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Exploring Co-Occupation Between University Students and Older Adults Living Together in a Retirement Home

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Abstract

Intergenerational housing programs in which young and older adults live together have been implemented worldwide, yet research exploring these programs is sparse. An important component of intergenerational living seems to be the activities that young and older adults engage in together. Taking a lens of co-occupation, that is everyday occupations performed together by two or more people, this thesis explored how university students and older adults, living together in a retirement home, enacted co-occupations and the factors that shaped these co-occupations. A focused ethnography, involving interviews and observations, was used to gain insight into the co-occupational experiences of the students and older adults. Thematic analysis of data generated findings regarding the roles of participants, using music as a tool to connect, connecting through informal co-occupations, diverse and mutually beneficial relationships, navigating tensions regarding differing perspectives, and experiencing discrepancies between physical ability and the nature of co-occupations.

Keywords

Intergenerational housing, Co-Occupation, Older adults, University students, Focused ethnography, Transactional perspective

Summary for Lay Audience

Intergenerational housing programs create a space where young and older adults can live together. Intergenerational housing programs have been used to improve the lives of older adults by reducing loneliness, improving intergenerational relationships, building communication skills, and enhancing social connectedness. An important component of intergenerational living seems to be the activities that the young and older adults engage in together. This thesis explored how co-occupations, that is everyday occupations performed together by two or more people, were enacted between university students and older adults living together in a retirement home, including the factors that shaped the co-occupations.

Students and older adults living at the study site retirement home were recruited to participate in interviews to discuss their experiences living in an intergenerational retirement home and the co-occupations that they engaged in. In addition, the researcher observed the co-occupations that took place at the retirement home in order to better understand how they were enacted and the factors that shaped them. Transcripts of the interviews and notes and diagrams from observations were analyzed to identify important ideas and themes.

Findings from this study include insights into the different roles of the students and older adults, how music was used as a tool to connect the generations, how people connected through informal co-occupations, the diverse and mutually beneficial relationships, navigating tensions regarding differing perspectives, and experiencing discrepancies between physical ability and the nature of co-occupations. Overall, this

study contributes to the understanding of intergenerational housing programs and co-occupation between young and older adults.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Intergenerational housing programs, in which young and older adults live together, have been used to improve the lives of the aging population around the world. An important component of intergenerational living seems to be the activities that the young and older adults engage in together. This thesis aims to explore the co-occupations that take place between university students and older adults who live together in a retirement home as part of an intergenerational housing program. More specifically, this thesis aims to identify how the co-occupations are enacted and detail the factors that shape them.

1.1   What Sparked my Interest

Despite coming out of my undergraduate degree with a passion for learning about older adults and aging, I started my master's program having no clear direction of what I wanted to spend my time researching. In addition, my supervisor Carri gave me full reign to design my own research study. While there are many topics that are deserving of research in the field of aging, it is difficult to narrow it down to just one area that you want to spend the next two years of your life exploring. I asked for advice from the other students in my lab on how they came to their topics for their master's and PhD research projects. The advice that I was given was to search for topics on health and aging in various news outlets, as that is a great way to understand what topics are of current interest in the field.

A few Google searches later and I found myself diving into a topic that has garnered a lot of attention in various media outlets. This topic was intergenerational housing programs. Several articles online detailed different styles of programs in various

locations around the world in which university or college students lived together with older adults, whether that be in the older adults' home or in an institutional home designed for older adults, such as a retirement home. While there are many online news articles and videos that demonstrate intergenerational housing programs of this nature, a search of databases resulted in a dearth of academic journal articles surrounding this topic. The media focused on these programs as a unique way to form intergenerational relationships between the young and old and address social isolation concerns in the older population. This was an indication that innovative programs of this nature need to be researched further within academia. One of the first media articles I read was doing a feature of a program in which university students who were enrolled in a music master's program were able to live in a local retirement home, rent-free, in exchange for volunteering their time to play their instruments in the common areas of the home. I began contacting this retirement home to discuss my interest in their program and after many conversations back and forth this retirement home became my study site.

Despite having this area of interest, I was still unclear about what I was going to look at in the intergenerational housing program. I then took my first occupational science course. This course was my first time thoroughly learning about the concept of occupation and how it plays a role in peoples' everyday lives and society as a whole. During this class I began researching the idea of co-occupation which, in a basic sense, refer to everyday activities that people do together. I made a direct connection to the intergenerational housing program in which I was interested in researching. From that moment I became interested in thinking about the co-occupations that the students and older adults do together, what these co-occupations look like, why they do these co-

occupations, and what plays a role in shaping how these co-occupations take place. Ultimately, exploring co-occupation within an intergenerational housing program became my area of interest.

1.2 <u>Positionality</u>

When conducting qualitative research it is imperative that the researcher position themselves, paradigmatically and personally, within their research and its context as the researcher's position shapes both the research and how the findings are interpreted in the study (Creswell, 2007). This research was approached from a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm. This paradigm, and the concept of reflexivity, will be further explored in chapter three of this thesis. As I write this research report, I am a 24-year-old master's candidate whose identity is largely comprised of being a student. As a result, I share commonalities with the university students in this study and lack a complete understanding of what it is like to be an older adult within our society or live within a retirement home context. However, my ideas regarding older adults were largely shaped by my undergraduate degree where I studied health science with a focus on health and aging. I see older adults as valuable and contributing members to our society and believe that they should be afforded the opportunity to experience a high quality of life. I believe that participating in meaningful activities and conversations are ways in which individuals can sustain a high quality of life into their old age. I also believe that activities designed for older adults living in residences such as retirement homes and long-term care facilities are often activities that are stereotypical to older adults such as bingo and card games, but they are not necessarily the activities that older adults would choose to engage in themselves. Prior to beginning research at this retirement home, I had

no personal history or experience in being part of an intergenerational housing program but believed that a program of this nature has the potential to be widely beneficial for everyone involved if it is executed well. I believed that university students who would sign up to live in a retirement home would be those who were free of any strong ageist beliefs and were compassionate and empathetic towards older adults. As a result, I assumed this program would be beneficial to introduce to a retirement home simply through the students' potential to provide companionship to the older adults living in this retirement home. I believed that co-occupation between university students and older adults in this retirement home would provide both parties with a new and diverse experience where they could gain perspective from another generation. It can be assumed that all of these factors played a role in shaping this research study and a different researcher with different relationships and experiences would produce different findings (Finlay, 2002b).

1.3   Background

The world's population is aging. The world is growing older at a rapid rate as a result of decreasing fertility levels and increasing life expectancy (He, Goodkind, & Kowal, 2016). The global population of older adults aged 65 and older is projected to nearly double between the years 2025 and 2050, with the total number of older adults expected to reach 1.6 billion worldwide (He et al., 2016). Canada's population is also aging with the number of older adults in Canada in the year 2036 expected to be approximately 9.9-10.9 millions persons, nearly double the number in 2009 (Statistics Canada, 2010). In addition to low fertility and increased life expectancy, Canada's baby boomer population largely contributes to this aging population (Statistics Canada, 2019).

According to Statistics Canada (2019), the proportion of the Canadian population that is made up of seniors will continue at an accelerated pace until 2030 where it will reach between 21.4% and 23.4% in comparison to seniors contributing to only 17.8% of the Canadian population in 2018. Following 2030, the proportion of older adults in Canada will continue to increase but will do so at a much slower pace (Statistics Canada, 2019).

As the population ages, an increasing number of older adults in Canada are at risk of being socially isolated (National Seniors Council, 2014). Social isolation is defined as "a state in which the individual lacks a sense of belonging socially, lacks engagement with others, has a minimal number of social contacts and they are deficient in fulfilling and quality relationships" (Nicholson, 2009, p. 1346). Older adults are at an increased risk of social isolation because of factors such as living alone, poor health status, changes in family structures, and death within their social networks (National Seniors Council, 2014). Social isolation, in turn, can lead to poor health status and health related quality of life, as well as negative impacts on community and society as a whole (National Seniors Council, 2014). Furthermore, changes in Western culture, such as the prevalence of the nuclear family, have contributed to creating gaps between generations (Newman, Ward, Smith, Wilson, & McCrea, 2013). These gaps are seen through geographical separation, when family members move away from one another, and through social pressures, where age groups frequently congregate amongst themselves and opportunities to interact between the age groups are limited (Newman et al., 2013).

Within this context of population aging, those concerned with the health and wellbeing of older adults are looking for innovative ways to improve the lives of the world's seniors, including decreasing social isolation. One way this is being attempted is

through the use of intergenerational programs. The Beth Johnson Foundation (2001), a foundation that focuses on providing a positive impact on the lives of older adults and positive aging, has provided a well-recognized definition of intergenerational practice, they state:

> Intergenerational practice aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contributes to building more cohesive communities. Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the young and old have to offer each other and those around them.

Intergenerational programs are recognized for their ability to enable generations, which are often age-segregated, to increase positive contact and decrease social distance amongst each other (Jarrott & Bruno, 2007). Such intergenerational programs are conducted worldwide in different ways. A report by Generations United and Leading Age described that the most frequently reported perceived benefit of intergenerational programming between older adults and youth was an increased understanding of the issues that affect older adults by youth participants and decreased isolation for older adults (Henkin, Patterson, Stone, & Butts, 2017). Additionally, the report stated that both the older adults and youth involved in intergenerational programming perceived benefits of increased self-esteem and self-worth, increased trust across generations, and an increased sense of community (Henkin et al., 2017).

A limitation of intergenerational programs is that they are often short-term, which can result in superficial or fragmented relationships (Pine, 1997). In addition, the majority of intergenerational programs are aimed at connecting young children and older

adults, as opposed to young adults and older adults (Hock & Mickus, 2019). Housing facilities for older adults, such as retirement homes and long-term care facilities, are an ideal location for intergenerational programming to take place (Henkin et al., 2017). One way to bring older and younger people together in a manner that is frequent and consistent is through the use of intergenerational housing programs in which young adults and older adults live together. While innovative intergenerational housing programs have been initiated worldwide, there is limited literature about intergenerational housing generally and the experiences of young adults and older adults living together in a retirement home and engaging in activities together. Intergenerational living within a retirement home context provides an opportunity to go beyond intergenerational programs that may be superficial and fleeting and move towards programs that are prolonged and enable deeper connections to form between generations.

Existing literature suggests that the co-occupations that the young and older adults engage in together are central to intergenerational housing programs (Arentshorst, Kloet, & Peine, 2019; Hock & Mickus, 2019; Landi & Smith, 2019). Co-occupations are essentially everyday activities that are performed by two or more people. Research and theory suggests that co-occupations are a key means of connecting with others, that are shaped by many features of the person and the context (Crepeau, 2015; van Nes, Jonsson, Hirschler, Abma, & Deeg, 2012). The co-occupations that take place in an intergenerational housing setting as well as the factors that shape them are poorly understood; such knowledge could help to better understand the dynamics of intergenerational housing programs, the meanings behind the activities that are engaged in together, and the relationships that are formed.

1.4   <u>**Study Purpose and Significance**</u>

This study aimed to fill gaps in the literature by exploring the co-occupations between university students and older adults living together in a retirement home. More specifically, this study aimed to explore how these co-occupations were enacted and the factors that played a role in shaping them. Researching this topic holds significance from several perspectives. Firstly, those who are participating in this study were provided the opportunity to articulate their experience of participating in an intergenerational housing program and explain how it has impacted their lives and the co-occupations that they engage in. Enabling participants to voice their opinions can create a space to learn from their voices in order to continue to improve such programs. It is important that co-occupations were explored within intergenerational housing environments as co-occupation provides a means of connection between the generations and thus can be a key to the success of intergenerational initiatives. Additionally, exploring intergenerational housing programs within retirement homes can provide insight into the strengths and weaknesses of such programs, allowing this research to become a valuable tool for other retirement homes or long-term care facilities that are currently implementing or considering implementing such programs. Furthermore, exploring this topic allows us to further our understanding regarding the concept of co-occupation, particularly the co-occupations performed by older adults. More specifically, this study enables us to understand the concept of co-occupation within a nonfamilial intergenerational relationship that has been recently initiated.

1.5   <u>**Organization of the Thesis**</u>

In the first chapter, I have introduced what inspired my research topic and the purpose and significance of this research. In the second chapter, I provide a literature review of intergenerational housing programs as well as the concept of co-occupation and intergenerational co-occupation, demonstrating a need for research in this area. In the third chapter, I explain the methodology and methods that were used throughout this study, including, a focused ethnography methodology, interviews and observation for data collection, and thematic analysis. I also describe the social constructivist lens that guided the study and the use of the transactional perspective throughout my research. In the fourth chapter, I present the findings from the study. In the fifth and final chapter, I present a discussion of the themes extracted from the findings, examine strengths and limitations of the study, discuss proposed research and practice implications, and conclude this thesis.

1.6 <u>Definitions of Key Terms</u>

This section provides definitions for several terms that are used throughout this thesis in order to ensure readability and a shared understanding of concepts.

Occupation refers to "the everyday activities that people do as individuals, in families and with communities to occupy time and bring meaning and purpose to life. Occupations include things people need to, want to and are expected to do" (World Federation of Occupational Therapists, 2019). For example, taking care of oneself, preparing a meal, or watching a movie.

Co-Occupation is defined as "everyday occupations performed together by two or more people, involving shared time and space and involving both shared and personalized meanings" (van Nes et al., 2012, p. 352).

Intergenerational practice "aims to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities which promote greater understanding and respect between generations and contributes to building more cohesive communities. Intergenerational practice is inclusive, building on the positive resources that the young and old have to offer each other and those around them" (Centre for Intergenerational Practice: Beth Johnson Foundation, 2001).

Intergenerational housing can take many forms and a variety of definitions exist. In this thesis, intergenerational housing refers to any housing model that intentionally houses people from multiple generations together, usually organized by a specific association or a housing community. This term is used throughout this thesis to encompass a variety of diverse housing models including intergenerational home sharing (Labit & Dubost, 2016) and an intergenerational residence model (Hock & Mickus, 2019).

Retirement home refers to a "privately-owned residence that provides rental accommodation with care and services for seniors who can live independently with minimal to moderate support" (Ontario Retirement Communities Association, 2018).

The **transactional perspective** refers to the theory that a person and their social, physical, and cultural context are inextricably linked and influence each other in a reciprocal relationship (Dickie, Cutchin, & Humphry, 2006). Additionally, both the person and the context can shape the occupation and how it is enacted (Dickie et al., 2006). Furthermore, the meaning of engaging in a co-occupation is continually created through transactions between the person and their context (van Nes et al., 2012). The shared and personalized meanings of co-occupation can be seen as the outcome of the

transactions between two or more people (van Nes et al., 2012). As a result, while two

people can appear to share the context and engage in the same co-occupation they may

experience unique personalized meanings of the co-occupation (van Nes et al., 2012).

1.7   Conclusion

Intergenerational housing programs appear to be an important way of facilitating

relationship-building between younger and older adults and enhancing the quality of life

of both parties. An especially important part of intergenerational housing programs seems

to be engaging in co-occupations as they are a means of forming a relationship with

others. The media, my positionality, and previous literature all contributed to my interest

in this research topic. In the next chapter, I review the previous literature surrounding the

research topic.

Chapter 2: Literature Background

In this chapter, I provide a review of the literature surrounding the research topic. I begin by detailing what is known about the characteristics and outcomes of intergenerational programs that involve young and older adults including intergenerational service-learning programs, reverse mentoring, as well as youth volunteering in long-term care facilities. Next, I describe various forms of intergenerational housing programs and their expected outcomes including intergenerational home sharing, intergenerational cohousing communities, university-based retirement communities (UBRC), and intergenerational living within institutional residences for older adults. Next, I review how co-occupation has been conceptualized within the literature and summarize research addressing familial intergenerational co-occupations as well as the co-occupations of older adults. Lastly, I explore gaps in the literature and explain the rationale for this study.

2.1   Intergenerational Programming between Young Adults and Older Adults

This section describes the types and potential benefits of formalized intergenerational programming as outlined in the literature, excluding intergenerational housing programs. These programs include intergenerational service-learning, reverse mentoring, and youth volunteering in long-term care facilities as these appear to be the most common program types within the literature.

Intergenerational service-learning is a recognized method of teaching in which students engage in community service throughout the duration of an academic course (Roodin, Brown, & Shedlock, 2013). Karasik, Maddox, and Wallingford (2004) explain that intergenerational service-learning is becoming an increasingly popular means of

integrating the community into traditional school courses. Furthermore, intergenerational

service-learning has been recognized as a way to enable students to effectively learn

course material while at the same time providing service throughout the community

(Roodin et al., 2013). Intergenerational service-learning most frequently has taken place

amongst undergraduate and graduate students within gerontology courses and within a

variety of diverse disciplines including nursing, occupational therapy (Karasik et al.,

2004), and business (Hanks & Icenogle, 2001). Intergenerational service-learning is

characterized by paying equal attention to service and learning as well as providing

benefits to both the students and the older adults (Andreoletti & Howard, 2018).

