reports about him confirmed that the media attention he spoke of was very real. Obtaining a manager to deal with sponsors and other issues, and having trusted people, such as the team’s psychologist and other team mates, to go to for advice were important strategies used for handling media pressures, and examples of a behavioural motivational response.

You know now I think I’ve got the right people in the right places. …. I sort of can handle the media pressure and all that much better. Basically if you start listening to all that sort of stuff it just goes to your head. You know they're quick to build you up but they're even quicker to nail you if you're going bad. (Byron, adult male athlete)

*Types of Responses are Linked*

When analysing participant motivational responses to interactions with the wider range of others (Chapter Six), it was found that the categorising such responses as cognitive, affective or physical/behavioural was to some extent arbitrary as one individual response could contain more than one category. As Holliday (2002) explained, the way data are organised and presented raises dilemmas for the writer, as does the decision of which data to select as evidence of the arguments being put forward. It was stated that one aim of the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) was to view individuals holistically. Representing a holistic view can, however, be difficult in a written discussion. Brett’s comments about onlookers are presented to illustrate this difficulty and to endeavour to capture a holistic view of the complexity of motivation.
Brett: An Adult Male Athlete

Brett’s comments were categorised separately as illustrating different types of motivational responses but were actually made in one extended comment at the end of the Circles of Influence Task. That entire section of the interview data is reproduced below. Different groups of onlookers (spectators and family members), different motivational responses (cognitive, affective and physical/behavioural), and other beliefs of the participant (for example, about the need for a balanced approach in life) are all discussed in a holistic way, rather than being segmented as in the process of data analysis. In relation to motivational responses in particular it can be seen that Brett’s responses were cognitive as when he was inspired by and appreciated support from people he didn’t personally know, but even more so when members of his family made an effort to watch him row. There was an affective response as well with the “great feeling” he had because he liked “being in the spotlight.” The activity of talking about things with family members other than rowing (a physical/behavioural response) was also important in the bigger picture of his life. Interest and support from all these people were “a really good motivating factor for training.”

I guess onlooker/audience/spectators. That's an interesting one. Like at times that is definitely an inspiration. For me I get a lot of inspiration in wanting to compete well in front of a crowd or something like that. So I just like that kind of thing. I like being in the spotlight when everything's going well. You know people are cheering for you. That's just a really great feeling. But generally those spectators being all these people that have influenced me. (points to circles task). If they were just people I didn't even know, that's just great. It's appreciated and that kind of thing.

But onlookers/audience/spectators, if they were made up of these sort of circles here. If they were there then that would be the most definitely an inspiration and definitely a motivating factor for me. Knowing that they were going to be there. And that's like typified by the Olympics. Knowing that everyone was coming over to watch me was a really good motivating factor for training for the whole time when we were together. Yeah definitely that.

INTERVIEWER: IS THERE ANYONE ELSE YOU THINK SHOULD BE ADDED TO THE CIRCLES?
Family I suppose. My aunty as well - my mum's sister. She's been someone on the outside who's always just been a relative I suppose (laughs). Always interested and played an active role in supporting me and things like that. Came over to the Olympics. And also in the last couple of years my brother in laws. My sisters have got married and those guys have been really good. Once again just providing a bit of a balance. Like rowing isn't all I talk about with them. Which is what I want 'cause sometimes you can get a bit sick of talking about it. (Brett, adult male athlete)

So although participant responses discussed above have been grouped according to particular aspects of motivation, in reality close examination of the separate comments revealed that these groupings were arbitrary and that motivational responses were complex in nature. Further complexity emerged when examining the issue of overlapping communities, such as when Brett’s family members became direct onlookers when he was competing. A discussion of findings relating to overlapping communities follows.

Complexity of Onlookers and Overlapping Communities

The second way that performer-onlooker interactions were found to be complex occurred when onlookers belonged to overlapping communities. In the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) communities were conceptualised as occurring at the microlevel of context. Participants could simultaneously belong to several different communities. Similarly onlookers could also belong to different communities. When family and friends took on the roles of other groups of onlookers, specifically the direct onlookers or the media, this shaped participant motivation in particular ways.

The different groups of onlookers in Figure 7.1 all have somewhat different primary roles in relation to a performance. Family and friends provide physical and emotional
support through interactions such as those described in the previous chapter (Chapter Six). This could be expected to be their role in relation to all settings, including performances, and some participants specifically gave examples in the Circles of Influence Task that related for instance to their parents driving them to and attending sporting events and concerts. The direct and indirect onlookers may also be assumed to have the roles of enjoying or appreciating the performance and the efforts of the performers.

When family and friends took on the role of direct or indirect onlookers and enjoyed and appreciated a performance, the effect could be positive for performers. The comments below illustrate participants’ appreciation of the special efforts made by family members to attend competitions or concerts, where they took on the role of supporters, and reflected a positive motivational response.

…. I refer again to the Olympics. Like the fact that I was having family, friends and all those sort of people in the stands, for me was really important that they were there. … I find that I compete better if I know someone that's going to be there watching me. (Brett, adult male athlete)

I mean my family were always there at the gigs. My dad used to come even to the night club shows for years on end you know. So and I don't know why but seeing them there is just a hell of a lot more fun than seeing anyone else you know. So that used to – that kept us going too you know. (Jordan, adult male musician)

Another group of onlookers, media representatives, generally has the role of reporting and critically reviewing the performance. When family and friends took on this role of critic, generally associated with the media, there could be a negative impact on participant motivation. The motivational effect of such interactions appeared to be greater than when interactions were limited to temporary members of the performance community who were not known to the performer. In particular, some adolescent
participants spoke about their fathers in this way. These comments have already been used to illustrate the impact of negative motivational responses, but they can also be interpreted as having a greater impact because of the overlap in communities, with fathers being perceived as inappropriately taking on the role of critic.

I suppose my Dad. He put a lot of positives but he's also had a bit of negatives. Like puts a lot of pressure on you to do well and make runs or whatever. But he's moved away so I only see him not much. So that sort of negative influence that was there isn't there any more. So there's no great pressure to do well. You sort of just play for fun now. (Adam, adolescent male athlete)

Like you're just sitting in the car coming home and dad points everything out that you did bad. .... Just how like you're afraid that whatever game he comes to watch he'll find something bad that you've done and he'll pick it out and point it out to you. And just stuff like that. I don't really want him to come and watch my games. (laughs). (Christine, adolescent female athlete)

The importance of overlapping communities and their effect on motivation was an issue that arose inductively from the data and findings are tentative. A similar area of inquiry that would be interesting to pursue in relation to overlapping communities is the situation where family members have more permanent roles in the same sport or music setting as participants. They could be co-performers or have other more permanent roles such as coach or teacher. How this overlap shapes performer motivation could be an area of future investigation.

PERFORMER-ONLOOKER INTERACTIONS ARE RECIPROCAL

The second major finding related to performer-onlooker interactions is that they were reciprocal in nature. In the discussion of the results addressing appraisals (see Chapter Five) it could be seen that the person and context interrelated in a reciprocal way. Aspects of both person and context were necessary for initial engagement in sport or music to occur, and each made appraisals of the other that shaped the nature of
ongoing involvement. Examination of the data relating to interactions between participants and onlookers also revealed a reciprocal relationship. Examples already given have indicated that when participants received positive feedback from onlookers, this could lead to a positive motivational response. Other examples will be provided below to illustrate the reciprocity of performer-onlooker interactions.

Some of the adult participants’ comments explicitly referred to the two-way, or reciprocal nature of their relationship with onlookers. Brad’s comments illustrate his two-way connection with supporters of his football team. He felt that gave something to them and they provided support for him. He gave the example of how supporters had helped him in practical ways after a recent personal difficulty.

Now you play at a higher level you know a few people do get to know you. People that you don't know come up to you and even on the streets sometimes and they tell you that you played a good game. And "how's the [team name] going to go this year?" They sort of, I don't know. I guess it's that sense of giving other people satisfaction. They come out and support you and you sort of give something back to them when you're winning or playing well. And they're really important as well. … So even more so now I feel like I owe them something back. Um so yeah, I really treasure the supporters - they're really important. (Brad, adult male athlete)

Byron described a cricket game where the team played well, the crowd responded, and this spurred the team on to greater success.

That day was probably the best day, one of the best days of my cricketing life, because it was such a good game. And I hopefully played a big part in that. But to be out in the middle of the [name of sporting venue] with I think there was 15,000 people screaming. …. And the crowd - the roar that was going on - there was just a belief in our team you know that we could win in any situation. And suddenly it just got momentum and kept rolling and kept rolling. And we won that game. (Byron, adult male athlete)
Jacob, a semiprofessional musician playing jazz and Latin music, explained that when an audience responded to the musicians’ playing, this in turn affected the musician, in a positive or negative way.

I like to see people enjoying themselves and when you’re playing dance music, it’s there in front of you. Or it’s not. So you know straight away whether the audience is having a good time or not. They’re not dancing out of politeness. People will clap out of politeness but they won’t dance out of politeness. (Jacob, adult male musician)

In these examples, it can be seen that the interactions between performers and onlookers were reciprocal in nature. Although little research was found explicitly examining performer-onlooker interactions, the notion of reciprocity is supported by some research in the music domain focusing specifically on the two-way process of communication during an actual performance (Davidson, 1997). For example, a performer’s physical movements assisted co-performers in understanding and sharing musical intentions, and “were important to the audience’s perception of the music” (p.222). Similarly movements of the audience such as smiles, frowns, laughs, and coughs could influence the performer. Davidson gave a detailed, rich description of the beginning of a musical performance where many subtle moment-by-moment interactions occurred between a solo performer, co-performers and the audience. Examples of such interactions are a supportive smile from a member of the orchestra, and catching the eye of a family member in the audience who gives a ‘thumbs up’ sign, illustrating also the positive effect of having family and friends in the audience.

PERFORMER-ONLOOKER INTERACTIONS ARE DYNAMIC
The third major finding relating to performer-onlooker interactions was that they were dynamic. Experiences during a particular performance, or more typically after a
number of performances or series of events, shaped expectations and preparations before subsequent performances for both the performer and the onlookers. So over time a performer’s views about themselves, and onlookers’ views about the performer, could change and develop. For example, Byron’s comments about the media, “they're quick to build you up but they're even quicker to nail you if you're going bad,” highlighted the changing nature of his relationship with the media.

One aspect of this dynamic quality is that over time, a performer could build up a particular reputation with onlookers. Several adult participants commented on how their desire for a good reputation guided their motivational beliefs and the nature of their involvement. It was the adult participants who spoke more about this issue and several reflected on how their beliefs and involvement had changed over the years. Brad and Byron, who were professional athletes in popular sports (cricket and Australian Rules football), both spoke about their desire to be remembered because of such a positive reputation. This belief was important to Byron’s ongoing involvement.

.... I want to be the best that I can be. Like I say at the end of the day I want to be remembered as someone who people would say "I went and saw him. I want to go and see [participant’s name] play." And when they leave the ground, Mum and Dad are just walking home and little Johnny says "did you see that guy play? I want to be like him." And hopefully that happens. (Byron, adult male athlete)

Over the years Jordan had participated in music in many different ways, including as a professional performer. Playing in front of live audiences was no longer a major part of his life although it was the part he said he enjoyed the most. Having a good reputation enabled his band to be more selective in relation to live performances, and changing technologies enabled access to a wider indirect audience. Recorded music
was seen as a more permanent record of performance and consideration of audience was a part of all these changes.

… I think the main thing is to get the music out and heard I think you know. It's probably - like I say with the internet and things, things have just changed so much in the last four or five years. You can just about set up from your house and get it around the world you know.

…. you've just got to keep going and keep going. Because if I pulled out some of the old disks and listened back now, I mean you're going to get embarrassed about certain things. Because you can hear your growth over the years you know (laughs). So now we have this real attitude about … this is permanent. …especially at this stage too. You don't want any crappy sort of - being heard by anyone. (Jordan, adult male musician)

The broader social contextual change of the development of the internet as a method of communication, had also changed the way Jake and his band related to their fans. His comments illustrated reciprocity as he was aware that performer-onlooker interactions were two-way as the band and their supporters interacted over time.

So I think we've always, with our internet and stuff, we've tried to keep up to date. And tried to keep it as much you know sort of interactive and people feel like they can get in touch with the band and that sort of thing which is really important. I mean we still get lots of hand written fan mail which we go through and reply to. Yeah it's just great to be able to - people can sit at home, get on the internet quickly, order a T-shirt or you know leave a comment or that kind of thing. Yeah we've got quite a few [internet sites]. There's a lot of fan based ones. … But yeah you now it's something as a band we'd love to be more involved with but it's kind of hard once we're on the road to regularly sort of get on to the internet. We're just lucky that we've got people to do it for us. (Jake, adult male musician)

Jake’s band had recently made an intensive tour of North America and consideration of fans was going to be a deciding factor in whether the band toured again, and how to organise the tour. That is performer-onlooker relations would shape the nature of the band’s involvement. In addition over time, it was the audiences’ responses that would help determine the band’s future.

…You know I could never not want to not keep pushing this as far as it's going to go. So basically someone else or something else has to put the brakes on. Whether it be
people stop buying our records. Or you know a general change in musical tastes. I think apart from that we're on a winner. (Jake, adult male musician)

So over time, as performers and onlookers continued to interact, the nature of involvement could change. Feedback from onlookers shaped participants’ efforts, and supporters responded to participants’ performances.

ANALYSIS OF SUBGROUPS
When examining all data related to onlookers (Figure 7.2) as a whole data set three major findings emerged. Performer-onlooker interactions were complex. This was the main theme of the results presented in relation to interactions with the wider range of others (see Chapter Six) and has been highlighted in this chapter with regard to onlookers. Performer-onlooker interactions were also reciprocal in nature and were dynamic as they changed over time. When taking a broad view of onlookers (Chapter Six), the only real group differences were between adolescents and adults in relation to the reported number of influential others. When focusing on a specific group and conducting a more in-depth analysis, as in this chapter, there were some differences between the subgroups of domain, gender and age, and these are discussed in this section.

In Figure 7.1 it may be seen that there were differences between subgroups with athletes and males being mentioned in many more media reports and internet sites than were musicians or females. Any differences between athletes and musicians, and between males and females in the extent of comments regarding onlookers, are confounded with other variables, such as professional versus amateur status in this
study, as more professional athletes than professional musicians were included in the sample, and different sports and types of music receive different amounts of media coverage.

Domain and gender differences in the amount of media coverage could be discussed in relation to the broadest macrolevel of context in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). A detailed discussion of such general social, political, economic and cultural factors is outside the scope of this study, but these broader differences did appear to have a motivational impact on participants. Some female athletes and those in less prevalent sports commented on such issues. Michelle’s comments about spectators in rowing compared with other sports and her resultant thoughts about motivation illustrate this impact. Because it was unlikely that there would regularly be many onlookers in rowing, she believed that it was important to be self-motivated.

