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Research dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree MMus (Music
Therapy)

**Exploring the contribution of the lyric completion songwriting technique to a music
therapy assessment session with preadolescent children in a children's home**

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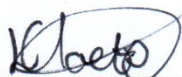
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ABSTRACT

Background: This study is informed by my interest in exploring the role of music therapy both in the assessment of preadolescent children in a children's home and, in particular, in relation to an examination of the contribution of lyric completion in songwriting during an assessment process. Although children are continually being placed in residential care all across the globe, this study focuses on the South African context.

Children who are placed in residential care have generally faced adverse childhood experiences and might find it difficult to process and express their experiences verbally. Music therapy can aid the processing of these challenges and their negative impacts. This study aims to explore the contribution of the lyric completion songwriting technique (LCST) to a music therapy assessment session with preadolescent children in a South African children's home.

Methods: This qualitative study was conducted with 14 participants between the ages of 8 and 12 years living in one children's home. Each participant had one individual assessment session where they completed the lyrics (fill-in-the-blanks) of an edited pre-existing song. After each participant's session, an observation form was completed that looked at the verbal and musical engagement of the participants, as well as their affective presence.

Findings: The findings indicate that, during an assessment, the LCST helps to highlight different qualities of engagement from the participants and to show how engagement shifts in the course of a single assessment session. The qualities of engagement not only pertain to engagement with the therapist, but also to elements of the verbal, musical, and affective domains.

Conclusions: In terms of assessment, the LCST affords a holistic view of the participant, by allowing them to be involved in different ways, and aids the therapist in determining clinical goals for a therapeutic process. It also gives the participants an opportunity for self-expression, for accessing resilience, and for exerting agency, all while being assessed in a creative, fun, and non-intrusive manner.

Keywords: music therapy, songwriting techniques, lyric completion, assessment, children's homes, residential care

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

I love using song-writing in music therapy sessions. It is such a wonderful amalgamation of process and product...of talking and music...of creating and reflecting. There is something powerful about working on a song; a product that reflects your inner pain, and then performing it – regardless of whether you are ‘so called’ tone deaf or not – for the world to hear... or just your closest friends... or someone in your family... or just playing it back to yourself. However, song-writing happens only when a child is ready and willing. It can’t be forced.

(Torrance, 2010, p. 25)

1.1 Background to the Study

The topic for this research inquiry originated from my passion for working with children and my interest in the field of music therapy. In my high school years, I worked as a group facilitator at children’s camps. At these camps, a registered social worker conducted assessment activities which included sentence completion techniques structured as a game. This, in turn, provided the social worker with information to aid in her assessment, without it being an intrusive experience for the children. Observation of her assessment methods motivated my interest in working with children within the social work system, specifically those in children’s homes or residential care. Likewise, as I have always been interested in the field of music therapy, I sought a way to combine these two passions into one research study. My interests have therefore led me to this study exploring the role of music therapy within the assessment of preadolescent children in a children’s home and, in particular, to an examination of the contribution of lyric completion in songwriting during the process of an assessment. Lyric completion, which refers to a song structure with incomplete and open-ended sentences to be completed by the participants in their own words, has long fascinated me.

Roche (2019) discovered that the predominant reasons for children being placed in residential care in the Global South were the loss of one or both parents and family members who could not support the children due to socioeconomic circumstances. This is particularly relevant in a South African context where the prevailing socioeconomic conditions have led to a large number of children being placed in residential care settings, as stated by the National Adoption Coalition South Africa (2020).

Music therapy can aid children in processing the challenges and difficulties they experience in everyday life. In a community music therapy study exploring the lived experiences of teenagers from a children's home who were participating in a choir, van Rooyen and dos Santos (2020) found that the music therapy process offered the youth meaningful intra- and interpersonal experiences. The participants reported interpersonal experiences such as improved social skills and growth in relationships, while, at an intrapersonal level, the participants reflected on their experiences of increased self-awareness, self-confidence, and self-esteem.

In another study, Hakomäki (2013) worked for two years on a music therapy process with a seven-year-old boy who had experienced a traumatic event in his life. It was found that the child experienced benefits as a result of processing the traumatic experience by actively creating music. Through songwriting, the child found emotional connections with specific musical features and was subsequently able to process his historical truth into narrative truth. Over time, he became stronger as he recovered from the traumatic experience and improved his sense of wellbeing.

Songwriting in music therapy practice is the use of various techniques whereby clients of all ages are assisted in creating lyrics to music and are provided with the opportunity to perform and/or record their own songs (Aasgaard & Blichfeldt-Ærø, 2016). Over the past ten years, there has been an increase in the use of songwriting as a therapeutic intervention in the field of music therapy (Krout, 2015). Jackson and Heiderscheit (2021) describe a compositional method called song transformation, where a pre-existing

song structure is used and certain phrases or words can be replaced by the client, while adapting or maintaining the original melody. This compositional method is akin to the lyric completion technique at the heart of this study and will be discussed further in Chapter 2. In their research, Baker et al. (2008) found that songwriting was most often used to address specific goals such as “a) experiencing mastery, develop[ing] self-confidence, enhanc[ing] self-esteem; b) choice and decision making; c) develop[ing] a sense of self; d) externalising thoughts, fantasies, and emotions; e) telling the client's story; and f) gaining insight or clarifying thoughts and feelings” (p. 470). In the light of Baker's research, I became more interested in exploring the possibilities that can be offered by the activity of lyric completion in songwriting during an assessment session.

In order to choose the relevant course of intervention for a therapeutic process, a form of assessment needs to occur. According to Layman et al. (2002), assessment is a vital part of music therapy practice and forms the first step in providing treatment to the client. Assessment in music therapy can be complex, for if one purely assesses the musical qualities of the session, one might exclude the psychotherapeutic impacts of the process. On the other hand, Bunt & Hoskyns (2013) point out that if one solely assesses the psychotherapeutic aspects of music therapy, the value of the creative experience might get lost. All-in-all, assessment in music therapy is often subjective and dependent upon how the therapist assigns meaning to, and interprets, the musical experience (Bunt & Hoskyns). It is therefore important for me, in my dual role as the researcher and therapist, to acknowledge that my subjective experiences and previous exposure to the client group, as mentioned in the opening statements of the introduction, are likely to have influenced the assessment process. Although I could not separate myself from the process and the creative experience, my music therapy training and research intentions encouraged me to remain primarily interested in the participants' engagements as I observed their participation in the process.

1.2 Aim of the Study

This study aims to explore the potential contribution of the lyric completion songwriting technique (hereafter referred to as LCST) to a music therapy assessment session with preadolescent children in a children's home. The purpose of this study is to explore the potential contribution of this technique to the children's affect, verbal participation, and musical participation.

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 Main Research Question

How does the lyric completion songwriting technique contribute to a music therapy assessment session with preadolescent children in a children's home?

1.3.2 Secondary Research Questions

- How do the children present verbally before, during, and after the songwriting lyric completion process?
- What are the children's observed affect before, during, and after the songwriting lyric completion process?
- Does the lyric completion songwriting technique engage the children in musical participation, and if so, how?

1.4 Dissertation Outline

In Chapter 1, introduction to the study, I provide the background for this study and introduce the main concepts pertaining to the focus of this research. The research questions, aims of the study and the outline of the dissertation, then conclude this chapter. Chapter 2, literature review, is divided into four sections. First, literature regarding children in residential care, and the challenges they face, is reviewed. Next, I explore the body of literature regarding music therapy in the context of working with children, and follow this with a discussion of the LCST. The final section of the literature review discusses the role of assessment both in residential care and in music therapy. Chapter 3 explains my research approach and the design chosen for this study. I also provide a discussion of my data

collection techniques, the data analysis, the ethical considerations and the quality of the study. I then present my results in Chapter 4. This chapter provides a detailed, step-by-step account of the analyses of the two datasets, namely, the thematic analysis of the songs' lyric content and the observational analysis of the participants' engagement within the LCST. The penultimate chapter, Chapter 5, comprises a discussion of the findings of the study focusing on emerging themes and the corresponding literature which supports the research questions governing the study. Finally, Chapter 6, conclusion to the study, includes a summary of my findings and my concluding remarks. Furthermore, I discuss the value and limitations of the study and provide suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this section, I present a review of the literature regarding children in residential care in the South African context as well as in international settings. A discussion of the literature regarding music therapy when working with children follows, and thereafter, various points of view on lyric completion in songwriting are discussed. Finally, I delve into the role of assessment in residential care and in music therapy.

2.2 Children in Residential Care

Fulcher (2001) describes residential childcare as a setting in which children and young people are offered care. Care, in this context, includes physical nurturing, the promotion of health and wellbeing, as well as social learning opportunities (Fulcher). These residential care settings are also referred to as orphanages, children's homes, alternative care, or institutional care. They collectively indicate a facility where children are cared for away from their families, in a group setting. These facilities form an integral part of the welfare system of children globally. According to Roche (2019), it is estimated that the number of children in residential care in the Global South ranges from 2.7 million to 8 million, with the majority of these children living in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southern Asia, and South-East Asia. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Roche found that the predominant reasons for children being placed in residential care are the loss of one or both parents and family members who cannot support the children due to socioeconomic circumstances.

Many children in South Africa face similar difficult circumstances as confirmed in the South African Child Gauge 2020 executed in 2018 (May et al., 2020). At that time, the researchers found that 20% of the 19.7 million children in the country were not living with either of their biological parents. The same study by May et al. also found that 59% of the children in South Africa lived below the "upper-bound" poverty line and another 30% lived in households where there was no income generation. Likewise, approximately 1.7 million children were reported to be living in backyard dwellings or informal settlements and a

further nearly 3.5 million children were recorded as living in households that are overcrowded (May et al.). These statistics also show the impact of the socioeconomic circumstances on child nutrition, access to basic services, education and proper housing. Within this societal context, the National Adoption Coalition South Africa (2020) found that 21 000 children were placed in residential care in 2018.

Residential care settings across the world aim to provide a safer alternative for children who experience maltreatment, abuse, and extreme poverty (Roche, 2019; Hope and Homes for Children, 2019). However, children in residential care also often face significant challenges including disadvantages, vulnerabilities, limitations to basic materials, and religious or cultural differences (Roche). In fact, researchers have found that being placed in residential care can have a negative impact on the emotional, cognitive, and social development of children (Browne et al., 2006; McCall, 2013; Roche; Rus et al., 2017).

In a scoping review of literature regarding children's experiences of residential care settings conducted by Roche (2019), in studies from India and Laos, it was found that children experienced a lack of agency, had limited influence over their lives, and expressed the wish for greater consideration when decisions were being made concerning them. Although various researchers in Roche's review identified fighting and poor treatment between peers as a significant problem, it was also found that children in residential care have positive experiences of peer relationships with people with whom they can share their emotions, discuss their worries, and share their successes. These positive experiences aid in resilience, social development, and the overall wellbeing of the children (Roche). Similar findings were also reported by Edmond (2012) in a study that focused on resilience in children's peer relationship experiences at school and in the children's home. Edmond found that peer relationships played an important role in the children's journey of belonging and acceptance. These also highlighted the children's abilities to overcome adversity in life and bounce back, making meaningful relationships while yet facing the stigma of being in residential care.

Burkhardt and Loxton (2008) conducted a study on common childhood fears and coping strategies among 8 to 13-year-old children in a children's home in South Africa. According to Burkhardt and Loxton, children in residential care can face various childhood fears; as such, coping mechanisms are required for their overall wellbeing. Some of the most common childhood fears reported by the participants of that study included, in random order, snakes, darkness, ghosts, strangers, spiders, dogs, men/boys, death, predators, and weapons (Burkhardt & Loxton). The authors found that the children's primary coping strategies included direct problem solving to alter stressful situations, while they also reported secondary coping strategies such as seeking social and spiritual support (Burkhardt & Loxton).

The group of aforementioned difficulties and challenges that children experience in residential care, or might have experienced prior to being placed and/or are still experiencing in residential care, can be summarised as adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). According to Boullier and Blair (2018), ACEs are potentially traumatic events that can have immediate and long-term negative effects on the health and well-being of an individual. These include living in a harmful environment with household challenges, maltreatment and neglect, and all forms of abuse (Boullier & Blair).

2.3 Music Therapy for Children in Residential Care

In music therapy, the medium of music is used to address various clinical goals within a wide range of client populations. According to Wigram et al. (2002), the World Federation of Music Therapy (WFMT) defines music therapy as follows:

Music therapy is the use of music and/or musical elements (sound, rhythm, melody and harmony) by a qualified music therapist with a client or group, in a process designed to facilitate and promote communication, relationships, learning, mobilisation [sic], expression, organisation [sic] and other relevant therapeutic objectives, in order to meet physical, emotional, mental, social and cognitive needs. Music therapy aims to develop potentials and/or restore functions of the individual so

that he or she can achieve better intra- and inter-personal integration and, consequently, a better quality of life through prevention, rehabilitation, or treatment. (p.30)

Wigram et al. further state that music therapy interventions are designed with each client population in mind, taking their needs and potentials into consideration. Bruscia (2012) supports this by stating that the therapist and client use all aspects of music – the physical, spiritual, emotional, social, and mental aspects – to improve or maintain the client’s health. This can occur either directly through the therapeutic elements of music or through the therapeutic relationship that develops between the therapist and the client in the musical experience. Music therapy can be used with clients of all age groups and various clinical conditions to address several therapeutic goals, including self-development, building self-esteem, and reducing stress (Bruscia).

Although, specifically regarding children in residential care, the literature on music therapy is limited, there is a growing body of research available describing therapeutic interventions among various types of clients with similar experiences, such as ACEs. Desmond et al. (2015) have stated that the use of the creative arts provides “a developmentally appropriate medium for children to process experiences that they may not have the developmental capability about which to communicate through talk therapy” (p.440). This was supported by Cropper and Godsall (2016) when they reflected on their experiences, as a music therapist and a drama therapist, working with children in a residential school who had previously experienced ACEs and complex trauma. They noted that, in their work, their focus is not to address one traumatic event but, rather, a series of adverse experiences, an inheritance of abuse, and insufficient attachments that have negatively impacted the development of the children. Cropper and Godsall found that the arts therapies provide the opportunity to address these adverse experiences through ongoing therapeutic relationships. Similarly, Wilson (2020) reported that the most frequently used music therapy interventions for children who had ACEs include creative improvisation,

actively playing instruments, and engagement in songwriting which can be adapted to meet the children's individual needs.

The work cited above highlights the value of music therapy in supporting children who live in children's homes, with the challenges they face. In the following section, the focus will be on the role of lyric completion in songwriting.

2.4 Lyric Completion in Songwriting

According to Ruud (2005), songwriting is a rich method of music therapy that can offer the client an aesthetic context in which to explore their own life, vulnerabilities, losses, possibilities, and aspirations. This is because songs are relatable across different cultures, ages, and life stages. As described by Ruud:

From childhood on, we all relate to songs and songwriting in a personal way. Children improvise with their voices, create mock-versions of familiar songs, and engage in a host of changing forms of identifications with songs and singers on their way to adulthood. The song text often provides an early experience of how to symbolically represent the world, and of how we can use metaphors to understand the meaning of what is happening to us. (p.9)

Wigram and Baker (2005) have similarly stated that the therapeutic use of songs (that are pre-composed) can offer clients the opportunity to reflect on their lives, to reflect on interpersonal relationships, to confront intrapersonal difficulties, and to project their feelings onto the music. Further, the authors said that songwriting, where the client creates their own material, can provide similar valuable therapeutic experiences and address various clinical goals (Wigram & Baker).

There are several techniques that can be used within the songwriting method of music therapy. Wigram (2005) explained that while therapeutic methods refer to the approach chosen by the therapist, therapeutic techniques refer to the strategies and tools applied within the method. For the purpose of this study where the focus is on lyric completion in songwriting, this strategy has been referred to in the literature as the "fill-in-the

blanks” technique. With this technique, the lyrics offered to the client are incomplete; they contain only sentence beginnings or fragments with some of the words left out.

Wigram (2005) expanded on the suitability of the fill-in-the-blanks technique for clinical work with clients:

A technique using a familiar song ... that the client relates to may be used and adapted to make it more personally relevant. This technique provides more structure for clients who may have difficulty expanding and organizing simple ideas and can also provide direction for the lyrics and may serve as a beginning point for a client who is having trouble getting started. (p.258)

In therapeutic settings, the LCST is similar to the sentence completion technique found in the field of psychology, and is often used by music therapists in psychiatry (Baker et al., 2009). This link allows us to draw on active practices within the field of psychology which utilise various methods for assessing children’s psychosocial functioning. Some of these include projective techniques such as sentence completion tasks, drawing activities, the Rorschach inkblot test, and the thematic apperception test (TAT) (Kugler et al., 2013).

According to Lilienfeld et al. (2000), most projective techniques are based on the projective hypothesis which states that clients project aspects of their personalities and unconscious material in the process of making sense of neutral test stimuli. The advantage of projective techniques is their ability to bypass the clients’ conscious defences and to provide insights for the clinician both to access and to assess important psychological information (Lilienfeld et al.).

Piotrowski (2015), in his extensive review of 28 survey-based studies worldwide, found that practicing psychologists employ projective techniques in their assessments and consider them valuable clinical tools. However, it is important to mention that Piotrowski also suggested that projective testing had become less popular in the field of psychology and that “attitudes toward projective tests have been blatantly negative in professional training settings yet guardedly positive in clinical practice” (p.262).

As mentioned above, one of the projective techniques that is often used to aid in the assessment of the psychosocial state of children is the sentence completion technique. This could be due to the fact that not only is information about a child's emotional and psychosocial functioning best obtained through their responses to projective stimuli, but also that, at times, the child's responses to projective stimuli are the only means of getting this sort of information (Krahn, 1985). According to Krahn, in this technique, a sheet of paper with incomplete sentences, or sentence beginnings, is given to the child and they are required to complete the sentences in their own words. The benefit of the technique is that it provides the opportunity to see what children openly reveal about themselves. This can be valuable in informing therapeutic goals.