Several studies have explored intergenerational service-learning. In a study that

looked at intergenerational activities between older adults at a retirement community and

university students, Arguilera-Hermida, Anderson, and Negrón (2020) found that both

the students and the older adults preferred participating in activities that included higher

conversation levels, such as committees, meals, one on one activities, and transportation

(Aguilera-Hermida et al., 2020). Intergenerational service-learning is well-documented as

a tool used to improve intergenerational relationships and communication (Anstee,

Harris, Pruitt, & Sugar, 2008; Augustin & Freshman, 2016; Covan, 2001; Penick,

Fallshore, & Spencer, 2014; Strom & Strom, 2015; Tam, 2014). Additionally, Karasik et

al. (2004) explain that intergenerational service-learning can be used to break down

students' negative views of the aging process and older adults in general. Despite the

perceived benefits of intergenerational service-learning, these programs often do not

create lasting and meaningful relationships as the programs often only take place over the

course of a single semester and do not always focus on promoting social connectedness (Aguilera-Hermida et al., 2020).

Reverse mentoring is defined as "an intergenerational approach that engages young adults in providing needed support and knowledge to older adults" (Breck, Dennis, & Leedahl, 2018, p. 514). In reverse mentoring young adults share their technological expertise or generational perspective with someone from an older generation (Murphy & Dingwall, 2001). Reverse mentoring has been used as a means to reduce social isolation in older adults by improving social connection through digital competence and interaction with young adults who act as mentors (Breck et al., 2018). In a phenomenological study by Breck et al. (2018) the researchers found that both younger and older adults benefit from participation in reverse mentoring. Breck et al. (2018) concluded that reverse mentoring led to increased self-efficacy in both young and older adults, reduced age-related stereotypes, intergenerational engagement, and social connection. Furthermore, in a study by Leedahl et al. (2019) the researchers surveyed students and older adults before and after participating in a reverse mentoring pilot program. Leedahl et al. (2019) identified significant improvement in student attitudes towards aging, confidence in teaching older adults, and comfort in working with older adults. Leedahl et al. (2019) also found that the older adults experienced increased interest in working with technology, valued the intergenerational relationships that were formed, and appreciated reverse mentoring as an educational approach for learning about technology.

In addition to intergenerational service-learning and reverse mentoring, studies have examined the interactions of young and older adults in the context of young adults

volunteering in long-term care facilities. A literature review by Blais, McCleary, Garcia, and Robitaille (2017) examined studies regarding high school and university students volunteering within long-term care homes. The researchers identified that benefits for students included "positive attitudes about aging, understanding the importance of autonomy and dignity of residents, enhanced communication skills, career-related learning, and positive feelings about developing relationships with residents" (Blais et al., 2017, p. 265). Benefits for the older adult residents included "improved communication abilities, engagement and pleasure in arts activities with youth volunteers, and enhanced well-being" (Blais et al., 2017, p. 265). Additionally, Blais et al. (2017) found that the youth and older adult residents were able to develop reciprocal relationships in that the youth were volunteering their time to spend with the older adults while the older adults were able to engage in social roles, such as being a mentor, that are often lost in older age.

2.2 __Intergenerational Housing Programs__

Intergenerational housing programs have been referred to by a plethora of different names such as intergenerational living, multigenerational living, cohousing, intergenerational home sharing, or student-senior home-sharing model. These housing programs take place in a variety of housing types ranging from senior's personal homes to university campuses to intergenerational communities to programs that exist within retirement homes. While these programs vary in their model and style, they all have one thing in common: they create a living environment in which the young and old live in close proximity to one another. Labit and Dubost (2016) state that an intergenerational housing model can alleviate many societal problems by providing a "good solution from

both an economic and social point of view; it could help lower old-age-related public expenditure due to an ageing population and improve older people's quality of life by placing the emphasis on personal autonomy and communal solidarity" (p.46). Additionally, intergenerational housing models often aim to support aging-in-place. Aging-in-place refers to "remaining living in the community, with some level of independence, rather than in residential care" (Davey, Nana, de Joux, & Arcus, 2004, p. 133).

The following sections describe the key characteristics as well as research regarding perceived benefits and drawbacks of a variety of intergenerational housing programs. First, I provide a brief review of intergenerational home sharing, intergenerational cohousing communities, and UBRCs. Lastly, I provide an in-depth exploration of intergenerational living within institutional residences for older adults.

2.2.1   Intergenerational Home Sharing

Intergenerational home sharing refers to the process by which students or young adults pay reduced rent in order to live within an older adult's home (McMaster University Graduate Studies, 2020; Toronto HomeShare Program, 2019). Home sharing programs appear to be a viable option for individuals living with a low income or living in places with limited affordable accommodations, often within large cities (Labit & Dubost, 2016). Furthermore, intergenerational home sharing has been recognized as a possible solution to "social isolation and the desire to age-in-community among older adults" (Gonzales, Whetung, Kruchten, & Butts, 2020, p. 179). Aging-in-community or aging-in-place can be made possible through home sharing as the older adult can gain "additional income, companionship, and assistance with completing household tasks"

(Mirza et al., 2019, p. 154). Fox (2010) explained that home sharing programs are more applicable to urban areas as there are often many older adults living alone, accommodations are typically expensive, and there is often a large student population, in comparison to rural areas.

Home sharing programs often use tools such as surveys or profiles to match students and older adults based on compatibility (Fox, 2010; Gonzales et al., 2020; Labit & Dubost, 2016; McMaster University Graduate Studies, 2020; The Canadian Press, 2018). As the intergenerational relationship is a large component of home sharing, the matchmaking process appeared to be critical to the success of a home sharing arrangement (Fox, 2010). It also appeared that having a signed agreement or contract regarding the terms of the arrangement, as well as having continued support and assistance in conflict resolution throughout the duration of the arrangement, plays a role in ensuring a positive home sharing experience (Labit & Dubost, 2016; Yeung, 2019).

The concept of intergenerational home sharing originated in Spain (Labit & Dubost, 2016) but has been seen throughout the world recently, including North America and throughout Canada. Within Ontario, there appear to be a few home sharing programs. A program called Symbiosis started in Hamilton, Ontario in 2017 that aimed to match students from McMaster University with older adults (55+ years of age) living alone throughout the community (McMaster University Graduate Studies, 2020; Roussy, 2018). Symbiosis was initiated with the intent of creating mutually beneficial and symbiotic relationships (Roussy, 2018). Symbiosis attempted to increase the social inclusion of older adults within the community (McMaster University Graduate Studies, 2020). Additionally, in May 2018 the National Initiative for the Care of the Elderly (NICE)

implemented a home sharing program in Toronto called the Toronto HomeShare Pilot Project (Mirza et al., 2019; The Canadian Press, 2018; Toronto HomeShare Program, 2019). This program was provincially funded in attempts to set a standard for intergenerational home sharing within Canada (The Canadian Press, 2018). Many older adults and seniors believed that they benefited from being involved in the Toronto HomeShare Pilot Project, reporting a decrease in both social isolation and financial burden (Toronto HomeShare Program, 2019). At this time, these appear to be the only intergenerational home sharing programs in Ontario.

Many authors have described the potential benefits of home sharing living arrangements. Fox (2010) detailed that successful home sharing arrangements can reduce the need for care services for older adults and therefore reduce spending on health and emergency services. Gonzales et al. (2020) detailed the expected outcomes of home sharing programs from an individual, municipal, and societal level. These authors state that home sharing programs can benefit both students and older adults at an individual level through enhanced affordability of education and housing, a positive impact on psychological health, feelings of security, independence, social capital, increased communication between generations, quality companionship, and reduced ageism and loneliness. Furthermore, Gonzales et al. (2020) described increased housing affordability as an outcome of home sharing at a municipal level. Lastly, Gonzales et al. (2020) expect that home sharing can create changes in cultural norms and public policy at a societal level.

Other authors have reported on research regarding the outcomes of home sharing. Martinez et al. (2020) conducted a scoping review involving six home sharing articles to

look at the impact of home sharing on older adults. This research found that all older adults who participated in home sharing reported the benefits of doing so (Martinez et al., 2020). These benefits were grouped into the categories of benefits associated with companionship, benefits associated with receiving support in daily tasks, and the financial benefit of home sharing (Martinez et al., 2020). Four of the six articles cited self-reported disadvantages or challenges associated with the older adults sharing their homes including navigating boundaries of shared space and time, navigating interpersonal boundaries, discomfort with the unfamiliar, and challenges in communication (Martinez et al., 2020).

2.2.2   Intergenerational Cohousing Communities

Cohousing, a concept that originated in Denmark in the 1970s, has seen a recent resurgence as the world's population ages (Labit, 2015). Cohousing has been recognized as a viable housing model for seniors in Europe, North America, Australia and Japan (Labit, 2015). Cohousing communities are comprised of "several independent homes in combination with shared spaces and facilities, which support living together, balancing privacy and communality" (Beck, 2020, p. 40). Intergenerational cohousing communities encourage people of all ages to live amongst each other and interact through a variety of activities (Lyon, 2012). Intergenerational cohousing communities are typically made up of approximately 20 condos or townhomes attached together as well as outdoor grounds and a common house equipped with a community kitchen and rooms for meetings or activities (Abrahms, 2011). Members of the cohousing community either rent or buy the units depending on the specific cohousing community in which they live (Abrahms, 2011). One important characteristic of cohousing initiatives is that they are self-managed

(Labit & Dubost, 2016). The group of individuals who live in the cohousing community are involved throughout the entire duration of creating and maintaining the community, ultimately creating their own rules and making decisions via consensus of the group (Abrahms, 2011). According to the Cohousing Network of Canada (2020) there is currently only one completed cohousing community in Ontario, in Ottawa, while nine additional communities are in the process of forming or developing. Of these ten communities, seven are identified as intergenerational or multigenerational communities, two are intended for seniors only, and the remaining community has not yet decided upon the intended occupants (Canadian Cohousing Network, 2020). These future intergenerational cohousing communities are currently forming in Toronto, Ottawa, Peterborough, London, and Waterloo (Canadian Cohousing Network, 2020).

Research regarding intergenerational cohousing has explored benefits and challenges. Wechuli (2017) identified many benefits such as creating living arrangements outside of family ties, creating a "good neighbourhood", and providing opportunities for people to interact with one another. These authors also emphasized that cohousing communities cannot replace long-term nursing care for older adults. Wechuli (2017) therefore recommended that cohousing communities should be created as a means to foster quality of life not as a means of reducing costs associated with receiving care as an older adult. Furthermore, a study by Riedy, Wynne, Mckenna and Daly (2019) examined the potential of cohousing as a policy response to the housing challenges faced by older adults in Australia such as supply, accessibility, affordability, security of tenure and isolation. Specific to intergenerational cohousing, Riedy et al. (2019) identified that "perspectives on whether intergenerational housing would likely be popular were mixed,

though there was broad agreement that it is likely to be a personal preference" (p. 235).

Lastly, a case study by Hacke, Müller, & Dütschke (2018) explored six cohousing

initiatives in Germany including four that were multigenerational. Hacke at al. (2018)

identified many internal and external benefits of cohousing initiatives from a social,

economic, and ecological perspective. Examples of internal benefits included interaction,

assistance, and self-governing (social); sharing culture, secure living, and low operating

costs (economic); and car-reduced, space-saving, resource-saving living (ecological)

(Hacke et al., 2018). Examples of external benefits included initiating new projects, open

events, and motivation for neighbourhood development (social); use of common areas

and providers of outpatient care (economic); and model characters for new projects

(ecological) (Hacke et al., 2018). Despite these benefits Hacke at al. (2018) suggested

that there are many barriers that hinder the implementation and spread of cohousing

communities such as a long search and development process and a shortage of people to

inform these projects.

2.2.3   UBRCs

UBRCs are retirement communities that are built on large campuses belonging to

universities (Carle, 2006). Montepare, Farah, Doyle, and Dixon (2019) state that although

"UBRCs vary in the strength of their institutional affiliation, their proximity offers

opportunities for lifelong learning and social connectedness as part of an academic

community" (p. 180). A longstanding UBRC program at Purdue University has created

educational opportunities, faculty research, undergraduate internships, and intellectual

wellness programs while providing training opportunities for students in programs such

as health and medicine (Logan, 2012). UBRC partnerships have been most common in

the United States where there are approximately 100 UBRCs as of 2019 with this number expected to rise over the coming years (Carle, 2006; Montepare et al., 2019). UBRC partnerships have not been as widespread in Canada (Aschaiek, 2016). Within Ontario, there only appears to be retirement villages on the campuses of the University of Guelph as well as the University of Waterloo (Aschaiek, 2016).

Montepare et al. (2019) explain that existing UBRC partnerships have been noted to increase student's literacy regarding aging courses as well as benefitting older adult residents by creating social connections and granting them access to wellness programs available at the university (2019). Additionally, Montepare et al. (2019) have stated that embedding retirement communities on college and university campuses leads to more sustainable partnerships than relationships that are formed with off-campus retirement communities. UBRC partnerships appear to be more sustainable than off-campus retirement communities as a result of the students and older adults being closer in proximity to each other and the bond formed by living on a shared campus (Montepare et al., 2019). Furthermore, a report by Henkin et al. (2017) that discusses intergenerational programming in senior housing has identified that partnering with educational institutions such as universities and colleges can "help expand the social networks of older adults, create meaningful civic engagement opportunities, and build social capital within the broader community" (p. 3).

2.2.4   Intergenerational Living in Institutional Residences for Older Adults

Intergenerational living programs that take place within an institutional residence for older adults, such as retirement homes and long-term care or assisted living facilities, have been initiated worldwide. In these programs, university or college students live in

the residences, with many programs providing free accommodations for the students (Ghonaim, 2017; Hock & Mickus, 2019; Humanitas, n.d.; Where We Live, 2019; Whitaker & Tonkin, 2019). According to the literature, the most widely recognized programs include the Humanitas Home in Deventer, Netherlands; a partnership between the Cleveland Institute of Music and Judson Manor in Cleveland, Ohio, USA; as well as a long-standing partnership between the University of Southern California and Kingsley Retirement Home in Los Angelos, California, USA (Hock & Mickus, 2019). Lately, intergenerational housing programs within residences for older adults have been replicated throughout North America, spreading across the United States (Hock & Mickus, 2019; Thielking, 2017; Where We Live, 2019) as well as Canada (Ghonaim, 2017; Rolfe, 2017).

The goals of intergenerational living programs differ. Frequent goals include reducing the social isolation of older adults, forming meaningful connections between generations, reducing student costs associated with obtaining a higher education degree, increasing the understanding of older adults by future health care professionals, writing life stories for the memoirs of older adults, as well as performing music as entertainment for the older adults (Ghonaim, 2017; Hock & Mickus, 2019; Rolfe, 2017; Thielking, 2017; Where We Live, 2019). Most of these programs involve graduate students (Ghonaim, 2017; Hock & Mickus, 2019; Where We Live, 2019), but some programs include undergraduate students (Rolfe, 2017). The students involved in these programs come from a variety of disciplines including occupational therapy (Hock & Mickus, 2019), music (Ghonaim, 2017; Where We Live, 2019), gerontology (Shippee, Schafer, & Pallone, 2008; Thielking, 2017), and English (Rolfe, 2017). Hock and Mickus (2019)

have stated that intergenerational living programs within residences for older adults seem to provide a better alternative for creating meaningful relationships between young and older adults when compared to typical higher education, non-residential programs which generally provide short-term contact within these facilities in exchange for an academic credit. Furthermore, Hock and Mickus (2019) suggested that the typical short-term interactions with older adults might even contribute to increasing negative stereotypes of older adults and age-related biases.

While intergenerational housing programs all follow the structure of having university or college students live in retirement homes or long-term care facilities, some of their features differ. One way in which they differ is the number of students that are living in the residences. Humanitas included six young adults in their home (Landi & Smith, 2019), while other programs only detailed having three students (Hock & Mickus, 2019). It can be assumed that this number is dependent on the number of older adults in each home as well as the residence's capacity to house students. Additionally, the length of time the students stay at the residence fluctuates amongst these programs. Some programs have the students living at the retirement home for a single year of their academic studies (Ghonaim, 2017), while other programs have the students living in the residence for the duration of their studies (Hock & Mickus, 2019; Landi & Smith, 2019). Despite the students staying at the residence throughout their entire studies, Hock and Mickus (2019) detailed that in the program they piloted the students lived at the residence for only 18 months, while Landi and Smith (2019) explained that Humanitas students stayed in the residence an average of three and a half years. In these programs, students were expected to spend time with the older adults, with their weekly and monthly time

commitments differing between programs. Some programs required that the students each spend 30 hours per month with the older adults, ideally one hour per day (Hock & Mickus, 2019; Landi & Smith, 2019), while others aimed slightly higher for 10-12 hours per week (Ghonaim, 2017). Other programs discussed in the academic literature do not provide details of the number of hours that the students were required to commit to spending with the older adults. Despite these differences across the intergenerational housing programs, student recruitment methods appeared to be fairly consistent, involving emails and information regarding the program sent to prospective students, followed by interviews with the students to ensure they would be a good fit for the program (Hock & Mickus, 2019; Landi & Smith, 2019).

While many of these programs have garnered local, national, and international media attention, there is very little scholarly literature surrounding intergenerational living programs of this nature. Landi and Smith (2019) used a Post-Occupancy Evaluation methodology to evaluate the care model and the built environment at the Humanitas home in Deventer, Netherlands. Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE) is an architectural methodology that aims to focus on a singular element of the "physical settings of a building by measuring relationships and providing observations on how the building performs post-occupation" and "reveals the activities and goals of the people using the building" (Landi & Smith, 2019, p. 2). The authors explored activities that took place throughout the home using behavioural mapping, qualitative interviews, and semi-structured questionnaires (Landi & Smith, 2019). This study identified that the Humanitas program was based on the concepts of social reciprocity and collaboration in order to generate a strong community (Landi & Smith, 2019). Landi and Smith (2019)

explained that the students living at Humanitas were able to interact with the older adults in whatever capacity they wished, stating that the younger adults most often spent their time with the older adults teaching them how to use various forms of technology, while the older adults often relayed personal life experiences to the students as well as taught them traditional hobbies (Landi & Smith, 2019). As a result, Landi and Smith (2019) described that the students and the older adults had a mutual relationship, in which the older adults gained information and skills and the students obtained increased knowledge regarding old age and the aging process.