Not really that many spectators for rowing that much (laughs). Basically if you're going to do it you've got to really be doing it for yourself because there's..... Maybe one day out of a year of training you'll get to go to Nations Cup or the World Cup and in Lucerne when they're just lining the shores. Which is fantastic. But if you can't do it by yourself, like no-one's going to come out and watch you at 4.30 in the morning (laughs) kind of thing. So it becomes - I just do it for myself really. I don't get that much out of - I mean I do get a kick out of having the spectators there but I get more of a kick out of just the enjoyment I get out of when I finish a race or whatever and I know I've done well. ... Sometimes I wonder what it would be like just to be a basketballer you know or something and just have this huge grandstand of people watching everything you do all the time. Like it would be amazing energy to have from the crowd. But we don't really have that. So there's not much of an influence. (Michelle, adult female athlete)

With regard to the subgroups of adolescents and adults, there were some clear differences between them with regard to performer-onlooker relationships. One difference between the age groups already discussed was that adult participants seemed less dependent on onlooker feedback in maintaining their confidence. Another
difference evident in Figure 7.1 was that adolescent participants overall gave fewer, less elaborated comments (247 text units vs. 1229 text units for adults), and had fewer media reports and internet sites in which they were mentioned. Because of the more limited data, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the data regarding adolescent participants and onlookers. The differences in the extent of the data between adolescent and adult participants could be explained by the characteristics of the particular sample selected, by the age or maturity of the participants, or by the overall experience of the participants in their domain.

This were some findings consistent with Oura & Hatano’s (2001) distinction between novices, junior experts and experts. When examining the mental models that performers tried to communicate to their audiences, they found that relative novices focused on what piano teachers in general might expect from a performance. Junior experts were able to recognise that piano playing was an act of communication and focused not only on what they had been taught, but also on what a hypothetical audience might appreciate. Pianists with still more expertise were able to consider what teachers in general, what specific teachers and what other audiences would expect – they “internalised several models of representatives of the community of practitioners and could shape their performances based on these models” (p.156). In addition, however, they were also able to retain their autonomy and search for their own particular performance style.

In this study differences in understanding about the nature of onlookers were also found between these adolescents and adults. Most of the adolescents, who were also
less experienced participants or relative novices, seemed to simply consider a one-way relationship with the onlookers, where onlookers provided positive or negative feedback that either made the performance enjoyable or dented their self-confidence.

David’s comments reflected this type of one-way interaction.

Well I know in more recent times it'd be, especially on that music tour - we had people who couldn't speak English very well, but they'd still think it was brilliant. And they'd come up and tell you that and myself. When you're up there and the audience is really behind you it's always good to - it makes you feel to keep on going. (David, adolescent male musician)

The adult participants, who were experts, gave more elaborated responses and reflected on the need to consider broader aspects of the context when performing. For example, adult musicians adapted their choice of pieces and the way they were played in response to actual or expected audiences. Jon’s explanation of how he took the audience into account illustrated his understanding that performer-onlooker interactions were reciprocal.

You program a particular concert. You rehearse for ten weeks or eight weeks or something. And then you get to the concert and no one's there (laughs). You literally only have a - not no one - but an audience - you were expecting an audience say of 400 and you only get 200 or 150 or something. And that's a negative feedback due to the fact that no one's really turned up (laughs). And you feel a bit deflated before you've even started. And the flip side is a program that people really like and everyone turns up. It's a great experience. (Jon, adult male musician)

Jon went on to explain how important it was to consider the audience’s expectations while preparing for a performance.

… without regular audiences at things, none of this would be particularly interesting (laughs). This is certainly true.

INTERVIEWER: DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE AUDIENCE WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO PLAY?
Oh, certainly. Absolutely. I mean music's just another form of communication. It's just another form of communicating with people and the way your performance is perceived by the audience is crucially important and you have to have some feedback from that. You have to really think about that when you're preparing for a
performance. I mean it's all very well playing Mahler if you love it. But if no one's going to come then I mean it's kind of...well it's not totally self-defeating. 'Cause I mean you'll have a good time but the whole aspect of the satisfaction is knowing that other people derive enjoyment from it as well. The communication aspect really has to be there I think. (Jon, adult male musician)

There were two adolescent participants, both musicians, who might be termed “junior experts” as in Oura and Hatano’s research. Both had achieved high levels in local music examinations and were experienced performers in a range of school and community groups. They reported the highest amounts of total time per week spent in individual practice, group rehearsals and performances of all the musicians interviewed. Their comments about onlookers reflected a broader perspective and were more similar to the adults than to the other adolescents. For example, Dean spoke about his reasons for playing music:

This may sound clichéd but the thought of making beautiful music really. I love the idea of making a piece of music that people love. Or making a piece sound good enough so that people will love it. Sort of giving music it's full potential I guess. (Dean, adolescent male musician)

It is well documented that there are differences between novice and expert performers and that expertise may be situation specific (Billett, 1998c; Boekaerts, 1997). There is also a current debate about the relative roles of personal and contextual characteristics in determining expertise in sport (Barab & Plucker, 2002; Helsen et al., 2000; Williams & Reilly, 2000) and other talent areas (Howe et al., 1998). The present findings provide further evidence that one difference between novices and experts is in the perceived nature of person-context (performer-onlooker) interactions. Greater expertise was associated with a broader understanding of the reciprocal nature of interactions between performers and onlookers and an ability to take this into account when performing.
CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The findings presented in this chapter addressed the research questions relating to interactions with a specific group of others – onlookers. Onlookers were conceptualised as comprising four main groups: family and friends, direct, indirect, and media onlookers. The main results illustrated in greater depth those presented when examining interactions with the wider range of others as discussed in Chapter Six. That is performer-onlooker interactions were complex, reciprocal and dynamic.

Comments by athletes and musicians were complex in that they contained cognitive, affective, and physical/behavioural aspects that often were linked in the same interaction. Complexity was also evident when overlapping communities shaped performer-onlooker interactions. The paradoxical nature of motivation was again revealed when some onlookers were perceived as being both positive and negative. Interactions between performers and onlookers, although often not involving direct contact such as verbal interaction, were not one-way, but reciprocal, with the actions of the performers shaping the actions of the onlookers and vice versa. The nature of performer-onlooker interactions changed over time and so motivation shaped by them was also dynamic. Analysis of the data relating to participants’ interactions with onlookers supported the view that motivation is a complex, dynamic construct that is reciprocally shaped by interactions at the interface of person and context.

In conclusion, there is little research that has specifically examined the nature of performer-onlooker relationships, and the results in this chapter have addressed the diverse and complex nature of the onlookers as well as the diverse and complex nature
of the performers, and shed light on the nature of the relationship between them. The results presented here are not claimed to be generalisable, but rather are viewed as exploratory in the attempt to understand how participants perceived their onlookers, and how the reported relationships shaped participant motivation. Participants described the actions of onlookers and the beliefs and emotions that they attributed to those actions. Perceptions of onlookers were not sought and interviews with onlookers, and more observations of performance situations, could have added more depth to the study. Obtaining media reports addressed this issue in a limited way by providing some triangulation of data. One unique finding was the role of overlapping communities in performer motivation and this could be a topic for future research.

In the two chapters relating to interactions with others, the main finding illustrated has been that of the complexity of the interactions. Both types of interface, appraisals (Chapter Five) and interactions (Chapters Six and Seven), revealed a reciprocal and complex relationship between personal and contextual factors that shaped motivation. Results relating to both appraisals and interactions also revealed that motivation was dynamic. The dynamic nature of the person-context relationship and the resultant motivation are the main focus of the next results chapter (Chapter Eight). It presents findings regarding the third type of interface, namely problems, and how participants have coped with these in order to persist in sport and music.
Chapter Eight
Problems and Motivation

… the complete exhaustion factor. It's like you have all these plans - oh yes I'm doing nothing else this evening - but what you're actually going to be doing this evening is lying on the floor doing absolutely nothing. So brain dead. (Tracy, adult female musician)

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss findings that address the research question relating to how problems faced by athletes and musicians shape their motivation in sport and music (Research Question 3, Table 3.2). When reviewing literature relating to problems (Chapter Three), it was seen that as individuals encountered a problem in the course of their activities, they responded by using various strategies and by making decisions about the nature of their involvement. It has been proposed in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) that dealing with such problems occurs at the interface of person and context.

The previous results chapters have focused on two aspects of motivated action as illustrated in Figure 2.1: initial engagement (Chapter Five) and Ongoing Involvement (Chapters 5-7). This chapter focuses on the third aspect of persistence. This is more than just ongoing involvement in the activities of a community, and refers to
continuing to be involved over time in the face of difficulties or distractions, that is, problems.

In order to understand how problems shape motivation, first it is necessary to discover what problems high-achieving individuals in sport and music face, and what strategies are used to deal with these. A further question of interest is whether these findings are similar across domains, across individuals and over time in relation to the types of problems faced, the strategies used to deal with them and resultant persistence in sport and music. These questions are addressed in this chapter primarily through an examination of the problems, strategies and decisions discussed by participants when completing the Issues Sorting Task. It will be seen that the interrelationship between problems and motivation is dynamic, and this represents the main focus of the results presented in this chapter.

The results are presented in three parts, focusing on problems faced, on strategies used, and on the dynamic nature of problems and resulting motivation. The first section of the chapter presents data relating to the types of problems encountered by participants. Finding Time is used as an example of a common situation. Some participants perceived this in a positive way and some in a negative way, again illustrating the importance of subjectivity in perceptions or appraisals and motivation. Differences between subgroups and individual variations in problems encountered are discussed.

The second section of the chapter presents data relating to the types of strategies used by participants when problems were encountered. Strategies used could be categorised
as focusing on affective, social, behavioural, or cognitive aspects of the situation. Four main findings emerged and these are discussed in turn. An examination of affective strategies indicated the value of focusing on the most specific level of context – the task or activity level. An examination of social strategies indicated the importance of interactions with other people. An examination of behavioural strategies indicated the complex nature of strategy use and motivation, and an examination of cognitive factors indicated the dynamic nature of strategy use and motivation.

The final section of the chapter further explores the dynamic nature not only of strategies used, but also of the problems faced, and of the resulting persistence. Individual case studies are presented to illustrate this dynamic nature. The chapter concludes with a summary and brief discussion of the results in relation to the research questions of interest.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED

The primary source of data relating to problems was the Issues Sorting Task completed as a part of Interview Two (see Appendix B6). One aim of this task was to gain an overview of the nature and frequency of problems that may have been encountered by participants. The problems selected for the Issues Sorting Task were those emerging from the participants’ reported experiences in Interview One. All ratings and comments related to the Issues Sorting Task were included in the analysis. In addition, data included comments made by participants throughout both interviews about how they dealt with various difficulties and problems in their lives.
The Issues Sorting Task Ratings

The Issues Sorting Task was organised around problems faced in the three settings of individual training or practice, group training or rehearsals, and group performance (competitions or concerts). Four other broader life events emerging from the first interview were included in the task. Participants were asked to indicate the frequency with which they had encountered each issue.

It was assumed that the “issues” in the task would be identified as problems to a greater or lesser extent as they were the ones raised by participants. It was not anticipated that some participants would perceive them in positive ways. As with the same type of social interactions being perceived positively or negatively (Chapter Six), the so-called “problems” could also be perceived in different ways. This finding is discussed further after presenting the frequencies with which participants said they had encountered each. A summary of these frequencies appears in Tables 8.1 to 8.4. The issues are ordered in the tables according to the number of participants who rated them as being “often” encountered. Later in the discussion, the term “issue” is replaced with the word “problem”, as this is the name of the type of interface under examination. In the following presentation of the results of the Issues Sorting Task, however, the term issue is retained, as this is the word used in discussions with participants.
Table 8.1: Rating of Issues Relating to Individual Training or Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue encountered</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finding time</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting started</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expenses involved</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of interesting or enjoyable tasks</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments from family/onlookers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting the right equipment/facilities</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding a suitable place</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss or change of teacher/coach</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.2: Rating of Issues Relating to Group Training or Rehearsal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue encountered</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of wasting time</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding time</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of opportunities</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport of self/equipment</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficult/uninteresting tasks/activities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments from team mates</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not getting along with team mates</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not getting along with coach</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative comments from coach</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joining a new group/team</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8.3: Rating of Issues Relating to Group Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue encountered</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Errors by team-mate</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing against better teams</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Errors by an umpire</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time/transport/expenses involved</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making an obvious error</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing badly overall in that situation</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not being selected for the competition</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment failure</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative feedback from spectators</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8.4: Rating of Other Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue encountered</th>
<th>Never Encountered</th>
<th>Encountered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Making a major decision such as focusing on one sport only</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal injury</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An important change in family circumstances such as leaving home or the breaking up of a relationship</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative press reports/reviews/evaluations</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Missing data for Daniel adolescent male musician
The Problem of Finding Time

Although the term “issue” was used in the task, for consistency this term is replaced by “problem” in the following discussion. Finding Time has been selected to illustrate the nature of a problem faced by participants on a regular basis, and the fact that not all participants perceived this to be a problem. Finding Time was nominated as the issue or problem most encountered when considering individual practice (12 participants). With regard to team or group training or rehearsal, finding time was equally second most nominated (4 participants) and a related problem of “wasting time” was the most nominated (6 participants). These problems were interrelated as some participants indicated that it was because they were so busy finding time that they resented wasting it. Nineteen participants had indicated that they had had to make a major decision such as choosing between two sports or instruments, and some of the comments made about this in the final part of the Issues Sorting Task related to the idea of finding time for competing demands. The comments used to inform this discussion were taken from all participants who commented on this particular situation (having limited time), not just from those who said it was a major concern for them.

It became evident in the first interview, especially during the Time Line Task, that all participants were busy people. Many had been involved in a variety of sporting or musical activities over the years prior to the first interview. At the time of the interviews some were still involved with sports or instruments other than their major ones, and most (21 participants) were involved in more than one team or ensemble (community) with their major sport or instrument. The extent of individual involvement in sport and music across different settings has already been illustrated
Participants’ lives were not taken up solely with activities related to sport and music. They also had study or work commitments, responsibilities and activities relating to families and in some cases partners, the need and desire for friends and social activities, and some were also involved in other recreational pursuits not connected with sport or music. In the previous results chapters a distinction has been made between cognitive, affective and physical/behavioural aspects of individuals and of their motivational responses. Physical or physiological responses were particularly evident when participants spoke about their busy lifestyles.

Although all participants seemed very busy, not everyone mentioned finding time as a problem, and some in fact perceived a lack of time in a positive way. A discussion of positive motivational responses in relation to finding time is given next, followed by a discussion of negative motivational responses in relation to finding time.