2.5 Assessment

Assessment provides the necessary information about the client's needs to inform the therapeutic process going forward. Given the important role of assessment in both social work and music therapy, when considering music therapy for children in a residential care setting, it is critical to examine this crossover element of these fields.

In the context of social work, assessment is a continuous process which involves active participation and seeks to understand the relevant circumstances of the individual using the service. It therefore forms the foundation for planning how change or improvement of the situation can be achieved (Bolger & Walker, 2018). Assessment in social work has also been described by Bolger and Walker as being structured, with characteristics that include being "holistic and comprehensive", "ethical and skilled", "purposeful and appropriate", "empowering and outcomes focused", as well as "dynamic and responsive" (p.171). Other aspects of assessment outlined by the authors include the fact that it "highlights protection and safe-guarding", is "based on engagement and inclusion", "involves judgement to support decision making", often "leads to planning and future action", and is "grounded in the legal and policy context" (Bolger & Walker, p.171).

Gattino (2021) provided a definition of music therapy assessment that captures its fundamental characteristics:

Music therapy assessment is characterized by using methods that are also applied in other disciplines (record review method, interviews, observations, and tests and measurements). Still, it has substantial differences in foci, established relationships, and assessed data based on musical experiences and content. Similarly, music therapy assessment includes the participation of music therapists, different from other assessment processes. It is essential to emphasize that music therapy assessment usually occurs through an evidence-based practice or a data-based practice. (p. 45)

Assessment in music therapy is the first phase of the therapy process. In this stage, the aim is both to gain insight into the client as an individual person and a social being, and to identify their unique needs, concerns, and strengths. This process aids the therapist in formulating client-specific goals (Bruscia, 2014). According to Wigram et al. (2002), there are various assessment models that inform the music therapy assessment process. These models include:

Diagnostic assessment (to obtain evidence to support a diagnostic hypothesis), general assessment (to obtain information on general needs, strengths and weaknesses), music therapy assessment (to obtain evidence supporting the value of music therapy as an intervention), initial period of clinical assessment in music therapy (to determine in the first two or three sessions a therapeutic approach relevant to the client), and long-term music therapy assessment (to evaluate over time the effectiveness of music therapy). (p.247)

As shown above, there are various models of music therapy assessment. Gattino (2021) also highlighted several music therapy assessment tools and scales, including the Nordoff-Robbins assessment scale, the individualised music therapy assessment profile (IMTAP), and the individual music-centred assessment profile for neurodevelopmental disorders. These are associated with categorisations of skills and behaviours, and are

mostly designed for clients with specific diagnoses in mind (Gattino). According to Gattino, it is essential that assessment processes and opportunities be made accessible to all populations. He further stated that “the possibilities for participation and interaction do not refer only to people with disabilities, since assessments can be directed or adapted to gender identity, gender expression, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability status, age, and religion of the individuals.” (p. 145). This viewpoint gives us support for exploring music therapy assessment for children in residential care.

Layman et al. (2002) similarly stated that the creative arts therapies are useful and frequently relied on for assessments of children who experience severe emotional difficulties or disturbances. This is because it has been found that children are more likely to engage in music and/or art, rather than verbally, as music and art provide a less threatening space for self-expression (Layman et al.).

2.6 Conclusion

From the literature reviewed above, it is apparent that a significant number of children have been placed in residential care globally, specifically, in the Sub-Saharan regions, including our South African context (Roche, 2019). Children who are placed in residential care often come from difficult backgrounds, have suffered ACEs and, daily, are faced with unique challenges (Boullier & Blair, 2018). The literature indicates that music therapy interventions, including engagement in songwriting, are often used to address the clinical goals and needs of children who have experienced ACEs (Wilson, 2020).

There is, however, a gap in the literature on these types of music therapy interventions, in terms of these having been specifically designed for children in residential care facilities. The same is seen with the LCST or “fill-in-the-blanks” songwriting technique that is related to the projective techniques used in psychology (Baker et al., 2009). Although the projective technique is frequently used in assessments in the field of psychology (Piotrowski, 2015), there is a scarcity of literature describing the use of the related songwriting technique in an assessment setting in music therapy.

In light of the above, and recognising the importance of a careful assessment of children's needs both in terms of a social work context and a music therapy approach, this study seeks to discover the potential value of the LCST, as a form of projective assessment, to a single music therapy assessment session with preadolescent children residing in a children's home in South Africa.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter starts with a descriptive overview of the research paradigm and the methodology applied. This is followed by a discussion of the research design and data sampling strategies. Next, the ethical considerations and crystallisation are set out, and finally, a discussion of the data collection and analytical procedure is provided.

3.1 Research Paradigm

Leavy (2017) states that a research paradigm provides the framework for a study and indicates its philosophical orientation. There are various paradigms or frameworks that guide social research and researchers utilise paradigms in different ways to guide their work. The paradigm that forms the philosophical foundation of this study is the interpretivist paradigm. This philosophical belief system values human subjective interaction and interpretation as it strives to gain an understanding of human experiences.

3.2 Research Approach

According to Maree (2016), qualitative researchers look at human experiences holistically in order to explore how people see reality. One way in which they do this is by investigating those people's personal experiences. Likewise, as is discussed by Bryman (2012), the researcher must acknowledge the participant's own reflections on these experiences in the social world. Ultimately, it is important for a qualitative researcher both to interpret these human experiences from the participant's perspective and to represent them as accurately as possible. This, in essence, becomes a multi-layered representation of the observation—it is the researcher's interpretation of the participant's interpretation of their experience. As I was interested in having an in-depth engagement with the personal experiences of the participants, this study was conducted using a qualitative approach. Additionally, since it is linked to the qualitative nature of this study and was likely to have affected the progression of the study, it is necessary to acknowledge my dual role as researcher and therapist in the research process. This is further discussed in section 3.7.5 below that looks at the therapist as a researcher.

3.3 Research Design

Yin (2018) defines the design of a study as the logical process that connects the research questions to the data and results. Expanding on this, Kumar (2011) notes that a case study design is commonly used in qualitative research where a case could range from an individual, to a group, a community, or a larger collection of persons. I used the case study as my research design in order to describe a single case. For this case study, the LCST was the unit of analysis, and the responses of each participant formed its constituent parts.

3.4 Selection of Participants

This qualitative study employed purposive sampling. As explained by Matthews and Ross (2010), purposive sampling is used in studies where the research design is based on the collection of qualitative data, and the focus is on a specifically chosen group of people, enabling the researcher to explore and interpret the experiences of those participants. Since the main research question indicates that the subjects would be preadolescent children from a children's home, purposive sampling was used in this study as the most appropriate approach for the formation of a specifically chosen group of participants. For this study, all the preadolescent children in the children's home who were 8–12 years of age were invited to participate in the songwriting process during a once-off individual music therapy session. Permission for the children to participate in the study was requested from the heads of the home who are also the main guardians of the children. The guardians informed the children about the study and advised them that they would meet with me in an information session, where we would speak about their participation.

The information session was then held and all the children within this age range were invited to the group meeting with me. During this meeting, I explained to them what the study was about, and after that, we played a sentence completion circle game to introduce the concept of lyric completion. I further explained to them what would be expected of them during the session, that is, that they could withdraw at any moment, it would be a once-off

individual session and, with their permission, I would make a video recording. I then went through the assent form (Appendix E) with the children, both as a group and with each individual child, after which 14 children, within the abovementioned ages, volunteered to participate.

3.5 Data Collection Techniques

This study was conducted at a South African children's home where children of a select age group were informed about the study and invited to participate. Qualitative research that is conducted as per case study designs makes provision for the flexible use of data collection methods. This contributes to a more open-ended approach whose flexibility allows for multiple datasets to emerge from one large body of gathered data. A once-off individual music therapy assessment session was held with each of the 14 children who had volunteered for the study. The participants consisted of 8 boys and 6 girls aged 8–12 years. The participants are further introduced in the tables provided in Chapter 4, section 4.1.1.2, that give a summary of thick descriptions of each individual's participation.

The sessions were 45–60 minutes long. Video recordings were made of all the sessions apart from one session where, due to technical difficulties, only an audio recording was made.

The assessment session was structured as follows:

1. Greeting, introduction and an explanation of the flow of the session
2. Exploring different instruments and sounds
3. Drumming with vocal and instrumental improvisation
4. Lyric completion songwriting process
5. Reflection

All the data were actively collected from the participants during these single sessions and later processed and organised into two separate datasets. Dataset 1 comprises a collection of observation sheets completed as per my observations of the participants during their

sessions. Dataset 2 consists of the song lyrics and related data which emerged from the songwriting process.

3.5.1 Dataset 1: Observation Sheets

Kumar (2011) affirms that observation is a trusted method of data collection often used by qualitative researchers. When the observer actively participates in the same context as the participants, the researcher takes on the role of a “participant as observer” as described by Green and Thorogood (2004, p.134). As an active participant, I completed an observation sheet which detailed the engagement of each participant before, during, and after the lyric completion process, with respect to verbal participation, affect, and musical participation. Due to the limited time available between the sessions, I wrote brief reflection notes on each session immediately after the sessions. Later, to complete the full observation sheet, I supplemented the annotations made in the reflection notes with the information available from the video recordings. An example of a completed observation sheet can be seen in Appendix I.

3.5.2 Dataset 2: Lyrics

All participants wrote a song by means of the lyric completion songwriting process. During the information session, all participants had indicated that their home language is Afrikaans. As such, I decided to choose the Afrikaans song “Die Lig” recorded by Jo Black (Black & Vorster, 2019) as the structure for the songwriting process. This decision was based on the fact that I was aware that the children listened to the Afrikaans music genre on a regular basis in the children’s home. Given that, I wanted to choose a song that was familiar but not too familiar thereby influencing the lyric completion process. I went through a purposeful process of finding an Afrikaans song with existing age-appropriate lyrics and content then, by elimination, decided on “Die Lig” (Black & Vorster). I found that the existing content of the song was appropriate and lent itself both to creativity and the opportunity to include projective lyrics, once the structure was edited. A reflection on this concept is included in my reflections on the study that are shared in Chapter 5.

As I developed the song structure, I provided it with open-ended sentences, based on the original song, then edited the sentences by omitting certain parts in order to form the lyric completion songwriting structure (Appendix H). The same song structure was used with all 14 participants to ensure a level of consistency that would facilitate efficient analysis and usability of the data. Figure 1 displays an example of the song structure and a translation.

Figure 1

Song Structure of Lyric Completion Process and Translation

Original (Die Lig – Jo Black)	Edited	Translation
<p>Verse 1 Vrees bepaal jou nie Sterk is wie jy is Jou lewe het dit al bewys Donker draaie kom Die lewe stamp jou om Jy sal weier om te lê Luister wat jou hart wil sê</p> <p>Chorus: Staan net op, voel die bloed deur jou are klop Dis net jy wat jousef kan stop Skree dit uit, kom wees die lig In die donker nag Brand ons vuur vir die hoop wat wag 'n Lighuis wat op die rotse staan Skree dit uit, "Kom wees die lig!"</p> <p>Verse 2 Maak jou eie pad Gaan waar niemand gaan Jou hele lewe wag op jou In jou teenwoordigheid Moet die vrees verdwyn Wees die lig wat aanhou skyn En dryf die donker oral uit</p>	<p>Verse 1 _____ bepaal jou nie _____ is wie jy is Jou lewe het dit al bewys _____ tye kom Die lewe _____ Jy sal weier om te _____ Luister wat jou hart wil sê</p> <p>Chorus: Staan net op, voel die _____ deur jou are klop Dis net jy wat _____ kan stop Skree dit uit, kom wees _____ In die donker nag Brand ons _____ vir die _____ wat wag 'n _____ wat op die rotse staan Skree dit uit, _____</p> <p>Verse 2 Maak jou eie pad Gaan waar _____ Jou hele lewe _____ jou In jou teenwoordigheid Moet die _____ verdwyn Wees die lig wat aanhou skyn En dryf die _____ oral uit</p>	<p>Verse 1 _____ does not define who you are _____ who you are your life has proven it _____ times are coming Life _____ You will refuse to _____ Listen to your heart</p> <p>Chorus: Just get up, feel the _____ pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop _____ shout it out, be _____ In the dark night, our _____ burns for the _____ who waits an _____ standing on the rocks Shout it out, _____</p> <p>Verse: Create your own path Go where _____ Your whole life _____ you In your presence, The _____ must disappear Be the light that continues to shine And drive away the _____</p>

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis and interpretation are the processes that lead the researcher to the answers for the proposed questions and provide the opportunity to find meaning within the collected data (Leavy, 2017). Thematic analysis of the data was employed in this study. The observation sheets that I completed, and the lyrics completed by the children, were analysed thematically as two separate datasets. The results were then integrated at a later stage.

According to Leavy (2017), the process of thematic analysis of the collected data occurs in five stages to allow the researcher to identify and interpret themes within the data.

The first stage involves preparing the data and the organisation thereof. The second stage of the process involves familiarising yourself with the data, as it is important to get a sense of the data as a whole before further analysis occurs. In the third stage, the data is reduced through the process of coding, where a descriptive word or phrase is assigned to segments of the data in order to highlight essential elements captured during the data collection phase. This leads to the fourth stage of analysis, which requires categorising the codes, looking for patterns and relationships between the codes, and identifying common themes in the data. During the fifth and final stage, interpreting of the themes is done in relation to the research questions.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

3.7.1 *Informed Consent and Assent*

Before I began the music therapy sessions as part of the data collection process, I obtained written permission to conduct my study in the form of a signed letter from the identified children's home (see Appendices A and B). Furthermore, a letter of information was provided to the participants' main guardians at the children's home (see Appendix C) and signed consent forms were obtained from each participant (see Appendix D). After information was provided to the participants, signed assent forms were also collected from each child who volunteered to participate in the study (see Appendix E). Participation in this study was voluntary and the participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time. Video recordings were only made with the participants' consent and, although used during the research process, they have not been made available as part of the final dissertation document.

3.7.2 *Ongoing Support*

Should the once-off songwriting process have elicited responses from the participants which indicated that they required ongoing intervention and support, the resident social worker was available for referrals in order to provide the necessary support (see Appendix F). This was indeed the case with two of the participants for whom I wrote a

referral letter to the resident social worker, with my observations and suggestions for further support.

3.7.3 Confidentiality

The identities of the participants have been kept strictly confidential throughout the process. All findings have accordingly been reported with reference to the children as “Participant A”, “Participant B”, and so on.

3.7.4 Storage of Data

The data is archived in electronic format on a password protected device at the Department of Music for a minimum of 15 years. During this time, the data might be used for further research.

3.7.5 Therapist as Researcher

I was both the therapist and the researcher in this study and therefore engaged in participatory observation. According to Leavy (2017), participatory observation requires the researcher to engage in the activities they are studying and, in parallel, to record systematic observations. In qualitative research, we acknowledge that our subjective experiences and biases are present in the study. As such, I acknowledge that my having come from a sheltered background could have made me unable to fathom the unique experiences that each of the participants had undergone. Furthermore, it was possible that my previous exposure to similar client groups on our church camps could have influenced my perceptions of the participants. With this lens, there was, therefore, the possibility either of my underestimating the participants’ resilience or of my pathologising their presentation in the session. Since it is impossible to separate myself from my previous experiences, I believe that, based on my music therapy training and my having an awareness of the possible influences, it could only have occurred to a limited extent.

The aim in participatory observation during qualitative research is to work with subjectivity rather than to strive for objectivity (Lazard & McAvoy, 2020). Individually and collectively, my physical presence in the room, my active participation as the therapist-

researcher, and my unique experience of each participant had an impact on the intersubjective experience during the songwriting process. Although it was the participant's experience at the heart of the songwriting process, from a reflexive standpoint it was impossible for me, as the researcher, to maintain "perspectival distance" (Lazard & McAvoy, p.164).

3.8 Research Quality

According to Kumar (2011), research quality can be described in terms of the trustworthiness and authenticity of the study. There are four factors that indicate the trustworthiness of a qualitative study, namely credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. Below, I will discuss the four factors of trustworthiness and how each was established in this study.

3.8.1 Credibility

Credibility in qualitative research refers to the "believability" of the study and as qualitative research studies explore the experiences of the participants, the findings should reflect the intentions of the participants (Kumar, 2011; Hays & Singh, 2012). The aim of this study was to accurately reflect the intentions of the participants in analysing their own contributions to the lyric completion songwriting process. I, however, acknowledge that my subjectivity was present, both as therapist and researcher. Since I was diligently aware of this, I managed it through writing reflective session notes in a commitment to reflexive engagement with the research process.

3.8.2 Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistency of study results over a period of time by several researchers undertaking the same study (Hays & Singh, 2012). In qualitative research, the emphasis on flexibility and freedom makes it difficult to maintain consistency; therefore, it is important to provide a detailed description of the process in order for other researchers to follow or critique it (Kumar, 2011). Consequently, this study used the same songwriting technique and observation sheet within a uniform age group to achieve

consistency in the results. It is, however, reasonable that, despite all the efforts made to assure consistency and dependability of the results, the findings from individual participants may vary between different researchers and across time.

3.8.3 Transferability

In qualitative research, the aim is to provide a detailed description of the research process in order to enable other researchers to determine the degree of transferability and applicability of the study to the setting in which they are working (Kumar, 2011; Hays & Singh, 2012). This study is not proposing a generalised application of the LCST in music therapy assessment. Rather, the aim was to explore the aforementioned technique in that context, and to provide a clear description of the research process so that it may lead to the formulation of a framework which can be used for further research, either in different age groups of similar settings or in the same age group from a wider population.