Furthermore, the Humanitas home was explored by Arenthorst, Kloet, and Peine (2019), who examined a case study of the home to understand the elements that contributed to Humanitas successfully transitioning into an intergenerational housing arrangement. Arenthorst et al. (2019) used a variety of methods to gain in-depth insight into the Humanitas home including interviews with management, employees, and students (n=8), onsite visits where observations and walking interviews took place, and the analysis of documents and external communications pertaining to Humanitas. Arenthorst et al. (2019) detailed that having students living in the home created a lively, joyful, and inclusive living environment. Furthermore, living alongside six students enabled the older adults to have new interesting conversation topics, reconnect with their youth through the students' stories and love lives, and bring the outside world in through the students' relaying their experience outside of the home (Arentshorst et al., 2019). Moreover, Arenthorst et al. (2019) explained that the students often helped the older adults use technology and social media as well as played games, went shopping, and visited restaurants together.

Lastly, Hock and Mickus (2019) assessed a pilot program in the United States in which three occupational therapy students lived in an 80 person assisted living facility in order to prepare the students for future work with the aging population. This program was based on learnings from the Humanitas home (Hock & Mickus, 2019). Little information is provided regarding the activities that the older adults and students performed together in this study, but the researchers explain that activity was logged monthly into three categories: individual recreation, conversation, or mealtime (Hock & Mickus, 2019). Hock and Mickus (2019) utilized semi-structured interviews with students, staff, and residents to explore the challenges and benefits associated with an intergenerational residential model (as they referred to this living situation) as well as recommendations for those thinking of initiating a program of this nature. The challenges of this intergenerational residence model included a lack of understanding of the students' role by the staff members, the residents' perceptions about the cost of having the students live at the facility, students' privacy, and demand for student time (Hock & Mickus, 2019). The perceived benefits of the model were students' increased knowledge of older adults and skills for communicating with older adults, a reduction of higher education expenses for students, more social activities and support for older adults, as well as more tolerance and understanding between the generations (Hock & Mickus, 2019). Lastly, Hock and Mickus (2019) provided four key learnings and recommendations suggesting that no additional resources were needed to support the program, there was difficultly recruiting students, clear expectation of student roles must be established, and students required on-going support throughout the duration of the program.

2.3   **Co-Occupation**

The available literature on intergenerational housing suggests that doing activities together across generations was central to the success of these programs within institutional residences for older adults. All presented studies discussed forms of doing together between the generations as elements of importance to participating in an intergenerational housing program. Furthermore, doing together can be seen as the building blocks of creating and maintaining mutually beneficial intergenerational relationships. Thus, in applying an occupational science lens, the act of doing together can be framed as engaging in co-occupation. Co-occupation is a term that originated in the occupational science literature in 1990 (Pierce, 2009). Various definitions and perspectives of the term co-occupation have been introduced over the years, resulting in diverse study topics and design. The definition that I used for my research is "everyday occupations performed together by two or more people, involving shared time and space and involving both shared and personalized meanings" (van Nes et al., 2012, p. 352). This definition is consistent with both my epistemological position as well as the theoretical perspective that I applied to this study. The following sections of this literature review will discuss the origin of the concept of co-occupation and examine how this concept is taken up within intergenerational and aging research.

2.3.1   Intergenerational Co-Occupation

Over the past three decades, since the formation of the term co-occupation, the majority of literature surrounding the concept focused on mother-child relationships (Dalvand et al., 2015; Olson, 2006; Pizur-Barnekow, Kamp, & Cashin, 2014; Poskey, Pizur-Barnekow, & Hersch, 2014; Price & Miner, 2008; Price & Stephenson, 2009; Slootjes, Mckinstry, & Kenny, 2016; Visser et al., 2016; Whitcomb, 2012). Pizur-

Barnekow, Kamp, and Cashin (2014) have attributed this focus to the fact that infancy is the life stage that is most heavily characterized by co-occupation when compared to all other life stages. When the term was first identified, it actually came as a result of a researcher engaging in an intergenerational co-occupation with her young daughter (Pierce, 2009). In addition to mother-child relationships, the co-occupational literature also includes studies of co-occupations that take place between parents and children in general (Mason & Conneeley, 2012; Olsen, 2006).

2.3.2   Co-Occupation within Aging Literature

Recently, studies have addressed older adults' engagement in co-occupation with other older adults (Crepeau, 2015; van Nes et al., 2012; van Nes, Runge, & Jonsson, 2009). Such studies often point to the idea that disruption in co-occupational experiences may reduce the social participation of older adults, ultimately leading to social isolation and increased symptoms of physical or mental illness (Pickens & Pizur-Barnekow, 2009). Two studies by van Nes et al. (2012, 2009) explored co-occupation in older adult couples. In the first study, van Nes et al. (2009) used an exploratory case study methodology with a narrative approach to study an older husband and wife's experience of everyday co-occupations three years after the wife had experienced a stroke. These authors conducted individual and joint interviews in order to create narratives from the data. Van Nes et al. (2009) found that the couple acted as a single entity as the majority of their daily occupations were intertwined. The couple identified as having one body (referring to the way that the participants' coordinate all of their doing together), three hands (referring to the couple's ability to be most effective when their assets are combined), and two minds (referring to the similarities and differences in the couple's

thinking) (van Nes et al., 2009). The study findings challenge an individualistic view of occupation and demonstrate the importance of viewing the interaction between an individual and their environment, including their social context, as looking at just one individual in this scenario would have told a very different story (van Nes et al., 2009).

Additionally, van Nes et al. (2012) used a photo elicitation methodology to explore the meaning of an older couple's most valued co-occupation, going for a walk together. In this study, van Nes et al. (2012) interviewed the participants and used photos to stimulate reflections and interview conversations. Van Nes et al. (2012) found that the couple believed that walking was a way of representing their togetherness while still being individuals, something that the couple had always done together, something that enabled the couple to experience freedom each in unique ways, and provided an opportunity to come across new things. Furthermore, van Nes et al. (2012) used the transactional perspective to explain the process of meaning creation regarding this co-occupation. Van Nes et al. (2012) suggested that it is important to focus on both the shared and personalized meanings of co-occupation and highlighted the "importance of continuity of meanings of co-occupation for maintaining both individual and couple identities" (p. 341). The researchers therefore proposed that maintaining meaningful co-occupations in later life may contribute to the health and wellbeing of older adults (van Nes et al., 2012).

Furthermore, in a study by Crepeau (2015) the researcher used an ethnographic methodology to study the community co-occupation of older adults preparing and serving church suppers together in New England. Crepeau (2015) used participant observation to study six consecutive church suppers. Crepeau (2015) identified that situational factors

such as "individual and group relationships, habits and routines, and the cultural, social, and historical context" (p. 54) played a role in shaping the community co-occupation of church suppers. Applying the transactional perspective prompted the researchers to move beyond viewing individual actions and develop a more thorough understanding of the occupational nature of community life (Crepeau, 2015). Additionally, this study adds to our understanding regarding the multiple forms of coordination and collaboration that took place when many people come together to perform community co-occupations of this nature (Crepeau, 2015).

Common across these three articles regarding co-occupation in older adults is the use of the transactional perspective. The articles by Crepeau (2015) and van Nes et al. (2012) explicitly stated their use of the transactional perspective to inform their research, and while the earlier article by van Nes et al. (2009) did not explicitly state the use of the transactional perspective, but rather discussed moving occupational science away from an individualistic view of occupation towards a more singular view of the person and their environment, which is a key component of the transactional perspective (van Nes et al., 2009). Van Nes et al. (2012) used the transactional perspective to describe the process of meaning creation of a couple's valued co-occupation, while Crepeau (2015) used the transactional perspective to explore a community co-occupation and how it was embedded within its 40-year history in the church and throughout the community. In addition, these studies highlight the importance of co-occupation as it has the ability to contribute to meaningful engagement and one's identity. In regard to shared meaning, Van Nes et al. (2009) identified that when engaging in a co-occupation the couple could have similar meanings, could each hold a different meaning, or could even have

somewhat conflicting meanings. Furthermore, Van Nes et al. (2012) discussed the presence of shared meanings of co-occupation but also recognized the unique personalized meanings held by each participant. Lastly, Crepeau (2015) defined the community co-occupation of the church supper by Pickens and Pizur-Barnekow's (2009) definition of co-occupation which includes shared physicality, shared emotionality, and shared intentionality, all of which are embedded within a shared meaning.

2.4   **Gaps and Study Rationale**

This study aims to address gaps in the literature and provide relevant information about the co-occupations that take place between older and younger adults living together in a retirement home. Provided by the review above, it is evident that there are gaps in the literature surrounding the current research focus. Firstly, while the benefits of non-residential intergenerational programs between higher education students and older adults have been well-documented through studies regarding service-learning, a noted limitation of these programs is the short time frame and the accompanying negative impact on ability to form meaningful relationships. Exploring intergenerational housing programs, where students and older adults can live together and interact for a lengthier period of time can enable a better understanding of what extended contact looks like between these generations as well as their ability to initiate and maintain relationships throughout this time. Despite the attraction to intergenerational housing programs by both older adult residences and media outlets worldwide, research regarding these programs remains limited in the formal academic literature. It is necessary to explore these programs, their processes, and their outcomes to identify the potential of these programs and inform future research and practice.

The few studies regarding intergenerational residence models all addressed the activities that the young and old performed together, despite the fact that each study focused on diverse aspects of the housing arrangement including an evaluation of the built environment and care approach (Landi & Smith, 2019), an analysis of the shift to inclusive long-term elderly care (Arentshorst et al., 2019), and exploring the benefits and challenges of these programs including recommendations for future application (Hock & Mickus, 2019). From reviewing these studies, it appears that activities seem to be important to intergenerational housing programs. It is evident through this literature review that there is a lack of in-depth information regarding the activities that take place between older adults and young adults living together within these residences. While some studies have named some specific activities that the young and older adults perform together, no studies have explicitly explored the process of co-occupation as well as the factors that support and constrain it. In fact, the previous literature by Landi and Smith (2019), Arenthorst et al. (2019), and Hock and Mickus (2019) provided only broad categories and descriptions of shared doing between the students and the older adults. Given that co-occupation is arguably the key element of any intergenerational program as evidenced by its discussion within each identified research study, it is important to understand the co-occupations that take place and the processes of co-occupation. Furthermore, it is important to understand the co-occupations the students and older adults prefer to perform, as explored in the literature by Aguilera-Hermida, Anderson, Negrón (2020) in the context of non-residential programs.

Moreover, while previous literature on co-occupation details familial intergenerational co-occupations, such as mother-child relationships, there is an absence

of literature that specifically targets non-familial intergenerational co-occupations. This study can inform literature on co-occupation by detailing examples of non-familial intergenerational co-occupations that take place between university students and older adults. Exploring the factors that shape these co-occupations can provide useful information to inform many types of intergenerational programs. Additionally, this study can add to the literature regarding co-occupation performed by older adults by expanding the variety of co-occupations that have been explored as well as identifying co-occupational opportunities within a retirement home setting.

2.5   Conclusion

This chapter summarized literature relevant to intergenerational housing programs and intergenerational co-occupation and provided a rationale for the study presented in this thesis. The following chapter describes the study methodology and methods.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Methods

In this chapter, I present the methodology and methods used in this research study. Firstly, I describe the methodology of focused ethnography and its applicability to the current research project. Secondly, I describe my paradigmatic stance as a researcher, specifically, a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm and explain the implications this stance has for this research. Additionally, I discuss the theoretical underpinnings of this research by explaining the transactional perspective and its implications for my research study. Next, I detail the study site, sampling and recruitment methods, followed by data collection methods that were used including interviews and observations. Next, I describe the process of using thematic analysis for data analysis, detailing each phase of the process. Additionally, I discuss the quality criteria used to evaluate 'goodness' in focused ethnography and the ways in which I strove to promote quality. Lastly, I address ethical issues that were considered throughout this research project.

3.1   <u>Methodology: Focused Ethnography</u>

The qualitative research methodology that I used for this study was focused ethnography. Knoblauch (2005) explains that focused ethnography should be seen as complementary to conventional ethnography and not in opposition to it. In ethnographic studies "the ethnographer participates, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions" (p. 2) to understand the context of interest (Hammersley, 2007). Focused ethnography is essentially an ethnographic study that focuses on "small elements of one's own society" (Knoblauch, 2005, p. 5). Focused ethnographies involve researching focused aspects of a field in contrast to attempting to research a field as a whole, making

it an appropriate methodology for exploring co-occupation within an intergenerational housing program as opposed to exploring the intergenerational housing program as a whole (Knoblauch, 2005). Richards and Morse (2013) further explain that focused ethnographic studies are often conducted within a subcultural group within the researcher's own culture, with culture broadly referring to the society that one lives within. Muecke (1994) states that these subcultural groups are often a fairly discrete community or organization. For example, focused ethnographies have been identified as beneficial in researching institutions (Richards & Morse, 2013). Although the study site of the retirement home is a culture that was previously unknown and unfamiliar to the researcher, it existed within the community that the researcher was living in during the time of this research study and therefore would be considered a subculture to the researcher. Additionally, Knoblauch (2005) stated that focused ethnographies tend to study situations, interactions, and activities while analyzing the structure and patterns of interaction. This is consistent with the goals of my research as the co-occupations that I explored were defined and characterized by the situations, interactions, and activities that they occurred within.

3.1.1   Paradigmatic Considerations: Constructivist-Interpretivist

Upon choosing to conduct a qualitative study, the investigator begins to shape their research by reflecting on how they view knowledge and reality and situating their research within a commensurate research paradigm (Creswell, 2007). Paradigms are considered a set of basic beliefs that shape and reflect the way researchers see the world (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). According to Guba and Lincoln (1994), these beliefs are "a

world view that defines, for its holder, the nature of the "world", the individual's place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts" (p. 107).

In good research, it is imperative that researchers make clear their personal assumptions and the research paradigm in which their research is situated, as these elements shape the research study at hand (Creswell, 2007). The current research study was approached from a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, a combination of two paradigms that are often used together in research (Creswell, 2007). Constructivist-interpretivist paradigms "share the goal of understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it" (Schwandt, 1998, p. 221). Constructivist research aims to understand the world around us by creating subjective meanings of experiences (Creswell, 2007). Similarly, the interpretivist paradigm concerns understanding the meaning behind something (O'Donoghue, 2018). Within the interpretivist paradigm, O'Donoghue (2018) states that "the researcher uses his or her skills as a social being to try to understand how others understand their word" (p. 9). Additionally, in an interpretivist paradigm knowledge is obtained through the process of social interaction (O'Donoghue, 2018).

Creswell (2007) explains that "constructivist researchers often address the 'processes' of interaction among individuals" (p. 21). Within the constructivist paradigm researchers assume that multiple realities exist in comparison to a positivist approach which assumes and ultimately searches for one singular "truth" or reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, realities are unique to each individual (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Some elements of the "realities" may be consistent amongst individuals or cultures while some realities may conflict with each other entirely

(Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These individual realities are only elicited and refined or reconstructed through dialogue between the researcher and study participants (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Ponterotto (2005) explains that meanings are hidden within the participants and are only brought to consciousness through deep reflection, thus emphasizing the centrality of dialogue between the researcher and their participants. In order for the researcher to understand the meaning they must interpret it (Schwandt, 1998). Additionally, constructivism is characterized by the transactional and subjective nature between the researcher and those being investigated (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). In the constructivist paradigm it is assumed that the researcher and their participants are "interactively linked" and that knowledge is the result of the co-construction between the researcher and the participants (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

A constructivist-interpretivist paradigm aligns with the chosen research goal of this study as I aimed to uncover the multiple realities or perspectives of the study participants' personal experience living at a retirement home equipped with an intergenerational housing program. The known experience of living within this particular context is something that exists only within the target population of this study. Through dialogue and interaction between the researcher and the participants, the multiple meanings of this experience were uncovered, extracted, and interpreted by the researcher. As a result, these meanings can be considered co-constructed by the researcher and the participants of the research study. It is my assumption that the reality of this housing program is diverse between, as well as amongst, the students and the older adults. I was not intending to identify a grand singular truth in regards to this program but instead was interested in how this lived experience was perceived from various individuals who

participate in this program and how it was situated in the context of the retirement home and experienced through co-occupations.