Finding Time and Positive Motivational Responses

It was assumed from comments in the first interview that finding time was a difficulty for participants and so would be perceived as negative, or have a negative impact on their motivation. This was not always the case. As illustrated previously, individuals could perceive similar situations such as the actions of a coach or teacher in different ways, and the need to manage many activities was the same. For example, although Jake’s comments indicated that he was very busy with his band, he had no problems finding time for individual practice or for rehearsing with his band. This could be interpreted as being because he was a professional musician and did not have to fit in other employment obligations, but the reason Jake gave was different.
It's still not really a job or work for us, you know, because it's so much fun. And it's not like someone will ring us up and say: “I want to have a rehearsal this week” and the other guys will say: “well I don't want to.” You know that hasn't ever happened. Because it's good to actually get together and rehearse. It's what we want to do. (Jake, adult male musician)

One positive idea expressed by several participants was that they enjoyed having structured activities and disliked having nothing much to do. For example, Michelle loved an active, structured lifestyle. When asked what factors influenced her continued involvement with rowing she said:

I think the reason I do it at such an intense sort of level is 'cause I just love um the fact that it is such a commitment. And such, just involves such dedication. So it's a challenge I think. One of the main factors. And because I like the lifestyle. Being fit and healthy and able to you know spend the whole day and all that sort of stuff. … And it's just motivating. I find it really motivating with my whole - the rest of my life as well. (Michelle, adult female athlete)

Tracy, a cellist, answered the same question with a similar positive idea about the need for structure:

Well I guess partly it's habit. 'Cause it's kind of been going for so long it's such an integrated part of my life that I'd miss it if it weren't there. I mean even having a break over the summer, you're kind of wondering what to do with yourself because you don't have that sort of structure and that um those kind of goals that you need to meet. (Tracy, adult female musician)

For some adolescent participants having something to do to occupy their time was also an important factor in their ongoing involvement.

I don’t like sitting around doing nothing. I’d rather do something on the weekends instead of doing nothing. (Aaron, adolescent male athlete)

You know life revolves round - you have to work around what your rehearsals and.... But it's great fun. You know I mean when you perform it's better than not performing and sitting at home doing nothing. (Dean, adolescent male musician)

Another idea expressed as a positive motivational response to the issue of finding time, was that for some participants, the activities of sport or music were in themselves
relaxing, or they provided relief from other activities. For example, as well as being a busy amateur musician, Jon worked full-time as a lawyer. Even though he said finding time for individual practice was often an issue for him, he also said:

I mean [music’s] a continual source of inspiration and relaxation and recreation. And I don't think I could subsist happily doing Law without having that outlet. I think that it's a coexistence that works quite nicely. I mean that's not the only picture. I mean you have your home life. I'm married and you have your family and all that sort of stuff so there's another aspect of one's existence. But I think music's a big part of it. (Jon, adult male musician)

For others, particular settings or types of activities provided relief from other more arduous tasks.

'Cause I mean I don’t particularly like swimming but it just breaks it up. 'Cause sometimes I find it a real chore to go to the gym. Like it's a real job and I really - sometimes I really hate having to do it. I just can't be bothered. But swimming I don’t mind. It's just like time out (laughs). Yeah. (Moira, adult female athlete)

Quartets I find I really need. So last Friday I played and the Friday before … I didn't play because one of the members was in Sydney. And it was a real relief to get there and play the stuff that we do play. … So yeah I find quartets a real release at the end of the week. Yeah and definitely miss it if it's not there. (Theresa, adult female musician)

A final positive perspective on finding time was that participating in lots of activities, and so making the most of time and opportunities, was seen as beneficial to current and future performance. Two participants who said that they often encountered finding time as an issue in the Issues Sorting Task in relation to individual work expressed this view. For Brad, who worked full-time as a school teacher, keeping busy in terms of doing more than the required structured activities was seen as essential. He was asked which of the settings of individual training, team training or team competitions was the most important.

It’s funny. I reckon the most important for me is to do those individual things. Because I mean we have to do all the other ones and they’re really important, but if you want to get that little edge on the opposition it’s those little individual things that can get you
over the line at the end. You know I know a lot of the times I'll go running at nine o'clock at night or something. And I'm just thinking all the rest of them are in bed (laughs) or asleep or whatever. You know little things like that. Most people on their nights off just want a break from it all because it’s only semi-professional and you all work. And some of them have got families and all that sort of stuff. So I just think you know when you’re out there doing something when everyone else is not doing something, you get that little advantage so yeah. They’re important for your mind more than anything. (Brad, adult male athlete)

Likewise, Dean thought that it was important to be as active as possible and his plans for the twelve months after the first interview reflected this:

….. So I think I just want to get through to the end of Year 12 with you know a good result and have fun and get myself involved in every you know extra activity, as well as the activities within the school that I can. Just make use of what you've got when you've got it. (Dean, adolescent male musician)

Finding Time and Negative Motivational Responses

Participants did not all perceive the need to manage multiple activities in a positive way. The main negative impact was on physical and emotional well-being with many reporting physiological or physical responses that they perceived to be unpleasant. For example, in the Day in the Life Task, participants frequently reported feeling “tired” (14 participants), and also that it was good when they could “relax” (10 participants). All the adolescent participants were full-time secondary students and were very conscious of the need to do well in their final years of school. Looming large in their lives and a source of anxiety was the final TEE (Tertiary Entry Examination). Their comments reflected the effects of the effort needed to study as well as to find time to participate in sport or music. Adam explained his plans for the next twelve months and his comments illustrated this.

Well I'd like to go away with the state under 17s to Brisbane. That leaves on January 1st. So I have to make that squad and train hard with that one all year. And I also want to play - make my way up the seniors' grade down at the district club down there. And then also you know work on my fitness and things like that. But I've also got to think
about schoolwork as well. It's tiring, yeah. (laughs). I've got exams soon - 5 weeks.
(Adam, adolescent male athlete)

Daniel was regarded as a musician in this study but he also spent time playing sport. He was in his school’s rowing team and played soccer with a community club. When asked if music was the most important activity in his life, his comments indicated the strain of juggling multiple activities.

In rowing season it's not. Oh 'cause music's kind of an all year thing. You've always got your practising or playing it. Like little festivals or something. But when rowing's on that's all you ever think about (laughs). And of course you've got school as well. So you can't really think about music and sport. You've just got to think "oh subjects" especially year 11. (Daniel, adolescent male musician)

Adult participants also reported difficulties with attempting to fit many activities into their lives. For example, Byron recalled a time when he was about to get married, was buying a house, was aiming for Australian selection, was being approached by prospective sponsors, and was under the media spotlight because of good performances. All this had a negative effect on him and on his performance in a home game that he and his team had expected to win.

And I suppose [the coach], sort of looked back after it and said: "I should've stepped in and helped you." But no-one did. And being a young guy you think: "well I can handle this.” I was doing media interviews. And one minute bloody organising receptions. And another minute trying to see a real estate agent …

…. And we lost that game. And I suppose it was just a shattering experience. Because that season we were unbeatable. And to come and play in Perth and get beaten in Perth um it was just soul shattering basically. (Byron, adult male athlete)

As well as feelings of tiredness and stress, some participants also reported frustration or disappointment at not being able to achieve what they wanted because of the number of commitments they had. Tracy and Jacob both worked full-time and
belonged to several ensembles and discussed difficulties in finding time for individual practice.

… the complete exhaustion factor. It's like you have all these plans - oh yes I'm doing nothing else this evening - but what you're actually going to be doing this evening is lying on the floor doing absolutely nothing. So brain dead. (Tracy, adult female musician)

The frustrating thing with that is that I’m still not doing … I like to be doing three or four hours a day, not three or four hours a week [individual practice]. But I’m also accepting the fact that I – it’s just not possible. So at this point in time I’m working too much teaching wise. I mean I’m in demand as a teacher. So learning to say “no” has been a bit hard. (Jacob, adult male musician)

Therefore, although all participants were busy, they could perceive this in positive or negative ways. When examining participants’ interactions with others (Chapter Six), it was also found that individuals could respond differently to a similar situation. For example, receiving a negative appraisal for a performance, or being coached in a “tough” manner, were perceived as positive by some and as negative by others. Again when examining what could appear to be a problem, the crucial role played by individual perceptions was apparent.

Subgroup Analysis and Problems

Analysis of the Issues Sorting Task also included an examination of individual ratings of issues for each setting. An example of the breakdown of individual responses to issues in the individual practice or training setting is provided in Appendix E1. The data were examined for differences between the subgroups of domain, age and gender. As illustrated in Appendix E1, although the numbers in each rating category were small, there were no apparent differences between genders.
A small difference between domains was noted as one issue in group performance settings, that of “transport/time/expenses”, was encountered somewhat more often by musicians. This could be related to the particular sample of participants in the study as all musicians except one were amateurs and so had responsibility for transporting their own instruments. Some of the musicians in the study played percussion, tuba and cello, which are all large instruments and more likely to be difficult to transport than a bag of sporting gear. Although the athletes’ sports could involve large equipment such as rowing boats and gym equipment, in performance settings the athletes tended to go to where the equipment was stored rather than have to take their equipment from place to place. Professional and semiprofessional athletes also had more assistance with matters such as transport.

Some differences between age groups were apparent. Adult participants and athletes said they more often encountered “getting started” as a problem in individual training and practice. With regard to other, broader life events, only one person, Aaron an adolescent male athlete, said he had encountered none of these issues, and four adult participants, all professionals, said they had encountered them all. Other age differences were apparent in broader life events with adults more likely than adolescents to have encountered a major change in family circumstances or negative reviews. All these differences appeared to reflect the particular situation of the individuals in the selected sample. Those with greater life experiences and with greater involvement in sport or music (adults in general and professionals in particular) had more opportunities to encounter potential problems.
Individual Variations and Problems

Problems encountered by participants reflected their individual circumstances, and so were different for individuals rather than subgroups. There were also some individual discrepancies noted between the participants’ sorting of issues and their other comments throughout the interviews. For example, in the Issues Sorting Task, Brad said that getting along with a coach and receiving negative comments from a coach were never an issue for him. In the first interview, however, a coach was said to have a negative influence because of constant negative comments and was reported to be a major reason behind Brad’s thinking about giving up football. One explanation for this discrepancy could be that he was thinking about his current situation rather than past experiences, or he was thinking about his overall experiences in sport and his experiences with coaches in general were perceived as being positive. The coach left the club and, as in Table 6.6, the negative situation was removed, and was not currently a negative influence for Brad.

Another individual inconsistency in the ratings of issues in was that lack of opportunities had seemed to be an important difficulty for Moira in the first interview, but she only rated it as “sometimes” encountered in the Issues Sorting Task. One explanation, as with Brad’s experience, could be that a problem can have an intense impact, even though it does not often occur, and that the intensity can fade over time. In earlier discussions it was reported that perceptions of situations could change over time. For example, an interaction with another person could be initially perceived as negative but over time could be reframed in a more positive way. So participants’ reporting of situations as being difficult in the first interview, while not rating them as
an issue occurring often in the Issues Sorting Task, could also reflect the dynamic nature of problems and motivational responses.

Discussion of Problems

Participants were asked to rate problems regarding different training and performance settings as well as broader life events. These problems were derived inductively from participants’ reported experiences in Interview One. Although an effort was made to be comprehensive and to give individuals opportunities to raise problems that concerned them, it is possible that there were other situations or events that had caused them difficulty but which they had not recalled, had not thought relevant, or had not felt comfortable about reporting. Tapping into all problems experienced was beyond the scope of the study and those discussed should be viewed as illustrative examples. In their study of Olympic athletes, Gould et al (2002) found that a large number of variables was perceived to influence performance and that there were complex relationships between these variables. It was stated that further research was needed to address the many interdisciplinary variables that could potentially influence performance, as well as interactions between such variables. The present findings would support this need and also suggest that further research is needed regarding the complex individual responses to such influences.

PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIES

The main source of data relating to strategy use was when participants were asked how they had dealt with various problems during the Issues Sorting Task. The second main
source of data relating to strategies came from responses relating to negative interactions in the Circles of Influence Task that revealed the use of particular strategies related to persistence. Thirdly, between interviews, participants were asked to complete the Day in the Life Task (see Appendix B4) and this provided insight into strategies used on a day-to-day basis to manage situations such as the stress of dealing with competing demands in participant’s lives. The final source of data relating to strategies consisted of participants’ comments made throughout both interviews about how they dealt with various problems in their lives in general.

Categorisation of Strategies

Strategies were categorised as focusing on thoughts (cognitive), on emotions (affective), on actions (behavioural), and on other people (social). This categorisation system is consistent with terminology used in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) and when categorising other results such as participants’ cognitive, affective and behavioural responses to interactions with other people. It is also similar to the idea of coping strategies comprising thinking, feeling and acting (Frydenberg, 1997a). There are no “physical” strategies as a separate category but many of the strategies seemed to be attempts to reduce unpleasant physical signs. Physical responses to problems or difficulties were also noted and sometimes the strategies were specifically designed to alleviate these, but seemed more appropriately categorised as focusing on affective or behavioural aspects of the situation. So the major categories of cognitive, affective, behavioural and social focus were developed mainly deductively by the researcher, based on existing categorisations of strategies as explained above.
This distinction is arbitrary, however, and was developed for the convenience of analysing data and presenting findings. As will be seen, different types of strategies may occur simultaneously and as emphasised previously, different aspects of the person operate holistically. In some ways all the strategies could be classified as cognitive in that a decision to think or do something differently was made. Equally, making decisions could be seen as taking action so that all strategies are behavioural in that sense. Using another approach, all strategies could be said to be productive coping strategies as they reflect the adaptive coping styles of focusing on solving the problem and turning to others for support (Frydenberg et al., 2004). Further discussion about the categorisation of strategies in relation to the person-context interface occurs later (Chapter Nine). The interest here is not in developing a set of refined categories, but in understanding participants’ experiences.

For the purposes of this study, sub-categories within the broader categories were developed inductively from the responses of participants. Table 8.5 indicates the categories and sub-categories of motivational strategies that were developed from examining all comments regarding strategies. Appendix E2 provides examples illustrating all the categories and sub-categories. The table reports the types of categories rather than their frequency because data analysis was based on spontaneous comments rather than on standard questions asked of all participants.
Table 8.5: Motivational Strategies Used by Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus on affective</th>
<th>Focus on social</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1: remember or notice the enjoyable aspects</td>
<td>S1: seek and receive support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2: engage in relaxing or enjoyable activities</td>
<td>S2: modify others’ actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3: consider your responsibility to others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus on behavioural</th>
<th>Focus on cognitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1: “just do it”; don’t think about it; move on</td>
<td>C1: (re)determine priorities; be flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2: modify the tasks; take breaks</td>
<td>C2: set goals; remember goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3: make sacrifices</td>
<td>C3: accept the situation as necessary or temporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4: have a balance in life</td>
<td>C4: think of the future; of the consequences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5: manage time effectively</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following section includes a brief discussion of each of the categories with one or two examples made to illustrate four important points. The value of focusing on the task or activity level of context is highlighted in the discussion of affective strategies. The importance of roles played by other people is again stressed in the discussion of social strategies. The complexity of strategy use and motivation is revealed in the discussion of behavioural strategies, and the dynamic nature of strategy use and motivation is indicated in the discussion of cognitive strategies.