3.8.4 Confirmability

Kumar (2011) defines confirmability as the extent to which the findings could be confirmed or verified by other researchers doing the same study. I foresee that other researchers might find similar results in music participation and participant engagement when applying the research to a similar client group within the same age range. On the other hand, I also foresee that the results of this study might be difficult to confirm for the following reasons:

- The process of engagement for each participant will differ according to their subjective experiences.
- The observation sheet will be based on each researcher's subjective observation of the participant's presentation.
- The same participants may respond differently in a subsequent session while following the exact same process, due to various factors outside of the researcher's control, including the client's emotional state on the day, the client's motivational levels, and the client-therapist relationship.

3.8.5 *Limitations and Delimitations of the Study*

The limitations and delimitations of this study are discussed in Chapter 6, conclusion to the study. The discussion includes an overview of the scope of the study, the sample population, and the sample size.

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS

Before a reader reviews the process of data analysis in this chapter, it is helpful to provide the context for the data through a restatement of the primary research question and the secondary research questions that have guided this study. The primary research question is:

How does the lyric completion songwriting technique contribute to a music therapy assessment session with preadolescent children in a children's home?

The secondary research questions are:

- How do the children present verbally before, during, and after the songwriting lyric completion process?
- What are the children's observed affect before, during, and after the songwriting lyric completion process?
- Does the lyric completion songwriting technique engage the children in musical participation, and if so, how?

In my search to answer these questions, the data collection phase resulted in two datasets, namely, that of the reporting in the observation sheets that I completed, and that of the participants' lyrics which materialised from the songwriting process, as previously discussed in section 3.5 on data collection techniques. This chapter gives an overview of the analytical processes for both datasets. Descriptions of the preparation and organisation of each dataset, as well as the coding and categorising of the data, are included. Finally, the identified themes and subthemes that emerged from the thematic analysis of the data are presented.

4.1 Thematic Analysis

The following section is described in two parts as informed by the two data sets. First, I will describe the analysis of the observation sheets (Dataset 1), and second, I will describe the analysis of the song lyrics that were completed by the participants (Dataset 2). The analytical approach was informed by the five phases of thematic analysis, described by

Leavy (2017), and presented earlier in section 3.6 that outlined the approach for data analysis.

4.1.1 Analysis of the Observation Sheets

In a music therapy assessment session, the overall goal is to assess where the individual client is and what their possible wants and needs are. The session also seeks to establish clinical goals to support them in their individual process of successful therapy. Fundamentally, this study is interested in the unique participation of each individual. To this end, the observation sheets were analysed and are summarised here in such a way that all 14 participants in the study are personally introduced to the reader. A summary of their participation along with each participant's distinctively completed song is also provided.

4.1.1.1 Preparation and Organisation of Data. The first step in preparing the data was to create an Excel document containing the raw data from each participant's observation sheet. (See Appendix J for the full observation sheet of each participant.) The second step was to create a separate document with a summary of each participant's observation sheet in order to provide a condensed overview of each participant's engagement during their session with respect to their verbal participation, affect, and musical participation. Below is an example of a condensed summary of an observation sheet (Figure 2); the full document can be seen in Appendix K.

Figure 2

Summary of an Observation Sheet

Participant D			
Verbal participation	Before	During	After
	Asked lots of questions	Unsure	Confident
Affect	Before	During	After
Range of affect	Appears slightly nervous	Appears eager	Elevated mood
Self-expression	Before	During	After
Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Limited	Comfortable	Comfortable
Musical participation	During		
Willingness/openness to participate musically	Participation fragmented		
Engagement with songwriting	Openly engaged		
	Needed some assistance with the concept		
	He got easily distracted by things in the environment (rain, cars driving by, dogs outside etc.) which influenced some themes of the song		

4.1.1.2 Summary of Thick Description of Individual Participation. Step three was to create a thick description of each participant’s engagement in the session in order to capture the essence of the process in a narrative format. An example is seen in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3

Example of a Thick Description of a Participant's Engagement in the Session

Description
Participant D is an eight-year-old boy. Although he eagerly participated in all aspects of the process, his participation was fragmented and unsustainable. He appeared eager and slightly nervous at first but gradually became more playful. During the songwriting process, he struggled with the concept and required constant guidance. At first, he approached the task eagerly, but then became easily distracted and engaged in a less focused manner. His musical participation was confident, and he appeared to have sought a connection while making the music. The content of his song reflects elements of a personal story, distracted engagement, and a playful approach.

In order to process and reduce the data further, the fourth step was to assign a code to each key feature identified in the summary table for each participant’s observation sheet. See Figure 4 below. The codes were assigned with the “thick description” label first (TD),

then the participant's label (A, B, C, etc.) and lastly, a number identifier (1, 2, 3, etc.) for each key feature. An example code is TDA1, where the TD refers to "thick description", the A, refers to "Participant A", and the 1 refers to the first key feature for that participant.

Figure 4

Example of Codes Assigned to Key Features

Key features
TDD1 – Eagerly participated in all aspects of the process
TDD2 – Slightly nervous at first, but gradually became more playful
TDD3 – Struggled to grasp the songwriting concept
TDD4 – Required guidance throughout
TDD5 – Easily distracted in all aspects of the process
TDD6 – Sought connection in actively making the music
TDD7 – Song reflects personal and playful content

Before describing the final steps of the analysis of the observation sheets, an overview of each participant's engagement within the session is presented. A table format is used for each participant and each table comprises a summarised version of the observation sheet, the thick description with corresponding codes, and the translated version of the participant's song lyrics.

I would thus like to invite the reader into the room by introducing each participant and their respective engagement with the lyric completion songwriting process. The lyrics inserted by the participants are typed in green in the tables. (See Tables 1-14.)

Table 1

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant A

Participant A Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Engages comfortably in conversation	Open	Friendly
Affect: Range of affect	Shy	Serious	Comfortable
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Comfortable	More limited	Comfortable
	During		
Musical participation	Eager to participate musically; open and willing; took it seriously; playful; imaginative.		
Song - Translated lyrics			
Title: (No title)			
Verse: a thief does not define who you are a child is who you are, your life has proven it Christmas times are coming Life is nice You will refuse to go to the shops on your own Listen to your heart		Chorus: Just get up, feel the heart pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop the bicycle Shout it out, be a person In the dark night, our lights burn for Jesus who waits a child standing on the rocks Shout it out, your heart is racing Verse: Create your own path, go where to the sea Your whole life is beautiful to you In your presence the devil must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the pigeon	
Description		Key features	
Participant A is an eight-year-old girl. She seemed friendly and, although she initially seemed a bit shy, she engaged comfortably in conversation. During the songwriting process, she was a bit unsure and required guidance. A was focused and approached the process as a serious task; this is reflected in the literal nature of some of the lyrics in her song. She was open and willing to participate in the process and became more comfortable and playful as time went by. This is again reflected in some of her lyrics. She was eager to engage in actively making the music and, despite being hesitant to initiate material, she participated confidently. While A remained shy, she seemed slightly more comfortable after the songwriting process.		TDA1 – Comfortably engaged throughout TDA2 – Shy in beginning and end of process TDA3 – Focused; approached it as a serious task TDA4 – Required continuous guidance TDA5 – Became increasingly more playful and confident TDA6 – Song reflected literal and playful content	

Table 2

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant B

Participant B Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Engages comfortably in conversation	Comfortable	More confident
Affect: Range of affect	Appears comfortable	Appears nervous	More comfortable
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Comfortable	Limited	Comfortable
	During		
Musical participation	Willing to engage; took it seriously; afraid to make mistakes; willing and open to participation.		
Song – Translated Lyrics			
Title: Everything about me			
Verse: a ghost does not define who you are a person is who you are your life has proven it my life times are coming Life can be nice You will not refuse to clean your room Listen to your heart Chorus: Just get up, feel the heart pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop yourself Shout it out, be mine forever In the dark night, our light burns for the devil who waits a bird standing on the rocks Shout it out, wait for me		Verse: Create your own path, go where you Your whole life for you In your presence the thief must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the darkness Chorus: 2 Just get up, feel the heart pulsing through your veins Jesus is the only one who can stop the devil Shout it out, be in my heart In the dark night, our light burns for the Lord who waits a penguin standing on the rocks Shout it out, be in my heart	
Description		Key features	
Participant B is a ten-year-old girl. She was friendly and comfortably engaged in conversation, although she seemed slightly nervous at first. During the songwriting process, she was willing to engage, but seemed unsure, uncomfortable, hesitant to express herself and slightly nervous. She needed guidance with the songwriting concept. B approached it as a serious task and wanted to do it “correctly”. She became more comfortable as the process continued and made the song her own. As the session went on, she became open and willing to engage musically; her participation was more		TDB1 – Shy and nervous at first, gradually becoming more confident and relaxed TDB2 – Willing to engage in the process TDB3 – Required continuous guidance TDB4 – Focused, and approached it as a serious task TDB5 – Song reflected literal and personal content TDB6 – Sense of pride and accomplishment afterwards	

confident, and she presented with an elevated mood. Her serious, literal approach and personal connection with the process seem to be reflected in the lyrics of her song. Afterwards, she appeared more comfortable and relaxed, as if she was experiencing a sense of accomplishment.	
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Table 3

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant C

Participant C Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Openly shares	Confident	Initiates conversation
Affect: Range of affect	Moderate mood	Comfortable	More elevated
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Openly shares feelings	Comfortable	Confident
	During		
Musical participation	Eager to participate musically; took it seriously.		
Song – Translated lyrics			
Title: Lord!			
Verse: what other people think does not define who you are ballet is who you are your life has proven it some times are coming Life is not long You will refuse to be who they think I am Listen to your heart		Chorus: Just get up, feel the love pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop it Shout it out, be who you are In the dark night, we just burn for the Lord who waits a hero standing on the rocks Shout it out, what bothers you Verse: Create your own path, go where the Lord leads you Your whole life is under your control In your presence the darkness must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the devil	
Description		Key features	
Participant C is an eleven-year-old girl. She shared willingly and conversed comfortably. At times, she seemed slightly sporadic and would jump between topics quickly. Initially, she presented with a moderate mood but was soon eager and excited to participate in all aspects of the process. During the songwriting process, she confidently		TDC1 – Comfortably engaged in all aspects of the process TDC2 – Fragmented elements in verbal and musical engagement TDC3 – Quickly grasped the songwriting concept TDC4 – Mood gradually elevated during the process TDC5 – Approached it as a serious task TDC6 – Song reflects personal and imaginative content	

engaged in the verbal aspects, seemed comfortable, took the task seriously, quickly grasped the concept and made the song her own. She was eager and confident in her musical participation although she played with an irregular rhythm. The content of her song reflects her personal connection to the process and elements of an imaginative approach.	
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Table 4

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant D

Participant D Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Asked lots of questions	Unsure	Confident
Affect: Range of affect	Appears slightly nervous	Appears eager	Elevated mood
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Limited	Comfortable	Comfortable
	During		
Musical participation	Openly engaged; participation fragmented; needed some assistance with the concept; easily distracted.		
Song – Translated lyrics			
Title: Sing			
Verse: Curry and rice does not define who you are D is who you are (D = Participant's name) your life has proven it nice times are coming Life is nice You will refuse to lie Listen to your heart		Chorus: Just get up, feel the health pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop a car Shout it out, be your heart In the dark night, we burn a pig for the people who wait a buck standing on the rocks Shout it out, a lion roars at the buck Verse: Create your own path, go where the school is Your whole life is nice for you In your presence the devil cards must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the rain	

Description	Key features
Participant D is an eight-year-old boy. Although he eagerly participated in all aspects of the process, his participation was fragmented and not sustained. He appeared eager and slightly nervous at first but gradually became more playful. During the songwriting process, he struggled with the concept and required constant guidance. At first, he approached the task eagerly, but then became easily distracted and engaged in a less focused manner. His musical participation was confident, and he appeared to have sought a connection while making the music. The content of his song reflects elements of a personal story, distracted engagement, and a playful approach.	<p>TDD1 – Eagerly participated in all aspects of the process</p> <p>TDD2 – Slightly nervous at first, but gradually became more playful</p> <p>TDD3 – Struggled to grasp the songwriting concept</p> <p>TDD4 – Required guidance throughout</p> <p>TDD5 – Easily distracted in all aspects of the process</p> <p>TDD6 – Sought connection in actively making the music</p> <p>TDD7 – Song reflects personal and playful content</p>

Table 5

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant E

Participant E Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Engaged in conversation with short answers	Limited	Confident
Affect: Range of affect	Energetic	Tense	More calm
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Comfortable	Expressed likes and dislikes	Comfortable
	During		
Musical participation	Engaged more actively in the music during second half of the song; reluctant towards the songwriting concept at first; became more eager as the process progressed.		
Song – Translated lyrics			
Title: God's love			
<p>Verse: you do not define who you are I am who you are your life has proven it</p> <p>Christmas times are coming Life is nice You will refuse to do what I want</p> <p>Listen to your heart</p>		<p>Chorus: Just get up, feel the heart pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop walking Shout it out, be Avengers In the dark night, our house burns for the Lord who waits an angel standing on the rocks Shout it out, to laugh and play</p> <p>Verse:</p>	

	<p>Create your own path, go where you want to Your whole life cares about you In your presence the wind must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the devil</p>
Description	Key features
Participant E is a nine-year-old boy. He presented as very excited to be in the space and immediately started to explore the instruments. At the beginning, his verbal participation was rather one directional and limited, but gradually became more confident. He also displayed a nervous energy at first but appeared calmer afterwards. During the songwriting process, he was reluctant to participate; he was tense, struggled with the concept and required guidance throughout. He approached it in a dismissive manner at first, but gradually became more playful and expressed disappointment when the session had to come to an end. His musical participation was very loud and fragmented. The lyrics in his song reflect a higher level of coherent engagement than was observed in his behaviour. The song also reflects elements of a literal and playful approach.	<p>TDE1 – Eager to explore TDE2 – Seemed nervous at first and gradually became more playful TDE3 – Struggled with the songwriting concept TDE4 – Reluctant to participate in songwriting process, but gradually became more engaged TDE5 – The lyrics seems more coherent, as opposed to the observed fragmented participation TDE6 – Song reflects literal and playful content</p>

Table 6

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant F

Participant F Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Comfortably responds to questions with full sentences	Openly shares	Confident
Affect: Range of affect	Mellow	Solemn	Relieved
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Comfortable	Able to express and reflect on difficult feelings and circumstances	Comfortable
	During		
Musical participation	Eager to participate; took the songwriting very seriously; made the song his own.		
Song – Translated lyrics			
Title: I am never alone			
Verse: sadness does not define who you are Happy is who you are your life has proven it		Chorus: Just get up, feel the rhyming pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop the weakness Shout it out, be with me then I will never be alone In the dark night, we burn the weakness for the next day that waits	

<p>good times are coming Life is a bit difficult for me You will refuse to remain sad</p> <p>Listen to your heart</p>	<p>a light standing on the rocks Shout it out, I am never alone, because if someone is with me, I am never alone</p> <p>Verse: Create your own path, go where your heart leads you Your whole life still stands before you/ Your whole life lies ahead of you still In your presence the sadness must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the bad emotion</p>
Description	Key features
<p>Participant F is a ten-year-old boy. He connected deeply with the songwriting process. He was very conversant and openly shared about his feelings and emotions. He quickly grasped the concept of the songwriting process. Despite appearing solemn, mellow, and emotional throughout the session, he later presented with an elevated mood, a sense of relief, and a sense of pride. He was eager to participate musically and seemed to have sought connection in the music. The lyrics in his song reflects a serious approach and elements of a personal story.</p>	<p>TDF1 – Comfortably engaged in all aspects of the process TDF2 – Solemn and mellow at first, mood gradually became more elevated TDF3 – Quickly grasped the songwriting concept TDF4 – Seemed solemn and emotional throughout the process and seemed to have experienced sense of relief afterwards TDF5 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards TDF6 – Sought connection in the music TDF7 – Song reflects serious approach and elements of personal story</p>

Table 7

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant G

Participant G Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Withdrawn	Became more comfortable	Open
Affect: Range of affect	Shy	More confident	More comfortable
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Held back	Asked for help when he needed it	Able to reflect on sentences that stood out for him in the song
	During		
Musical participation	Eager to participate; needed guidance throughout; became more comfortable during second half of the song; focused on doing it "correctly"		
Song – Translated lyrics			
Title: The music therapy song			

<p>Verse: animal does not define who you are G is who you are your life has proven it (G = Participant's name)</p> <p>nice times are coming Life is good You will refuse to quit music</p> <p>Listen to your heart</p>	<p>Chorus: Just get up, feel the nice pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop the car Shout it out, be a youtuber In the dark night, our light burns for the day that waits a dog standing on the rocks Shout it out, be a youtuber</p> <p>Verse: Create your own path, go where God tells you Your whole life likes you In your presence the child must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the darkness</p>
Description	Key features
Participant G is a nine-year-old boy. Although he was shy and withdrawn at first, G gradually became more confident and comfortable during the session. He had a literal approach to the songwriting process and required guidance. He was eager to participate musically and displayed creativity and confidence. He seemed to have experienced a sense of accomplishment afterwards. The lyrics in his song reflect a literal approach to songwriting.	<p>TDG1 – Shy at first and gradually became more confident</p> <p>TDG2 – Required guidance throughout</p> <p>TDG3 – Confident and creative in the music</p> <p>TDG4 – Experienced sense of accomplishment</p> <p>TDG5 – Content of the lyrics reflect literal approach</p>

Table 8

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant H

Participant H Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Openly engaged in conversation	Serious	More confident
			Spoke less
Affect: Range of affect	Calm	Solemn	More playful
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Reserved	Shared feelings	Able to reflect on sentences that stood out for him in the song
During			
Musical participation	Willing to participate musically; eager to participate in the process; quick to respond to "fill-in-the-blanks" prompts.		
Song – Translated lyrics			
Title: <i>The Jesus song that drives away the devil</i>			
Verse:	Chorus: Just get up, feel the heart pulsing through your veins		