One of the defining features of qualitative research and a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm is engagement in reflexivity by the researcher (Finlay, 2002a). Finlay (2002b) defines reflexivity as "thoughtful, conscious awareness" that "encompasses continual evaluation of subjective responses, intersubjective dynamics, and the research process itself" (p. 532). Reflexivity is a process that is ongoing through every stage of a research study (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). When conducting research from a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, one must be aware of how their personal behaviors, biases, relationships, and social context influence all aspects of the research project (Finlay, 2002b). Not only can these factors play a role in how the participant responds to the researcher but will ultimately affect how the researcher interprets data from the study (Finlay, 2002b). Creswell (2007) explains that "researchers recognize that their own background shapes their interpretation, and they 'position themselves' in the research to acknowledge how their interpretation flows from their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences" (p. 21). Cruz and Higginbottom (2013) describe that reflexivity is especially important when conducting a focused ethnography as researchers often have previously experienced the culture they are researching and so reflexivity is a means of establishing that the findings of the study are authentic and "not just an expression of his or her ideology" (p. 42). Ultimately, the researcher is interpreting the meanings that the participants hold about the world and their experiences within it (Creswell, 2007). To practice reflexivity, the researcher must be self-aware and explicitly state how their personal assumptions and perspectives played a role in formulating the

findings of the study (Finlay, 2002b). This is a way of ensuring rigour in a qualitative study (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004), and as a result I will discuss personal methods of reflexivity I used throughout this study in the Quality Criteria for Focused Ethnography section of this chapter.

3.1.2   Theoretical Approach: Transactional Perspective

Commensurate with the purpose of a focused ethnography, a transactional perspective was employed to create a rich study that expands beyond the individualized experience of a single person. The transactional perspective on occupation is based on John Dewey's work on the transactional view, emphasizing the presence of multiple relationships between person and context (Dickie et al., 2006). While studies of occupation that utilize an individualistic perspective can provide a detailed account of the individual experience of occupation, they present a dualistic view of a person and their environment which inherently limits our ability to understand the nature of the relationship between these elements (Dickie et al., 2006). A transactional perspective rejects this dualism and enables us to view person and context as a complete whole, and seeks to understand the relationships between humans and social, physical, and cultural elements of their context (Dickie et al., 2006). People are not independent of their surroundings and therefore, their context or environment should be taken into account when studying their occupations (Dickie et al., 2006). Dickie et al. (2006) state that "occupation can be viewed as a transaction joining person and situation" (p. 90). Additionally, Heatwole Shank and Cutchin (2010) describe the meaning of occupation within a transactional perspective stating that "a transactional interpretation suggests that meaning is constantly negotiated, or re-created, through the continual re-coordination of

person and place" (p. 5). The transactional perspective was employed throughout the duration of this research study, including in the creation of interview questions and observation guides, data analysis and interpretation. In this study I drew upon a transactional perspective to ensure that I would consider co-occupation as influenced by both the individual and the context and explore how co-occupation emerged from the transactions between the person and their context.

In regards to co-occupation, the transactional perspective has been used to describe the process of meaning creation for the people involved in the occupation (van Nes et al., 2012). The definition of co-occupation that was used throughout this study detailed that there are both shared and personalized meanings held by those who perform the co-occupation together (van Nes et al., 2012). van Nes et al. (2012) explain that in the transactional perspective it can be assumed that these shared and personalized meanings are co-constituted by those who perform a co-occupation together in a flexible process of meaning making. It is important to mention that one's meaning of a co-occupation is influenced by both personal factors as well as the socio-cultural and relational context around them (van Nes et al., 2012). As a result, while two people can appear to share the same context and perform the same co-occupation together, their personalized meanings of this co-occupation can be diverse and are essential to explore in order to understand the complex meaning of the particular co-occupation (van Nes et al., 2012). As a result, van Nes et al. (2012) refer to the shared and personalized meanings of a co-occupation as "the 'outcome' of the transactional processes" between two people (p. 350).

This theoretical approach is consistent with my chosen research methodology as well as the study of co-occupation. Bailliard, Aldrich, and Dickie (2013) detail the natural

fit of using the transactional perspective on occupation in combination with an ethnographic methodology as they share many of the same principles. These shared principles include the ethnographers' desire to start research with a broad and general approach as the transactional perspective recognizes that influences on a situation are difficult to anticipate prior to conducting research (Bailliard et al., 2013). Additionally, there is mutual appreciation amongst ethnography and the transactional perspective for multiple perspectives, as using multiple methods of data collection is involved in ethnography and the transactional perspective acknowledges the importance of acquiring different types of knowledge in experience (Bailliard et al., 2013). Additionally, van Nes et al. (2012) place a large emphasis on the ability of the transactional perspective to describe the process of meaning creation. This is consistent with a focused ethnography methodology as the researcher aims to understand the emic view of the participants, including their personal meaning of a specific co-occupation, while also bringing in an etic view of the activities and the shared context which allows the researcher to identify the shared meaning of this co-occupation as shaped by contextual elements. This application of the transactional perspective to meaning creation within co-occupations was laced throughout my research study including through study design, data collection, interpretation of the findings, and the writing of this thesis. Further details regarding the application of the transactional perspective on occupation to this research study regarding co-occupation are present throughout the findings and discussion portion of this thesis.

3.2   **Study Site and Sampling and Recruitment**

3.2.1   Study Site

The retirement home that served as the study site is located in a mid-sized city in Ontario, Canada. This intergenerational housing program was initiated in the fall of 2017 and since then has consistently had two to three university students living there each year from September to April. To participate in the program the students must be attending the local university and be completing a graduate-level music program at the university. This study took place over the 2019-2020 school year. During this year there were two students living in the residence, a vocalist and a pianist. The students lived at the retirement home free of charge and received 3 free meals per week in exchange for volunteering their time to interact with the older adults in the retirement home for approximately 10-12 hours per week. The students were able to decide how they spent this time with the older adults through a combination of performing musical entertainment, hosting and attending leisure activities, as well as attending mealtimes with the residents.

3.2.2   Sampling and Recruitment

The initial target population of this study was university students, older adults, staff members, and family members of residents who were involved in or knew about the intergenerational housing program at the study site, and were involved in or knew about, the intergenerational co-occupations that took place within it. As I initially intended on focusing more generally on the benefits, drawbacks, and processes of an intergenerational housing program while simultaneously looking at co-occupations, I wanted to keep my target population open to not only those who were direct participants of the intergenerational housing program but also those who could speak to the intergenerational housing program from more of an outsider perspective. The inclusion of

these outsider perspectives was intended for the purpose of keeping my study open to perspectives of those who were not necessarily a part of the intergenerational program but could closely see the impact that it had on those involved. For example, a family member of a resident who wanted to share how the program had significantly impacted the resident's time living at the retirement home. As my study developed, all of the participants who signed up for my study were university students and older adult residents. This shifted my study as it enabled me to focus on the personal experiences of and the meanings behind participating in co-occupations together amongst only those who have the lived experience of doing so. Looking at both the older and younger participants of this intergenerational program, as opposed to focusing on one age group, aided in my ability to apply a transactional perspective to explore the creation of both shared and personalized meanings of the co-occupations that took place. Additionally, to partake in this study, participants were required to be able to read and speak English to understand the consent forms and engage in the interviews. Excluded from this study were those who were part of the target population but who did not frequently interact with the students living at the retirement home as their knowledge of the co-occupational experience would have been limited. Muecke (1994) stresses that in focused ethnography studies the participants are those "with a store of knowledge and experience relative to the problem or phenomenon of study, rather than persons with whom the ethnographer has developed a close, trusting relationship over time" (p. 199). As a result, the number of participants who can inform the study of this experience is often limited (Muecke, 1994).

When conducting focused ethnographic studies the most common sampling technique is purposive sample with complementary sample techniques such as snowballing or solicitation (Higginbottom, Pillay, & Boadu, 2013). Subsequently, to recruit participants for this study both purposive and snowball sampling techniques were employed. The initial sampling technique used was purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is "a type of non-probability sampling that is most effective when one needs to study a certain cultural domain with knowledgeable experts within" (Tongco, 2007, p.147). When beginning this study, I knew that it was crucial to include the opinions of the two students living at the retirement home as I understood that bringing in a dual perspective of this interaction between the students and the older adults would strengthen the study. When I met with the staff member that I was in communication with at the retirement home she asked the students if they would be interested in hearing about my study and upon the students' confirmation that they were willing to learn more she was able to send their contact information along to me. After contacting the students and informing them about my study and what it would entail, both of the students agreed to participate. Enrolling both of the students as participants in this study was a large success in my research process.

To recruit the remaining participants for my study, various techniques were used including newsletter entries, recruitment posters and postcards, and verbal recruitment scripts. Firstly, in order to 'introduce' myself to potential participants, the study site allowed me to include a brief written introduction of myself in the retirement home's October monthly newsletter (Appendix A). This newsletter entry allowed me to briefly detail the study that I would be conducting and explain that, throughout the term, I would

be frequently visiting the retirement home to conduct interviews and observations. A headshot photograph was also included in order to make my face recognizable to those who lived and worked at the retirement home. An additional poster was sent out in the December monthly newsletter (Appendix B) in order to let the residents, know that I was now recruiting for my study and they could contact me if they were interested. The second technique used to recruit participants was a recruitment poster (Appendix C). After approval by the general manager at the retirement home, this recruitment poster was posted on several information bulletin boards throughout the retirement home in areas that were frequented by residents. In addition to visual recruitment techniques, I began personally asking residents if they would be interested in participating in my study. As I was attending the retirement home to conduct observations of the students and older adults interacting and partaking in co-occupations, I became familiar with who attended which events/activities with the students and had the opportunity to get to know them and invite them to participate in my study. Purposive sampling techniques were used to recruit these residents as I believed they would be information-rich participants as they were the older adults who were involved in co-occupations with the students. Richards and Morse (2013) discuss that in focused ethnography "participants may not know one another, but the researcher focuses on their common behaviors and experiences resulting from their shared features" (p. 59). To invite participants to my study I used a verbal recruitment script (Appendix D). Additionally, I carried around recruitment postcards (Appendix E) with me whenever I was onsite in order to share my study and contact information with potential participants. Whenever I spoke with residents of the retirement home individually or in small groups, I would re-introduce myself and my study using

the verbal recruitment script and give them the postcard to enable them to follow-up with me regarding the prospect of becoming a participant in my study. To screen potential participants for my study, I created a telephone screening script (Appendix F) which could be used to ensure that participants met the eligibility criteria for my study.

The recruitment process for the older adult residents did not go as smoothly as I had initially hoped. When speaking to the older adults about my research project they would begin telling me about their experience with the students and even seemed interested in doing an interview with me, but this did not translate to many calls or emails inquiring about participating in my study. Several women also seemed very shy about sharing their opinions or seemed to believe that their ideas were not valuable to my research study and would say "oh, you don't want to hear from me". Something that I noticed was the older adults' reluctance to call or email me. The residents would often say "but you're here all the time" implying that they would not be calling or emailing me to set up an interview date because they would see me throughout the week. After hearing this, I realized that I might need to switch to a more active approach when recruiting participants. Instead of sharing my contact information with the older adults I began asking them for their contact information so that I could follow up with their interest in my study. I also scheduled interviews in person and provided the older adults with an interview reminder card (Appendix G) that detailed the date, time, and location of the proposed interview. These techniques proved to be far more successful than the recruitment poster and postcards alone.

Towards the end of recruitment, I began using snowballing techniques and further purposive sampling techniques. Snowballing techniques occur when current participants

of the study recommend other potential participants to the researcher (Marshall, 1996).

Biernacki and Waldorf (1981) explain that once a researcher has exhausted their initial

contacts it can be difficult to initiate new ones. Snowballing techniques are often

successful as they create comfortability in the potential participants due to being referred

to the researcher by someone they know and often trust (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). Both

the students and the older adult residents began accessing their social networks within the

retirement home to inform residents of the research study that was taking place. It

became clear that different residents attended different events with the students and as I

did not attend every event at the retirement home each week there were some residents

with whom I had never crossed paths. Additionally, some residents did not attend many

formally scheduled events with the students but still engaged in informal co-occupations

with them, often making it difficult to identify these residents as potential participants.

Working with the students also enabled me to purposefully recruit residents with whom

the students were the closest and often engaged in informal occupations and were

referenced during my interviews with the students. During observations the students

would introduce me to these older adults throughout the retirement home if they believed

that the older person would be interested in participating in my study. The students aided

in recruitment of these older adults by providing them with information about my study

and vouching for my credibility. I believe that creating this trust between potential

participants and myself as the researcher was essential to the success of recruitment for

my study.

3.3   Data Collection in Focused Ethnography

In focused ethnography studies, the researcher attempts to pay close attention to the participants' emic insight of their world while the researcher brings in their own etic perspective or framework to viewing the culture and the actions within it (Roper & Shapira, 2000). As a result, Roper and Shapira (2000) state that "etic insight into meanings behind actions—why people do what they do or believe as they do—is a principal outcome of ethnographic studies" (p. 9). Those using a focused ethnography methodology rely primarily on participant observation as well as either unstructured and partially structured interviews to collect appropriate data (Muecke, 1994). Data collection in focused ethnography studies rely on short-term field visits in comparison to the long-term field visits that often characterize conventional ethnographies (Knoblauch, 2005). These field visits are not continual and can even exist in intervals (Knoblauch, 2005). Muecke (1994) reiterates this idea by stating that participant observation in focused ethnography occurs at specific times or events and over a limited time period. To compensate for less time spent in the field, Knoblauch (2005) acknowledges that focused ethnographies are data intensive and often rely on the heavy use of audiovisual technologies during data collection and a lengthy data analysis process. These technologies will be discussed in further detail below. Consistent with literature regarding focused ethnography, semi-structured interviews and field observations were used simultaneously to collect data. Field observations took place during scheduled events and/or activities instead of over long and continuous periods of time.

3.3.1 Data Collection Methods: Semi-Structured Interviews

One method of data collection used was semi-structured interviews. I adopted DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree's (2006) description that semi-structured interviews are

"generally organised around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee" (p. 315). Semi-structured interviews can reveal in-depth information about the participant when conducted individually (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). These semi-structured interview methods were consistent with a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm as Ponterotto explains the necessity of dialogue between the researcher and the participant to reveal deeper meanings that exist within the participant (2005). Following Creswell (2007), I developed questions that were "broad and general so that the participants can construct the meaning of a situation, a meaning typically forged in discussions or interactions with other persons" (p. 21). Additionally, in a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm it is understood that each participant has their own individual reality of the experience and conducting semi-structured interviews is a way to uncover the multiple realities of this experience (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

During the proposal stages of this study, I had hoped to conduct two sets of interviews with both the students and the older adults. The first interview would take place in September shortly after the students' moved into the retirement home. This initial interview was aimed to grasp an understanding of the students' and older adults' feelings towards the intergenerational housing program at its onset. The follow-up interview was planned to take place in December, a few months after the students had been living in the retirement home to ask both the students and the older adults about their experiences with the intergenerational housing program over the previous four months. While I was able to conduct two interviews with each of the students (Appendix H, Appendix I), recruiting the older adult residents took much longer than anticipated, as

was explained above in the sampling and recruitment section. As a result, only one interview was conducted with each older adult, which occurred from December to February. Relevant questions from the first (Appendix J) and second (Appendix K) interview guides were combined to create a new interview guide (Appendix L) to cover all topics that I had wanted to discuss with the older adults. The first interviews with the students did not yield as much valuable information as the second interviews did, as the students had only been living in the retirement home for a short period of time. The benefit of this first interview was that it provided me the opportunity to get to know both of the students and build rapport with them early on in the data collection process. After having completed this study, I believe that only one interview was necessary with each student and older adult and I could have ensured that rapport was built with the students in other ways.

I conducted a pilot interview prior to completing the first interview at the study site to allow myself to practice my interviewing skills and ensure that all questions on the interview guide made sense. The person who engaged in the pilot interview was a university student who had prior experience with an intergenerational program, enabling her to answer the questions that had been prepared. Prior to beginning each interview, I distributed a consent form (Appendix M) and demographic questionnaire (Appendix N) to the participant to complete before proceeding. In total, 11 interviews were conducted over a five-month period (two students and eight older adults). Ten interviews took place with individual participants and one interview was completed with a married couple. In total, two students were interviewed twice each, and 8 older adults were interviewed once each. Each interview was about one hour long. As previously mentioned, focused

ethnographies rely heavily on the use of audiovisual technologies (Knoblauch, 2005). As a result, all semi-structured interviews conducted in this study were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

3.3.2   Data Collection Methods: Observation

The second method of data collection that I conducted for my study was naturalistic observation. Roper and Shapira (2000) state that focused ethnographies are known for "intensive participant observation activities within the naturalistic setting, asking questions to learn what is happening, and using other available sources of information to gain as complete an understanding as possible of people, places, and events of interest" (p. 8). Field observations were used in the current study to enrich the study by supplementing the data that was collected during the semi-structured interviews. Field observations in focused ethnographies are not continual and often occur during specific events (Knoblauch, 2005; Muecke, 1994). This was consistent with my observation techniques because in order to conduct field observations when the students and the older adults would be engaging in co-occupations, it was easiest to attend the retirement home for student-led events and activities that were scheduled on the retirement home's leisure calendar. This strategy, however, did not enable me to observe informal and unscheduled co-occupations between the university students and the older adults; short of sitting in the retirement home all day, it was difficult to identify when and how to do so. Additionally, although the students attended some mealtimes at the retirement home, they often decided to attend a specific mealtime last minute and were typically not able to provide advanced notice to me. As a result, I had to come up with a strategy to observe an informal co-occupation like mealtime. I spoke to the students and

asked if there were any days that they frequently had a meal in the dining room. The female student replied that she most often tried to eat Sunday brunch in the dining room with the older adults and so I scheduled to come the following Sunday, communicating with her the morning of to confirm her attendance.