A Focus on Tasks or Activities

Affective aspects of individuals, namely their feelings and emotions, emerged in a number of ways in this study. One way was when considering the importance of the microlevel of task. In the Day in the Life Task participants were asked about specific
activities in which they engaged over the course of a selected day, and about their perceptions of these activities. It has already been highlighted that participants were very busy and were trying to manage multiple commitments. One outcome of this was that they reported physical responses such as stress or tiredness, supporting the need to include physical aspects in a model of motivation. These were then associated with negative emotions such as anger, and the strategies used tended to focus on changing the feelings as well as the physical response.

The first strategy that participants used to address this was of focusing on the positive aspects of a task (A1). A committed professional athlete, Blake was involved in two heavy training sessions on the day he chose to use for the task. All the comments Blake made were ones that reframed potentially negative activities into positive ones. In a sense this could be seen to be a cognitive strategy as he changed his thoughts but as the focus is on the feelings about the activities that is why they are categorised as affective. As Blake describes each potentially arduous task, he spontaneously gives a positive outlook to it.

- One and a half hours team training with warm ups, sprinting and ball skills outside in summer - very hot, very tired, but good as it gets me fit and used to running hard
- 10 x 25 laps recovery swim - good to get hydrated again
- massage - good to relax
- weight training - I love weights
- watching TV with girlfriend - great to finally relax (Blake, adult male athlete)

The second type of strategy focusing on affective aspects was when participants engaged in relaxing or enjoyable activities (A2). Some of the activities reported in the Day in the Life Tasks appeared to be direct attempts to reduce the physical responses leading to negative feelings, and participants often commented on particular activities
in their daily lives as being relaxing or enjoyable. Engaging in relaxing diversions is seen to be one way of coping with stressful situations (Frydenberg, 1997b). Such activities ranged from simply eating after training, having a shower, watching TV, talking with friends or getting extra sleep. For example, Theresa, a busy amateur musician, did not perceive all the activities of her chosen day as being positive. In between less palatable activities she inserted more enjoyable ones and this appeared to be a conscious strategy on her part. Although she had a strong sense of social responsibility that kept her involved in organisational tasks in her ensembles, these did not always give her immediate personal satisfaction.

- copying music for orchestra - music photocopying is v. v. tedious; being librarians is tedious
- coffee with mother - well needed break, coffee, chat
- fast food restaurant for tea - always quick if not so good for the thighs
- orchestra rehearsal - get very angry + resign as librarians (again)
- drown anger @ pub! (Theresa, adult female musician)

Her comments were discussed in the second interview and she explained that she and her husband had agreed to be librarians again: “... you know you've sort of got to do it otherwise there's no music.” Her social responsibility goals appeared to be predominant over her need for a more personally pleasurable experience so she needed to generate such experiences herself. The extent of comments regarding strategies related to affective responses to tasks and activities, supports earlier discussions indicating that affective aspects of learning need to be included in studies of learning and motivation (see, for example, Hanin, 2002; Meyer & Turner, 2002; Pekrun et al., 2002a; Schutz & Lanehart, 2002).
A Focus on the Importance of Interactions

Interactions with other people were the focus of the two previous results chapters (Chapters Six and Seven) where they were found to shape participant motivation in positive and negative ways. Other people were also important when considering strategy use. The three types of social strategies identified involved other people in three different ways: allowing them to provide support, trying to change them, and thinking of one’s responsibilities towards them. The strategy of seeking and receiving support from others (S1) reflects previous discussions where other people have been influential in a positive way as they have played a support role in assisting participants to continue to participate in sport and music. When particular difficulties were encountered, participants also sought support. In some cases this was a matter of going to professionals in relation to particular issues, and at other times it was the support of family or friends that helped. Sometimes both types of support were sought.

The example given earlier of Byron gaining support from his friends and others in his club at a difficult time is one example of this strategy. The example in Appendix E2 also illustrates the way Byron actively sought out friends for support. Another example of this strategy is when Mary had to decide whether to be a professional athlete which meant regularly being away from home. She didn’t want to harm her relationship with her husband and sought his support.

But I got so much support from him. And he's like “no this is what we need to do.” And he completely supported me 100%. So it enabled me to feel better about spending all that time away and being so focused. And basically doing what I needed to do, you know rather than having to compromise. I never felt like I had to compromise. (Mary, adult female athlete)
This type of strategy is similar to the positive coping style of “reference to others” (Frydenberg et al., 2004). The importance of social support strategies is well documented in the literature relating to self-regulatory strategies (Zimmerman, 1998), coping strategies (Frydenberg & Lewis, 1999) and help-seeking strategies (Karabenick, 2003), and they were widely used by participants in this study.

Another type of strategy focusing on the social entailed the modification of others’ actions (S2). This strategy was often used when dealing with activities that were not enjoyable or with errors made by others. For example, a coach might be persuaded to change the training regime, or a fellow performer could be helped or coached in some way, or a conductor or players’ committee persuaded to change the pieces played. Theresa explained how she influenced the other people in the committee of one of her ensembles so that the music played was more to her liking.

I’m actually on the committee for that so um I was finding it quite frustrating (laughs) because we were playing all the same sort of music. We were playing Bach and Mozart and much as I like Bach and Mozart, not for everything. And my idea of um chamber music is playing as an ensemble. Not playing with soloists. So the concert we’re working towards at the moment, we’re actually doing just string orchestra music. And that was purely to placate me (laughs). So I have to go and enjoy it (laughs). (Theresa, adult female musician)

This strategy is similar to the behavioural one of changing the task, except it must be done via another person. The ability to do this would reflect a high level of social skills or interpersonal resources on the part of an individual (Wentzel, 1996b).

The final strategy in the category of strategies focusing on social factors was that of recalling or focusing on one’s responsibility to others in order to help maintain a certain level of involvement (S3). Social responsibility personal motivational goals
reflect “adherence to social roles and role expectations” (Wentzel, 1991, p.1066), and this type of strategy appears similar to this. There were several examples such as when Tania said that thinking of her responsibilities as leader of the orchestra helped her to do her individual practice as well as to attend rehearsals. Considering such responsibilities prompted participants to do more individual and group practice or to concentrate more during performances. Sylvia was asked whether individual practice, group rehearsal or performances were the most important setting.

> They are all important, I’d probably say senior band is more important. Because you feel like you’re letting the team down if you don’t practice the music. (Sylvia, adolescent female musician)

The use of strategies focusing on social aspects of a situation again supports the importance of interactions with other people, not only in relation to the nature of initial engagement and ongoing involvement, but also to persistence.

_A Focus on Complexity_

Examining strategies classified as focusing on behavioural illustrates again the complexity of motivational responses, because participants did not just use one strategy at a time. The strategy of “just do it; don’t think about it; move on” (B1), was particularly prevalent when participants discussed how they responded to their own or others’ errors. The issue of dealing with errors by team mates or fellow performers was rated as occurring most often (10 participants) in the performance situation of a competition or concert (see Table 8.3). Another strategy, that of acceptance of the situation (C3), was seen to be necessary as well as the ability to just get on and do something. This did not appear to be the same as the non-productive coping strategy
of ignoring the problem (Frydenberg et al., 2004) as quite often there was a follow up action later to fix a problem at training or rehearsal. This could perhaps involve modifying the task (B2), or modifying others’ actions (S2), but many agreed that at the time it was important to just keep going and temporarily ignore the problem. This indicated that several strategies could be linked together either simultaneously or sequentially, and that doing this led to persistence over time.

Jordan spoke about a disastrous musical performance, or a “train wreck.” These situations could lead to anger but generally errors were dealt with in a good-humoured way by focusing on the enjoyable aspects of the situation (A1). Other strategies illustrated in Jordan’s comments were to modify the task (B2) by eliminating a song, or change another player’s skills (S2) by pushing “the guy to practice it.”

… band members always make a point of noticing each other's mistakes so they've got one up their sleeve you know. ...Sometimes it's just a friendly little, you know. Sometimes with musicians, I mean ...you can have a laugh over it. But when you have what we call a 'train wreck', which is when there is absolutely no way out, when guys can actually get quite ticked off about it. It doesn't happen very often but there has been, I must admit, there has been times when, you know someone's just totally lost it. Forgot this bit or forgot that bit and ruined the whole song. Someone gets aggro about it.

SO WHAT HAPPENS THEN? HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH THAT?
Usually once it's over and you're off the stage or whatever, you, you know you just make a point at the next rehearsal, sorting it out. I think it's something that's ongoing … Another thing that happens a lot is, I'm sure you would have heard this one too sometimes you'll play songs that maybe somebody's not technically proficient enough to play. You know just maybe, like I've written something that the bass player can't handle, or vice versa, and you know and you do notice that. If that happens, then sometimes you've just got to eliminate the song or you've just got to push guy to practice it a hell of a lot harder. 'Cause not everyone's always at the same level. (Jordan, adult male musician)

So although strategies could be coded into separate categories, they were not necessarily used in isolation. That is, several strategies were linked in relation to a
particular problem and could be used at different times. Research into the use of coping strategies has found similarly that different strategies may be used at different phases of the problem. So coping may be examined at a microlevel of a particular strategy in a specific situation, or in a macro-analytic way for predicting long-term outcomes (Frydenberg, 1997b). Similarly in this study a strategy may be explained and considered in isolation, but in reality, particularly for more complex situations, several strategies were used simultaneously or over time, a finding also supported by Lund and Kranz’s (1994) work.

**A Focus on the Dynamic Nature of Strategy Use**

Four mainly cognitive strategies were identified and examples of these appear in Appendix E2. The discussion here focuses on participants’ comments about their priorities (strategy C1) which highlighted two points. One was that strategies are connected, providing further support for the complexity discussed in the previous section. For example, successful implementation of the cognitive strategy of prioritising sport or music ahead of everything else often required the support of other people (S1). Secondly, priorities could change and participants did change their priorities over time. With a change in priorities, came a change in commitment and in the nature of involvement. So strategy use was dynamic and related to persistence.

Mary’s decision to pursue a career as a professional athlete over time reflected a conscious ordering of priorities but could not have been carried out without the support of her husband and this example was given in the previous section as an illustration of seeking and receiving support (S1). Mary indicated, when discussing her plans for the
next twelve months, that she had now made a decision to change her priorities again so she could stay home more, while still achieving goals in her sport.

… I don't want to play internationally any more. Just because of - and it's not my age - but my stage in my life. And I feel like I've gotten to a certain point and my priority is not with - I mean because of all the travel - I just don't want to do it. So but I do want to keep improving and I do feel like I still am playing well. So I'm going to play... I'm going to try and play in the US and try and get to the top over there. I still have these goals and ideas. But it's just not on an international level any more. (Mary, adult female athlete)

Tania was another participant who indicated that her priorities had changed and this had changed the nature of her involvement in music. Her response also included the strategy of having a balanced life (B4). Her response to the question about whether music was the most important thing in her life revealed this.

No it's not now. You see it was. You see I believe that... You see back then, 16 onwards, everything I did was too psychotic. It was too focused in. Honed in. Music, music, music, music. Now I try to get more of a balance. … And so I now see it as my livelihood. But I also see there is a point to life as well. … And so I'm just this little, little, anonymous person in society that does my own music and my own thing. And has my own life with my husband. Yeah. So it's not the foremost thing. I guess I'd miss it to a point. But I would also, um, give some of it up if I ever wanted to. I don't feel I now need that as my sole purpose you see. (Tania, adult female musician)

At the end of Interview One she reinforced this point when asked if there was anything else she felt it was important to say about herself as a musician.

…. I guess that my motivation in music now is definitely not what it was back then. My motivation back then was a lot higher than now. I guess I've just settled and accepted where I'm at now. Therefore there isn't actually a lot of motivation required to keep me going. Because I guess I'm sitting on a certain level. I'm able to play music. Sometimes I have to practice it. Sometimes I don't practice it and maybe I should (laughs) You know. Um yeah. It's just interesting. Very interesting. How in life, how your priorities change. (Tania, adult female musician)

Interestingly in the second interview Tania indicated that her priorities had changed yet again and she no longer was happy with her teaching load, her general lifestyle, or her musical activities. She and her husband were considering selling their small property
and moving to England. Although this did not seem to happen, informal observations the following year indicated that while still active in performing, she had stopped playing in the main ensemble to which she had belonged. The point is that participants appeared to be continually revising and reordering their priorities, leading to changes in the extent and nature of their involvement. In other words, motivation was dynamic.

Discussion of Strategy Use

The categorisation system used in Table 8.5 reflected an intrapersonal, more social cognitive view of strategies. Although related to the context, strategies are seen as something a person chooses to do. When related to volition or self-regulation, strategies reflect sustained effort and decisions made by an individual to support their own goals (Corno, 1993). Examination of the strategies from a more resolutely person-context perspective, however, reveals that they reflect the reciprocal nature of the person-context relationship and need to be located at the person-context interface. The following discussion provides some examples to support this statement.

Some of the strategies reported in Table 8.5 directly relate to the individual shaping structural (A2, B2) and social (S1, S2, S3) aspects of their context. Other strategies could involve negotiation with or consideration of other people (B4, C1, C4) or changing structural aspects of the context (B3, B5). Even strategies that appear to be intrapersonal, or residing within the person (A1, B1, C2, C3), on examination of participants’ previous responses, could be seen to have been learnt from observing or
interacting with other people. For example, when describing his life as a cricketer in
the Time Line Task, Byron spoke about a period when he became preoccupied with
the performance of other cricket players with whom he was competing for a place in
the Australian cricket team. He recalled thinking about a quote from a sport
psychologist, "control the controllables," that had helped him focus on his own
performance and not be distracted by things out of his control. Two of the rowers,
Michelle and Moira, in examples given in the Circles of Influence Task, recalled how
their mothers had told them to make sure they enjoyed what they were doing, and how
they had incorporated this so that it became a motivational strategy for them.

Mum has been a great influence as well. Because she just says "do whatever you're
happy with." … She's always good at that. She still says the same thing - make sure
you're just enjoying it. (Michelle, adult female athlete)

But she [mother] didn't care you know. Yeah it was not at all a pushy mum. Just you
know "have fun and enjoy it. It doesn't matter." … How can I put it? Like nothing was
impossible, no matter how crap I was (laughs). But you know just keep persevering
and it didn't matter even if I was bad. And so yeah there was never any pressure or
expectations as long as I enjoyed myself. So that's what I got from her. (Moira, adult
female athlete)

Therefore rather than locate strategy knowledge or use within the person, it seems
more aptly placed at the person-context interface as part of the appraisal process, and
this adjustment to the Model of Motivation will be discussed further in Chapter Nine.