<p>my own work does not define who you are I do my work is who I am your life has proven it</p> <p>I am going to eat times are coming Life is about I am not a thief You will refuse to do homework</p> <p>Listen to your heart</p>	<p>You're the only one who can stop the anger/feeling angry Shout it out, be that the lord can come take you In the dark night, we burn the sun for the Lord who is expecting us a boulder standing on the rocks Shout it out, to heaven</p> <p>Verse: Create your own path, go where you want to Your whole life exists because I like you In your presence the devil must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the devil</p>
Description	Key features
<p>Participant H is an eight-year-old boy. Initially he was calm and reserved but was comfortable joining in the conversation. During the process, he became more solemn, serious and a bit emotional. Still, he was open to engaging in all aspects of the process. He had a serious approach to the songwriting process and was quick to respond to the “fill-in-the-blanks” prompts. After the process he seemed more comfortable and playful, although he was less engaged verbally. The lyrics in his song reflect a serious and literal content.</p>	<p>TDH1 – Reserved and solemn at first, gradually became more comfortable and playful. TDH2 – Less engaged in verbal conversation afterwards. TDH3 – Serious approach to songwriting TDH4 – Song content reflects literal and serious approach</p>

Table 9

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant I

Participant I Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Initiates constant verbal interaction	More limited	Less actively engaged
Affect: Range of affect	Elevated mood	Confident	Slightly lower energy
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Explorative	Playful	Comfortable
	During		
Musical participation	Willing to participate; struggled to focus; playful.		
Song - Translated lyrics			
Title:	Thud		

<p>Verse: Frog does not define who you are a person is who you are your life has proven it</p> <p>Christmas song times are coming Life has determined it You will refuse to go to the devil</p> <p>Listen to your heart</p>	<p>Chorus: Just get up, feel the pulsing pulsing through your veins You're the only one who one day can stop cars Shout it out, be with me In the dark night, we burn sandwiches for the night that waits a lizard standing on the rocks Shout it out, let us braai/barbeque</p> <p>Verse: Create your own path, go where you can Your whole life protects you In your presence the night must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the devil</p>
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Description	Key features
Participant I is a ten-year-old boy. He participated eagerly and willingly throughout the process. He was highly energetic, playful, engaged in constant verbal communication without waiting for a response. Participant I struggled to remain focused on the task at hand but managed to finish the song without losing interest in the project as a whole. His playful approach to the songwriting process, at times, took inspiration from things he could see in the room. These themes are reflected in his song. After the songwriting session, he seemed more regulated, calm and less verbally active.	<p>TDI1 – Eager to participate in all aspects of the process</p> <p>TDI2 – Highly energetic and gradually became calmer and grounded</p> <p>TDI3 – Struggled to maintain focus, but remained interested in the process</p> <p>TDI4 – The content of the song reflects playful and imaginative approach</p>

Table 10

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant J

Participant J Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Openly shared	Comfortable	Confident
Affect: Range of affect	Comfortable	Self-conscious	Proud
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Comfortable sharing feelings	Assertive	Able to reflect on what stood out for her in the song
	During		
Musical participation	Eager to participate; took it seriously; made the song her own; quickly grasped the concept.		
Song – Translated lyrics			
Title: The circuit of love			

<p>Verse: Peaceful does not define who you are love is who you are your life has proven it</p> <p>good times are coming Life gets hard sometimes You will refuse to argue</p> <p>Listen to your heart</p> <p>for everyone who wait a signal standing on the rocks Shout it out, L.O.V.E - Love</p>	<p>Chorus: Just get up, feel the love pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop it Shout it out, be happy and have a good time In the dark night, our love burns for the people who wait a signal standing on the rocks Shout it out, L.O.V.E</p> <p>Verse: Create your own path, go where it takes you Your whole life must be without mistakes for you In your presence the darkness must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the darkness</p> <p>Chorus 2: Just get up, feel the peace pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop the feeling Shout it out, be happy and have a good time In the dark night, our joy burns</p>
Description	Key features
Participant J is a 12-year-old girl. She was open and willingly participated in all aspects of the process. J appeared comfortable at first but became more self-conscious during the songwriting process and when she initially had to engage in making the music. She seemed to be seeking a connection in the music. She quickly grasped the songwriting concept, took it seriously and made the song her own. As she gradually became more confident, she displayed a sense of pride and accomplishment. The content of the song reflects her serious and personal approach to the songwriting process.	<p>TDJ1 – Willing to participate</p> <p>TDJ2 – Comfortable at first, became self-conscious during songwriting process</p> <p>TDJ3 – Took a serious approach and made the song her own</p> <p>TDJ4 – Gradually became more confident</p> <p>TDJ5 – Seemed to have sought connection in the music</p> <p>TDJ6 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards</p> <p>TDJ7 – Song reflects a serious approach and personal elements</p>

Table 11

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant K

Participant K Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Directive	More conversation oriented	One directional
Affect: Range of affect	Elevated mood	Became calmer	Proud
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Confident	Assertive	Confident
During			

Musical participation	Eager to participate; initially eager to participate in the songwriting process, then wanted to do a different song.
Song – Translated lyrics	
Title: (no title)	
Verse: K does not define who you are (participant's own name) Surname is who you are (participant's own surname) your life has proven it My times are coming Life is nice You will refuse to not listen Listen to your heart	Chorus: Just get up, feel the rain pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop learning Shout it out, be my rescue In the dark night, our light burns for the water that waits a shoulder standing on the rocks Shout it out, look for a very big word Verse: Create your own path, go where you want to Your whole life is for you In your presence the naughtiness must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the clouds
Description	Key features
Participant K is a ten-year-old boy. He was eager to participate, but on his own terms. His initial verbal participation was dictatorial and one directional. During the songwriting process, his verbal participation became more conversational, and he seemed calmer. His musical participation was also directive. He took control and made us take turns to make music. He seemed to avoid developing a connection in the music until the third repeat of the song. He approached the songwriting process impatiently, as if he had to “get it over and done with”. Gradually, he became more interested, and later experienced a sense of pride. The lyrics in his song reflect elements of his disinterested, literal and more serious approach.	TDK1 – Eager to participate TDK2 – One directional verbal participation TDK3 – One directional musical participation TDK4 – Seemed to avoid connection in music TDK5 – Gradually became more collaborative TDK6 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards TDK7 – Song reflects elements of a disinterested, literal, and serious approach

Table 12

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant L

Participant L Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Confident	Less verbal participation	Comfortably engaged in conversation

Affect: Range of affect	Appears excited	Calm	Proud
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Self-assured	Confident	Able to reflect on lines that stood out for her
During			
Musical participation	Open and willing to participate; eager to engage in songwriting; grasped the concept easily; engaged without hesitancy; took it seriously; made it her own.		
Song – Translated lyrics			
Title: This is just me			
Verse: School does not define who you are but sport is who you are your life has proven it My time is coming Life is awesome You will refuse to argue Listen to your heart	Chorus: Just get up, feel the music pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop it Shout it out, be yourself In the dark night, we burn candles for the days that wait an angel standing on the rocks Shout it out, God is always with me Verse: Create your own path, go where life takes you Your whole life is waiting for you In your presence the sins must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the devil		
Description	Key features		
Participant L is a 12-year-old-girl. She seemed confident and self-assured throughout the process. She was comfortable while engaging verbally, and seemed open for connection in the music. She took the songwriting process seriously and she quickly grasped the concept and seemed to have immersed herself in the process, becoming less verbally active as she concentrated. She made the song her own and looked as if she had experienced a sense of pride in what she had done. The lyrics in her song reflect her serious and personal approach.	TDL1 – Willing to participate TDL2 – Confident throughout TDL3 – Seemed to have sought connection during the making of the music TDL4 – Took a serious approach and made the song her own TDL5 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards TDL6 – Song reflects a serious approach and personal elements		

Table 13

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant M

Participant M Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Shy to engage in verbal conversation	Comfortably engaged in verbal conversation	Confident

Affect: Range of affect	Shy	Slightly self-conscious	Proud
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Limited	More confident	Able to reflect on lines that stood out for her
During			
Musical participation	Eager to participate; eager to engage in songwriting; took it seriously; made it her own		
Song – Translated lyrics			
Title: A song of hearts			
Verse: Hello I am M, it does not define who you are (Participant added an intro line with own name) M is who you are (participant's own name) your life has proven it Music times are coming Life is nice You will refuse to stay unhealthy Listen to your heart	Chorus: Just get up, feel the love pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can stop anger Shout it out, be thankful In the dark night, our love burns for the people who wait a song standing/written on the rocks Verse: Shout it out, love, kindness, and songs Create your own path, go where your heart wants to go Your whole life is helping you In your presence the anger must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the anger		
Description	Key features		
Participant M is a 12-year-old girl. She began the process shy, slightly nervous, and hesitant despite appearing eager and excited to participate. During the songwriting process she became more comfortable, confident, and expressive. She approached the songwriting in a serious, yet creative manner. She appeared to have experienced a sense of accomplishment afterwards. Her musical participation also displayed greater confidence as the process progressed. Her song reflects elements of a serious approach, creativity, and a personal story.	TDM1 – Willing to participate TDM2 – Shy and nervous at first, gradually became more confident and comfortable TDM3 – Serious and creative approach to the songwriting process TDM4 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards TDM5 – The content of the song reflects a serious and creative approach, and personal elements.		

Table 14

Overview of Individual Participant Engagement – Participant N

Participant N Observation Summary			
	Before	During	After
Verbal participation	Mostly responded to prompts and questions	Comfortably engaged in verbal conversation	Confident

Affect: Range of affect	Presented with low mood	Became more comfortable	Elevated mood
Self-expression: Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Comfortable expressing concerns	Comfortable expressing needs	Able to reflect on lines that stood out for him
During			
Musical participation	Willing to participate; initially struggled with the songwriting concept; took it seriously.		
Song – Translated lyrics			
Title: Everything about me			
Verse: irritating does not define who you are fast is who you are your life has proven it a time for everything comes Life is nice You will refuse to listen Listen to your heart	Chorus: Just get up, feel the heart pulsing through your veins You're the only one who can ever stop Shout it out, be yourself In the dark night, our house burns for the fire brigade that wait a boulder standing on the rocks Shout it out, hello, rugby, soccer, cricket Verse: Create your own path, go where you say Your whole life is you In your presence the pencils must disappear Be the light that continues to shine, and drive away the cats		
Description	Key features		
Participant N is a ten-year-old boy. At first, he presented as tired, with a low mood and seemed self-conscious. He willingly participated in the songwriting process, but struggled with the concept, became bored and required guidance. He gradually became more interested and actively engaged in both the verbal and musical domains. After the process ended, N looked more comfortable, presented with an elevated mood and reflected a sense of pride and accomplishment. In his approach to the songwriting process there were elements of literal thinking, content that he seemed to relate to, and parts where he looked around the room for ideas of what he could use to “fill -in-the-blanks”. This approach is also reflected in the lyrics of his song.	TDN1 – He was willing to participate, became bored and then gradually increased in active engagement. TDN2 – He presented with low mood at first and elevated mood afterwards. TDN3 - Struggled with the songwriting concept TDN4 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards TDN5 – The lyrics in his song reflects elements of a literal, disinterested and more actively engaged approach.		

4.1.1.3 Organising Codes. The fifth step of the analysis of the observation sheets was to transfer all thick description summary codes (Figure 4) to an Excel spreadsheet (Appendix L, sheet 1). Codes with similar content were grouped and a descriptive label was assigned to each category. The result was 21 level two codes (e.g. "OS6 Guidance from

therapist", "OS16 Sense of accomplishment", "OS13 Low mood to elevated mood", "OS14 High energy to grounded", "OS15 Comfortable to self-conscious"). These codes (e.g. OS1) were structured using the prefix "OS" for "observation sheet" and a number based on the column number in which the content appeared—the columns were ordered consecutively from left to right across the spreadsheet (as seen in the yellow row in Figure 5). An example of some of the codes and new labels can be seen in Figure 5.

Figure 5

Example of Fifth Step of Data Analysis

OS13 Low mood to elevated mood	OS14 High energy to grounded	OS15 Comfortable to selfconscious	OS16 Sense of accomplishment	OS17 Grasping of songwriting concept	OS18 Lyrical content of songs
TDF2 – Solemn and mellow at first, mood gradually became more elevated	TDI2 – Highly energetic and gradually became calmer and grounded	TDJ2 – Comfortable at first, became self-conscious during songwriting process	TDB6 – Sense of pride and accomplishment afterwards	TDC3 – Quickly grasped the songwriting concept	TDA6 – Song reflected literal and playful content
TDC4 – Mood gradually elevated during the process			TDF5 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards	TDF3 – Quickly grasped the songwriting concept	TDB5 – Song reflected literal and personal content
TDN2 – He presented with low mood at first and elevated mood afterwards.			TDG4 – Experienced sense of accomplishment	TDD3 – Struggled to grasp the songwriting concept	TDC6 – Song reflects personal and imaginative content
TDF4 – Seemed solemn and emotional throughout the process and seemed to have experienced sense of relief			TDJ6 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards	TDE3 – Struggled with the songwriting concept	TDD7 – Song reflects personal and playful content
			TDK6 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards	TDN3 - Struggled with the songwriting concept	TDE6 – Song reflects literal and playful content

4.1.1.4 Identifying Themes. Step six of the analytical process was to identify emerging themes. Where the label of a second level code sufficiently described the content within the column, it was carried forward to function as a stand-alone designation for one of the 10 final themes and a new level 3 code was assigned (e.g. "S1T3 Guidance from therapist", "S1T6 Sense of accomplishment"). For example, "OS16" which was the level 2 code for 'Sense of accomplishment', contains the same data but the code changed to "S1T6 Sense of accomplishment" to become a final theme from the observation data. These codes (e.g. S1T1) were structured using the prefix "S1" for "Dataset 1" and a number based on the position of the column containing its content in the sequential order of columns when moving from left to right across the spreadsheet. In the case of level two codes which could be

further grouped together according to their content (e.g. "Low mood to elevated mood"; "High energy to grounded"; "Comfortable to self-conscious"), they became the names of subthemes, and an overarching label was assigned to describe the encompassing theme (e.g. "S1T5 Shifts in mood").

The subthemes were then given alphabetical codes of consecutive common letters indicating their association with the overarching theme's code/label, e.g. "S1T5a Low mood to elevated mood", "S1T5b High energy to grounded", "S1T5c Comfortable to self-conscious". (Appendix L, sheet 2). An example of this can be seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6

Example of Step Six of Data Analysis – Level Three Coding

S1T4 Shifts in engagement	S1T5 Shifts in mood	S1T6 Sense of accomplishment
S1T4a Shy and nervous to confident and comfortable	S1T5a Low mood to elevated mood	TDB6 – Sense of pride and accomplishment afterwards
TDG1 – Shy at first and gradually became more confident	TDF2 – Solemn and mellow at first, mood gradually became more elevated	TDF5 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards
TDM2 – Shy and nervous at first, gradually became more confident and comfortable	TDC4 – Mood gradually elevated during the process	TDG4 – Experienced sense of accomplishment
TDB1 – Shy and nervous at first, gradually became more confident and relaxed	TDN2 – He presented with low mood at first and elevated mood afterwards.	TDJ6 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards
TDJ4 – Gradually became more confident	TDF4 – Seemed solemn and emotional throughout the process and seemed to have experienced sense of relief afterwards	TDK6 – Experienced sense of pride afterwards
S1T4b Shy, to more comfortable, to shy again	S1T5b High energy to grounded	TDL5 – Experienced sense of pride

This step allowed the final themes of this data set to emerge. Analysis of the observation sheets yielded several common features that emerged from the data as identified in the labels in the final stage of coding. These were grouped into 10 themes, several of which have further subthemes, as indicated in Table 15.

Table 15*The Final 10 Themes and Subthemes From the Observation Sheets Analysis*

Themes	Subthemes
Quality of engagement	(a) Eager and comfortable engagement (b) One directional engagement (c) Explorative engagement (d) Confident engagement (e) Distracted engagement
Focused and serious approach to songwriting process	
Guidance from the therapist	
Shifts in engagement	(a) Shy and nervous to confident and comfortable (b) Shy, to more comfortable, to shy again (c) Increase in playfulness (d) Reluctant engagement to more engaged (e) Boredom to actively engaged (f) Decrease in verbal engagement
Shifts in mood	(a) Low mood to elevated mood (b) High energy to grounded (c) Comfortable to self-conscious
Sense of accomplishment	
Grasp of songwriting concept	
Lyrical content of songs	
Connection through active music making	
Presentation during musical participation	

4.1.2 Analysis of the Song Lyrics

The 14 songs, as completed by each participant, constituted the second dataset in the study that was analysed and is described below. In the following section, the steps of this process are discussed.

4.1.2.1 Preparation and Organisation of the Data. The first step of preparing the lyric completion songwriting data was to create an Excel document containing the raw data from each participant's song and to provide a translation of the lyrics (Appendix M, sheet 1).

The words and sentences inserted by the participants are in red (in the Afrikaans version), and in green (in the English version). An example can be seen in Figure 7.