During the data collection period, I conducted field observations at the retirement home 12 times. These observations lasted 1-2 hours each. Observations typically took place in the afternoons and evenings of weekdays. One observation took place on a Sunday morning to observe brunch, as previously mentioned. Most observations took place during weekly scheduled leisure activities, but I also attended the retirement home on a weekday morning to observe a Remembrance Day Ceremony. In addition to these formal field observations, I informally observed any co-occupations that were taking place as I entered and exited the retirement home for interviews or meetings. The number of field observations was not predetermined, but rather was based on conducting a sufficient amount of observations over the course of the data collection period and gaining a strong understanding of the co-occupations within the context. I began conducting field observations after my first interviews at the retirement home, and subsequently conducted interviews and observations during the same time period. An observation guide (Appendix O) was utilized during field observations to structure data collection. I focused on observing the co-occupations that were taking place, the relationship and interactions between the university students and older adults, and the physical space and objects that were being used. Consistent with using audiovisual technologies in focused ethnography, floor mapping techniques were used to draw the settings in which the field observations were taking place (Knoblauch, 2005). These

visual floor maps were later analyzed along with the other data to draw conclusions regarding the use of both the physical setting in which the co-occupations took place and how the space shaped the co-occupational experience.

Higginbottom et al. (2013) explains that during focused ethnographies the researcher will typically play an observer-as-participant role. This role is characterized by remaining an impartial researcher but at the same time creating enough trust and relations with participants to maximize sharing between the researcher and the participants (Higginbottom et al., 2013). While Higginbottom et al. (2013) advocates for impartiality, this does not align with my paradigmatic stance. During my observations at the retirement home, my amount of participation as a researcher varied. I attempted to remain in an observer-as-participant role during my field observations while acknowledging that from a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm it is impossible to remain an objective researcher and ignore that the context is inherently shaped by my presence within it (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). During field observations, I was not seeking objectivity but instead was forming my own interpretations of what I was observing. As the students and the older adult residents became more comfortable with me attending scheduled events, communication and engagement became more frequent during my field visits. Additionally, sometimes the students were not aware of how much participation I intended to have while observing and as a result encouraged me to participate or join into the co-occupations that were taking place in order to make me feel welcomed and comfortable at the retirement home. Increased engagement and communication with both the students and the older adults contributed to my rich descriptions and findings in this research as I was able to grow trust and comfortability between myself and the

participants, which I believe led them to share more thoughts and feelings with me as well as act more naturally when I was conducting observations.

3.4   Data Analysis using Thematic Analysis

Consistent with the research aims and this study's theoretical underpinnings of co-occupations and a transactional perspective, the focus of data analysis was to understand how co-occupations were enacted between university students and older adults living together at a retirement home as well as the factors that shaped these co-occupations. Commensurate with the transactional perspective, I attended to ways in which the person and the context inextricably shaped each other and the co-occupations. Additionally, I looked for the shared and personalized meanings of engaging in co-occupation and the ways in which meaning was created. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the participant characteristics as identified through the completion of demographic questionnaires. Furthermore, thematic analysis techniques were used to analyze the study data. Thematic analysis is defined as "a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 57). More specifically, inductive thematic analysis was used to identify themes based on the data and not based on a pre-determined coding framework. Thematic analysis was applicable to my research study as it is not bounded to a pre-existing theoretical framework and is therefore applicable to my paradigmatic stance of constructivist-interpretivist. Additionally, thematic analysis is an attractive method of data analysis for a novice researcher as it has proven to be both accessible and flexible as analysis takes place in a systematic way and is simply a method of analysis and not an approach of conducting qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Throughout data analysis I followed the six phases detailed by Braun and Clarke (2006) namely: 1) familiarizing yourself with your data; 2) generating initial codes; 3) searching for themes; 4) reviewing themes; 5) defining and naming themes; and 6) producing the report. It is important to note that while these phases provide an excellent guide for conducting thematic analysis, these phases do not always follow a linear progression and may be repeated several times, as is seen in my depiction of the data analysis process below (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Additionally, data analysis began immediately after the collection of any data and continued to occur simultaneously with data collection in order to enable my research methods to be refined throughout the research process. I will now detail each phase of the thematic analysis progression.

3.4.1   Phase One: Familiarizing Yourself with your Data

Phase one of thematic analysis was used to become familiar with the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasize the importance of immersing oneself in the data through actively reading the data repetitively. Transcription was one of the main techniques I used to become familiar with the data. I personally transcribed all interviews verbatim from audio recordings, typed up completed observation guides and created digital floor maps that were originally handwritten onsite. Braun and Clarke (2006) state that personally transcribing your data will allow you to have a more thorough understanding of your dataset. Following the completion of transcribing each document, I felt I had a good grasp on each interview and observation that took place and could recall what was seen or spoken about during these visits to the retirement home. During transcription of the data, I wrote and continually updated an informal list of ideas of potential codes that stood out to me in the data. This list was kept

for personal use to remind myself of what was frequently spoken about in the data, as well as to present and discuss this information with my supervisor and advisory committee. Following the transcription of each document I read through the transcripts thoroughly and actively. I felt I had familiarized myself very well with the data as I had personally collected the data and had a strong recollection of the conversations that were had and the observations that were witnessed. At this point I began moving onto phase two of thematic analysis.

3.4.2 Phase Two: Generating Initial Codes

Phase two of thematic analysis focused on generating initial codes from the data set. These codes are formed by organizing small segments of raw data into groups to be further analyzed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). At this point in thematic analysis I began using an analysis software program called Quirkos, which enabled me to upload all of my electronic data and organize the text into codes. This data included both interview transcripts and observation field notes which made reference to the floor plans of the spaces in which the observation took place. Higginbottom et al. (2013) explain that data analysis in focused ethnography is "highly compatible with computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software" (p. 6). When I began using Quirkos and began to sort through the data to find these initial codes I felt the need to return to phase one of thematic analysis. Since I had completed my interviews over a five-month period and transcribed them and read them as they occurred, it had been a long time since I had read over my early interviews and observation guides. I felt that I was not as familiar with the dataset as a whole as I once had been and felt that I should to be to complete data analysis to the best of my abilities. I went back to my transcriptions and refamiliarized myself by re-reading

through all of the data actively and jotting down reflexive notes along the sidebar of the documents that I thought would be helpful during the analysis process. Revisiting this phase allowed me to become more comfortable with the entire dataset from start to finish, preparing me to actually begin phase two of thematic analysis.

After refamiliarizing myself with the dataset I returned to Quirkos to begin assigning initial codes to the data. I began coding the interviews first followed by the observational guides. Both types of data were coded in chronological order which meant that I started with the student interviews followed by the interviews with the older adult residents before finishing with the observational guides. After coding the entire dataset and refining these codes with my supervisor, I repeated this process one more time to ensure that the data was coded thoroughly. Simultaneously with this initial coding process, I created a "code book" in which I refined the code names and created a meaning/definition of each code. This code book helped me to organize the many codes that I had identified through analysis as well as maintain a clear explanation of what each code was referring to within the dataset. Following the generation of initial codes, I moved to phase three of thematic analysis.

3.4.3   Phase Three: Searching for Themes

Phase three of thematic analysis focuses on searching for themes in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These broader themes are identified by grouping the initial codes identified in phase two together (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) describe themes as repeated patterns within the dataset. I began this phase by trying to brainstorm ideas and simply writing out all the possible themes that I identified from combining different codes that logically fit together. Although this process was helpful in

establishing some early ideas, the themes were underdeveloped and relied heavily on surface level details from the data. Subsequently, I moved on to using a more visual approach to searching for themes.

Not only had I received advice from a colleague about the success that she had using sticky notes to visually arrange her codes into themes but Braun and Clarke (2006) also detail the benefit of using visual representations during this phase. To visually see my theme production in progress I wrote out all of the most prevalent codes on cue cards and began rearranging them into various groupings on a table. This allowed me to have flexibility in my analysis as I could continue to rearrange and renegotiate the grouping of codes. It helped me to visually see the codes that were making up each theme. During this process, myself and my supervisor identified that some concepts were not coded thoroughly enough as the codes did not entirely represent all that was present in the interviews and the observational data. Before continuing to search and organize my themes, I returned back to the Quirkos program to flesh out some concepts that had not been focused on heavily enough during the initial coding such as the presence of authority and power throughout the co-occupations that took place. To flesh out these concepts I used the Quirkos software to go back through the data and seek out text segments that related to these ideas of authority or power. Additionally, I returned to the text segments that were originally linked to authority and analyzed them further, trying to organize them into categories based on similarities and interpret the meanings of these text segments. Temporarily returning to phase two allowed me to create more thorough codes and ultimately strengthened my analysis process as a whole. Once I felt confident with my initial codes and how they were grouped together into broader themes through

my visual representation, I began to write about these themes to expand my ideas about each theme and formally place my ideas onto paper.

When creating a draft of my themes, I began writing about all of my ideas and inputting extracts from the data that supported each theme. I wrote down all of the information that I had discovered through data that supported each theme in order to ensure that there was as much detail possible and nothing was excluded. At this phase, I knew any unused information could and would be removed from the themes later on throughout the ongoing analysis process. During the writing of initial themes and information, I was able to identify some material that could be grouped together as subthemes within the broader themes that had previously been defined. I began separating these ideas with temporary theme and subtheme names. Once I was confident with the potential themes that I had established from my initial codes I moved onto phase four of thematic analysis to further review the cohesion of the data extracts within each theme as well as situating the themes within the entire data set.

3.4.4   Phase Four: Reviewing Themes

Phase four of thematic analysis is concerned with reviewing the themes that were identified during the previous phase of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process was completed through communication back and forth with my supervisor. We had several conversations to renegotiate the ideas that I had roughly written about, allowing me to refine and rework my potential themes over and over again. During this phase many themes were split into subthemes while other themes were combined together. Furthermore, there was also a focus on the visual floor maps that had been created and digitized. These floor maps were analyzed alongside the themes that were identified to

explore how the space played a role in shaping how the co-occupations took place. Additionally, Braun and Clarke (2006) state that there are two levels to reviewing themes. Level one is concerned with "reviewing at the level of the coded extracts" (p. 91), essentially meaning that all data extracts within a theme should form a pattern (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This level was completed by reading through the extracts included in each theme and subtheme and making sure they formed a coherent pattern before moving onto the next level. As I had previously spent a lot of time negotiating these themes and their extracts, this level did not pose much difficulty. Level two is used to "consider the validity of individual themes in relation to the data set, but also whether your candidate thematic map 'accurately' reflects the meanings evident in the data set as a whole" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 91). To complete this level, I read through the data set in its entirety to ensure that the themes that I had created were representative of my interviews and the observations that took place. During this process Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasize that rereading the entire dataset may result in some of the work being recoded to identify data that was missed during the initial coding phase. As mentioned in the previous phase this was something that was returned to several times throughout analysis. Once both of these levels were achieved and I felt that the themes were representative of the dataset, I began phase five of thematic analysis. It is important to note that phases four and five especially did not take place in a linear manner and almost occurred simultaneously. As I reviewed my themes, I created theme names to summarize what was being discussed within each theme and the essence of that theme which often led me to rework themes and rearrange the subthemes within them. This process continued several times.

3.4.5 Defining and Naming Themes

Phase five of thematic analysis focuses on defining and naming themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During this phase I not only created names for the themes and subthemes but tried to refine what the themes were capturing from the dataset. Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasize the importance of identifying the "story' of each theme and making sure that aligns with the 'story' of your entire dataset. To complete this phase I created and revised theme names with the help of my supervisor. The advice that I was given was to use more descriptive words in the theme name to describe what was happening within each theme or subtheme. For example, using words like enacting, connecting, and engaging provided rich descriptions of my themes. This advice made creating theme names much easier.

To capture the essence or 'story' of each theme I worked on writing about the themes in more detail than my previous drafts. It was important during this phase to not only provide a descriptive account of the data but to take this further to interpret the data and search for meaning in the co-occupations, and the relationships between the person, elements of the context, and the occupation, as emphasized in a transactional perspective. As I completed the interviews and the study observations myself I had a good grasp on what was going on within the retirement home regarding the intergenerational program but I needed to take this analysis further to figure out what this meant and why it was important to my research question. Interpretation was achieved through the help of my supervisor attempting to challenge and question my descriptions of the data and to move beyond what was on the surface. This took much time and work but ultimately the themes

became more rich and interpretive than originally produced. After appropriately defining and refining the themes I moved onto to the sixth and final phase of thematic analysis.

3.4.6   Phase Six: Producing the Report

Phase six of thematic analysis details the production of the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). As many details of my findings were written about during the previous phases of thematic analysis, this phase was used mainly for fine tuning my writing to ensure that it fully encapsulated the themes and the complicated story of my data. I ensured that my writing provided sufficient and vivid extracts from the data to represent each theme. Braun and Clarke (2006) detail that the "analytic narrative needs to go beyond descriptions of the data, and make an argument in relation to your research question" (p. 93). To achieve this, I made sure to link each theme back to the research question and verbalize how the theme had a direct link to the question that I sought through my research. After the report containing my themes was produced they were reviewed by my committee for input and final revision. This input was taken into consideration and any appropriate changes were made. This marked the end of my formal data analysis process. At this point I felt as if I reached a thorough understanding of intergenerational co-occupation within the study site and the factors that shaped them.

3.5   Quality Criteria in Focused Ethnography

In this section of the thesis I will discuss the quality criteria that were used to establish the 'goodness' of this qualitative research study. The quality criteria were used throughout the process of study design, data collection, and data analysis to ensure the quality of this study. Higginbottom, Pillay, and Boadu (2013) explain that there is no set of quality criteria specific to focused ethnography but place an emphasis on promoting

rigour through reflexivity. As a result, the quality of this research study was supported by applying Tracy's (2010) descriptions of criteria for strong qualitative research that details eight indicators of high quality qualitative research regardless of the researcher's paradigmatic stance. The criteria that I will be using to demonstrate the quality of this research study are credibility, rich rigour, and sincerity. These three are inclusive of trustworthiness (within credibility) and authenticity (within sincerity), criteria that Guba and Lincoln (1994) express are indicators of good constructivist research.

3.5.1 Credibility

Firstly, Tracy (2010) defines credibility as "the trustworthiness, verisimilitude, and plausibility of the research findings" (p. 842). Richardson (2000) states that credibility in ethnography is dependent on the researcher providing an authentic account of the "cultural, social, individual, or communal sense" of the reality (p. 254). In qualitative research, one can achieve credibility through thick description, triangulation or crystallization, multivocality and member reflections (Tracy, 2010). In this research study, the practices of thick description and crystallization were used to ensure the credibility of this focused ethnographic study.

Thick description is used to describe providing the reader of the study with an "in depth illustration that explicates culturally situated meanings and abundant concrete detail" (Tracy, 2010, p. 843). This is especially important when conducting an ethnography or focused ethnography as it provides the reader with enough detail that they can fully understand the culture or subculture that is being investigated and begin to make their own interpretations regarding the findings of the study (Tracy, 2010). To provide thick descriptions, the study site context is described in various sections throughout this

thesis, including the current chapter regarding methods as well as in the following chapter which discusses the findings of this study. Through these descriptions of the study site it is intended that the reader is able to grasp the complexity of the context and be informed enough that they are able to judge the plausibility of my conclusions. Additionally, direct quotes were used throughout the findings chapter of this study to directly support the themes that were identified throughout analysis. Staying close to the data, by providing rich descriptions of the co-occupations and the retirement home context as well as direct quotes of participants, is aimed at providing the reader with enough details of the study to identify their own understandings regarding the study context and the co-occupations within it.

Additionally, crystallization techniques were used to increase the quality of this research study. Tracy (2010) explains that similar to triangulation, crystallization encourages the use of multiple sources of data, methods, researchers, and theoretical frameworks throughout the research process. In contrast to triangulation, crystallization is used "not to provide researchers with a more valid singular truth, but to open up a more complex, in-depth, but still thoroughly partial, understanding of the issue" (Tracy, 2010, p. 844). Crystallization is evident throughout this thesis by the use of various sources of data including semi-structured interviews as well as field observations with two different sample groups (students and older adult residents). Each of these data sources contribute to my complex understanding of co-occupation that exists between university students and older adults in a retirement home. Although one can never fully grasp the reality of those who exist within another context, providing multiple sources of data allows the researcher another view into those being investigated.

3.5.2   <u>Rich Rigour</u>

Additionally, Tracy (2010) states that research that is considered rich in rigour is "marked by a rich complexity of abundance" (p. 841). Throughout this research study I tried my best to ensure that the study was richly rigorous throughout all stages of the research process. This included spending enough time in the field to ensure that an appropriate amount of data was collected to support significant claims. Although field visits in focused ethnographic studies are substantially shorter than those deployed in conventional ethnographic studies (Knoblauch, 2005), the researcher still has to ensure that there is enough data to address the study objectives. I believe that this was achieved throughout this research by both the number and quality of interviews and observation visits that were conducted as well as the variety of activities that were observed. The interviews had great depth as enabled by the rapport that I had built with my participants and I was able to collect rich data through observing my participants engage in co-occupations together. Regarding the study sample, this research demonstrated rigour through the participation of both of the students who live at the retirement home as well as the older adult residents. This combination of participants is a means of achieving rigour as it provided an abundance of perspectives to the research, allowing for a complex understanding of co-occupations from both a student and an older adult perspective. Additionally, the study sample included eight older adults, all of whom participated in co-occupations with the university students or had done so in the past. Lastly, rigour was demonstrated through the "care and practice of data collection and analysis procedures" (Tracy, 2010, p. 841). Rigour was demonstrated throughout the data collection and analysis phase of research through various measures including but not

limited to conducting in-depth interviews with thoughtful research questions and spanning considerable lengths of time (approximately one hour long), transcribing interviews rich in both accuracy and detail, as well as creating rich and thorough field notes and transcribing them accurately (Tracy, 2010). Furthermore, there was rigour in analysis as there were multiple people involved in analysis, including myself and my supervisor as well as advisory committee members who provided input into emerging ideas. All of these factors combined establish the rich rigour of this research study.