The findings relating to strategy use outlined above referred to those strategies used by
participants to deal with specific issues or problems. Other strategies described by
participants as being used for other purposes were not included. For example,
throughout the interviews other types of strategies were mentioned that were used to
enhance performance rather than deal with difficulties. One participant said he
listened to loud music to get “pumped up” before a sporting competition. Similarly, other types of strategies were evident when discussing participants’ appraisals of their communities (see Chapter Five). Resulting changes in training regimes, changes of coaches or teachers, changes of clubs or ensembles, or even changes of town, state or country to achieve congruence could be conceived of as motivational strategies. Again, these strategies were considered separately from those used in response to more specific problems analysed in this chapter.

Such decisions to gather particular data or to focus on certain situations may eliminate other potentially interesting or important findings and reflect researcher bias (Maxwell, 1998). The results relating to problems and strategies focused on specific situations, when there could be many other strategies used consciously and unconsciously by participants throughout their lives in general and in their sporting and musical activities. To be comprehensive, all such strategies should be considered but the problem arises about how to tap into these.

Using a questionnaire to determine which strategies were used would involve an impossibly long list of potential strategies and would be problematic in terms of strategies used unconsciously. Detailed observations of participants would not necessarily identify strategies focusing on cognitive or affective matters, and it is anyway impossible for an observer to observe every setting or everything within a particular setting (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Methodologically this study aimed to examine “real life” situations and to capture participants’ own experiences and understandings. It would seem then that it was legitimate to examine a particular set
of strategies in this study – those identified by a specific sample of participants in situations where they faced a limited set of specific problems.

Further research examining motivational strategy use would be needed to produce a more comprehensive typology of strategies and would include those used to enhance performance as well as those used to pursue broader goals and to deal with problems. Consideration should also be given to temporal aspects of strategy use. For example, less intrusive or effortful strategies could be tried initially, with strategy use changing over time. This last point has been addressed to some extent already and is discussed in the next section where the dynamic nature of problems, strategy use and persistence are considered in more detail.

PROBLEMS AND MOTIVATION ARE DYNAMIC

Building on Earlier Findings

This section of the chapter focuses on the dynamic nature of the problems and strategies illustrated in the previous discussion and in earlier findings, and moves beyond these in its scope. When faced with problems, participants implicitly or explicitly engaged in what could be called motivational decision-making as they engaged in strategy use that affected the nature and extent of their involvement in sport and music. Previous discussions about decisions focused on particular decisions made in particular situations. For example, how the decision was made to initially engage formally with music or sport, whether to join a team or ensemble, and how to deal with negative interactions were all discussed as “isolated” or one-off decisions when
discussing appraisals (Chapter Five) and interactions with others (Chapter Six). It could be seen that these decisions were complex and involved dynamic interactions between the person and the context, but they were discussed as occurring at a particular point in time. The following discussion takes a broader time frame and incorporates a more holistic approach to motivation.

Decision Points and Trajectories

In order to take a more holistic, integrative approach to participants’ motivation, a summary of each person’s life, or trajectory, as revealed by the available data, was written. Each trajectory included details of the individual’s development in sport or music, the people who had influenced them, their beliefs and hopes, the problems and life events encountered and how these had been dealt with. It was evident from these trajectories that participants’ lives were complex with competing demands and multiple issues creating the need for the use of multiple strategies over extended periods of time. When taking a more holistic approach, it could be seen that decisions were not just made in a single situation, but that participants made numerous decisions over time that affected their persistence in sport and music.

One reason the participants were selected for this study was because they had persisted in sport or music over time. Examining their individual trajectories revealed the various decisions they had made regarding their involvement and the reasons behind their persistence. The methodology adopted for this study explicitly explored the examination of decision points over time in three ways: reflection on decisions made
before the Interview One, explanation of any decisions made between Interviews One and Two, and discussion of decisions that were in the process of being made during the time of Interview Two. Table 8.6 summarises and provides examples of each decision point.

Table 8.6: Decision Points and Illustrative Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time point</th>
<th>Examples of major decisions about the nature of involvement</th>
<th># of participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before Interview One</td>
<td>Moved to a high school with a specialist sport or music program</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gave up other sports or instruments to focus on major one</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moved to another country or town to pursue sport or music</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stopped playing major sport or instrument</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between interviews</td>
<td>Dropped out of specialist program at high school</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moved to another country or town to pursue sport or music</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joined a new club or ensemble</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During, beyond Interview Two</td>
<td>Unsure about nature of future involvement</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dissatisfied with current involvement and unsure about future</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some participants had stopped playing a sport or instrument before Interview One and reflected on the causes and consequences of this in the interviews. Some participants, between the two interviews, had made a decision to change the nature of their involvement and such changes were discussed in the second interview. For example, two adolescents had continued to play sport but had dropped out of their specialist school programs. Finally, some participants were in the process of making a decision to change the nature of their involvement when interviewed for the second time, and were able to talk about the factors they were considering in relation to this. For
example, Byron was deciding if he should accept an offer to play cricket in another state, and Tania was deciding whether to give up her job, sell her property and move to England. All the adolescents were making decisions about what to do after leaving school.

Problems and Persistence

Gathering historical, biographical and longitudinal data enabled an examination of the nature of individuals’ motivation over time, or their persistence in sport and music. In particular, when examining participants’ responses, there appeared to be a sequential process of appraisals being made when potential problems arose. This process is represented by the flow chart in Figure 8.1 similar to that of Folkman and Lazarus (1991, p.214). The flow chart’s elements are similar to Frydenberg’s (1997b, p.37) diagrammatic representation of coping which includes individual and situational factors, appraisals, and coping behaviour.

In Figure 8.1 individuals initially perceive a situation within their life (B) as positive or negative depending on their prior experiences, demands within the context (A), and personal characteristics (C) such as self-efficacy and motivational beliefs. A primary appraisal is then made of the situation based on the resources available from the domain or broader context (E) and from within the individual person (D). Contextual resources could be other people or financial help. Personal resources could include knowledge of various strategies or a high level of interpersonal skills. If this appraisal is positive, persistence in sport or music results. If, however, the situation is perceived
as negative, motivational strategies such as those described earlier in this chapter are implemented. For example, help might be sought, the situation could be thought of in a more positive way, or priorities could be changed.

![Flow Chart](image-url)

*Figure 8.1: Problems and Persistence Over Time - a Flow Chart*
After implementing such strategies, a secondary appraisal is made of the situation, again taking into account available personal and contextual resources. As a result, if this appraisal is now positive, persistence occurs. If the secondary appraisal is negative a decision is made to modify the nature of involvement or to discontinue. When negative appraisals lead the participant to modify the nature of their involvement, this could be an attempt to modify the demands of their context or of their life in general, or to modify aspects of themselves. This finding echoes the discussion of appraisals in Chapter Five where such actions occurred when participants perceived that they and their community were incongruent. For example, they could take a break, undergo a different training program, find a different team or ensemble, or modify their goals.

Alternatively, on making a negative appraisal, a participant might discontinue in sport or music altogether. If they had discontinued, depending on their appraisals of their own characteristics, the demands of the domain or of life, and resources available, they may later resume in sport or music. The outcomes (or motivated action) of persisting, modifying involvement or discontinuing then become the “prior” experiences for the next appraisal process occurring when participants encounter other life events, contextual demands, or something about themselves, which are perceived as being positive or negative and the appraisal process starts over again. So there is an ongoing, dynamic process of appraisals, strategy use and decision-making about the nature of involvement in sport and music. This process occurs at the interface of person and context, with the dynamic interplay of multiple aspects of both.
Illustrative Example of Problems and Persistence Over Time

Examples of decisions at particular time points to continue, discontinue or modify involvement have already been presented throughout the discussion of findings of the study. As explained earlier, the discussion here refers to a broader time frame and Brad’s experiences over time will be used to illustrate the dynamic nature of the decision-making process represented in Figure 8.1. What was evident from Brad’s experiences was that as he faced potential problems, multiple appraisals and decisions were made over time and the nature of his involvement in his major sport changed a number of times. Again this illustrates the non-unitary, complex nature of persistence.

Brad, a semiprofessional football player, had been playing Australian Rules football since an early age, encouraged by his family and school. He loved football and showed an early interest in it (prior experiences). While he was at high school, however, the contextual demands changed in that a teacher who had promoted football left the school, and the school amalgamated with another that did not prioritise football. Brad’s personal characteristics (his skill and interest in sport in general), life events (injuries to school hockey team members), and contextual demands (change in school priorities) were the relevant factors leading to the need for a decision to be made. Brad made an appraisal of these factors. Brad was open to options (personal resource) and had supportive people in his environment (contextual resource). The strategies he used were to be flexible (C1), to accept the situation as being necessary (C3), and to focus on the positive aspect of hockey being a new challenge (A1). In relation to his major sport, however, the resulting decision was a much reduced level of involvement, and eventually he discontinued playing football.
I got into hockey because our school team had a lot of injuries and I was quite good at all sports so they gave me a crash course in how to play hockey and I played hockey in the grand final team. And then I took up hockey the following year and that was a winter sport. And then I played three games of football the following year. But the school that I was at had a relatively weak football competition. So I pretty much gave everything away. … Yeah I gave it up. I'm not really too sure now. I ask myself the question why I gave it up and I think I was really - I just loved sports so I mean hockey was a new challenge and I enjoyed playing it. (Brad, adult male athlete)

Brad returned to play football later at the encouragement of a friend whose team needed players (contextual demands). He still loved football (personal characteristics) and his “life events” had changed because he was no longer at school and could choose between options available in community sport (contextual resources). He was still willing to take up opportunities (personal resource).

And then I got back into sport in a structured way through a friend … and started playing cricket. And then from cricket some guy asked me if I wanted to play football. And I thought "yeah, I really enjoy football.” So I went down and then - I wasn't expecting much. It was an amateur competition. And I thought it would just be you know a kick in the park sort of thing. I guess enjoyment and being around other people was the original sort of attraction back to football. And then from there I pretty much excelled at that level…(Brad, adult male athlete)

Brad received offers from several league clubs to play at the highest level available in the Western Australia Football League (WAFL). His level of involvement at the time of the interviews, however, took a while to develop after this break as he lacked confidence, especially not having progressed through the “normal” developmental pathway (personal characteristic of self-efficacy). This was interesting because contextual resources in terms of material rewards and people available for training and support were offered by various clubs, and as discussed elsewhere he had the encouragement of his girlfriend to make such a move. He was not keen to travel a great distance from home for training, however, and was not sure he shared the same beliefs as some of the people in those clubs. So based mostly on his perception of his
own characteristics and resources, his appraisal of his current situation was positive and, despite these offers, he did not change the nature of his involvement. Eventually after further success at amateur level and an offer from a club near his home, he made the decision to join a higher level club. His comments indicate that he consciously weighed up various personal and contextual factors in order to make his decisions.

And very early on in the piece I was asked to play at a higher level for [name] football club. And I actually said yes to going down there and the night that I was meant to go down to training I sort of chickened out. I thought "just hang on a second. It's only been nine weeks." And from going down to having a kick in the park it's turning into four times a week training and you know I'd have to travel from [suburb] to [suburb] to train. And I just you know weighed it all up and thought "no I wasn't ready."

…So I played for the [club] Amateurs again for the next year and did really well and made the State team for the second time and at the end of the year a friend that I played cricket with knew a guy from [football club] and the oval was just around the corner from me. I sort of said yes to going down to the preseason. That was a pretty daunting task ‘cause you’re by yourself. You don’t know anyone when you go down there. Like most of the kids at this sort of level of football have come right through the ranks you know of Junior football to colts, reserves and league you know. So you know everyone knew each other and for myself it was sort of like you know a 24 year old starting at this sort of level was not really heard of that much and….So I went down and I found out that I knew a few people from school – just knew of them – didn’t know them well. And yeah from there I just gave it my best shot and the first night I did well in the run. I came you know in the top ten. It was pretty gruelling …(Brad, adult male athlete)

Brad loved football and was encouraged by his family. His friends also played an important supportive role and they helped him in the decisions to resume football and to play at a higher level. Brad’s situation changed again though when he was not getting along with the coach and he decided to leave the club. Having a coach whom he perceived as supportive and who promoted learning and development was important to Brad. His appraisal of his situation was negative and he decided to discontinue playing. The encouragement of his friends (contextual resources) and the arrival of a new coach (contextual characteristics) renewed Brad’s desire to play football.
My coach is definitely influencing me now. I was going to give it away at the end of this year. We had limited success in the last two years. We only won seven games each year out of I think nineteen. And I mean personally I was, I was succeeding. I was doing well in the club awards and all that but um the coach wasn’t very supportive. And at this level it’s such a big commitment to make to sort of feel like you’re being kicked in the face a lot of the time. You know you weren’t getting looked after properly.

I was definitely going to give up and I was actually meant to be at a meeting at 5.30 to find out who our new coach was for this year. I was actually out in the back yard playing back yard cricket with my mates and I had a beer in my hand and everyone – my friends – were saying “are you going to go down to the meeting?” and I said “no I’m not playing this year.” And then they sort of like said “oh you’d better just go down and find out and come back and tell us.” So I went down and when [coach’s name] walked in the room I thought “gee here we go – I can’t say no to this.” And he was named the coach so I couldn’t say no. He’s just such a wonderful coach … (Brad, adult male athlete)

The example given of Brad clearly illustrates both the dynamic nature of motivation and the complex nature of the appraisal process. Discontinuing football had been a relatively straightforward response to a contextual change and the availability of an alternative sporting option. Resuming later as an adult and progressing to higher levels of involvement had taken a long time. Brad’s appraisals and decisions had been influenced by his own interests and perceptions, by his family and friends, and by the characteristics and resources perceived to be available in various contexts. Later again, although playing well, his motivation had waned as a result of a negative relationship with the coach at that time and poor results by the team. A combination of persuasion from friends and a desire to work with the new coach led Brad to decide to stay in his club. Two years after the second interview, although another coach had been appointed, Brad was still with the same club, was a vice captain, had played the “milestone” 100 games, and was a leading contender for a local award of the fairest and best player in the whole state competition.
Discussion of Problems and Persistence Over Time

One important finding, related to the dynamic nature of strategy use, was that “persistence” does not appear to be a stable concept. While participants continued to be involved in sport and music in the face of competing demands and other problems, the nature of their involvement was continually shaped by these problems and by the strategies used. So participants could be said to have persisted in a broad sense, but their actual involvement was dynamic in nature. This point is explored further in the discussion of the main findings (Chapter Nine).