Figure 7

Example of Participant's Lyrics and its Translation

Participant A	Lyrics	Translation	Context
A title			(Participant could not think of a title)
A1	Skelm bepaal jou nie	a thief does not define who you are	
A2	'n kind is wie jy is, jou lewe het dit al bewys	a child is who you are, your life has proven it	
A3	kersfees tye kom	Christmas times are coming	
A4	die lewe is lekker	Life is nice	
A5	jy sal weier om alleen winkels toe te gaan, luister wat jou hart wil sê	You will refuse to go to the shops on your own, listen to your heart	
A6	staan net op, voel die hart deur jou are klop	Just get up, feel the heart pulsing through your veins	
A7	dis net jy wat die fiets kan stop	You're the only one who can stop the bicycle	
A8	Skree dit uit, kom wees 'n mens	Shout it out, be a person	
A9a	In die donker nag brand ons ligte	In the dark night, our lights burn	
A9b	vir die Jesus wat wag	for Jesus who waits	

In the next step of this phase, the lyrics of each song (and corresponding translations) were carried over into an Excel spreadsheet and, line by line, the song was segmented according to each instance where a phrase of lyrics was to be completed by the participants (Appendix M, sheet 1). The labels were assigned by using the participant letter first (A, B, C, etc.), followed by a number (1, 2, 3, etc.) indicating the line of the song it referred to. Since the participants had to complete the lyrics by filling in the blanks (refer to Figure 1), there were instances where one line of the original song had two or more spaces to fill. In such cases, the line number has been given an additional lowercase letter that follows the numeral (9a, 9b, etc.). An example of a code is A9a, where the “A” refers to Participant A, the “9” refers to the ninth line of the song, and the “a” refers to the first space

of the line that was filled in by the participant. An example of this system can be seen in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Example of Labelling the Song Segments Line by Line

Participant A	lyrics
A title	
A1	Skelm bepaal jou nie
A2	n kind is wie jy is, jou lewe het dit al bewys
A3	kersfees tye kom
A4	die lewe is lekker
A5	jy sal weier om alleen winkels toe te gaan, luister wat jou hart wil sê
A6	staan net op, voel die hart deur jou are klop
A7	dis net jy wat die fiets kan stop
A8	Skree dit uit, kom wees 'n mens
A9a	In die donker nag brand ons ligte
A9b	vir die Jesus wat wag
A10	n kind wat op die rotse staan
A11	Skree dit uit, Jou hart klop vinnig
A12	Maak jou eie pad, gaan waar see toe
A13	Jou hele lewe is mooi vir jou
A14	In jou teenwoordigheid moet die duiwel verdwyn
A15	Wees die lig wat aanhou skyn en dryf die duif oral uit

4.1.2.2 Familiarisation With the Data. My presence during the songwriting processes and my having worked through the observation sheets afforded me the opportunity to acquire a more holistic understanding of the participant's engagement with the process. This then added another dimension and greater depth to my interpretation of the processed data.

4.1.2.3 Level One Coding. In order to reduce the data, the next phase of the thematic analysis required a transfer of all the labelled lines to an Excel spreadsheet to which the first level of coding was applied (Appendix M, sheet 2). Labelled phrases with similar content were grouped and a descriptive label was assigned to each category. This resulted in a total of 11 labels describing the subthemes (level one codes) e.g. "SL1 Perception of what others think". These codes (e.g. SL1) were structured using the prefix "SL" for "song lyrics" and a number based on the column number containing the relevant

data as determined sequentially across the spreadsheet from left to right (seen in the yellow row in Figure 9). An example of some of the codes and labels can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9

Example of Level One Coding

SL1 Perception of what others think	SL2 Reference to emotions	SL3 Self identity	SL4 Daily life and events in relation to self concept
N1 irritating does not define who you are	C6 Just get up, feel the love pulsing through your veins	M1 Hello I am M , it does not define who you are	L1 School does not define who you are
D1 Curry and rice does not define who you are	J6 Just get up, feel the love pulsing through your veins	K1 K does not define who you are	H1 my own work does not define who you are
C1 what other people think does not define who you are	M6 Just get up, feel the love pulsing through your veins	E1 you do not define who you are	C2 ballet is who you are
C5 You will refuse to be who they think I am , listen to your heart	J8 Shout it out, be happy and have a good time	A2 a child is who you are	L2 but, sport is who you are
G13 Your whole life likes you	M9a In the dark night, our love burns	B2 a person is who you are	M5 You will refuse to stay unhealthy
	J9a In the dark night, our love burns	D2 D is who you are	H5 You will refuse to do homework
	C11 Shout it out, what bothers you	E2 I am who you are	G8 Shout it out, be a youtuber
	J11 Shout it out, L.O.V.E	G2 G is who you are	N11 Shout it out, hello, rugby, soccer, cricket
	M11 Shout it out, love, kindness, and songs	I2 a person is who you are	G11 Shout it out, be a youtuber
	M14 In your presence the anger must disappear	K2 Surname is who you are	

4.1.2.4 Level Two Coding. Due to the bulk of the data, level one codes with similar content were further grouped and a descriptive label was assigned to each category. This resulted in a total of six labels (level two codes) that described the themes, e.g. the subthemes "SL1 Perception of what others think" and "SL3 Self-identity" fell under main theme "S2T1 Concept of Self", see Appendix M, sheet 3. These codes (e.g. S2T1) were

structured using the prefix "S2" for "dataset 2", "T" for theme and a number based on the relevant data column's position in the spreadsheet (as seen in the green row in Figure 10).

Figure 10

Example of Level Two Coding

S2T1 Concept of Self	S2T2 Emotional awareness	S2T3 Participant engagement with the song	S2T4 View of life	S2T5 Seeking connection	S2T6 Reference to religion
SL1 Perception of what others think	SL2 Reference to emotions	SL5 Playful imagination	SL7 View of life	SL11 Seeking connection	SL10 Reference to religion
SL3 Self identity		SL9 Concrete associations with the given lyrics			
SL4 Daily life and events in relation to self concept		SL12 Concrete reference to music			
SL6 Agency in strength of character					

4.1.2.5 Identifying Emerging Themes From the Song Lyrics. From the analysis of the lyric completion songwriting data, there were six themes that emerged as identified by the labels in the final stage of coding (level 3) as indicated below:

- i) Concept of self
- ii) Emotional awareness
- iii) Participant engagement with the song
- iv) View of life
- v) Seeking connection
- vi) Reference to religion

4.2 Introducing the Themes

This chapter concludes with a tabulated presentation of the themes that emerged from the study and the analysis of its two datasets. The brief descriptions of the themes provide a frame of reference for the discussion of this study's findings in Chapter 5 that follows.

Table 16*Introduction of Themes*

Data set 1: Observation sheets	Data set 2: Song lyrics
<p>Theme 1: Quality of engagement</p> <p>This theme encapsulates the observations as each individual participant engaged with the songwriting process in a unique manner, although there were certain common trends in engagement observed as well.</p>	<p>Theme 1: Concept of self</p> <p>This theme encompasses all that emerged from the participant's lyrics in relation to their perception of what others think, their self-identity and their agency in terms of their strength of character, among other topics.</p>
<p>Theme 2: Focused and serious approach to songwriting process</p> <p>This reflects the way in which certain participants engaged on a deeper level with the songwriting process and approached it as a serious task.</p>	<p>Theme 2: Emotional awareness</p> <p>The content that emerged from the participant's lyrics in relation to their references to emotion is captured under this theme.</p>
<p>Theme 3: Guidance from the therapist</p> <p>This theme represents the degree to which certain participants were dependent on guidance from the therapist, either due to lack of concentration, feeling insecure, or struggling to grasp the concept.</p>	<p>Theme 3: Participant engagement with the song</p> <p>This theme embodies all that was revealed from the participant's lyrics in relation to their range of engagement with the songwriting process, that is ranging from playful and imaginative, to concrete associations with the given lyrics.</p>
<p>Theme 4: Shifts in engagement</p> <p>Within this theme, the observed shifts in engagement before, during, and after the songwriting process are captured.</p>	<p>Theme 4: View of life</p> <p>Insights that appeared from the participant's lyrics in relation to their outlook on-, and view of life, are summed up in this theme.</p>
<p>Theme 5: Shifts in mood</p> <p>This theme encapsulates the observed shifts in mood before, during, and after the songwriting process.</p>	<p>Theme 5: Seeking connection</p> <p>This theme encompasses what emerged from the participant's lyrics in relation to all references made, explicitly or</p>

	implicitly, to a need to belong or the seeking of a connection with others.
<p>Theme 6: Sense of accomplishment</p> <p>The theme reflects how certain participants seemed to have experienced a sense of pride and accomplishment after the completion of the songwriting process.</p>	<p>Theme 6: Reference to religion</p> <p>This theme covers all that emerged from the participant's lyrics in relation to concrete references to topics related to religion.</p>
<p>Theme 7: Grasping of songwriting concept</p> <p>This theme represents the extent to which certain participants were able to grasp the concept of the LCST; some were quick whereas others seemed to have struggled more to understand the concept.</p>	
<p>Theme 8: Lyrical content of songs</p> <p>The relevance of the content reflected in the lyrics inserted by the participants in relation to their observed engagement in the session, as well as independent content unrelated to their engagement is summarised under this theme.</p>	
<p>Theme 9: Connection through active music making</p> <p>This theme captures how far some participants seemed to have sought connection in the active musicking, whereas other participants seemed to avoid that connection.</p>	
<p>Theme 10: Presentation during musical participation</p> <p>Represented by this theme is the participants' engagement specifically in terms of how they react to music, ranging</p>	

from confident participation throughout, to fragmented participation.	
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4.3 Conclusion

The data collection phase resulted in two datasets. For Dataset 1, the observations of each participant along with their respective song were analysed highlighting the key characteristics of each individual's engagement in the lyric completion songwriting process. Subsequently, for Dataset 2, all 14 songs were subjected to thematic analysis in order to identify the themes that were elicited by the lyric completion techniques. In the next chapter, the research questions guiding this study will be addressed by discussing the themes that emerged from the data analysis within the context of the existing relevant literature.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

This chapter reviews the findings of the study with reference to the themes that emerged from the analysis of the data. While preparing and analysing the data thematically, the raw data and codes constituting the emerging themes were organised into, and handled as, two separate datasets: Dataset 1 speaks to the individual participation of the children in the lyric completion songwriting process, while Dataset 2, refers to the lyrical content of the songs completed by all participants. A restatement of the research questions here can help to contextualise the discussion going forward as, overall, the discussion aims to address the primary research question and the secondary research questions, while making reference to the raw data in terms of its support in the literature.

The main research question is:

How does the lyric completion songwriting technique contribute to a music therapy assessment session with preadolescent children in a children's home?

The secondary research questions are:

- How do the children present verbally before, during and after the lyric completion songwriting process?
- What are the children's observed affect before, during and after the lyric completion songwriting process?
- Does the lyric completion songwriting technique engage the children in musical participation, and if so, how?

Additionally, the themes that emerged from both datasets feed into, and help to structure, the content of this discussion. They are used in an integrated manner, neither being necessarily addressed individually nor being in the sequential order and dataset affiliation with which they appeared in Chapter 4. Rather, the discussion which follows is presented according to three main topics covering all 16 themes: i) participant engagement, ii) musical participation, and iii) affect. In discussing the themes, any response that is elicited by the

LCST is considered a worthy response. Similarly, even in the case where a response only pertains to one participant, it is still regarded as valuable and necessary to be discussed.

5.1 Participant Engagement

The findings of this study indicate that the LCST contributes to an assessment session by giving us insight into aspects of participant engagement. According to Bell et al. (2014, p.62), “engagement is exhibited by communication and/or social interaction with peers or the therapists”. I was interested in the participants’ musical participation, as well as in observing affect and verbal engagement, before, during, and after the session. In fact, I found that individual participants engaged with the LCST in a unique manner, although certain trends were identified. This will be further discussed through the themes quality of engagement (S1T1), shifts in engagement (S1T4), participant engagement with the song (S2T1), and focused and serious approach to the songwriting process (S1T2). The first topic of discussion considers how a music therapy assessment session could benefit from the LCST through insight into various aspects of the participants’ engagement, the music and the progression of the session, and with me as the facilitator.

5.1.1 Quality of Engagement

This theme, quality of engagement, covers the following unique sub-themes related to participant engagement: a) eager and comfortable engagement, b) one-directional engagement, c) explorative engagement, d) confident engagement, and e) distracted engagement. These sub-themes are explored below in the context of the research findings.

5.1.1.1 Eager and Comfortable Engagement. The data indicate that 10 participants engaged willingly, eagerly, and comfortably. This was observed in their verbal participation as the participants engaged in reciprocal conversation, initiated conversation, responded to questions with full sentences and participated in an open manner.

This was seen in the case of Participant C, an 11-year-old girl (Table 3). She comfortably engaged in conversation and, although her verbal participation seemed sporadic as she jumped between topics quickly, she openly shared with the therapist before the

LCST. Participant C engaged verbally and with confidence during the LCST, and she also initiated a conversation after the LCST. In terms of assessment, this appeared to demonstrate that the LCST afforded another layer through which to assess her verbal participation, since “C” had seemed sporadic in her verbal participation before the LCST but had become more structured and confident during the songwriting process.

We see in the literature that there is a place for the assessment of verbal participation. However, there seems to be a gap in the literature on the assessment of verbal participation of neurotypical children, as the only literature easily found that specifically related to the assessment of verbal participation was in the field of other diagnostic groups. For example, verbal participation is commonly assessed among client populations with specific diagnoses, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder, and activities are incorporated in music therapy assessments to encourage reciprocal verbal communication (Bell et al. 2014). Gattino (2021) states that assessments can be directed and adapted to support various client groups or individuals. Thus, although the participants in this study do not have such specific diagnoses, the assessment of the verbal domain is still of importance.

5.1.1.2 One-directional Engagement. The quality of one-directional engagement was seen in the case of Participant K, a 10-year-old boy whose engagement, in both the verbal and musical domains, was not reciprocal but rather one-directional and directive (Table 11). This was observed through behaviour where he would engage verbally, make comments, give instructions, ask questions but not wait for a reply, and, at times, indicate that I, the therapist, must either stay quiet or not reply. This behaviour was also demonstrated during his musical participation, where he directed the music and again indicated when the therapist either had to remain silent or was allowed to make music.

During the assessment session, Participant K’s one-directional engagement implied that the LCST offered him an opportunity to express himself freely. This type of reaction during the assessment is supported by Layman et al. (2002) who stated that engaging with music during an assessment session provides a less threatening space for self-expression

by children. It could also be an indication that the LCST afforded “K” an opportunity to exert agency, which might be an occurrence that he does not experience often, since according to Roche (2019), children in residential care often face a lack of agency and influence over their lives. In terms of assessment, this behaviour could also be showing that “K” was being guarded in order to protect himself from me, a stranger.

Alternatively, perhaps his experience of being in the social work system had taught him that adults might ask uncomfortable questions. In some instances, the processes are intrusive in the welfare system, and the children are therefore more fearful of engaging with an adult. This notion is supported by Featherstone et al. (2016):

Social workers are charged with entering the lives and moral worlds of families, many of whom have routinely experienced disrespect, and have longstanding histories of material and emotional deprivation. In entering such lives, social workers share with those they encounter universal experiences of loss and disappointment. However, there are additional issues that arise in the course of doing such a job involving the making of decisions that bring pain and hurt as well as joy and support with consequences that can endure for generations. (p.1)

5.1.1.3 Explorative Engagement. Explorative engagement was shown by Participant E, a 9-year-old boy (Table 5), who immediately and energetically explored the instruments and the space when he entered the room. This is as opposed to several other participants who requested permission first or channelled their curiosity through verbal conversation. Since he also appeared slightly nervous at first, this suggests that he felt more comfortable engaging with the instruments than engaging verbally. It could also be interpreted as curiosity: eagerly exploring this new experience of engaging with music and instruments. This curiosity, exploring with sounds in different ways, is described by Bruscia (2014) as a form of participation that is an essential part of the creative process in music

therapy and contributes to the client's own experience of problem solving while creating a product that might be beautiful and meaningful to them.

5.1.1.4 Confident Engagement. The data indicate the unique quality of confident engagement in the case of participant L, a 12-year-old girl (Table 12). She appeared self-assured throughout the assessment and engaged in all aspects of the session with a clear sense of confidence. "L" comfortably and confidently engaged verbally both before and after the LCST. During the LCST, she was less active verbally but, without hesitancy, engaged with the lyric completion technique and made the song her own. "L" then confidently engaged in the musical domain of the LCST and sang with expression. She also initiated the "pop-like" style in her song through her vocal expressions.

Through looking at the different qualities of engagement and how the participants present themselves in the therapeutic space, one gains insight into the unique qualities and characteristics of each individual. From an assessment perspective, these observations can inform the formulation of clinical goals and the planning of therapy. This has also been stated by Bruscia (2014) who found that the process of assessment aids the music therapist in gaining insight into the client as a person, and in identifying their unique needs, concerns and strengths.

5.1.1.5 Distracted Engagement. Distracted engagement, another quality of engagement was seen with Participant D, an 8-year-old boy (Table 4). Although he was eager and gradually became more confident, both in his verbal and musical participation, this confidence was not sustained but fragmented, as he was distracted easily. His distracted behaviour was consistently observed throughout the session as he would jump up in the middle of a phrase, both verbal and musical, to look out of the window for rain, to see cars driving past, and other similar scenarios. He would also interrupt the flow of the

assessment process to talk about, or ask about, something he heard outside e.g. a dog's barking, cars driving by, or people's voices.

While this could indicate that the LCST is not engaging enough for a child of his age, it could also point to the need for further evaluation by a specialist to investigate the possibility of an attention deficit disorder. The Individualized Music Therapy Assessment Profile (IMTAP) assessment tool by Baxter et al. (2007) views distracted engagement as an important domain of assessment. In addition, whether the client is able to return to an activity, with or without cues from the therapist, can be informative in tracking the progress of a client's therapeutic process.

5.1.2 Shifts in Engagement

The data indicate several shifts in engagement throughout the assessment session; some appeared to be common trends among several participants, whereas other shifts in engagement were unique to certain participants.

5.1.2.1 Shy and Nervous to Confident and Comfortable. In terms of verbal participation, several participants showed a shift from being shy and nervous at the beginning of the session to becoming confident and comfortable in their participation towards the end. An example of this was Participant G, a 9-year-old boy (Table 7), who was verbally withdrawn at first and gradually became more confident during the LCST. His presentation in musical participation is further discussed in section 5.2.2.1.