3.5.3   Sincerity

Lastly, to ensure the quality of this study, sincerity will be discussed. Tracy (2010) relates sincerity to the notions of authenticity and genuineness, describing that it can be achieved in research through "self-reflexivity, vulnerability, honesty, transparency, and data auditing" (p. 841). Sincerity was demonstrated throughout this study through self-reflexivity and transparency throughout the research process.

Firstly, sincerity was achieved in this study through practicing self-reflexivity. While Higginbottom et al. (2013) describe that in focused ethnography reflexivity can be used to promote rigour in a study, Tracy (2010) considers self-reflexivity to be a component of sincerity. Reflexivity within a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm is described in detail in the paradigmatic considerations section of this paper. Self-reflexivity is described as both the process of encouraging researchers to be honest and vulnerable regarding their strengths and shortcomings of the research study as well as explaining "how they claim to know what they know" (Tracy, 2010, p. 842). Throughout this study, the aim was to be reflexive and self-aware regarding how my own personal life experiences shaped the study and my interpretation of the findings. In order to

demonstrate self-reflexivity within the duration of this research study I frequently "positioned" myself in relation to this research throughout various chapters in this thesis. This was an attempt to weave my reflexive considerations throughout my study (Tracy, 2010). First, in the positionality section in the first chapter I discuss my positioning in regards to the study context. Next, in the paradigmatic section of this thesis I detail my constructivist-interpretivist worldview. Lastly, throughout the duration of the research study I kept reflexive notes detailing my experience conducting this study. These notes took place at random intervals and were collected using various methods including hand-written, typed, and audio recorded. These reflexive notes were referred to throughout the writing of this thesis.

Additionally, to remain transparent with the reader of this study, this thesis provides an honest account of the research conducted, often providing examples of times throughout the research process where a specific design of the study was intended but later was altered as a result of unanticipated aspects of the research context. An example of this was displayed in the sections describing the semi-structured interview methods and the intention to conduct two interviews with both the students and the older adults. I was transparent with the reader by letting them know that this did not take place as intended as well as explaining the reasoning as well as the implications this had on the study design and findings. This is consistent with Tracy's (2010) notions of transparent research, she states "transparent research is marked by disclosure of the study's challenges and unexpected twists and turns and revelation of the ways research foci transformed over time" (p. 842).

3.6   Ethical Considerations

When conducting research, especially with human participants, it is important to acknowledge the potential ethical concerns related to the study. Ethical guidelines ensure that researchers take responsibility for ensuring that all participants in their study are respected and protected (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, & Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, 2018). Murphy and Dingwall (2001) explain that "like all researchers, ethnographers have a responsibility not only to protect research participants from harm, but also to have regard to their rights" (p. 339). Additionally, ethical considerations are present throughout the entire duration of the research project (Goodwin, Pope, Mort, & Smith, 2003). Before conducting this study, an application was submitted for ethical approval of this study and its methods from the Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) of Western University. Ethical approval was obtained for this study on August 22nd, 2019. In order to protect all participants of this study, ethical precautions were put in place throughout the progression of the study, which are explained in detail below.

When research involves humans, it is important to ensure that all participants provide informed consent to participating in the study. Participation in the research study should be voluntary and the participants should be informed on both the purpose of the research and the potential risks and benefits that come as a result of the study (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2018). To gain informed consent, potential participants were provided with a letter of information prior to participating in the study. This letter of information provided details regarding the study including its purpose, the study procedures, and potential risks and benefits as well as a consent form to sign (Appendix M). Additionally, this letter of information informed the participants that as

their participation in this study was voluntary, and they could leave the study at any time throughout the duration of the project and withdraw their information if they requested.

A potential ethical issue that arose during the planning of my study was how to conduct field observations in common areas of the retirement home where there were a combination of participants and non-participants in a room. Not all people in the room would have signed consent forms for my study and it would not be feasible to do so as many people would be coming and going in the area throughout the duration of observation. To address this issue, I informed residents of the retirement home that observations were taking place in the area they were entering by placing a sign (Appendix P) in a visible place at the entrance of the room in which observation was taking place. This ensured that all residents and staff were aware that research was being conducted in this area and they could make an informed decision about their presence in the observation location. This strategy was included in the application to the NMREB and approved as being ethically sound. During these observations all field notes included general descriptions of the activities that were taking place at the retirement home and provided no identifiable descriptions of people involved in the activity.

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, the names of both the retirement home where the study was conducted as well as the participants involved were excluded or disguised. Throughout this thesis the participants were referred to by their participant numbers (1 through 10) with the student participants sometimes referred to as 'the pianist' and 'the vocalist' to provide context to the situation. All personal information obtained directly from the participants (e.g. the demographic survey) did not include any

identifiable information that could link the information back to them, such as their name or phone number.

All paper and electronic records of this study were stored securely to ensure privacy of the information and the participants. Paper records with personal information were locked in a filing cabinet in a locked office at Western University. Electronic records were stored on Western University's secure network and online drive. Both paper and electronic records will be retained for a minimum of seven years as required by the NMREB of Western University, after which paper documents will be securely shredded and electronic files will be erased electronically. Identifiable information can and will only be accessed by myself and my supervisor, the principal investigator.

In conclusion, this chapter has explored the various methods that were employed throughout the research study. This chapter discussed the methodology, data collection, data analysis, quality criteria, and ethical considerations for this thesis study. The following chapter will discuss the findings of this thesis.

Chapter 4: Findings

In this chapter I discuss the findings of this study, beginning by detailing the context in which this study took place, followed by providing the demographics of the study participants. Lastly, I detail each of the six main themes (see Table 1 for details), some with corresponding subthemes, that were created through thematic analysis of the data. The first theme titled *Enacting Diverse Roles Within Co-Occupations* discusses the different roles that the students and the older adults played during co-occupations, the varying levels of authority that they displayed, and the role that the setting played in shaping that role. The second theme titled *Connecting Personally With Music and in Turn Connecting With Others* discusses music as something that most people had personal connections to which became a tool that supported the students and older adults engaging in co-occupations and connecting to each other. The third theme titled *Connecting Through Informal Co-Occupations* discusses informal co-occupations, such as mealtime or having a coffee together, as an opportunity for the students and older adults to connect. The fourth theme titled *Diverse and Mutually Beneficial Intergenerational Relationships Shaping Co-Occupations* discusses the relationships that were formed between the students and the older adults and how this shaped the co-occupations that they performed together. This theme includes two subthemes: *Wide Spectrum of Personal Relationships* and *Mutually Beneficial/Reciprocal Relationships*. The fifth theme titled *Navigating Tensions Regarding Differing Perspectives* discusses how the participants navigated their way through issues that arose out of the student program and how this negatively shaped some co-occupations. This theme includes three subthemes: *Differing Perspectives on Student Attendance*, *Differing Perspectives on Event Preparedness*, and *Lack of*

Information about Program Structure. The sixth and final theme titled *Experiencing Discrepancies Between Ability and the Nature of Co-Occupations* discusses the effect of the combination of older adults' personal and spousal illnesses, impairments, and aging-related declines and the nature of the co-occupations. This theme includes three subthemes: *Personal Illness/Impairment, Fatigue/Uncomfortableness,* and *Spousal Illness/Impairment*. Within these themes and subthemes, there were many instances in which the participants used co-occupations to transact with their context. Furthermore, the participants experienced both shared and personalized meanings when engaging in co-occupations.

Table 1: Themes and Subthemes

Theme	Subtheme
1. Enacting Diverse Roles Within Co-Occupations	
2. Connecting Personally With Music and in Turn Connecting With Others	
3. Connecting Through Informal Co-Occupations	
4. Diverse and Mutually Beneficial Intergenerational Relationships Shaping Co-Occupations	1. Wide Spectrum of Personal Relationships 2. Mutually Beneficial/Reciprocal Relationships
5. Navigating Tensions Regarding Differing Perspectives	1. Differing Perspectives on Student Attendance 2. Differing Perspectives on Event Preparedness

	3. Lack of Information about Program Structure
6. Experiencing Discrepancies Between Ability and the Nature of Co-Occupations	1. Personal Illness/Impairment
	2. Fatigue/Uncomfortableness
	3. Spousal Illness/Impairment

4.1   Study Context and Summary of Co-Occupations

This study was conducted in a retirement home in which there were just over 100 residents. The retirement home had one floor dedicated to providing assisted living care to residents. As briefly explained earlier in this thesis, during the 2019-2020 school year there were two music graduate students from a nearby university living in the retirement home, within the context of a program designed to enact benefits of intergenerational living. While not explicitly stated by retirement home staff or documentation, the goal of this intergenerational housing program seemed to be to provide music-related programming for the older adults and foster and support intergenerational relationships. The students each lived in their own studio apartment suite in the retirement home, equipped with their own kitchenette and washroom. The students frequently expressed how spoiled they felt to be living in such nice accommodations, especially because they were living there for free. The students were able to eat three complimentary meals in the dining room per week and also had access to a full-sized communal kitchen with an oven and stove if they wanted to prepare meals on their own. The students were expected to volunteer 10-12 hours per week by spending time with the older adult residents. This number appeared to be flexible as the busyness of the students' school and personal schedule varied each week. The students' volunteer hours mainly consisted of performing

musical entertainment, hosting and joining leisure activities, attending mealtimes with the residents, as well as informal and unplanned interactions with the older adults.

Musical performances took place throughout the retirement home quite regularly with either one or both of the students, depending on the students' schedules. These performances commonly took place during or after the scheduled dinner hour at the retirement home so that the residents could enjoy music while they were eating or stay in the dining room after their meal was finished for some entertainment. Additionally, there were weekly musical performances on the assisted living floor as these residents ate their meals in their own smaller dining room instead of the retirement home's large common dining room. Sometimes musical performances surrounded holiday events at the retirement home such as Remembrance Day or Christmas. Furthermore, the students were encouraged by staff members to informally practice their music in the common areas of the retirement home. While it appeared that these particular students sometimes practiced their music informally throughout the retirement home, I learned through comments from Participant 6 that they preferred to practice at the university more than some of the students that had lived at the home in the past.

In addition to musical performances, the students hosted and attended leisure activities amongst the retirement home residents. The leisure activities were advertised to all residents on the monthly leisure calendar at the retirement home. One of these leisure activities was a student-led choir. The choir ran weekly practices every Thursday night where the students and the older adults would gather to learn and practice singing songs together. The students organized the older adults by choosing what songs to sing and how they were to be sung. Additionally, the students organized performances for the choir,

such as performing at the Remembrance Day Ceremony as well as Christmas caroling at the long-term care facility next door. Additional leisure activities that the students attended weekly were both the retirement home's pub hour and happy hour. These events took place on Friday and Saturday at around four o'clock in the afternoon to allow for the residents to have a drink before dinner. It is my understanding that the pianist attended both Friday and Saturday events while the vocalist was only scheduled to attend the event on Saturday afternoon. During pub hour, the pianist would play a musical set while the older adults enjoyed drinks and small snacks and had conversations amongst themselves. When the vocalist attended the happy hour event she was in charge of serving residents drinks, as she had previously acquired certification to serve alcohol. The vocalist would also join in the musical performance of the pianist, often singing with him in between serving beverages. If the vocalist was not in attendance at the pub hour, drinks would be served by a staff member from the retirement home. Additionally, the students also hosted their own activities independently with the residents. The female student hosted an opportunity for the residents to learn and play chess together every Sunday afternoon. A handful of residents attended this event and had a wide range of knowledge and experience playing chess. The student would teach and assist the residents when they needed help or would play a game against the residents. Similarly, the male student began hosting an opportunity for the residents to join him to draw art together weekly as this was something that he was interested in. The students also had the opportunity to attend any of the leisure activities that were organized by the retirement home. As a result, the students attended different events such as singing hymns after dinner, movie nights, and cooking and eating a thanksgiving dinner together. Additionally, the retirement home

supported residents in attending the students' musical performances throughout the community. The students would notify the staff and residents about a performance on the university campus or at a local venue and the residents would sign up to be taken by the retirement home's bus to the performance. The number of older adults able to attend these performances was limited by the number of seats on the bus. During my time at the retirement home I heard about three off-site performances including performances of Jesus Christ Superstar and The Mikado.

Another co-occupation that the students performed was eating meals together in the dining room. As part of the intergenerational living program, the students were able to eat three free meals per week in the retirement home. The students could choose which meals they wanted to attend based on their preference. The female student appeared to consistently attend the Sunday morning brunch buffet; otherwise the students attended meals in an unpredictable manner as their schedules frequently changed. During the meals the students could sit wherever they preferred and were served by the retirement home staff similar to the older adult residents. The students would have conversations with the older adult residents while they ate their meal.

Lastly, the students had various informal and unplanned moments to interact with the residents of the retirement home. These moments took place when the students were walking throughout the home and often when the students were entering and leaving the retirement home between their trips to school. The students would stop and have a coffee and/or conversation with the residents at a small café by the reception desk within the retirement home.

4.2   Participant Characteristics

A total of ten individuals participated in this study (See Table 2 for details). Three participants identified as male, while the remaining seven participants identified as female. There was one male and one female student, both in their 20's. The average age of the older participants was 88 years old. Self-reported health amongst the older adult residents ranged from poor to very good, with most participants reporting good health. All of the older adults had been living in the retirement home for a minimum of ten months, with the average length of time in the retirement home being one year and four months. In regard to financial status, several participants did not report their yearly household income. In several cases it appeared as if the participant could not remember their income or they preferred not to share this information when completing the survey. I expect that all of the older adult participants had a significant level of financial security given their capacity to pay the fees associated with living in the retirement home. Furthermore, I assume that the fees of this particular retirement home would be such that low-income seniors likely could not afford to live there.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Participants

#	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Highest Level of Education	Yearly Household Income	Self-Reported Health	Time living in retirement home at time of interview
1	22	Woman	Single	Completed trade school/ college/ university	<$20,000	Excellent	1 month (1st interview) 4 months (2nd interview)
2	26	Man	Single	Completed trade school/ college/ university	$20,000-$39,000	Very good	2 months (1st interview)

							4 months (2nd interviews)
3	91	Man	Widowed	Completed trade school/ college/ university	<$20,000	Poor	Over 1 year
4	91	Woman	Separated/ Divorced	Completed trade school/ college/ university	$80,000+	Very good	1 year
5	84	Woman	Married/ Common law	Completed high school	$80,000+	Good	1 year and 2 months
6	89	Woman	Married/ Common law	Completed high school	$40,000-$59,000	Fair	2 years
7	82	Woman	Separated/ Divorced	Completed trade school/ college/ university	Unknown	Very good	1 year 6 months
8	90	Woman	Widowed	Completed high school	Unknown	Fair	2 years
9	86	Woman	Married/ Common law	Some high school	Unknown	Good	10 months
10	87	Man	Married/ Common law	Some college/ university or trade school	Unknown	Good	10 months

In order to ensure anonymity, participants are referred to by their corresponding number. The students, who are Participant 1 and Participant 2 are also referred to as the vocalist and the pianist respectively, when context is necessary. Names that are used in quotes were changed to pseudonyms.

4.3   Enacting Diverse Roles Within Co-Occupations

The intergenerational housing program was structured such that the students received complimentary housing and three meals per week in return for providing and joining in leisure activities and musical performances to the residents at the retirement home. In this context, it appeared that the students were considered as a resource or a service by both the retirement home management and the older adult residents in contrast to being regarded as a typical resident in the retirement home. Despite this structure, both the students and older adult residents took on many diverse roles with varying levels of authority during the performance of co-occupations with the older adults.

In some co-occupations, the students took on roles that appeared to involve authority and power over the older adult residents by acting as teachers or instructors. For example, at choir practices the students would run a warmup, choose the songs to sing, and direct the older adults on how to sing each part of the song, as a choir instructor would. One of the students acknowledged this authority and power by comparing a musical performance he had done for a small group of residents to the weekly choir. He said:

> It's a lot different than the performances on Mondays because in the choir situation [the vocalist] and I are in a seat of power. We have authority and we lead the choir; we direct them how to sing, what to do really. For me… it's not that I don't like it, but I prefer the Monday concerts because unlike the choir situation where we have that authority, on Mondays it's just [the vocalist] and I perform something, she sings something, I play something and then the audience has direct feedback, like immediate feedback. (Participant 2)

One of the participants brought up this idea of the students' authority during choir, she said:

> [The pianist] plays the piano and [the vocalist] needs to sing. It's a little formalized but I guess she'll get over that. I don't know that she's done it with old people before . . . it's as if she had a class and she has a little baton to lead us. I'm not sure all that's necessary but she does it anyways. I find it a bit awkward but if I were her, I would just relax and enjoy us singing. You can lead with your hand; you don't need a little stick. But that's just her and that's the way she does it, it's fine. (Participant 4)

It was clear that this participant believed that the student was bringing formality and exerting a particular form of authority to the co-occupation by using a baton. During my many observations of the choir I never saw the vocalist use a baton to direct the residents but during my interview with the vocalist she discussed this object, saying:

> [The Director of Lifestyle and Leisure] is really open to our ideas and there is also the perfect balance of encouragement. It was her idea to do the choir thing, but I just happened to have my conducting baton with me like I'm ready. (Participant 1)

While the students were acting as instructors, the older adult residents were being active learners. The older adults would listen to the students' instructions and guidance and sing the choir songs accordingly.