The example of Brad’s experiences provided above illustrates the process by which participants continually made appraisals of their current situation, engaged in the use of various strategies, and made decisions about the nature of their involvement based on a complex range of factors. Therefore, when examining persistence, it was evident that motivation was dynamic and was shaped by complex relationships between personal and contextual factors. It was also evident that when potential problems arose, appraisals played a crucial role and that interactions with other people could be an important part of contextual demands and resources. So the flow chart presented in Figure 8.1 incorporates the three types of interface presented in the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). In the next chapter (Chapter Nine) the nature of the person-context interface will be discussed further. This chapter will first conclude with a summary of findings in relation to the relevant research questions.
CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

The findings presented in this chapter addressed the research questions relating to problems and motivation. In order to understand how problems shaped the nature of individuals’ engagement, involvement and persistence, the results were presented in three main sections that focused on problems faced, on strategies used, and on how these shaped participant motivation. An overall finding was that problems and strategies varied not only between individuals but also over time, so that participant motivation, as indicated by their persistence, was dynamic. The following discussion refers to each research question relating to problems and motivation.

What Problems are Faced by High-Achieving Individuals in Sport and Music and What Strategies are Used to Deal with These?

The first set of results presented focused on the problems encountered by participants. The issue of finding time was used to illustrate that what could be seen as problems were actually perceived positively by some participants and negatively by others. In that sense the term “potential problem” seems more appropriate. The second set of results focused on strategies used by participants when dealing with potential problems. These were categorised as focusing on affective, social, behavioural and cognitive aspects of the situation or of the individual. Findings indicated that a range of motivational strategies could be used simultaneously or sequentially as participants solved, managed, or coped with various problems in their lives.
Are These Findings Similar Across Domains, Across Individuals and Over Time?

Few differences were observed between domains or gender in relation to the types of problems frequently encountered. Adults, who in general had greater life experiences, and often had greater involvement at higher levels in sport or music than adolescents, had more opportunities to encounter a wider range of problems. Although there were variations in the way individuals appraised situations and in the strategies they used, their experiences could be represented by a problem-solving flow chart which showed how situations, priorities and resultant involvement could change over time.

How do Problems Shape Individuals’ Motivation in Sport and Music?

A flow chart (Figure 8.1) indicated the process by which, when potential problems were encountered, individuals made appraisals taking into account characteristics of themselves and of their context as well as personal and contextual resources. Appraisals could be positive and result in persistence. Negative appraisals resulted in the use of motivational strategies and, depending on the success of these, participants would persist, discontinue, or modify their involvement. Dealing with potential problems reflected the complex nature of the notion of persistence, and the continual, dynamic interplay of multiple factors at the person-context interface. In the final discussion (Chapter Nine) the results presented in the previous four chapters relating to each type of person-context interface will be drawn together and discussed as a whole.
Part III: Discussion of the Findings
Chapter Nine
Discussion

PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE OF THE CHAPTER

One purpose of this chapter is to explore the way the results of the study inform the main research question of how the person-context relationship shapes motivation in sport and music. The chapter begins with a summary of the results already presented (Chapters Five to Eight), and draws three major findings across these that address this question. These findings relate to the complex, reciprocal, and dynamic nature of the person-context relationship and are discussed in terms of their implications for the conceptualisation of motivation. A revised form of the Model of Motivated Action is presented to more accurately represent the findings of the study.

A second purpose of this chapter is to reflect on strengths and limitations of the methodology used in the study. In particular, the use of biographical and longitudinal data, the focus on the motivation of high-achieving athletes and musicians, and the use of specially designed tasks are discussed. A third purpose of the chapter is to discuss how the findings are relevant to those working in various applied fields. This is accomplished through a discussion of issues emerging from the study that offer possibilities for further exploration and that have relevance for applied settings. The chapter concludes with a summary of the significance of the research.
SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The presentation of the results (Chapters Five to Eight) was structured around, and focused on, research questions relating to three types of interface proposed in the Model of Motivated Action (Chapter Two) in which motivation was operationalised as initial engagement, ongoing involvement and persistence. Table 9.1 gives an overview of the main results for each question.

Table 9.1: Summary of Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Key Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How do individuals’ appraisals of aspects of the</td>
<td>Aspects of both person and context were necessary for initial engagement in sport or music to occur. These could be different for each individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>context shape their motivation in sport and music?</td>
<td>Person and context made reciprocal appraisals of each other that shaped both initial engagement and ongoing involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Motivation was dynamic as many participants changed their major focus or the nature of their ongoing involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How do interactions with a range of other people</td>
<td>A wide range of others shaped motivation in positive or negative ways, and sometimes in both positive and negative ways. The nature of ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shape individuals’ motivation in sport and music in</td>
<td>involvement was additionally complex as responses had multiple aspects and communities could overlap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive and negative ways?</td>
<td>Situations, perceptions, and involvement were dynamic over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relationships between individuals and “others” were reciprocal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How do problems within the context shape individuals’</td>
<td>Different individuals could perceive the same potential problem differently and could use a range of strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motivation in sport and music?</td>
<td>Problems, strategy use and persistence changed over time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCUSSION OF THE MAJOR FINDINGS

This section addresses how the results of the study inform the main research question: How does the person-context relationship shape motivation in sport and music? Drawing together findings from the results summarised in Table 9.1, there are three major conclusions about how the person-context relationship shapes motivation. Firstly, the person and context are complex in that they are multifaceted with many different aspects acting together in complex ways to shape motivation. Secondly, person and context are in a reciprocal relationship with each acting upon and shaping the other to contribute to motivation. Thirdly, persons and contexts change and motivation is dynamic as it also changes over time. How these major findings relate to and extend other research will be considered later in the chapter when discussing the significance of the study. In the following section illustrative examples from the study will be given for each conclusion in turn and each will be discussed in terms of the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) that was used to frame the research.

Motivation is Shaped by Complex Aspects of Both Person and Context

The first major conclusion is that person and context are complex in that they are multifaceted, and many different aspects of each act together in complex ways to shape motivation. This complexity was illustrated in the study in several ways. Multiple aspects of the person and of the context were involved as individuals made appraisals that shaped their initial engagement and ongoing involvement. Participants also interacted with various other people who shaped their motivation in positive or negative (and sometimes positive and negative) ways. Motivational responses of
participants to interactions or life events were multidimensional. Appraisals of current situations differed between individuals who could face multiple issues or potential problems and could adopt more or less adaptive strategies to deal with these. Participants simultaneously belonged to more than one community which could overlap, with consequences for motivation. The findings therefore supported the conclusion that the person-context relationship shapes motivation in complex ways.

Complexity and the Model of Motivated Action

Prior theory and research indicated that it was important to consider multiple aspects of both person and context (see Chapters Two and Three) when developing the original Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1). The following discussion considers in turn how appropriately aspects of the person and of the context are represented in the model in the light of the findings of the study.

The Person

The results supported the inclusion of physical, cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of the person in a comprehensive view of motivation. In particular this study extended other models of motivation (see Chapter Two) by incorporating physical aspects of individuals. For example, when making appraisals of their suitability to play a particular sport or instrument, participants regularly took into account their own physical characteristics. The findings also supported the necessity of including affective factors in conceptualisations of motivation. For example, when participants interacted with others they could experience a range of positive emotions such as
enjoyment or feelings of pride or inspiration, or negative emotions such as anger, disappointment or feelings of discouragement.

There were also links between the multiple aspects of the individual. For example, the strategies used to deal with problems, as well as focusing on alleviating physical responses such as feelings of tiredness or stress, could also focus on feeling more positive about an activity, on reordering goals and priorities, or on doing a task differently. Such strategies could all occur simultaneously or sequentially. The results of the study therefore supported a comprehensive model of motivation that includes interrelated physical, cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of the person.

In the original Model of Motivated Action, aspects of the person were listed separately, although it was stated that they were in an interactive relationship. It was evident in the study that not only were cognitive, affective, behavioural and physical aspects of the person interrelated, but that it was extremely difficult to consider them separately at all – even for the purposes of analysis. For example when coding motivational responses to interactions with others (Chapter Six) it was explained that different types of responses were associated with the same interaction. Similarly when categorising motivational strategies (Chapter Eight), divisions such as cognitive or affective were arbitrary. Despite the fact that an attempt was made to tease out different aspects of the person in this research, the initial aim of considering persons in a holistic way was fulfilled as it became evident that the data needed to be considered in a holistic way. While it is important to still recognise the complexity, or multifaceted nature of persons in a model of motivation, their multifaceted yet
ultimately holistic nature needs to be represented. Listing of characteristics, as in the original Model of Motivated Action, could be construed as representing aspects of the individual as discrete rather integrated, so to represent the person more holistically is one change required to the Model of Motivated Action.

The Context: Multiple Levels

There was evidence from the results that all levels of context played a role in shaping motivation. At the macrolevel, broad social and cultural factors contributed to the nature of involvement. For example, media attention was differentiated according to the type of sport or music, or according to the gender of participants. There were differences at the domain level in the way involvement was structured. For example, training in sport had a definite seasonal rhythm with different requirements in the off-season, pre-season and on-season, whereas the intensity of musical rehearsals was more consistent over time. Different types of sport or musical genre also led to differences in involvement. For example, sporting competitions varied between types, and conventions about interactions with the audience varied for different musical genres. At the organisational level of context there were differences that shaped the nature of involvement. An athlete training with the Australian Institute of Sport, for example, could access greater resources and would have higher demands regarding commitment placed upon him or her than one belonging to a local community sporting organisation.

At the more microlevel, the nature of communities was found to shape ongoing involvement in various ways. Sometimes, as illustrated in the case of onlookers,
different communities from different domains could overlap, shaping motivation in more intense ways. Communities also comprised different settings and particular tasks or activities, about which participants made appraisals. For example, if certain tasks were perceived as too easy or too onerous, participants could change the nature of their involvement by adopting strategies such as an athlete inserting more enjoyable activities between the onerous ones, or a musician persuading a management group to select particular music for a concert.

In the original Model of Motivated Action, levels of context were conceptualised in a hierarchical way but the importance of each level of context in shaping motivation was not necessarily related to its level in the hierarchy. For example, when examining the reported frequency of different categories of others (Table 6.2), celebrities received 11.3% of nominations, whereas friends and others in the community, with whom participants would have had more direct and frequent contact, were reported as less influential (4.2% and 2.6% respectively). This finding could be interpreted in a number of ways. It could support the idea that motivation in a particular domain is likely to be most influenced by others within that domain - that motivation is situated within specific contexts. Asking the same participants about the influence of others in domains such as their working or academic lives could change the perceived relative importance of celebrities. Another interpretation could be that all levels of context may have a more direct role in shaping motivation than is implied in a hierarchical representation. So while it is important to recognise the multifaceted nature of context, rather than a hierarchically organised list format in a model of motivation, a more fluid
indication of the multifaceted nature of context is needed. This is another change required to the Model of Motivated Action.

_The Context: Social and Structural Aspects_

In the results of the study there was ample evidence of the importance of other people, the social aspects of context, as for example through interactions that were perceived in positive and negative ways. Physical, material or structural aspects of context were also important when individuals made appraisals of their communities and took into account factors such as the distance needed to travel to training, or the facilities or resources available (or not) to play the sport or instrument. A further feature of the Model of Motivated Action was to recognise that whatever the level of specificity, contexts included both structural and social elements. This was stated in the explanation of the key features of the model (Chapter Two) although not explicitly included in the representation in Figure 2.1. Given the importance of both social and structural aspects in the findings of the study, these needed to be emphasised to a greater degree, requiring a further change to the Model of Motivated Action.

**Motivation is Shaped by a Reciprocal Person-Context Relationship**

The second major conclusion from the results of the study is that motivation is shaped by person and context, which are in a reciprocal relationship, each acting upon the other. In the research, although context was examined primarily through the reported perceptions of individual participants, it was clear from the results that person-context reciprocity existed. For example, both individuals and communities appraised each
other. Individuals made judgments about the congruence of their own expectations and those of a particular community. Communities also appraised individuals in determining what resources would be available to them, and in making judgments about whether they could meet the training requirements or were deserving of a leadership role.

Another example of person-context reciprocity was the way performers and onlookers related. For example, musicians gained feedback from the audience about their performance during or after a concert, and would consider this in planning future programs. When encountering potential problems, person and context operated reciprocally as aspects of both were used to make appraisals. Characteristics of the person and of the context, as well as resources available from both, were taken into account as participants made decisions about the nature of their involvement. When tasks, settings, communities, or people were appraised in a negative way by participants, they sometimes made efforts to change the nature of those tasks or to change people’s actions, so changing the nature of their contexts.

*Reciprocity and the Model of Motivated Action*

The three types of person-context interface represented in the Model of Motivated Action all reflected reciprocity between person and context, illustrated by the bi-directional arrows used to connect person and context. Conceptualising the relationship between person and context as appraisals, interactions and problems was useful in order to examine the nature of this relationship and in providing a framework for the study. On examining the findings of the research, however, it appeared that the
person-context interface could be more appropriately represented. In the following discussion it is proposed that two different types of person-context interface need to be distinguished: social and structural. It is also proposed that appraisals of these types of interface, and strategies used when negative appraisals are made, are also located at the person-context interface.

**Social Interface**

When an interaction with another person occurred, this could be perceived as being positive or negative, and similar interactions could be perceived differently by different individuals. So an interaction occurred between person and context (social aspect) at the person-context interface, but it was the person’s appraisal of this that shaped motivation. Where individuals (person) interact with other people (context), this occurs at the *social interface* – the interactions in the original model. As illustrated in the literature reviewed regarding interactions (Chapter Three), interactions and relationships with other people are regarded as being of primary importance in social cognitive, sociocultural, and humanist perspectives, and the findings of this study suggest that they retain a prominent position in a model of motivation.

**Structural Interface**

Participants also encountered potentially problematic situations, or life events that precipitated the appraisal process but were not necessarily the result of a direct interaction with another person. For example an event triggering a positive or negative
appraisal could occur at various levels of context such as a lack of opportunities or resources in a particular organisation, or the need to engage in unpleasant tasks. More physical aspects of the person, such as an injury, could also precipitate an appraisal. So such events did need to be included in the model and it is proposed that dealing with such events occurs at the person-context interface. The findings of the study therefore supported the need to include a structural type of interface, requiring a further change to the Model of Motivated Action.

Therefore there are two types of interface that need to be represented: social and structural. Interactions (social aspects) and other events (structural aspects) occurred at the person-context interface and then it was the individuals’ appraisal of these events that determined the nature of subsequent involvement.