Another illustration of this is Participant M, a 12-year-old girl (Table 13). She only responded to prompts and questions and seemed shy and nervous at the beginning of the session. "M" then gradually became more comfortable during the LCST, started to engage more in verbal conversation, and even became more expressive in the music as well. "M" seemed confident afterwards and easily engaged in a reciprocal conversation.

5.1.2.2 Increase in Playfulness. In the data of four participants, it was found that there was a shift in engagement in terms of an increase in playfulness. An example is Participant H, an 8-year-old boy (Table 8). He presented as calm, solemn, and serious both

before and during the LCST process. The content of his song was quite serious, and he got a bit emotional during the process as he shared that he was missing his family. Gradually, “H” became more relaxed and playful towards the end of the session. This was specifically observed in his musical participation which became more upbeat and was expressed by him as he moved his body to the music. This could demonstrate how the LCST afforded him an opportunity to tap into his creativity and playfulness, despite being faced with adversities and difficult emotions as expressed by his presentation at the beginning of the session.

This shift in engagement also suggests that the LCST affords self-regulation. According to Moore (2013, p. 199), “Self-regulation is a complex process of self-directed change.” It refers to the ability to implement the skills to effectively manage various levels of experiences; these experiences can occur on a cognitive, behavioural, and emotional level (Moore).

5.1.2.3 Reluctant Engagement to Being More Engaged. The data indicate another shift in engagement, in two participants, from a state of reluctant engagement to an increased willingness to engage. This can be seen in the involvement of Participant K whom I have referred to before (Table 11). Participant K was reluctant to engage in the songwriting aspect of the session. He demonstrated this reluctance by seeming willing at first, until he had to fill in the blanks. “K” then stopped and asked if he could rather sing a different song or play on the guitar. (His requests were not ignored, and at the end of the session we included various songs he wanted to perform while he “accompanied” himself on the guitar.) After some encouragement and guidance, he did engage with the LCST, became more interested in the process and, gradually, also became more comfortable and conversational. “K” also seemed to have experienced a sense of pride afterwards as discussed in section 5.3.2.

In the specific case of participant K, his reluctance could be interpreted as a form of resistance, since he displayed a need to have control over the session throughout. It could also be that the LCST seemed less appealing to him than active music making. However,

the LCST afforded him an opportunity to express himself and exert agency as discussed earlier in 5.1.1, one-directional engagement.

5.1.2.4 Shy, to More Comfortable, to Shy Again. A unique shift in engagement was displayed by Participant A, an 8-year-old girl (Table 1). She looked shy at the beginning of the process and mostly only responded to prompts and questions with minimal eye-contact and a self-conscious/awkward smile. During the LCST, she became increasingly comfortable and initiated conversation, confidently engaged with her voice during the musical aspect of the process and ventured towards initiating instrumental material. However, after the songwriting process, she then appeared shy again, with the same features as before, although to a lesser extent. This might be a reflection of the fact that the LCST and the active participation with the music afforded her a non-threatening opportunity to engage and to express herself, as described by Layman et al (2002). With this in mind, she might have appeared shy in the beginning and again afterwards, due to the possibility of experiencing our one-on-one verbal interactions as threatening. McGregor et al. (2021) have discussed this tendency for seeing one-on-one interactions as threatening by explaining how children in residential care can often feel powerless when engaging with adults.

5.1.2.5 Boredom to Actively Engaged. A unique shift in participation from boredom to active engagement was presented by Participant N, a 10-year-old boy with low mood at the beginning of the session. He seemed bored during the LCST. This was shown through observed behaviours such as sighing, slumped body posture and waiting for the researcher's prompts to engage in filling in the blanks. During the chorus, the pre-existing lyrics seemed to have invited "N" to insert lyrics about subject matter that was of interest to him – firefighters and different types of sports. He gradually perked up and started to read the sentences out loud while completing the lyrics, as opposed to waiting on my prompts.

As he became more actively engaged in both the verbal and musical domains of the process, "N"'s body posture changed to a more active stance, and he had a more excited tone in his voice. This points to the possibility that the LCST afforded him the opportunity to

tap into his interests and to express elements that bring him joy. Since he displayed an elevated mood afterwards, as opposed to his low mood in the beginning of the sessions, in terms of assessment, this could be an indication that "N" might need support in the future in order to access and express his inner sense of joy.

5.1.2.6 Decrease in Verbal Engagement. Another unique shift in engagement was also observed with Participant H, an 8-year-old boy. This time, there was a decrease in verbal engagement. Although he became more playful during the LCST and towards the end of the session, his verbal interactions became more limited afterwards. This suggests that he experienced a sense of catharsis after expressing himself through his song and did not similarly feel the need to express himself more verbally. It is also possible either that he was a bit concerned that he had shared too much with the therapist by showing emotion, or that he was just processing the experience in his own way.

5.1.3 Participant Approach in Engagement With the Song

The data indicate that participants approached the LCST in various ways. The theme, focused and serious approach to the songwriting process, expresses how some participants seemed invested in the LCST process, were focused throughout, and wanted to make sure that they did it "correctly" even though it was made clear that there was no right or wrong way to complete the lyrics. They also seemed invested in making the song their own: to "put their own stamp on it". In terms of assessment, this could be interpreted in multiple ways. First, it could be considered that they had approached the LCST as a "school project" and that they viewed the therapist in a "teacher" role and felt that they had to do it correctly in order to get "good marks". Likewise, they could have approached it in this manner because they thought that that was what was expected of them within what they perceive as the power relationship between the therapist, as the stranger-adult, and themselves, as children from within the social work system.

McGregor et al. (2021) discuss how children in residential care perceive power relations and urge us to:

Appreciate the level of powerlessness a young person in care can experience as a form of constraint where they often have limited say or decision-making power. This must not be constructed as powerlessness within the subjectivity of the young person in a paternalistic way but rather the external power of a system charged with their basic right of survival in terms of a home, shelter and basic care and support. (p. 14)

Another interpretation could be that they were really interested and invested in creating something that is their own – something that they did not have to share with anyone outside the therapeutic space, if they did not wish to do so.

Although the lyrical content of the songs will be discussed in section 5.2.4, the findings also indicate several trends in the approach to writing the song lyrics. Ten participants had a playful and imaginative approach to the lyrics by giving a chuckle after they wrote a phrase or seemed amused with their own lyrics. They included phrases such as “Frog does not define who you are” (Participant I), “a hero standing on the rocks” (Participant C), and “Shout it out, be Avengers” (Participant E).

Other participants made concrete associations with the given lyrics and used phrases such as “In the dark night we burn candles” (Participant L), and “feel the heart pulsing through your veins” (Participants E, H, N, B). There were also several direct references to the music, such as “feel the music pulsing through your veins” (Participant L) and “a song written on the rocks” (Participant M).

5.2 Musical Participation

There are several facets to musical participation that emerged from the data. These findings pertain to sub-question 3: Does the lyric completion songwriting technique engage the children in musical participation, and if so, how? In this section, the following themes are looked at: presentation during musical participation (S1T10); connection through active music making (S1T9); grasping of songwriting concept (S1T7); guidance from therapist (S1T3); concept of self (S2T1); emotional awareness (S2T2); lyrical content of songs (S1T8); seeking connection (S2T5); view of life (S2T4), and reference to religion (S2T6).

5.2.1 Presentation during Musical Participation

All the participants engaged in musical participation during the LCST. As shown in the tables with the overview of participant engagement (Tables 1–14), the data indicate that each participant was willing and/or eager to participate musically, although several trends in the quality of musical participation were observed: a) confident engagement, b) fragmented engagement, and c) one-directional engagement. Saarikallio (2019), describes musical engagement as “an act of creating, re-constructing, and cultivating the self and the social world, emphasising the agency of the person engaging in the music” (Saarikallio).

5.2.1.1 Confident Engagement. The data shows confident and creative participation in active music making. This was found with participants who eagerly engaged with active music making and with those who comfortably or confidently engaged in vocal and instrumental participation and, in some instances, initiated musical material. An example of this is Participant G, whom I referred to earlier in terms of verbal participation. In the music, “G” was eager to participate, he was creative, and he made his own “drum kit” with the instruments available in the space. His vocal participation was also confident when we sang his LCST song, and he initiated rhythmical material on this “drum kit” in accompaniment to his song.

Although “G” presented as shy and withdrawn in his verbal presentation, he presented confidently in the music. This could be attributed to the fact that children might prefer to express themselves through music rather than to verbally share their thoughts and feelings. This notion is supported by Layman (2002) who stated that children who experienced emotional difficulties are more likely to engage musically than verbally during assessment. This bears out the interpretation that the LCST affords musical participation during assessment, and might also indicate that this technique affords an opportunity to assess children in a playful and creative manner. Desmond et al. (2015) reminded us that, in terms of assessment, the creative arts is a developmentally appropriate medium for children that allows them to process and express experiences that might be difficult to express

verbally; it engages their imagination and allows them to communicate through creativity and play.

5.2.1.2 Fragmented Engagement. The data also shows fragmented engagement in the musical participation of several participants, such as Participant C, an 11-year-old girl referred to earlier. She was eager to participate in the music and confidently engaged with her voice, although her musical contributions seemed irregular. Her rhythm seemed irregular as she played in short bursts of fast drumming that was not related to the steady beat provided by the guitar's accompaniment. While the playing of the therapist was adapted at times in an attempt to match Participant C's contributions, that seemed to confuse her and the accompanying music had to return to providing a steady beat. "C" also seemed to struggle with an awareness of phrasing; she would often sing or play through the ending of phrases, or would stop, as if anticipating an ending before the end of the phrase.

Another example is participant E, also referred to earlier. His musical participation was fragmented and not sustained, as he became easily distracted by elements inside or outside the therapy room as discussed in section 5.1.1, distracted engagement. Similarly, participant I, a 10-year-old boy (Table 9) displayed fragmented musical participation and gave contributions that seemed sporadic and had an irregular rhythm. He seemed unaware of musical elements since his contributions were loud, drowning out the music, and seemingly unrelated to the song.

5.2.1.3 One-directional Engagement. Finally, in terms of presentation during musical participation, the data indicates a unique quality of one-directional musical participation, as illustrated by Participant K. Similar to his verbal participation discussed in section 5.1.1, Participant K's musical engagement was not reciprocal. He was directive in the music and seemed to have actively avoided joint musicking while at the same time directing the therapist and himself to take turns in making music. Once again, this could be

interpreted as his having the opportunity to express himself, to exert agency or to take control in order to protect and guard himself.

5.2.2 Connection Through Active Music Making

It was found in the data that several participants seemed to have sought interpersonal connection in the music. They were open to making music together and also seemed to want to make the musical interaction a shared experience between participant and therapist. According to Bruscia (2014), interpersonal processes involving the client and the therapist form an integral part of music therapy and can support the client in accessing their inner resources to resolve problems or to increase their general wellbeing.

During the active music making aspect of the session, Participant L, a 12-year-old girl, engaged in a reciprocal manner. For her, the music became a conversation with sections where she initiated the style of the music and sections where she followed, resulting in a shared connection in the music. For “L”, this experience supported her general wellbeing by enabling her to tap into her confidence and pride, as is discussed further in section 5.3.2. A unique case was presented by participant K, who actively avoided connection in the music, until the third repeat of the song where he “allowed” others make music at the same time and, as such, to have a shared experience with him.

5.2.3 The Songwriting Concept

The data indicate several trends in terms of how the participants grasped the LCST concept. Of the 14 participants, five (ages 10–12 years) were quick to grasp the concept and comfortably engaged with completing the lyrics; another five (ages 8 years and 10 years) required some assistance in the beginning of the process, then quickly grasped the concept and were able to continue without assistance. Still another four participants (ages 8–10 years) struggled to grasp the concept and required guidance from the therapist throughout the session. This could be attributed to the age range of the participants, since the older participants seemed to grasp the concept more easily, whereas some of the younger participants struggled slightly, or struggled throughout.

Other contributing factors can be a lack of concentration or of motivation. This was experienced with Participant D who wanted to give up and frequently exclaimed “I can’t”. Yet another possible reason for some participants’ struggles with the LCST could be that the language of the song was too difficult for them since several of the words are not used in children’s everyday vocabulary. It was also evident that several participants expected to write an English song, since some participants asked for help with translating their specific words into Afrikaans, an outcome which is reflected upon in section 5.6.

The guidance from the therapist was not in the form of providing suggestions or leading the participant in any way. Instead, guidance took the form of encouragement, affirmation or providing assistance in brainstorming possible options of words to fill in by letting the participant choose 3–5 possible words, write them down on a big sheet of paper and choose the option that most resonated with them. In this way, the participants received support to continue with the process and could still project their own material on the song when completing the lyrics.

5.2.4 Music and LCST as a Projective Tool

The data indicate that the lyrics reflected elements of personal, literal, imaginative, and playful content. This could be attributed to the projective quality of the music, the song itself and the songwriting process (Jackson & Heiderscheidt, 2021). This is further described by Bruscia (2014):

Clients often come to therapy because they need to express what they are experiencing inside and because music provides myriad opportunities for helping them to do so. Music therapists engage clients in a wide variety of activities and experiences aimed at helping them to externalize, enact, release, ventilate, represent, project, or document their inner experiences. (p. 79)

According to Freud’s transference and projection theory, the patient/client displaces strong feelings and unconscious processes onto the therapist/clinician (Tanzilli & Lingardi, 2022). As described by Tanzilli and Lingardi, the therapist/clinician should serve as a “blank

screen” to allow the projection of the client/patient’s internal structure. In this songwriting process, with the specific use of the LCST, the song now becomes the projective screen. By completing the lyrics of the song, the participants have the opportunity to project some of their own thoughts and feelings onto the open spaces in the incomplete sentences that provide a blank opportunity for the participants to express themselves. These aspects of projection through the LCST will be highlighted by discussing the following themes that emerged from the data: concept of self, emotional awareness, seeking connection, view of life, and reference to religion.

5.2.4.1 Concept of Self. The findings indicate that the LCST afforded the participants the opportunity to reflect on their self-identity, agency in strength of character, daily life and events in relation to their concept of self, and their perception of what others think.

As an example, participant D, an 8-year-old boy, used the phrase “Curry and rice does not define who you are”. He then shared that the children at school use that phrase to mock him based on his ethnicity. He is part of the marginalised Coloured community that forms one of the four main ethnic groups in South Africa, and who also suffered greatly during the Apartheid era (Adhikari, 2006). This community has a rich heritage with various cultural backgrounds, including among others, Khoisan, European, and Malaysian influences (Adhikari). One of the well-known cultural backgrounds and cuisine influences in the Coloured community are the spices from their Cape-Malay heritage, and this includes curry dishes (Nugent, 2010). Hence, for “D”, there is a link between the phrase “curry and rice” and his ethnicity.

It can be considered that the LCST afforded him the opportunity for projection by using a phrase such as “curry and rice”, which might not make sense in the context of that sentence and might have been easily dismissed. However, this sentence held a deep personal meaning for “D” and the musical setting might have afforded him the opportunity to express the fact that the children at school, who are predominantly from the White Afrikaans

community, mock him, an experience that he would not necessarily have shared otherwise. According to Wigram and Baker (2005), song text can create an experience that symbolically represents our world and provides metaphors for understanding the meaning of our experiences. The LCST could also have formed a non-intrusive bridge or point of connection from which the children could open up and verbally share their feelings on their own terms. This is supported by Wigram and Baker who stated that songwriting can offer the clients an opportunity to reflect on interpersonal relationships.

5.2.4.2 Emotional Awareness. The data also indicate that participants were able to refer to their emotions, display a need for connection and relate to their personal story in the lyrics. Participant F, a 10-year-old boy (Table 6), wrote lyrics that made frequent reference to sadness and loneliness: “Sadness does not define who you are”; “In your presence the sadness must disappear”; “Shout it out, be with me then I will never be alone”. He then disclosed that his mother had passed away recently and that was the reason he had been placed in residential care.

According to Ruud (2005), songwriting in music therapy can offer the client a context in which to explore their vulnerabilities and losses. Participant F’s response to the process suggests that the LCST afforded the participants of this study a mechanism for projecting their feelings and emotions onto the music, a position that is supported by Wigram and Baker (2005). In exploring the contribution of songwriting to the therapeutic needs of clients “who have experienced neglect, abuse, or trauma” (Jackson & Heiderscheit, 2021, p.85), it was found that by “fostering a sense of safety through the structure provided”, a “song becomes a container and a vehicle for expressing difficult emotions.” (Jackson & Heiderscheit, p.85).

5.2.4.3 Seeking Connection. The data also shows that participants included lyrics that refer to seeking social connections. The need to belong and the desire for social connection is a basic human need (Inagaki, 2014), and the literature suggests that children and adolescents who have been orphaned, abandoned, or have experienced neglect may

struggle with social integration and relationships (Whetten et al., 2011). An example of lyrics that reflect a search for connection was given by Participant B, a 10-year-old girl (Table 2). Her lyrics suggest a need for connection through phrases such as “Shout it out, be **mine forever**”; “Shout it out, **wait for me**”; and “Shout it out, be **in my heart**”. Although “B” did not disclose any further context, it was a noticeable theme in her song and could be interpreted in multiple ways.

On the one hand, these phrases could be an indication of longing for her family: Children in residential care often do not have regular contact with their families and might miss them and feel disconnected (Roche, 2019). Yet, it could also have been a reference to a longing for peer relationships. According to Edmond (2012), children in residential care find a sense of belonging in their peer relationships, not only because of how they are seen and perceived by their peers, but also because peer relationships are often the only relationships that they can choose to be in. Additionally, as the children’s home has a strong Christian ethos—which will be discussed further in the section about reference to religion—her lyrics could have been in reference to religion and seeking a connection with God, a noticeable theme in her song. In terms of assessment, this can denote that the songwriting technique provides a means through which to determine whether her needs as a child seeking connection are being met.