The physical environment of the theatre (Figure 1), where the choir practices took place, reflected this hierarchy. The theatre was set up in a way that had the students at the front of the room facing the older adults to conduct them during their practicing and

performance of singing choir songs. This setting amplified the authority that the students were demonstrating over the residents as there was a clear divide between who was an older adult and who was a student instructor. While the students made sure to ask the older adults for input throughout the practice, the students were essentially instructing them the entire time.

Figure 1: Theatre Floor Map
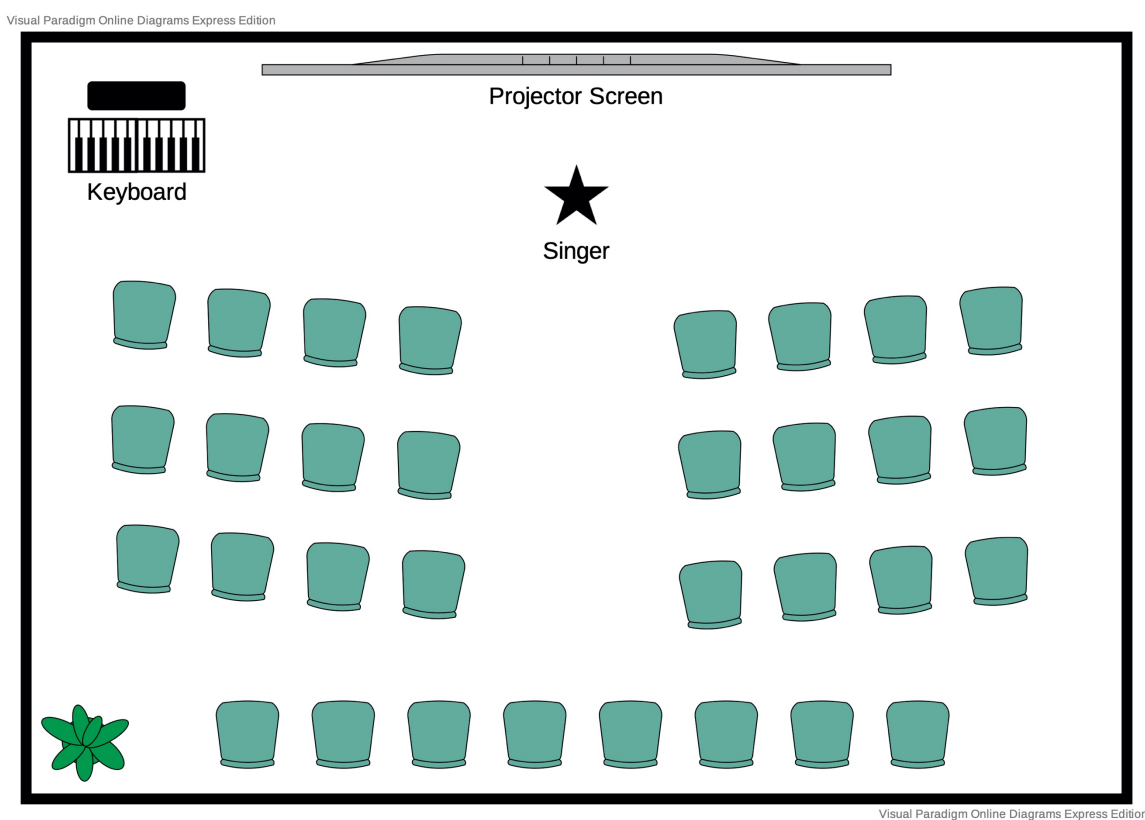
Similar roles, as well as a similar physical environment, were present when the choir performed at a Remembrance Day ceremony (Figure 2) in front of the retirement home's residents and staff. During this ceremony the students re-established the same instructor role and the older adult residents performed the songs that that they had rehearsed during their practices under the guidance of the students. The male student

played the piano throughout the performance while the female student instructed the older adults on when to stand and sit throughout the ceremony and conducted the older adults through the songs.

Figure 2: Remembrance Day Performance Floor Map
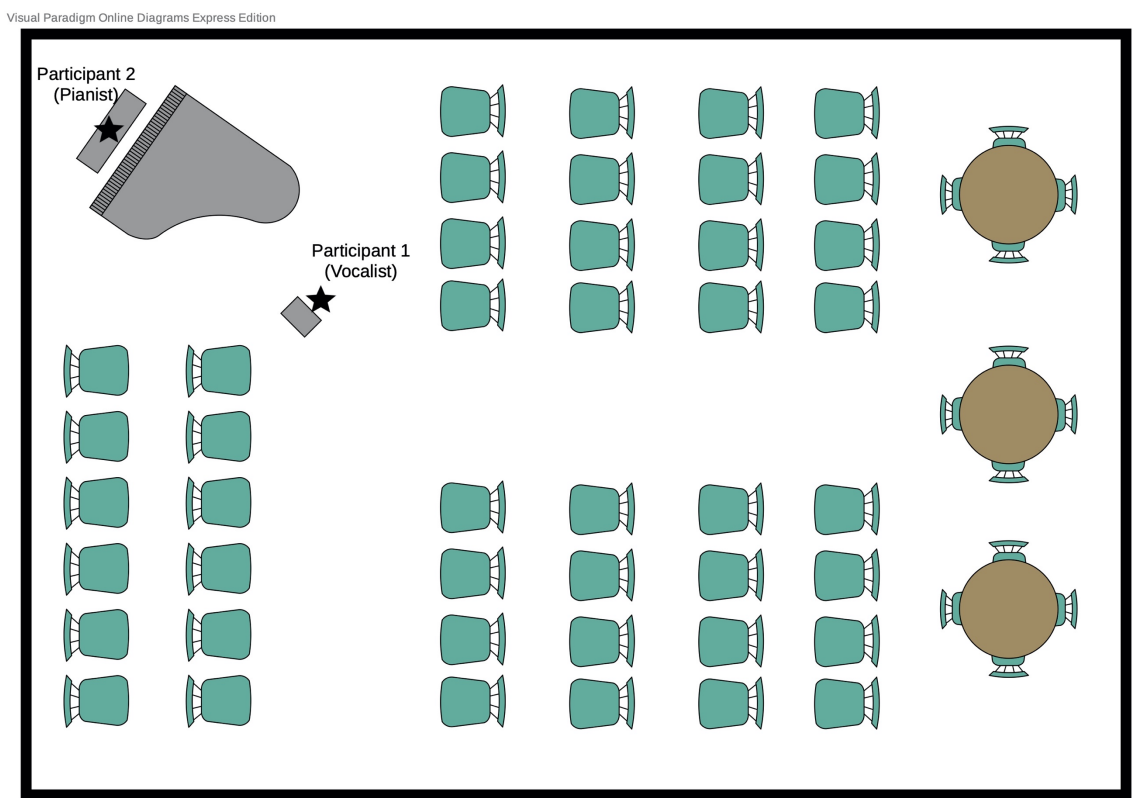
During the scheduled leisure activity of chess, one of the students took on a different role which developed over time. When the chess programming was first initiated, the female student acted as an instructor, similar to the role she played during choir. The female student brought a printed set of instructions of how to play chess to the first few meetings and instructed and demonstrated to the older adults how to play the game. As the older adults' skills and knowledge of the game increased, she was able to sit back and only assist the older adults when needed, usually when they could not remember how to move a particular piece on the board. This student shifted from an

instructor role to a supporting role as the weeks progressed. One of the participants described playing chess with the student by saying:

Well, she doesn't actually teach us unless we have a question. She doesn't interfere with us. She's there to give us advice if we want it, that's really how she operates. She helps us if we have a question. Watches us play. We don't really need much organization, but she would help us if we needed it. She's just there as a friend – which is nice. She has no sort of… being an authoritative role or anything else. It's just a nice association to have there. Someone who knows what the games about and if we have questions, and we do about some things that go on the board – she's there to answer them and that's nice. And she enjoys watching us I think, and it's sort of fun. That's the limit and that's okay. I don't think we really would tolerate much interference with what we do but we love advice, you know… we love to have advice and support but we don't want to be put in a classroom and be told how to do things and that sort of thing. So, they're quite good about that, they don't impose themselves. She's there and she's a resource you can use, and she laughs at our mistakes. It's just a nice relationship. (Participant 4)

During the weekly chess event the older adult residents mostly played a learner role, while some residents acted as peers with the student. As many of the older adults had never played chess before, or had not played since their childhood, they often did not know how to play. As a result, these older adult residents often looked to the student for guidance on game instructions and player moves, as previously explained. However, some residents who attended this event, including one man who attended chess weekly,

were well versed in chess and did not look to the student for support. These residents acted more as peers with the student as they did not have much to learn from her chess knowledge and ability.

The physical space in which chess (Figure 3) took place contributed to the situation in which the student held lesser authority over the older adults in comparison to choir practice. Chess took place at a simple four-person table in one of the lounges of the retirement home. The female student sat at the table with the older adults, allowing her to closely watch the game and step in for assistance when she was needed. Having the student sit with the older adults may have made it appear as if the student was an equal participant to the older adults in the co-occupation but in this situation the use of objects made the student's supporting role for the residents that needed guidance very clear. For example, the student always set up the chess board prior to games being played, brought typed chess instructions, and typically did not play chess but rather observed and answered questions.

Figure 3: Lobby Lounge Floor Map
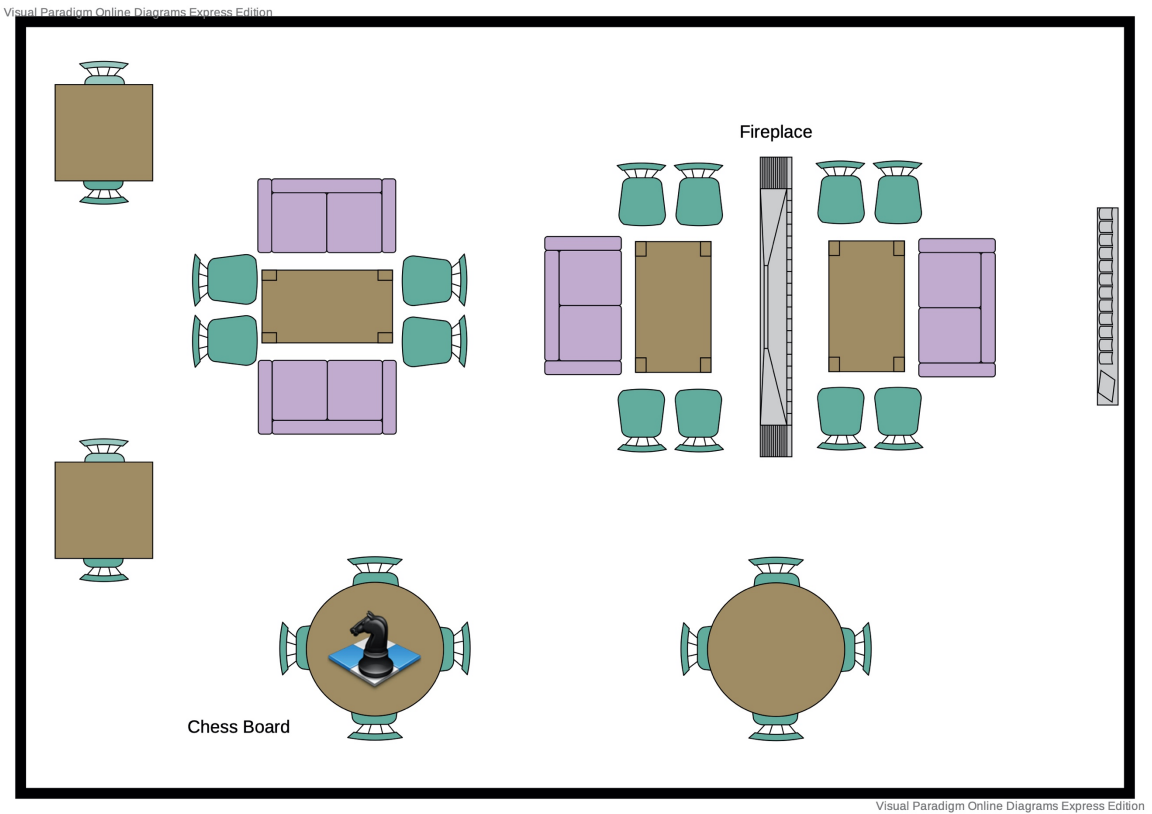
Another co-occupation in which the students held lesser authority was during pub

nights or happy hour, which took place in the pub (Figure 4) several nights a week at the

retirement home. During this co-occupation the students took on a service role as

demonstrated in the following examples. The pianist would play songs on the piano for

an hour or so during this time. The room had several different seating areas and activities

to enable people to have conversations, play games, and/or enjoy beverages and snacks.

The student explained that during these pub nights he initially thought that he would be

playing background music during this activity but instead the residents that attended the

activity began treating the student's playing of the piano as another musical performance

for them to enjoy. The student explained:

It's embarrassing because I love being background music. I'm so used to…at weddings, at concerts, open houses… I just sit in the back and play the music…they enjoy. If it's a song they really like then they'll turn and be like "yeah, that was great!". Down [in the pub] it's full blown concert-mode again. (Participant 2)

Figure 4: Pub Floor Map
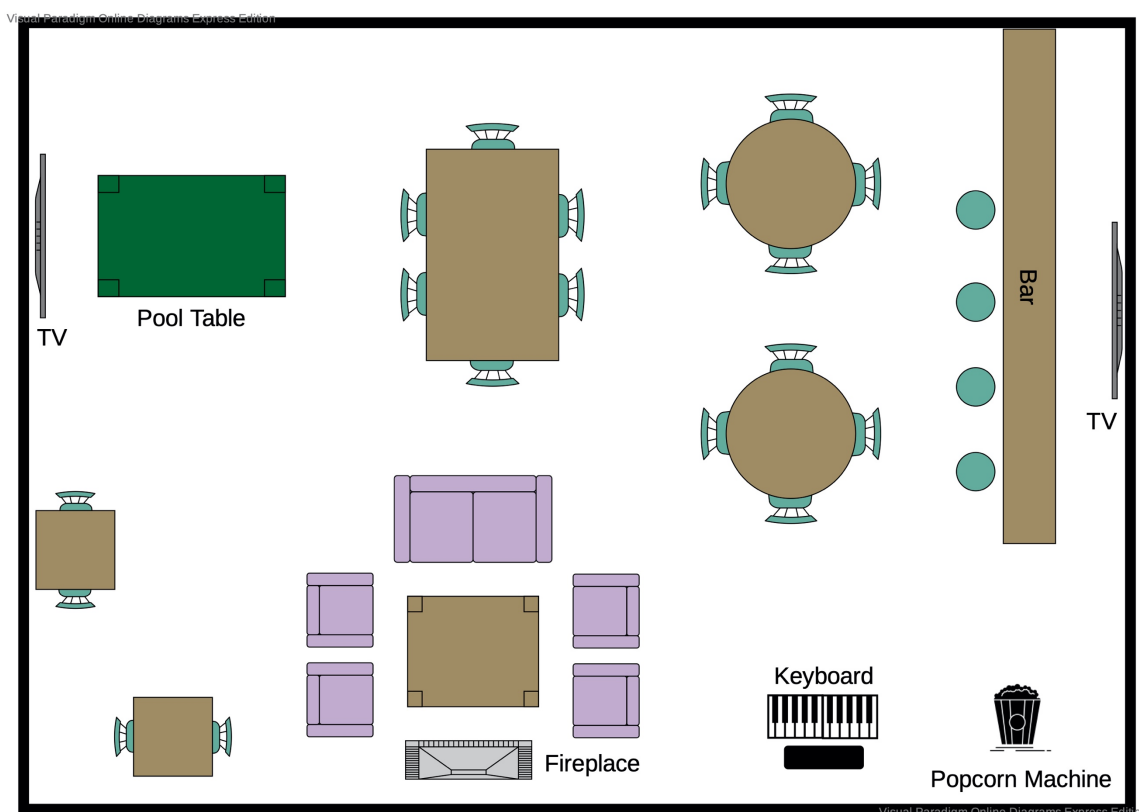
While the pub provided an opportunity for a more informal interaction between the students and the older adults, it appeared that the residents were replicating some of the more formal settings for listening to the students play such as during musical performances. However, power dynamics were different during the pub nights than during musical performances as the older adults were, at times, directing the student's

behaviour, suggesting that the older adults perhaps held more power than the students in this co-occupation. The older adults often turned their chairs towards the student playing the piano and treated the music as a performance in contrast to the student's intent of playing background music. The student acknowledged the older adults' interest in watching him perform and as a result played as such. Consequently, the student took song requests from the residents and often hosted interactive conversations surrounding the music being played. Additionally, during these events the female student would often serve beverages to the residents, quite literally demonstrating her service role during the pub nights. Lastly, during one of my observations the pub hour was used to celebrate all of the older adults' birthdays in the retirement home for that particular month. As a result, the older adults were preoccupied by several different actions during the hour that they were down in the pub. These actions included blowing out candles, cutting, serving, and eating cake, and receiving birthday cards if it was their birthday. Due to the abundance of extra happenings going on, the student played background music and left the older adults to their party. The only time the student was called on was to play and lead the singing of happy birthday for the residents, another example of how the student served the residents during this co-occupation. While neither group necessarily held authority over the other, the students and the older adults played different roles from each other during the performance of this co-occupation.