*Appraisals and Strategies*

The results indicated that appraisals occurred at the person-context interface, and reflected the reciprocal nature of the person-context relationship. For example in the flow chart used to illustrate participants’ motivational decision making (Figure 8.1) appraisals took into account a complex range of factors with person and context being in a continual, dynamic interplay. Appraisals, in a graphical representation of motivation, would need to remain at the person-context interface. Strategy use is part of the appraisal process. In the original Model of Motivated Action, strategies were located in the person part of the model, but as indicated in the discussion of strategy use (Chapter Eight), they actually were more appropriately located at the person-context interface.
The Person-Context Relationship and Motivation are Dynamic

The third conclusion drawn from the findings of the study is that persons and contexts change and that motivation is dynamic as it also changes over time. There was extensive evidence for this in the findings of the study. When individuals made appraisals of their context they took into account aspects of themselves and of their contexts that changed over time. For example, as individuals grew physically they could see themselves as more suitable for a different type of sport or musical instrument. As they encountered different sports or genres they could develop different interests. Contexts within which individuals lived could also change. Organisations could set up different courses or funding opportunities, or there could be a change of coach or teacher who could instigate different activities. Outside the domains of sport and music, family relationships could change as parents divorced, or individuals could have different demands placed upon them such as the need to sit major school examinations. So the personal and contextual factors that individuals took into account when making appraisals were dynamic.

Motivation, when reflected in the nature of ongoing involvement and persistence, was also dynamic. For example, if incongruence existed between appraisals made by an individual and those made by a community, the person could change the nature of their involvement by spending more time training or practicing, could change to another more congruent community, or in some cases could decide not to persist and stop participating in a particular community or in a certain type of sport or musical genre altogether. When interactions with others were perceived as positive, this could encourage individuals to take part in a greater number of activities in sport or music, or
aim to perform at a higher level. Participants’ dynamic experiences were represented by a flow chart where appraisals, strategy use and decisions about motivation were continually being made over time (Chapter Eight).

The Model of Motivated Action and Dynamic Aspects

In the Model of Motivated Action the presence of various bidirectional arrows was intended to imply that interactions between components were dynamic. The findings of the study supported a conceptualisation of the dynamic nature of the person, the context, and of motivation. Therefore, in the light of the strength of the study’s findings, a comprehensive model of motivation should retain a reflection of this dynamic nature.

THE REVISED MODEL OF MOTIVATED ACTION

In the previous discussion three major findings that addressed the question of how the person-context relationship shapes motivation have been presented and the appropriateness of the Model of Motivated Action (Figure 2.1) in the light of these findings has been addressed. Some of the results are adequately represented in the model whereas others prompted the need for changes in the way motivation was represented. A Revised Model of Motivated Action is presented in Figure 9.1. This incorporates changes suggested by the findings of the study to the components of the model: person, context, and person-context interface.
Figure 9.1: Model of Motivated Action (Revised)

- The small circles represent individual persons within a multiple context.
- The shaded area indicates the intersection of person-context interface.
- Environmental events over time affect the motivational action.
- Personal development history and perceptions of prior experiences influence the person's actions.

- Domains: Type, organisation activities, social/structural factors, cognitive/behavioural/attitudinal.
The Person

The revised Model of Motivated Action represents the person in a circular rather than linear way. Physical, cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects of the person are still included, but the aim is to highlight the holistic nature of these characteristics. Persons are still shaped in an ongoing way by prior experiences and life events. The small circles within the larger circle of context (the left hand side of the figure) emphasise that individuals live and act within multiple contexts. While they remain part of the context, it is possible to focus on the individual (right hand side of the figure) and, from that person’s perspective, to examine his or her appraisals of the person-context interface (centre part of the figure).

The Context

In the revised model, the two broad categories of context, macrolevel and microlevel are still used, but their relationship is fluid rather than hierarchical, and so both are within one circle rather presented as a list. As with the earlier version of the model, the macrolevel comprises the broader political and economic context, the domain level, types within the domain, and organisations. The microlevel of context in the still includes communities, settings, and tasks. The revised model specifically includes both social and structural aspects of contexts across all “levels”.
The Person-Context Interface

The three types of interface in the previous model are represented differently in the revised model. There are now two types of interface: social and structural. Appraisals of these occur at the person-context interface and various strategies may be used as part of this process. Motivation, operationalised as engagement, involvement, and persistence, is shaped at the interface of person and context. Motivated action then changes events and experiences and so the whole process is dynamic.

Graphically Representing a Complex, Reciprocal, Dynamic Construct

One modification to the Model of Motivated Action was derived, not only from the actual results of the study, but from a change in emphasis of the researcher’s theoretical orientation that occurred during the course of the research. As stated in the introduction to the research (Chapter One) the position of the researcher needs to be made explicit and incorporated into the inquiry process (Chenail, 1997; Maxwell, 1998; Stake, 1994). Although the basic theoretical position remains a person-context perspective as described in the introduction, the emphasis changed slightly so that a change to the way motivation is represented was required.

In the original Model of Motivated Action, the context, the person and the person-context interface were represented as separate but interconnected. It was explained in the accompanying description that a person always exists within multiple contexts, but these were represented separately for convenience to examine the different components that make up the whole. Over time this view changed so that the person
needed to be represented graphically as always occurring within multiple contexts. There were two main reasons for the change: one emerging from the process of analysing the data, and one from contact with further theory and research in the field of motivation.

When analysing the data and presenting the results, it became increasingly clear that person and context could not be considered separately. For example, personal and contextual factors shaping initial engagement were best represented as a matrix where aspects of both person and context were necessary to understand how initial engagement occurred. When analysing the examples produced in the Circles of Influence Task, it was evident that others’ actions did not occur in isolation from participants’ responses, that both mutually shaped motivation, and that a complete data analysis needed to consider both. Furthermore, when dealing with problems, appraisals simultaneously involved perceptions of personal and of contextual characteristics and resources. Throughout the study it could be seen that person and context were in continual interplay, with each shaping the other and shaping participant motivation.

The second reason for a change in the graphic representation of motivation occurred because of changes in motivation theory and research during the course of the study. As illustrated in a recent publication, not only have views of motivation changed over recent times, but they are still changing and altering the way motivation is examined (Corno & Mandinach, 2004). The introductory remarks (Chapter One) indicated that the research was placed in a time where motivation theory and research were
incorporating context more adequately and comprehensively. As stated previously, this study was conceived in 1999 and data were gathered in 2000 and 2001. During the time of the research situative views of motivation were less well-developed (Turner, 2001) and methodological implications of taking this view were being proposed (Volet, 2001a). More sociocultural or participatory approaches to motivation research were also being developed (see, for example, Hickey, 2003; Hickey & McCaslin, 2001; Hickey & Granade, 2004; Pressick-Kilborn & Walker, 2004; Sainsbury & Walker, 2004). Such literature has emphasised the mutual roles of person and context in shaping motivation and the need to incorporate this notion more fully into the Model of Motivated Action became desirable.

It is difficult to represent graphically the many relevant components related to motivation while still showing that these components mutually operate in a fluid, interactive, dynamic way. Valsiner (1998, p.352) referred to the similar idea of “inclusive separation” where an individual and their social world are distinguished “while maintaining their dynamic interdependence.” In a recent publication Rogoff (2003) discussed the difficulties of graphical representations and used a photographic image with different aspects alternately placed in focus, rather than a diagram. Her concern was that "the ways the models have diagrammed the relation between the individual and the world lead us, perhaps unintentionally, to a limiting view of individual and cultural processes - as separate entities" (p.42). Even the ability of photographic images to represent the interactive and dynamic nature of motivation over time is limited because of the static, two-dimensional nature of any printed
representation. With this constraint in mind, the revised Model of Motivated Action was developed to indicate that the person always exists within multiple contexts.

METHODOLOGICAL STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

One of the main aims of this research was to develop innovative methods to capture the nature of the dynamic, complex construct of motivation. Inspired by the depth and breadth of data produced in other studies such as that of Bloom (1985c), the intention was to address some of the methodological implications of examining motivation in an experiential and situative way (Volet, 2001a). This section of the chapter briefly raises some strengths and limitations associated with the methodology used. Specifically these relate to the use of qualitative methods including biographical and longitudinal data, sampling decisions made, the specially designed tasks, and a brief reflection on the strategies used to enhance validity.

The Use of Qualitative Methods Including Biographical and Longitudinal Data

The research methods used were developed to capture and explore the experiences and perceptions of athletes and musicians by producing both historical and longitudinal data. The exclusive use of qualitative methods such as the interviews and tasks led to the gathering of detailed views about multiple aspects of the participants and their contexts. Rich, thick descriptions were obtained about the participants’ perceptions of the people with whom they interacted and the communities and settings in which they lived. It was through analysing such descriptions that a comprehensive, holistic understanding of motivation was gained. Searching for patterns and themes across
individuals led to an understanding of the way personal and contextual factors shaped motivation. Gathering of longitudinal data at three formal time points and at other opportunistic times added further richness and enabled the dynamic nature of motivation to emerge.

**Biographical Data – Self-Reports**

One of the strengths of the methods also led to perhaps its main limitation. Most of the data came from self-reports which were invaluable as a source of detailed descriptions about events in participants’ lives and their interactions with others. Limited information, however, was obtained from others involved in the events or interactions. To some extent this was acceptable as the focus was on understanding participants’ perceptions of their lives, but gaining other perspectives would have developed an even broader understanding. For example, if an individual’s perceptions were negative and led to decreased or discontinued involvement, other views could shed light on aspects of the situation that could be changed. This would have added a further dimension to the present study and be relevant to those wanting to help individuals engage or participate to a greater degree in a particular community.

Some recent research exploring motivation in context has used observations as the main data source and supplemented these with interviews – the reverse of the situation in the present study. For example, using a goal theory perspective one study used weekly observations along with less frequent questionnaires and interviews over a school year to examine the motivation of young adolescent students (Mansfield, 2004). Another study from a sociocultural perspective focused on intrapersonal, interpersonal
and community planes to examine developing interest. Observations of a classroom group over time and across settings were supplemented by individual interviews (Pressick-Kilborn & Walker, 2004).

Corno & Mandinach (2004) reiterated the need expressed by others (see, for example, Turner & Meyer, 2000) to examine motivation in classrooms or workplaces in real time. Despite the importance of examining motivation in real-life settings and over time (Nolen, 2004), there are methodological and practical difficulties in doing this if the aim is to gain a comprehensive understanding of motivation as was the case in the present study. Changes in the nature of involvement as people moved across contexts and over time as found in this study means that multiple communities would need to be observed over extended periods of time. Interactions with many people over the years had contributed to participant motivation and again it would be impossible to observe all of these. Nevertheless, there is still a need to be able to observe and examine multiple aspects of multiple contexts in as much detail and with as much rigour as has been given to the explorations of intrapersonal aspects of motivation in social cognitive perspectives. Some of the recent studies mentioned here have attempted this and it is an area for future development.

Using self-reports as the main source of data raises further possible issues. As Brophy (1999) maintained, motivation is a subjective experience "so we need to know what the person is experiencing subjectively as well as what comprises the 'objective' environment in the situation" (p. 2). It has been argued, however, that such reports may be unreliable and the participant may either consciously or unconsciously aim to
provide the researcher with socially desirable responses (Corno & Mandinach, 2004; Turner & Meyer, 2000). As discussed when outlining threats to the validity of the current study (Chapter Four) asking participants about past events has sometimes been regarded as an inappropriate way to gain a valid and reliable picture of the actual events (Galbo & Mayer Demetrulias, 1996). Others have expressed concern with the social cognitive perspective’s reliance on self-reports that assumes “that students’ perceptions are the most powerful predictor available” (Anderman & Anderman, 2000, pp.67-68). Gathering data such as descriptions and observations of natural settings (Bong, 1996), from multiple sources and by multiple methods are ways of addressing issues of validity and reliability associated with the exclusive use of self-reports (Järvelä & Niemivirta, 2001; Turner, 2000; Volet, 2001a). The need is to “provide rich information on the interplay of individual and social dimensions in the construction of motivation in situation” (Volet, 2001a, p.322). This study gathered rich data in multiple ways at different time points about participants from diverse settings to achieve this.

Self-reports are regarded as crucial in gaining access to an individual’s beliefs, feelings and experiences that are not immediately observable, but were interpreted with the recognition of their limitations in the absence of broad corroborating data. These perceptions and recollections are understood as being shaped by past and more recent experiences of the participants, as well as by the multiple, overlapping, complex contexts in which they have lived and acted.
Longitudinal Data

One of the major strengths of the research methods designed for the study is that they enabled a consideration of motivation over time. As already discussed there has been a lack of longitudinal research on motivation although this is becoming more prevalent (see, for example, Burland & Davidson, 2002; MacCallum, 2001b; Mansfield, 2004; Nolen, 2004; Pressick-Kilborn & Walker, 2004). Exploring participants’ experiences over an extended time span revealed the dynamic nature of involvement and persistence. For example, questions at the end of Interview One about future plans were followed up at the beginning of Interview Two, and these indicated changes in involvement between interviews. In the Issues Sorting Task, and through open-ended questions about issues they thought should have been raised, participants were given the opportunity to discuss problems they had previously encountered as well as problems they were encountering during the time of the interviews. Questions used also enabled participants to reflect upon on-going decisions that they were making about their involvement. Similar to more “on-line” methods of examining constructs (Ainley & Hidi, 2002; Boekaerts, 2002b), this study was able to tap into current motivational processes, as well as examining changes in motivation over time.

The longitudinal perspective taken shed new light on the nature of persistence. Although participants, over a long time frame, persisted in sport and music in that they were still involved in those domains over the years, the nature of their involvement could change quite dramatically. The clearest example of this was when participants stopped playing a particular sport or instrument and either changed their focus within the domain, or resumed when they reappraised their situation. A further example was
when two of the adolescent participants discontinued with their school sport programs during the study. This did not mean they were no longer motivated to play their particular sport, but for different reasons had made a negative appraisal of the situation at school. Both continued to be heavily involved in various teams in their community sporting club. One was also able to still play in the school team although not in the specialist program. So motivation, revealed as persistence, was complex and dynamic.

Sampling Decisions

The research focused on the motivation of athletes and musicians. When providing a rationale for selecting the contexts of sport and music (Chapter One), it was suggested that understanding motivation in these domains would lead to a broader understanding of motivation in other domains, such as academic learning. Sport and music were also regarded as having many similarities and athletes’ and musicians’ responses were remarkably similar both in content and in the way they appeared to be shaped by relevant personal and contextual factors. Differences between domains did occur, for example, in the degree of media attention or the nature of training requirements; but similarities were more evident. For example, school students in special sport and music programs all felt the pressure of being required to participate in a number of different teams or ensembles while still maintaining school grades. Professional adult athletes and musicians were aware of, and took into account, their supporters and other onlookers when thinking about particular performances and about their overall reputation as a performer. They all were mindful of their family, friends and responsibilities to them and in other communities.
So although the focus in the study was on motivation in sport and music, taking a holistic approach enabled a consideration of the individual person in his or her total context, not just as an athlete or a musician. In other words, the methodology used meant that motivation was revealed as not being confined to one particular context or setting, but rather consideration of the whole person in multiple contexts was needed to fully understand motivation. This is an important finding relevant to the study of motivation in other contexts such as academic settings, and supports more sociocultural or person-in-context views of motivation. Recent studies have taken into account a number of contexts (MacCallum, 2001a, 2001b; Mansfield, 2004) and the present study extends this by taking an even broader view.