5.2.4.4 View of Life. The data indicate that the participants’ lyrics give us an insight into their views of life, so various perspectives that emerged from the participants’ lyrics will now be discussed. These perspectives are: a) positive outlook on life, b) expression of hope and anticipation, c) expression of adversity, d) follow your heart, e) passive outlook on life and f) active outlook on life.

a) Positive outlook on life.

The data indicate that there were 11 participants whose lyrics made reference to a positive outlook on life, using phrases such as “Life is **nice**” (Participants A, D, E, K, M, N); “Life is **good**” (Participant G); “Life is **awesome**” (Participant L); “Your whole life **is beautiful to you**”

(Participant A). There could be multiple interpretations of these phrases since there is no way to gauge whether another individual's experience is positive or not. In the case of Participants L's and A's responses, the phrases seemed to be a resilient positive response, based on their confident, eager and comfortable demeanours during the LCST. However, it is also likely that some of the participants who chose the word "nice" to complete the phrase used it more as an instant or generic response. As such, this could also be a reflection of their limited capacity to access within themselves what exactly they want to express so that they are, in a sense, limited to the use of the single word "nice". Their word choice could also have been influenced by the fact that the sentences provided in the song structure were too difficult and became too big of a question for some participants to verbally articulate. This will be reflected upon further in section 5.6.

b) Expression of hope and anticipation.

The data showed that participants included lyrics that indicate an expression of hope. This is seen in phrases such as "Your whole life still **lies ahead** of you" (Participant F) and "Your whole life **is waiting for** you" (Participant L). This could either be interpreted as a response in reference to an expression or phrase that they had heard before or be an indication of their holding out hope for the future, believing that the difficulties they face now do not form the sum of their future. This would especially apply in the case of Participant F who expressed his difficulty with the recent loss of his mother. With Participant L who seemed confident, had a positive attitude, and made frequent reference to her sport that she aspires to succeed in, it could indicate hope in the possibilities that the future holds.

c) Expression of adversity.

In the data, participants sometimes referred to an outlook that reflects the challenges and adversities of life. In these cases, the participants gave expression to adversity through phrases such as "Life **is a bit difficult/hard for me**" (Participant F) and "Life **gets hard sometimes**" (Participant J). These expressions are understandable as it is widely accepted that residents of children's homes often experience, or have experienced ACEs

(Quisenberry & Foltz, 2013). It is also likely that there can be power relations perceived by the children in the homes that prevent them from sharing or that make them withhold information (McGregor et al., 2021). With the above kinds of expressions from the participants, this opens the possibility that the LCST also removes the perceived threat of power relations and instead allows participants to project their thoughts and feelings of adverse experiences without their conscious thinking being a barrier to this sharing (Lilienfeld et al., 2000).

d) Follow your heart.

This was indicated by participants who used phrases such as “Create your own path, go where **your heart wants to go**” (Participant M) and “Create your own path, go where **your heart leads you**” (Participant F). These phrases appear to show striving or longing for another path in life. They could also reflect the participants’ confidence in who they are, and their trust that following their hearts will lead to the fulfilment of their hopes and dreams. Although the participants are faced with adversities, through the LCST, they seemed to be displaying a sense of ambition and to be expressing their aspirations for the future. According to Felner and De Vries (2013), having ambition and aspirations for the future might be challenging for children who have experienced ACEs, since apart from the paralysing effect of trauma, the lack of exposure to ambition and the modelling of healthy ambition also plays a role (Felner & De Vries).

e) Passive outlook on life.

For some participants, this is seen in phrases such as “Create your own path, go **where life takes you**” (Participant L), “Life **has determined it**” (Participant I), and “Create your own path, go **where it takes you**” (Participant J). These phrases suggest that the children feel as if they do not have agency over their lives. According to Roche (2019), children in residential care often experience a lack of agency and influence over their own lives. In terms of assessing a child, this type of perspective of life alludes to their need for a sense of agency and

autonomy in their lives. It could also be that they require support in actively tapping into their resilience and accessing their already existing agency.

f) An active outlook on life

This is shown by the use of phrases such as “Your whole life is under your control” (Participant C), “Create your own path, go where you want to” (Participant K), and “Create your own path, go where you say” (Participant N). These phrases could be an indication that the participants experience a lack of control in aspects of their daily lives and expressed their need for a sense of control through the lyrics. It could also be interpreted from a point of resilience, in that, despite the adversities they are faced with, these participants feel confident that they can take control of their lives. The literature also supports this notion that children who come from adverse backgrounds can display resiliency (Quisenberry & Foltz, 2013).

5.2.4.5 Reference to Religion. There were references to religion in the lyrics inserted by the participants. The children’s home has a strong Christian ethos that might have influenced this occurrence. These lyrics were, nonetheless, chosen by the participants themselves and reflect their thinking processes. The references ranged from mentioning God, to angels and heaven, and to sins and the devil. For example, Participant L, a 12-year-old girl, included phrases such as “an angel standing on the rocks”; “Be the light that continues to shine and drive away the devil”; “In your presence the sins must disappear”; and “Shout it out, God is always with me”. These imply that the participants possibly find a sense of meaning in life as well as connection and support, by being attached to a form of religion. This notion is reiterated by Burkhardt and Loxton (2010) who found in their study that, among children living in South African children’s homes, one of the effective coping

strategies reported by the children is that of spiritual or religious support. This is, however, often linked to the religious character of the home.

5.3 Affect

This section addresses the findings related to the second secondary research question: What are the children's observed affect before, during and after the songwriting lyric completion process? This question is answered by specifically looking at the following themes: shifts in mood (S1T5), and sense of accomplishment (S1T6).

5.3.1 Shifts in Mood

Several trends in shifts of mood were observed among the participants. As an example, the one common trend, seen with four participants, was movement from low mood to elevated mood. Participant N showed this trend. As noted earlier, he presented with low energy and a low mood, falling to a level of boredom at the beginning of the session. "N" verbally expressed that he was tired, but also presented with a slumped body posture and a deflated tone in his voice. He gradually showed an increase in energy and interest during the LCST and, eventually, presented with an elevated mood afterwards. This was observed as he smiled more, his body language was more energetic, and he showed an increase in verbal engagement and with a more cheerful tone in his voice.

On the other hand, a unique presentation of a shift in mood was seen by moving from a high energy, fragmented state to a regulated, more grounded energy level. This was demonstrated by participant I who was highly energetic, dysregulated and distracted at the beginning of the session, gradually becoming more engaged in the LCST and later showing a decrease in energy. Although "I" was still energetic, he presented as more grounded and calmer after the LCST. This might suggest that the LCST provides a structured opportunity to express emotions and, as a consequence, contributes to emotional regulation. According to Moore (2013), an extensive review of other studies found that music experiences have an influence on the emotional state of an individual, can evoke emotions and can also

contribute to emotion regulation, a finding that supports the likelihood of the positive effect of the LCST on the child's emotional regulation.

Participant J, a 12-year-old girl (Table 10), displayed another unique shift in mood. Initially, she was comfortable and confident, but became self-conscious during the LCST. "J", however, seemed to regain her confidence and was proud afterwards. Her sudden change in becoming more shy and more self-conscious could be attributed to the fact that she felt a spotlight had been put on her when she had to create her own lyrics. It could also be due to the fact that children of her age, in the preadolescent phase, tend to feel more self-conscious (Higa et al., 2008). While it was possible to have adapted the structure of the session slightly, in order to make her feel more at ease at that moment, this will be reflected on further in section 5.6. It is also of interest to note that "L" regained her confidence afterwards, which could have been because the LCST afforded her an experience of empowerment and accomplishment.

5.3.2 Sense of Accomplishment

A common trend that was observed among several participants was a sense of pride and accomplishment after the LCST songwriting process. With none of the participants was this more evident than with Participant K who, despite having faced some challenges during the process, exclaimed afterwards "I CAN write a song!", with a proud smile on his face. Although the songs were not recorded in a way that could have allowed the participants to take a recording home with them, there was a sense of having a completed product at the end of the session. It was something tangible, even if only for a few moments, that the participants could be proud of their songs; the product that they had created. In her work with at-risk youth and children who have experienced trauma in South Africa, Torrance (2010) found that concluding a process with a product, a recording in this instance, is integral to the therapeutic process. Having a product is a way for the child to share their experience or to have a reminder while holding the therapeutic process sacred, if the child so wishes (Torrance).

5.4 Summary of the Contributions of the LCST to an Assessment Session

In this study, the process comprised one assessment session for each participant, where a child and the therapist interacted through the use of the LCST. Each child was involved in generating their own verbal content, interacting with the therapist, and engaging in music participation. These were the main three areas that informed the assessment, and the discussion of the data revealed the following contributions of the LCST to an assessment session:

- The LCST provides information on the quality of engagement of participants (section 5.1.1) as being eager and comfortable, one-directional, explorative, distracted, or confident. It also highlights how participants' engagement can shift from one state before engaging with the LCST, to another during, and even another afterwards (section 5.1.2). Some of the shifts observed in this study included a move from being shy and nervous to being confident and comfortable; an increase in playfulness; a change from reluctant engagement to being more engaged; changing from being shy to being more comfortable then being shy again; moving from a state of boredom to being actively engaged, and finally, a decrease in verbal engagement. These qualities and shifts of engagement were not observed only in terms of engagement with the therapist but also with the LCST itself, with the music, and with the process throughout.
- The LCST supports the assessment process by providing information on the quality of musical participation from the participants. The LCST engaged all the participants in musical participation and, while they were all willing and eager to participate in the music, there were differences in their presentation during musical participation (section 5.2.1). These qualities of presentation included confident and creative participation, fragmented participation, and one-directional participation. There were also participants who appeared to be seeking interpersonal connection in the music, as well as one individual who seemed to actively avoid connection in the music.

- The LCST is a projective technique (section 5.2.4) which contributes to assessment by giving an insight into the participant's concept of self, emotional awareness, and their desire for connection and belonging. Through projecting onto the blank screen of the open spaces in the lyrics, the LCST affords the participants the opportunity to project their unconscious thoughts and feelings without the barrier of the conscious holding them back from sharing (section 5.2.4).
- The LCST also adds to assessment by providing information on the quality of the affective presence of the participants and how this shifted (5.3.1). The shifts in mood observed in this study are related to the observed changes in engagement discussed earlier, and include shifting from low mood to elevated mood, from high energy to being grounded, and from comfortable to self-conscious. The LCST also afforded opportunities for self-regulation (section 5.1.2) and emotional regulation (section 5.3.1).
- The LCST affords the child a sense of accomplishment, an experience and a product to be proud of (section 5.3.2), as well as an opportunity to exert agency. An illustration of this is Participant K who engaged in one-directional engagement, was able to have a sense of agency, and proudly presented his song at the end with a sense of accomplishment (section 5.1.1; section 5.1.2; section 5.3.2).
- The LCST also informed assessment by creating opportunities for creativity and self-expression. Participants who were initially reluctant, non-reciprocal, bored, and shy in their engagement, were able to express themselves through the structured, yet creative, nature of the LCST.
- The LCST provides the therapist with a more holistic view of the child in terms of their engagement with the lyric completion process, through verbal content, manner of engagement—both verbally and musically—and presentation of affect. Participant C showed this impact as the LCST afforded another layer through which to assess her verbal participation which seemed sporadic at first, but became more structured and confident during the process (section 5.1.1).

- The LCST allows the therapist to conduct an assessment in a creative and playful manner so that it is not an intrusive experience for the child. This quality of the LCST specifically benefitted Participant G who was verbally withdrawn, but engaged in a confident, creative and playful manner when engaging in the music (section 5.2.1).

5.5 Implications for Practice

Leading from the discussion of the data, I would like to discuss the following implications for practice. The proposed implications for practitioners to keep in mind will be based on my reflections as therapist-researcher in this study. The discussion includes a retrospective reflection on what I might have done differently, a discussion of the reasoning behind certain decisions I made before embarking on the data collection process, further reflections on decisions I made during the songwriting process with various participants, and suggestions of alternative approaches for the future.

5.5.1 Evaluate Carefully how Open-Ended/Completed Phrases are

I would like to reflect on the song structure and the open-ended sentences. Some of the edited sentences of the pre-existing song used in this study were not sufficiently open-ended that they might have led the participants to engage in a more concrete manner. If those sentences were altered slightly, they could have allowed for a more inviting blank screen for projection. However, as there were also some of the participants who needed that structure, the “easier” sentences would have assisted them in grasping the songwriting concept.

5.5.2 Keep Participant Age and Guidance Requirements in Mind

Upon reflecting on the song I chose to base the songwriting structure on, “Die Lig” by Jo Black, I realise that, in certain places, the language of the existing lyrics was too difficult for the age of some participants. The age group of this study was centred around the preadolescent range, yet the participant’s ages ranged from 8-12 years. Since there is quite a difference between the cognitive and linguistic abilities of an 8-year-old and those of a 12-year-old, the older participants were better able to engage with the song’s lyrics. Although

some of the participants found the process meaningful, difficulty with the language might have influenced how well the participants managed to grasp the LCST concept. Since several participants required guidance with the LCST concept, perhaps I should have prepared different song options with a range from simpler to more complex sentences.

5.5.3 Consider Participants' Preferred Language and the Song's Language

I would like to reflect on the decision to use an Afrikaans song. The reason behind choosing an Afrikaans song was the fact that it is the predominant language of the participants. From previous experience at the children's home during 2020, the children listened to a large amount of Afrikaans music. Afrikaans music was the genre often requested by the children of a similar age group at that time. However, due to the prevalence of English pop culture, the participants would often think about writing and engaging with the music in English. This can be further evidenced by the fact that the participants, on occasion, requested to sing English songs during our once-off session. In the instances where participants requested my help in translating their English lyrics into Afrikaans, I encouraged them to keep it as is in order to preserve the possible material of projection.

5.5.4 Let Client Profile Inform Song Choice

Although it was an informed decision to use an Afrikaans song, I could have had English options available too. The fact that I am an Afrikaans-speaking person myself might also have influenced the choice of the song. Upon reflection, I realise that I had perceived the original lyrics of the song as meaningful and had hoped that, by using the edited structure, the song would also have become meaningful to the participants.

5.5.5 Facilitate the Process with Spontaneity, Flexibility, and Fun.

The following point I would like to reflect on is whether the LCST might have been restrictive in the assessment session. As I was limited to one session with each participant for engagement with the LCST process, my focus on the LCST may have resulted in missed opportunities for other spontaneous interactions with the participants. However, the structure and framework of the LCST provided for meaningful engagement with the participants as

well as the opportunity to observe them in different forms of engagement, within one assessment session. This overall experience encompassed instrumental exploration with moments of spontaneity, the LCST process, a sense of accomplishment, the creation of a product, and the opportunity to reflect on the lines that stood out for the participants, in their songs.

5.5.6 Assess the Degree of Interaction Necessary for Effective Facilitation

Another point to reflect on is that one of the participants became bored with the LCST. The fact that he had to write down the words in order to complete the lyrics seemed to have bored him. Upon reflection, I could have been more creative in my facilitation style and created an interactive way of perhaps singing the open-ended phrases and allowing him to say the words out loud instead of writing them down. However, the reason for staying with the specific song structure and flow of the session was my focus on collecting consistent and reliable data, even when I noticed that the participant had become bored.

5.5.7 Be Open to the Shift in Client Presentation and Adapt Accordingly

Another point to reflect on is the case of Participant J who became more self-conscious during the LCST, which was possibly because she felt that she had been put under the spotlight. Upon reflection, I could have been more adaptive and flexible and introduced an improvisation to help the participant to relax upon noticing that she had become shy. It is important to note that it is typical for music therapists to adapt the level of structure within music experiences to sustain a client's engagement (Jackson and Heiderscheit, 2021). I had similarly included that aspect of being adaptive in other ways, without changing the flow of the session or the song structure too much, in order to keep the data collection process as consistent as possible. In particular, the instrumental sections between the verses and repetitions were participant-led and more focused on the individual's needs. Likewise, participant H was disappointed that we could not write a "Jesus song", therefore I included sections between the verses where we sang "hallelujah" repeatedly and

came back to the same lyric completion song structure that all the participants were working on.

5.5.8 A Proposed Template for an LCST Assessment Form.

I have created a template of an observation sheet, based on the areas of assessment that emerged in this study, which I believe could be helpful to other music therapists who might be interested in engaging with this technique. The column on the left indicates possible areas for assessment, followed by possible qualities of engagement that could be observed during an assessment session based on this study, as well as spaces for the practitioner to include the observations based on the individuality of each client. The proposed observation form when using the LCST in a music therapy assessment session is shown below in Figure 11.

Figure 11

Template for an Assessment Form

Therapist - name and surname:		Place of assessment:				Date of assessment:						
Client – name and surname:		Age:				Gender:						
Institution/school:		Date of birth:				Language:						
Referral:		Current treatment/medication:				Contact details						
Brief history/Diagnosis/Life circumstance/Traumatic events:						Client/parent/guardian:						
						Cell:						
						Email:						
Name of song:												
Qualities of engagement	One-directional	Distracted	Shy	Nervous	Calm	Solemn	Comfortable	Explorative	Eager	Confident	Other	
Shifts in engagement	(Therapist's description required)											
Affect	(Therapist's description required)											
Shifts in mood	(Therapist's description required)											
Qualities of verbal participation	Only responds to questions and prompts	Short answers/ unsure	One-directional/ does not wait for reply	Answers in full sentences	Comfortable	Open	Curious	Confident	Reciprocal conversation	Initiates conversation	Other	
Content of verbal participation	(Therapist's description required)											
Shifts in verbal engagement	(Therapist's description required)											
Musical participation	(Therapist's description required)											
Engagement with LCST	(Therapist's description required)											

5.6 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the 16 themes that emerged from the data analysis of both the LCST lyrics and the observation sheets. The discussion of the themes addressed the main research question as well as the secondary research questions by providing a substantial overview of the contributions of the LCST to an assessment session that was based on the three main topics of participant engagement, musical participation, and affect. The chapter concluded by referring to various implications for practice based on a thorough reflection of the therapist-researcher.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION TO THE STUDY

6.1 Overview of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the potential contribution of the LCST to a music therapy assessment session with preadolescent children in a children's home, specifically, the impact of the technique on the children's affect, verbal participation, and musical participation. The data was gathered through once-off individual assessment sessions with 14 participants, between the ages of 8 and 12 years, who were from one children's home in South Africa. The data collection phase resulted in two datasets, namely, the remarks in the observation sheets compiled by the therapist/researcher and the lyrics completed by the participants during the LCST process.