Another decision made in the sampling process was to focus on those who could be considered experts in motivation in that they had persisted at a high level over time in sport and music. Because of the particular sample selected, however, the specific factors of importance, strategies used and so on that emerged may not be readily generalisable to less able or less persistent individuals. Participants who played team sports or who were in musical ensembles were selected rather than players of individual sports, or soloists. They therefore could be expected to encounter other people in significant ways more often. Alternatively, athletes and musicians who choose to play in teams or ensembles could be more affected by social factors, or simply more attuned to them, and that is why other people appeared to be so important. It would be interesting to see if other people played such important roles for those in more individual pursuits.
The Use of Specially Designed Tasks

The individual tasks designed for the study were one of its unique aspects and overall were successful in producing rich data for analysis. The Timeline and Circles of Influence Tasks in particular stimulated participant recall and allowed them to choose situations and examples that seemed most relevant for them. As with other studies taking a more “bottom up” or grounded approach (see, for example, Bø, 1996), participants were found to interact with a wide range of other people whose influences were complex. These tasks would be useful in further research aiming to gain biographical information about past experiences and in research aiming to tap into people’s social networks.

The Day in the Life Task produced interesting findings. For example, it revealed the involvement of participants with a variety of people and activities that were not connected with sport or music, and so emphasised the complexities of their real lives and the selective nature of the data often produced in research (Stake, 1994) if only settings chosen by the researcher are considered. That not all participants completed this task, despite reminders, perhaps indicates a difficulty with using diary type activities such as those used by Ng (1998). Nevertheless, such tasks have potential for widening the settings available for consideration.

The Settings Chart Task was not as successful as hoped, mostly because of constraints on the interview time available. The descriptive questions also did not seem particularly interesting for the participants and some of this information could have been obtained in other ways. As discussed in the section on self-reports, observations
of settings over time could have been more appropriate and the task has potential for adaptation in studies aiming to focus on motivation in a particular setting. Classroom based research could use such a structure for observations as well as for interviews, and the advantages and disadvantages of similar techniques have been discussed by Turner and Meyer (2000).

The Issues Sorting Task also had limitations as it selected only certain potential problems and did not tap into all strategies that participants could have used. This point was discussed more fully when explaining the findings related to this task (Chapter Eight). Given the aims of the present study the limited scope of the task was reasonable. A similar task could be used more successfully, for example, in research with a focus only on difficulties or problems. If the aim were to tap into a broad range of strategies, then the task would need some adaptation to take into account, for example, strategies designed to enhance performance rather than just those used to manage and overcome problems.

Despite some limitations as indicated above, the questions and tasks used captured the experiences of participants over time, enabled the production of extensive, rich data, and accomplished this in an interesting way for both the researcher and the participants.
Strategies to Enhance Validity

When discussing the methodology used in this research (Chapter Four) various strategies were described that were used to enhance the validity of the findings. For example, data gathered nonsystematically, while needing to be interpreted with caution, provided support or otherwise for participants’ comments. The nature and extent of participants’ responses to the interviews, tasks and research project in general indicated that rapport and trust had been developed and reduced the likelihood that their interview responses were restricted or were made in an attempt to provide socially desirable ones.

Perhaps at this stage of the dissertation, the most important issue related to validity is the generalisation of findings. Conclusions, explanations or interpretations made in any research, and particularly qualitative studies are always "condition and context dependent, partial, inconclusive, and indeterminately applicable" (Huberman & Miles, 1994, p.432). It is up to the readers themselves of such studies to “determine whether the findings are applicable to other cases than those which the researcher studied" (Gomm et al., 2000, p.100). So although rich descriptions have been obtained, explanations and interpretations offered, and applications to other domains suggested in the following section, ultimately generalisations about the findings of the study would need to be made by readers and other researchers exploring similar issues. Making the processes of data production and analysis transparent, separating description and interpretation, and explaining how threats to validity have been addressed have facilitated this process.
FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND APPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Despite the need for readers to make their own decisions about the generalisations of the findings of this research, some suggestions for understanding motivation in other domains and for other individuals have been suggested throughout the presentation of the results. The following section discusses some issues arising from the research which could be explored further and which have implications for applied settings. These issues are ordered from those relating quite specifically to the domains of the present study, to those concerned with motivation in broader situations. Five issues will be discussed: performer-onlooker relations; individual practice and homework; overlapping communities of practice; the importance of social interactions; and the paradoxical nature of motivation.

Performer-Onlooker Relations

Performer-onlooker relationships were investigated as part of the overall relationship between social interactions and motivation. Although face-to-face interactions might not actually occur, as was the case with indirect onlookers, it was found that participants’ motivational responses to interactions with onlookers were multifaceted. Participants also took into account the reactions of spectators or audiences when planning their performances, when considering long-term performance plans, and when establishing and maintaining their public reputation.

Limited research was located about performer-onlooker relationships in the domains of sport and music. Given the assumptions about the importance of the spectators in
sporting events in popular press (Cullen, 2001, 2002; Westcoasteagles, 2002) this area is one that could be empirically examined and could have important direct implications for player performance. Are there differences for example, between individual and team or ensemble performers in how they respond to or take onlookers into account? How can supporters best assist performers? Can onlookers be detrimental to performance and under what conditions? Further research is needed regarding how expectations about, direct experiences with, and feedback from spectators, audiences and other onlookers shape performers’ involvement and persistence.

Similarities Between Individual Practice and Homework

Another area that could be explored further is that of individual training or practice. Individual practice was conceptualised as a separate setting in this study, connected with a particular community, but not always physically located within it. In fact individual practice may be physically located in another community such as a gym or the home. The person-context matrix developed to represent appraisals illustrated that involvement in individual practice varied according to personal and contextual factors. For example, a person wanting to join a higher-level community could engage in more individual work or in a different type of work, in order to improve their skills and their likelihood of being accepted in such a community. Contextual factors were also important in determining the amount of individual work as, for example, the Olympic rowers did not engage in individual training because of the way their community was structured. So involvement in individual training and practice was shaped by the relationship between the affordances and constraints provided by communities, and the
motivational beliefs, emotions and behaviours of individuals within those communities.

This way of understanding individual practice has relevance to the similar activity of homework, a form of "individual practice" in the academic domain. Although homework is directly connected to the classroom community, it is generally carried out in another community - the family. Some examination of homework as it relates mostly to personal responsibility and volition has been conducted (Corno & Xu, 1998), but from a more person-context perspective it would be interesting to see if a matrix as developed in this study is relevant to homework. An exploration of the personal and contextual characteristics and their relationship involved in homework could provide an understanding of students’ involvement, or lack of involvement in this activity.

It would also be interesting to examine communities in other domains to see if a similar matrix of appraisals was useful in understanding the nature of involvement. For example, a similar reciprocal process could exist in workplace communities when individuals make appraisals of their job satisfaction, and subsequent decisions about whether to seek work elsewhere. In educational institutions, such a matrix could be helpful in understanding students’ subject or course selection.

Overlapping Communities

Overlapping communities are another area for further exploration. As shown, when families and friends took on the role of supporter or critic, the motivational impact
seemed greater than when unknown others took on these roles. Numbers in this study were small but this finding could be examined more closely. For example, when family members of participants have more permanent roles such as co-performers, coach or teacher in the same sport or music setting, this overlap may significantly shape motivation.

This is also a potential area of inquiry in educational settings where families and peer groups and other groups to which students might belong, may overlap to a greater or lesser extent with the classroom setting. For example, a parent might also be a teacher, or siblings might be in the same school or even classroom. This has been examined to some extent from an anthropological perspective by Locke-Davidson and Phelan (1999) who considered issues such as overlapping values. A similar investigation focusing on communities that socially overlap would be of interest in order to explore the effect of such overlap on individual motivation.

Importance of Social Interactions

Participants’ appraisals of interactions with a range of other people were important in shaping motivation. As already pointed out, the strength of this finding may be a result of selecting members of teams or ensembles as participants, but it is supported by a range of research in various domains (see, for example, Bø, 1996; Juvonen & Wentzel, 1996; Weiss et al., 1996). One starting point for future research is a consideration of whether the dimensions of enabling encouraging and extending, developed in this study to represent others’ influences, are applicable to other
situations. For example, are some roles more important in certain domains or for certain individuals? The participants in the present study had skills and interest in the relevant domains. What types of roles played by others would be most helpful, for example, to school students who were achieving poorly or who were not interested in the subjects available?

The whole area of social interactions is a complex one and further research is still needed to understand their relationship with motivation. How to account for complex social factors in conceptualisations of motivation is, even from a social cognitive perspective alone, a complex issue.

The difficulty faced by social-cognitive theorists stems, in part, from the countless number of social factors that need to be considered in these relatively recent theoretical formulations and, in part, from the potential disparity among researchers, practitioners, and students on how these social and contextual factors (and each of their dimensions) are perceived and interpreted. (Bong, 1996, p.151)

The Paradoxical Nature of Motivation

One interesting finding, also related to the importance of social interactions, was that participants could simultaneously perceive others as shaping their motivation in both positive and negative ways. For example, the same person or group of people could be perceived positively in one situation or at one time, but negatively in another situation or at another time. If a person or an event is perceived in a negative way, an individual’s motivational response could change over time, perhaps because of the use of adaptive motivational strategies that result in reframing the situation in a positive
way. This finding and possible interpretations have already been discussed in some detail (Chapter Six).

The number of examples of this was relatively small in this study and it would be interesting to explore this finding more closely in other settings. Can a teacher in a classroom be perceived as simultaneously positive and negative and if so, how does this shape students’ motivational responses? More generally in schools over the years teachers may have been perceived positively and negatively, and this could also be examined in relation to students’ involvement. As found in studies of music and sport (Hallam, 1997; Hellstedt, 1995), parents may also provide both affordances and constraints in relation to their children’s motivation for academic study. Finally, when both positive and negative responses occur, research would be needed to determine under what situations or conditions adaptive responses to this were maximised.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH
The previous discussion focused on particular aspects of the research that were related to the three types of interface used to structure the results chapters. In this final discussion, the broader conclusions about the complex, reciprocal and dynamic nature of motivation are discussed. The contribution of this research to an understanding of how the person-context relationship shapes motivation is considered.
One of the key findings of the study was that in order to understand the motivation of a particular individual, a complex range of factors needed to be taken into consideration. For example, multiple aspects of context could be important in determining whether an individual engages initially in a community, setting or task, and whether they continue to do so. Similarly, each individual brings a unique range of physical, cognitive, affective and behavioural aspects to a situation and these shape motivation in complex ways.

Person and context acted in a reciprocal way. For example, an individual could have a strong interest in an area but if there were no programs available or no encouragement of this interest, initial engagement would not seem to be likely. Similarly, organisations could offer programs but an individual would have to be willing to engage with those programs. So it is important to consider both person and context and to understand that different individuals would appraise the relationship between aspects of each differently. For example, the actions of a "harsh" coach, or teacher who made a "negative" evaluation, could be appraised as positive by some and negative by others.

In this study there were wide differences between individuals in terms of the particular aspects of their contexts that they paid attention to, and in the individual characteristics that contributed to the appraisals they made of these. The importance of considering individual situations or cases in motivation research in education settings has been demonstrated and discussed (see, for example, Lemos, 2001; MacCallum, 1997).
Sosniak (1985a) noted the extent of individual differences between expert concert pianists, and Hallam (1997) found a level of individuality in music practice far exceeding expectations.

It may not be a particularly helpful finding for those in the field, but there are no easy answers to the question of how to enhance the motivation of groups of people or even of individuals. Although previous research has shown a range of factors that need to be taken into account, the way these factors operate together in a reciprocal and complex way may be as specific as each individual case. Research cited relating to the paradoxical nature of motivation supports this view, as does the comment by Margaret, an adult athlete, when reflecting on her own experiences as a coach.

…you really just have to sit back and make sure that you analyse the whole situation rather than just thinking that you can get a whole group of people and treat them all the same. 'Cause they're all so different. (Margaret, adult female athlete)

The Dynamic Nature of Motivation and Response to Challenge

A further key finding of the study was the dynamic nature of motivation. When selecting the participants it was to some degree assumed that those who had persisted at such high levels would: have high levels of self-belief, have come from supportive backgrounds, and have sustained their interest, goals and level of involvement over time. In fact this was not the case, as illustrated by participants’ discussions of their self-doubts, of their negative interactions with others, and of changes in the nature of their involvement. For example, some changed to another sport or instrument then back again, or turned from amateur to professional or professional to amateur, or joined or dropped out of specialist programs. Developing trajectories from
longitudinal and biographical data revealed and illustrated the dynamic nature of motivation. In particular, when participants faced problems, that is appraised their current situation in a negative way, the dynamic nature of motivation emerged.

There is support in the research literature for explicitly considering difficulties that have been overcome in relation to sustained involvement or persistence. When examining the effectiveness of role models in programs for young people, high profile role models are trained to show how they reached their current situation and to discuss obstacles encountered and how these had been overcome (MacCallum & Beltman, 2002). This assists observers see the role models as being more relevant and so more motivating (see, for example, Lockwood & Kunda, 1997). Similarly, popular literature regards stories of individuals who have encountered and overcome difficulties as being motivating to others trying to achieve their goals (see, for example, Budler, 1992; Tebbel, 2003). Frydenberg (2002b) found that high achievers had all been exposed to risk factors or potential difficulties.

In a similar way, participants in this study encountered situations that had challenged their desire or ability to participate and had met, although not always overcome, these problems. Their road to success had not always been straightforward and this is an important finding that could only emerge through an examination of motivation over time. Further research about how successful individuals have overcome difficulties would complement findings in the resilience literature which tends to focus on groups of people at risk rather than those who have achieved higher levels of success (Brendtro & Larson, 2004; Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care,
2000; Fuller, McGraw, & Goodyear, 1999). For example a recent book (Frydenberg, 2002a) focused on proactive coping (Greenglass, 2002) and highlighted the importance of positive psychology and of achieving life’s goals – looking to enhance and increase positive experiences rather than to just overcome or manage negative ones.

Conclusion

Capturing high-achieving athletes’ and musicians' words, experiences and feelings, and deriving meaning from their perceptions of multiple real-life situations were invaluable in revealing their journey of engagement, involvement and persistence in complex social contexts. Adopting a holistic view of motivation, grounded in a social cognitive, person-context perspective, highlighted its dynamic and reciprocal nature at the person-context interface. As they shared their dreams and disappointments it became apparent that these high-achieving individuals were able to overcome difficulties along the way and sustain their involvement over time. I am sure they will continue their successful journeys as athletes and musicians.