6.2 Summary of the Findings

As discussed in Chapter 4, the two datasets were analysed thematically and this resulted in 16 themes. These themes were discussed in Chapter 5 according to three main topics: i) participant engagement, ii) musical participation, and iii) affect.

The data shows that the LCST provides a holistic view of the participants' engagement. The LCST contributes to the assessment process by highlighting the qualities of engagement—verbally, musically, and with the therapist—and how these qualities might shift during an assessment session. The LCST engages the participants in musical participation and, although all 14 participants in the study were eager to participate, there were differences in how they presented in the music. The LCST also contributes to the assessment of the affective presence of the participants and how that might shift during one assessment session.

The LCST provides an opportunity for participants to engage in a creative and playful manner. This manner of engagement allows for self-expression, for accessing and exerting agency, and for experiencing a sense of pride and accomplishment. The projective nature of the LCST also contributes to assessment by allowing the participants to project their unconscious needs, wants, and emotions onto the blank screen of the open spaces provided

by the incomplete lyric phrases. This results in an assessment process that does not seem intrusive to the participants.

6.3 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

While the primary research question being addressed in this study seeks to investigate the contribution of the LCST to a music therapy assessment of preadolescent children in a specific environment, this study did not set out to prove how effective the technique could be as an assessment tool. The focus instead has been purely on the potential impact of the technique on the affect, verbal participation, and musical participation of the children involved in the session.

In this context, there were therefore several limitations associated with this study. These include the small sample population (one residential facility in South Africa), the small sample size (14 participants), my involvement as a therapist and a researcher, and the narrow cultural context (all Afrikaans speakers) of the sample population. However, the research questions required a very subjective engagement with the participants in order to assess their very individualistic outcomes. As such, although the findings may not find universal application to other culturally different populations, or to children of a different age group, or to other environmental settings, the study adds texture and volume to the limited existing findings in the body of literature on the impact of the LCST among children undergoing music therapy assessment.

6.4 Contribution to the Field of Music Therapy

Although the aim of this study was not to propose a music therapy assessment tool, my hope is that the findings will contribute to the gap in the literature on the assessment of preadolescent children in residential care. As reiterated in section 6.2 above, this study has shown that the LCST contributes to assessment by providing a holistic view of the participants' engagement with regard to verbal participation, musical engagement, and affect. The observations arising from this research may, in turn, assist clinicians with the

implementation of the LCST, the formulating of clinical goals and the designing of a treatment intervention specific to each client.

6.5 Recommendations for Further Research

The concept of the LCST in an assessment session shows great promise and holds potential for further research. As discussed in the introduction to the study, and in Chapter 2, a significant number of children, most of whom have been exposed to ACEs, are placed in residential care not only in South Africa but globally. Based on the findings of this study, further research is recommended to explore in greater depth the contribution of the LCST, with a similar client group, at more than one site, and using a larger sample size.

A further recommendation for ongoing research would be to explore the possibility of developing an assessment tool based on the use of the LCST for preadolescents that are placed in residential care.

6.6 Conclusion

Due to the high prevalence of children placed in residential care, globally, and specifically in South Africa, this study offers an overview of the contributions of the LCST to an assessment session with preadolescent children in a South African children's home. It provides evidence of the impact of the LCST on an assessment session, while also acknowledging that there are limitations to its use. Further recommendations are offered to enrich the value and contributions of this study to the field of music therapy.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Letter requesting permission - Children's Home



University of Pretoria

Faculty of Humanities

School of the Arts

Date

Letter requesting permission to conduct the study at the children's home

To whom it may concern,

My name is Liza Cloete. I am a student at the University of Pretoria, and I am currently enrolled for a master's degree in music therapy.

The purpose of this letter is to request your consent to conduct a research study at the children's home.

Research topic: Exploring the contribution of the lyric completion songwriting technique to a music therapy assessment session.

Music therapy: Music therapy is the clinical use of music to address the individual's emotional, social, physical, spiritual, and psychological needs.

Lyric completion songwriting technique: This is a song structure with incomplete lyric sentences and the participants are required to complete the sentences in their own words.

Aims of the study: This study aims to explore the contribution of the lyric completion songwriting technique, to a music therapy assessment session with preadolescent children in a children's home. The purpose of this study is also to explore the contribution of this technique to their affect, verbal participation, and musical participation in the assessment session.

What will be expected of the children's home? I will need support and permission from the children's home for a once-off, individual session, with each child between the ages of eight and 12 years. If possible, a room or private space on the property will be beneficial to the study, otherwise arrangements can be made for an off-site venue. All parties involved in the study will sign informed consent/assent forms and participation is completely voluntary. Video recordings will be made of the sessions, with the participants' consent, and will only be used as part of the research and will not be made available as part of the final dissertation document.

What will be expected of the children? Each child will participate in a once-off, individual music therapy session. In our music therapy session together, we will play different instruments, sing, and write songs together. The child does not need to know how to play any of the instruments, as I will show them in our session.

Approval: The study will only begin after ethical approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria, has been obtained.

Risks and benefits: Participation in the study is completely voluntary and the children are free to withdraw at any time. There are no risks or direct benefits in participating in this project. If the children decide to withdraw there will be no negative consequences, nor will they need to explain their reason. You are encouraged to ask any questions you might have about the study.

It is possible that issues may emerge for the children during this process and that further therapy may be required. I would further like to request permission to refer the children to the resident social worker, should that be the case.

Who will have access to the results of the study? The research will be conducted by myself as principal researcher, and my supervisor. It will be used for academic purposes only. The data will be archived in electronic format on a password protected device at the music therapy offices of the school of the arts for a minimum of 15 years. During this time the anonymised data might be used for further research.

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor if you require more information about the study.

Kind regards

Liza Cloete

(Signature of student required)

Researcher name: Liza Cloete

email: lizasmit95@gmail.com

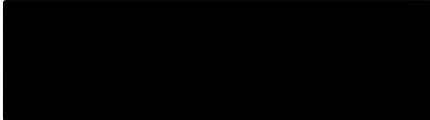
Tel.: 076 466 6415

(Signature of supervisor)

Name of supervisor:

email:

APPENDIX B: Letter of permission



To whom it may concern,

15 Oktober 2021

The purpose of this letter is to request permission for Liza (Smit) Cloete to conduct a research study at [redacted] children's home.

Research topic: Exploring the combination of the lyric completion songwriting technique to a music therapy assessment session.

I, Jakobus Vorster (head of institution), hereby give permission for Liza (Smit) Cloete to conduct the aforementioned research project at [redacted] children's home. I acknowledge that the data collected may be used in the [redacted] confirm that I understand what is required in the research project. I am aware that the participants may withdraw from the study at any time, should they wish to do so.

Jakobus Vorster
Signature

15/10/2021
Date



APPENDIX C: Letter of information – Guardian



University of Pretoria

Faculty of Humanities

School of the Arts

Date

Letter of information – Guardian

To whom it may concern,

My name is Liza Cloete. I am a student at the University of Pretoria, and I am currently enrolled for a Master's degree in Music Therapy.

The purpose of this letter is to request your consent for the child in your care to participate in a research study.

Research topic: Exploring the contribution of the lyric completion songwriting technique to a music therapy assessment session.

Music therapy: Music therapy is the clinical use of music to address the individual's emotional, social, physical, spiritual, and psychological needs.

Lyric completion songwriting technique: This is a song structure with incomplete lyric sentences and the participants are required to complete the sentences in their own words.

Aims of the study: This study aims to explore the contribution of the lyric completion songwriting technique, to a music therapy assessment session with preadolescent children in a children's home. The purpose of this study is also to explore the contribution of this technique to their affect, verbal participation, and musical participation in the assessment session.

What will be expected of the children? Each child will participate in a once-off, individual music therapy session. In our music therapy session together, we will play different instruments, sing, and write songs together. The child does not need to know how to play any of the instruments, as I will show them in our session. The video recordings of the sessions, with the participants' consent, will only be used as part of the research and will not be made available as part of the final dissertation document.

Approval: The study will only begin after ethical approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Pretoria, has been obtained.

Risks and benefits: Participation in the study is completely voluntary and the children are free to withdraw at any time. There are no risks or direct benefits in participating in this project. If the children decide to withdraw there will be no negative consequences, nor will they need to explain their reason. You are encouraged to ask any questions you might have about the study.

The resident social worker will be available should anything arise during our session indicating that the child requires further support.

Who will have access to the results of the study? The research will be conducted by myself as principal researcher, and my supervisor. It will be used for academic

purposes only. The data will be archived in electronic format on a password protected device at the department of music for a minimum of 15 years. During this time the anonymised data might be used for further research.

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor if you require more information about the study.

Kind regards,

Liza Cloete

(Signature of student required)

(Signature of supervisor)

Researcher name: Liza Cloete

email: lizasmit95@gmail.com

Tel.: 076 466 6415

Name of supervisor:

email:

APPENDIX D: Letter of informed consent – Reply slip (Guardian)



University of Pretoria

Faculty of Humanities

School of the Arts

LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT: REPLY SLIP

FULL NAME OF PARTICIPANT: _____

RESEARCH TOPIC: Exploring the contribution of the lyric completion songwriting technique to a music therapy assessment session

I, _____ (guardian), hereby give my consent for _____ to participate in the aforementioned research project and acknowledge that the data collected may be used in the current research. I confirm that I understand what is required in the research project. I am aware that the participant may withdraw from the study at any time, should they wish to do so.

Signature of guardian

Date

Signature of student/principal researcher

Date

Signature of supervisor

Date

APPENDIX E: Letter of assent for children under 12 years of age



University of Pretoria

Faculty of Humanities

School of the Arts

Hello _____, my name is Liza Cloete, I am a music therapy student, and I am working on a project about songwriting in music therapy. I want to ask whether you will work with me today. If you say yes, this is what we will do:

In our music therapy session together, we will play different instruments, sing and write songs together. You do not need to know how to play any of the instruments, as I will show you in our session.

1. We will only have one session together and it will take place on

_____.

2. I will also be video recording our sessions together. Those will only be for me to look at, to help me remember the songs we created together. You are also welcome to look at/listen to the recording if you want to.

I will video/audio record you as you answer the questions.

If you want to stop at any time, please tell me, or point to this picture of the stop sign.






Signature of student/principal researcher



Date

Signature of supervisor

Date

CHILD ASSENT FORM

 A yellow emoji with large blue eyes, a white hand to its chin, and a white thought bubble above its head.	<p>DO YOU UNDERSTAND EVERYTHING THAT I HAVE EXPLAINED TO YOU?</p> <p>YES NO</p>
 Two green directional signs on a post. The top sign says 'CHOICE 1' with a right-pointing arrow. The bottom sign says 'CHOICE 2' with a left-pointing arrow.	<p>DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS YOUR CHOICE TO HELP ME TODAY?</p> <p>YES NO</p>
 A red octagonal stop sign with the word 'STOP' in white, centered on a blue square background.	<p>DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU CAN STOP ANYTIME YOU WANT TO?</p> <p>YES NO</p>

	<p>DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT I WILL BE USING A VIDEO RECORDING DEVICE TODAY?</p> <p>YES NO</p>
	<p>DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS FOR ME?</p> <p>YES NO</p>

APPENDIX F: Letter of permission from the social worker



To whom it may concern,

15 Oktober 2021

The purpose of this letter is to grant the requested permission for Liza (Smit) Cloete to refer participants for further support after the conclusion of the study.

Research topic: Exploring the contribution of the lyric completion songwriting technique to a music therapy assessment session.

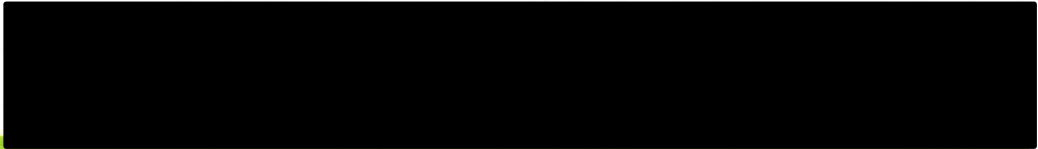
I acknowledge that it is possible that issues may emerge for the children during this process and that ongoing support may be required.

I, Janda Ferreira (social worker), hereby give permission for Liza (Smit) Cloete to refer the children with ongoing needs to me. I confirm my availability to provide further support.

Signature

2021.10.15

Date



APPENDIX G: Observation sheet

(To be completed with a short description in each block)

Verbal participation	Before songwriting process	During songwriting process	After songwriting process
Verbal participation (Responds mostly to questions or prompts/ engages comfortably in conversation/ initiates material)			
Content/ themes			

Affect	Before songwriting process	During songwriting process	After songwriting process
Range of affect (Appears withdrawn/ presents with low mood/ presents with elevated mood/ appears nervous/ appears comfortable)			

Other			
--------------	--	--	--

Self-expression	Before songwriting process	During songwriting process	After songwriting process
Communication of feelings/wants/needs (Limited/ comfortable/ age-appropriate)			
Other			

Musical participation	During the songwriting technique
Willingness/openness to participate musically	
Instrument choice	
Vocal participation	
Awareness of musical elements	

Initiating musical material	
Response to music (Limited/indifferent / strong response / Like/dislike)	
Engagement with songwriting	

APPENDIX H: Example of the song used

Original (Die Lig – Jo Black)

Edited

<p>Verse 1</p> <p>Vrees bepaal jou nie Sterk is wie jy is Jou lewe het dit al bewys Donker draaie kom Die lewe stamp jou om Jy sal weier om te lê Luister wat jou hart wil sê</p> <p>Chorus:</p> <p>Staan net op, voel die bloed deur jou are klop Dis net jy wat jouself kan stop Skree dit uit, kom wees die lig In die donker nag Brand ons vuur vir die hoop wat wag 'n Lighuis wat op die rotse staan Skree dit uit, "Kom wees die lig!"</p> <p>Verse 2</p> <p>Maak jou eie pad Gaan waar niemand gaan Jou hele lewe wag op jou In jou teenwoordigheid Moet die vrees verdwyn Wees die lig wat aanhou skyn En dryf die donker oral uit</p>	<p>Verse 1</p> <p>_____ bepaal jou nie _____ is wie jy is Jou lewe het dit al bewys _____ tye kom Die lewe _____ Jy sal weier om te _____ Luister wat jou hart wil sê</p> <p>Chorus:</p> <p>Staan net op, voel die _____ deur jou are klop Dis net jy wat _____ kan stop Skree dit uit, kom wees _____ In die donker nag Brand ons _____ vir die _____ wat wag 'n _____ wat op die rotse staan Skree dit uit, _____</p> <p>Verse 2</p> <p>Maak jou eie pad Gaan waar _____ Jou hele lewe _____ jou In jou teenwoordigheid Moet die _____ verdwyn Wees die lig wat aanhou skyn En dryf die _____ oral uit</p>
--	---

APPENDIX I: -Example of completed observation sheet

Participant D			
Verbal participation	Before	During	After
	Asked lots of questions	Unsure	Confident
	Did not wait for answers	Said "I don't know"	Used microphone when talking
	Responds comfortably, yet in short answers to questions about school etc.	Asked me to fill in the words on his behalf	
		Became more actively engaged during second half of the song	
Content/Themes	Asked about the music room		
	Asked about the instruments		
	Asked where I'm from		
Affect	Before	During	After
Range of affect	Elevated mood	Appeared eager	Elevated mood
	Appears eager	More comfortable	Playful
	Appears slightly nervous	Serious in beginning	Comfortable
	Curious	More playful later	
		Wanted to give up "I can't"	
Self-expression	Before	During	After
Communication of feelings/wants/needs	Limited	Comfortable	Reflected on his favourite lines from the song
	Asked questions about the space and environment, but did not clearly react or respond	Able to express preference of stationary	Comfortable
		Mentioned kids making fun of him at school	
		Able to reflect on words in the song	

		Complains that "he can't"	
Musical participation	During		
Willingness/ openness to participate musically	Eager to participate		
	Participation fragmented		
	Participation unsustained		
Instrument choice	Voice		
	Microphone		
	Djembe with mallet		
	Woodblock		
	hand drum		
	Bells		
Vocal participation	Comfortable		
	Eager		
	Confident		
Awareness of musical elements	Steady rhythm		
	Aware of tempo changes		
	Aware of timbre changes		
	Aware of dynamic changes		
	Cresc and accell "build- ups"		
Initiating musical material	Eager to explore in the music		
	Comfortable initiating vocal material		
	Comfortable initiating instrumental material		
Response to music	Seemed to have enjoyed the music		
	Made it his own		
	Seemed to have sought connection in the music		
Engagement with songwriting	Openly engaged		
	Needed some assistance with the concept		

	He got easily distracted by things in the environment (rain, cars driving by, dogs outside etc.) which influenced some themes of the song		
General Comments	Before	During	After
	Curious	Easily distracted	
	Explorative	Struggled with concept of fill-in-the-blanks	
		Needed guidance to sustain his engagement	

APPENDIX J: Observation sheets and raw data

See attached Excel document titled: Appendix J. observation sheets raw data

APPENDIX K: Observation sheet summaries

See attached Excel document titled: Appendix K. Observation sheet summaries

APPENDIX L: Observation sheet key features

See attached Excel document titled: Appendix L. Observation sheet Key Features

APPENDIX M Lyric completion data

See attached excel document titled: Appendix M. Lyric completion data