Finally, while engaging in mealtime, the students and residents seemed to be on more equal footing and held similar roles as participants in the co-occupation. The students appeared to be treated as typical residents during this time. Mealtimes took place in a dining room (Figure 5) in which tables and chairs were organized to seat four people

to a table. In this setting both the students and the older adults behaved and were treated similarly; sitting where they preferred, being served by wait staff, and conversing with other residents.

Figure 5: Dining Room Floor Map
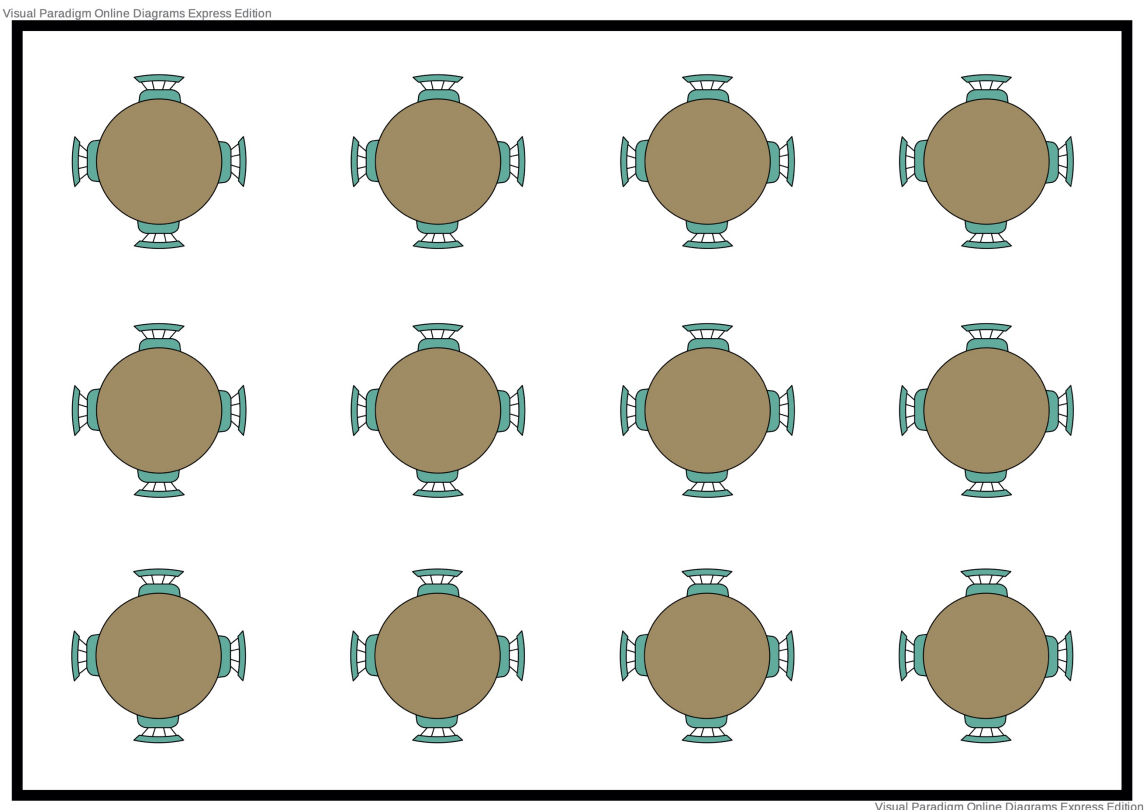
During musical performances throughout the retirement home, the students played a performer role while the older adult residents acted as listeners or consumers of the music. While it appeared that most residents appreciated music and believed musical ability was a good talent to bring into the retirement home, the older adult residents understood their ability to exert influence on the music that was played during music-related co-occupations. In this scenario, the older adults acted as active consumers of the music and demonstrated their authority through decision-making regarding the music that

the students performed. The older adults expressed preferences regarding the genre of music that was played including the apparent dislike of opera music. One participant even referred to the preferences of the older adults' music taste as "anti-opera". She said:

> We had [the pianist] here, yes! Twice. Once when he was alone. I really enjoyed that because he would tell us what was coming and most [of the residents] are not…they're very anti-opera. Anything that's (singing in a high-pitched tone) is off. So, he would explain just ordinary. He didn't play opera or anything but Shubert's songs. (Participant 5)

It also appeared that one of the staff members, the Director of Lifestyle and Leisure, at the retirement home stepped in to give the music students feedback after hearing the preferences of the older adult residents. The staff member instructed the students to perform a variety of music genres and stay away from performing classical or opera music during certain performances. The student explained:

> We try to mix it up a little. With the pub hour stuff, we try to do a little more jazzier stuff. I know lately we have been playing some Christmas carols and that kind of thing. Back near the end of November [The Director of Lifestyle and Leisure] was like "maybe take a break from the classical stuff" so we did that. I'd sing Connie Francis and some older stuff. (Participant 1)

One of the participants explained that despite not liking opera, the sheer talent of the students allowed the performances of opera to still be enjoyed. The participant said, "I just totally enjoy them, I honestly don't like opera, but she's got such a beautiful voice that you kind of tune that part of it out and enjoy the skill she has" (Participant 10). The

participant's spouse chimed in "you'll sit through that! She's so… they're both so talented! They really are. They are good" (Participant 9). She further explained:

> The first part of the year we got a lot more opera, now we're getting more variety.
> Because someone asked [the vocalist] to sing opera the other night and she said
> "oh, I'm not supposed to tonight" so I think they must have spoken to her about
> having different music and like we said though, she's so good, you still enjoy it.
> (Participant 9)

Despite the general consensus that opera is not the favourite genre in the retirement home, some residents do have an appreciation for it. One of the students described an older adult resident's interest in opera, saying:

> But then there's [Bob]. [Bob] likes when I sing classical things, so I don't know if
> he comes to all the jazzier things, but he loves the classical things, so he gets
> treats every once in a while, when we're allowed to sing classical stuff.
> (Participant 1)

Another participant shared her interest in what she termed opera music saying:

> [The pianist] is so intelligent. He's so smart. He not only can play the piano and
> he is great at that piano! Wow can he ever play. So, I've asked the girls
> downstairs if they could turn the piano around a little bit so we would see his
> hands because he just plays so fast and such nice music. I like the more operatic
> music because that's, you know, Beethoven and the different ones, that he just can
> really play. And he's knows them just so wonderfully. (Participant 8)

To cater towards the older adults' negative feelings towards operatic or classical style music, the students ensured to play a variety of genres. When describing this desire from the residents for a mix of genres, one of the older resident participants explained:

> They know that there are a lot of people in there who don't understand opera and don't want to understand opera, so they try to balance the music for them . . . I think on the whole, most of [the residents] love music. In one form or another and having students that are in a form in some ways that some of them have never heard before… it's an education and they like it. As long as they get a mix . . . a lot of people as long as they get a mix of music. They love it". (Participant 6)

Additionally, the older adults displayed their ability to exert influence on the music co-occupations by requesting specific songs to be played or sung by the students. These songs were often older songs that they remembered from different time periods throughout their lives. The students described putting in extra effort to build a repertoire of songs and how it allowed them insight into the lives of the older adults. One of the students said:

> It's not just eye opening in the sense that, you know, we have music that we have no idea how to play, we never heard of, but it's interesting in the sense that we see through their lives and their experiences and it's like story time basically for us. It's nice. (Participant 2)

As seen throughout these examples, it appears that the students were constantly balancing being in a service role and an authoritative role during the performance of co-occupations. It is evident that the setting in which the co-occupations occurred in impacted and reflected these roles and how different the students' participation was in

comparison to the older adult residents. It is important to note the original context of the students being in the retirement home to act as a service or a resource. Even when the student displayed a largely authoritative or leading role (e.g. choir), they were there to serve the older adults, who were often the listeners or learners, by performing for them and instructing them. In this way, the older adults felt comfortable speaking out when their expectations hadn't been met or the students were not "serving" them the way in which they had hoped. This was clear through the older adults voicing their opinions on the genres of music that they preferred to hear in the retirement home which directly shaped the music-related co-occupations that took place between the students and the older adults. It appeared that if the residents did not enjoy the genre of music it may keep them from participating in the co-occupation, such as attending operatic music performances. In this way it is clear that the residents felt like they had a say in controlling how the co-occupations took place and were not passive participants during the performance of co-occupations. It is imperative to note that neither the students nor the older adults held authority over the other but they both held authority in different ways during different co-occupations.

4.4   **Connecting Personally With Music and in Turn Connecting With Others**

In this section I detail the ways in which the students and the older adults found that they could connect to music as well as used music as a tool to connect to each other. At the retirement home, music was seen by both older residents and student participants as something that everyone could connect to. Many residents were able to form a connection with music as a result of their history to music throughout their lives. Additionally, music seemed to bring joy to both the university students and older adults

in their own unique ways. Music was also used as a tool to connect the older adults and student to each other as it created engagement surrounding the topic of music and enabled the older adults to share music-linked memories from their past. This evident personal connection to music served as a basis for engaging in music-related co-occupations. As such, most of the co-occupations that took place in the retirement home surrounded the musical talents of the students such as the student-led choir, live music during pub hour and happy hour, and musical performances within the retirement home and in the community. Consequently, the connection to music played a large role in shaping the co-occupations that were performed together by the university students and older adults. The following paragraphs provide details regarding these findings.

Most, if not all, participants seemed to appreciate the music that came along with having the music students live in the retirement home. Music was spoken about by both the students and the older adult participants as something that everyone could connect to. The pianist said:

> In my opinion it's easier for music students to do the [intergenerational housing] program. Just because they have something that everyone can relate to. Everyone likes music. Everyone can sing. Everyone can play an instrument if they wanted to. They can join in and have fun. (Participant 2)

One of the participants even explained that the music students and their high-quality music was one of the reasons that she chose to move into this particular retirement home. She told me:

> I love music. So, the idea of hearing good music moving in here…when I was looking for a place to live, I went to one of the retirement homes and they had

entertainment and it was bad [laughing]. You get bad anywhere, but it was bad,

and I thought "oh my god". I couldn't stand it. So, the idea when we came here

and they said they were going to have music students I thought "wow, this is

going to be music". (Participant 6)

She further explained this universal love of music while describing that choosing music

students to move into the retirement home makes the most sense for the program from an

economic standpoint. She said:

I think music sort of reaches the soul of everybody. When you bring students in…

the cost of having them, you're in the business to make money. It might be [a

retirement home] but it's making money too. So, I think that music students

would be a better income or outlay of money, let's put it that way. (Participant 6)

Furthermore, during observations I noticed that there was good attendance of residents at

music-related events. These findings indicated a shared appreciation for and connection

to music amongst the students and the older adults.

Many people in the retirement home felt a connection to and through music

because they had a history partaking in various forms of music in their past and for some

participants, in the present. Many older adult participants shared their experience of

music with the students, as well as with me during interviews, whether they were in a

band, played an instrument, or sang in a choir. One participant explained:

Well, I've been involved in music all my life. . . Singing was still a very big part

of me when I moved in here. I was still in the church choir. The idea of having

students from Western was exciting for me. I mean, that wasn't the total reason

but along with the reasons that was something I liked. (Participant 6)

When asking another participant if she had a history in music she said "I do . . . but the trouble is I wasted it. I took violin for a long time and then I played in a girl's band. Played baritone horn for a while, so that was fun" (Participant 9). In contrast she talked about her husband and his history of music, or lack thereof, saying "he used his guitar to hide his long underwear on gym days at school [laughing]" (Participant 9). One of the students described the musical history of another participant saying:

> One of the residents here, on the first floor . . . Every time I'm able to play she will always come out. She can hear the grand piano down in the dining hall, I mean she's just down on the corner that way. But she comes out and she says "ah, I knew it was you" and then she sits down, and we have this long chat. I play for like 10 minutes, she comes out and we have an hour talk… which I love. Because then she tells me… because she was a pianist as well, accordion player, she was a singer and she says all these techniques that she used to use and I was like "oh, that's interesting". (Participant 2)

Additionally, the university students and the older adult residents described music as something that brings them happiness and joy. One of the older adult participants described the benefit of music saying, "I think it brings a kind of joy, it brings an interaction and bridges the gap, and I think that's very meaningful" (Participant 10). Additionally, during the many choir practices that I observed I noticed the joy that singing with other residents afforded the older adults. Some of the older adults who were very soft-spoken sang loudly and beamed with pride as they sang, which appeared uncharacteristic of their normal demeanour. On the other hand, the university students expressed that they rediscovered joy in playing music at the retirement home, something

that they mentioned isn't always present during the completion of a master's in music program. As they strove to master their craft in a challenging and rigorous program, they mentioned losing sight of some of the fundamental reasons they began playing music in the first place. One student focused heavily on the harsh reality of performing for his musically trained colleagues and professors at school. During my interviews with him he frequently referred to this idea. He said:

> As a musician in the faculty, we're always trained and raised to think if you want to hear compliments and you want to get clapping ovations or standings ovations all the time then pay for your own concert kind of thing. It's a harsh reality. If you want to hear your own praise [claps], play for yourself. (Participant 2)

Playing music at the retirement home for the older adults provided the student the opportunity to play for a crowd that was not as harsh as his colleagues and professors and was not focused on critiquing the students' musical skills. This reminded the students of the joy that is present in music and the positive feelings that it can evoke. The students were able to renew their connection to this occupation that holds great meaning to them, a process that was made possible by the specific context of this co-occupation, more specifically the audience for this music. When speaking to this student about one of the pub hour events where he was playing Christmas carols and many residents were joining in singing and giving a full applause after every song, the student explained how different this treatment is for music students. He said:

> And for us that's totally separate than the world that we live in. We're always like "you can do so much better", kind of critiqued in things. Whereas here it's the joy of it and you're just literally trying to cheer people up. (Participant 2)

Music was also used as a tool to initiate conversations between people who appeared to be very different from one another. In this way, music was seen as a way for the students and the older adults to engage with each other and ultimately form connections. One of the students explained:

I think that music is one of the easiest, most universal ways to connect . . . I think that music is just one that is universally understood and just makes sense . . . music is pretty universal; people are pretty passionate about it and it's a form of entertainment. (Participant 1)

The students and the older adults did not just play and listen to music together, but other music-related co-occupations also arose through the shared interest in music. During my observations I often saw the students and residents discussing music together. The students quizzed the residents about their knowledge of music; during one of the pub hour events the pianist asked the residents to guess which song the composer stole from when creating the song he was playing for them. At first, none of the residents knew the answer. The student then repeated the section slower and the residents were able to guess the correct answer. Furthermore, the students often introduced the audience to the piece or group of pieces that they were going to play. The students provided information about the composer, the time period and location that the piece was written and perhaps a small anecdote about why the song was written. Having a common history and interest of music amongst several of the residents helped to create interactive performances and music co-occupations.

Another way that the residents and students connected to each other was through music evoking emotion and memories of one's past. During my observations of

intergenerational co-occupations at the retirement home I frequently witnessed the older

adult residents give compliments and feedback to the university students who were

performing music for them. Many of these comments described how the residents

personally connected to the music that was played by the student. These comments often

demonstrated that a memory had been sparked by the music and allowed the older adults

to reflect upon earlier times in their lives. For example, I heard a resident say "this takes

me back to my dancing days" after a student finished playing a song on the piano.

Another resident recalled a memory after hearing another song played by the student,

saying "this was my grade 8 piano exam". The co-occupation of performing and listening

to music together enabled the older adults to share the memories of their lives with the

students, further connecting them. One of the students described this ability of music to

trigger a memory by saying:

> I feel like everybody in their life has at one point connected to some kind of music
>
> or have experience with some or it triggers a memory for them. It's a very
>
> passionate subject for a lot of people so I feel like that is also beneficial.
>
> (Participant 1)

It is clear that the co-occupation of performing and listening to music together as

well as engaging in additional music-related co-occupations held different meanings for

the students and the older adults. When the older adults listened to the performed music it

held personal meaning by triggering memories of previous life experiences. When the

students performed music for the older adults, it held personal meaning of renewing their

love and connection to music, something that had been lost. Together there was a shared

meaning of performing a co-occupation with someone from another generation and a shared experience of joy evoked by music.

As seen in the findings above, many of the students and the older adults had a personal connection to music. Personal connections to music were a result of the students' and older adults' history with music, the joy it brings them, the memories associated with music or a combination of these factors. These personal connections to music formed a basis for the older adults and the students to engage in co-occupations together, leading the majority of co-occupations enacted by the students and older adults to be music related. The residents' and students' enjoyment of music shaped the co-occupations that took place between the students and the older adults as it provided a focus for these co-occupations and shaped the planning of future co-occupations.

4.5 Connecting through Informal Co-Occupations

Informal co-occupations, such as mealtimes or having coffee in the cafe, provided an opportunity for the students and older adults to form more intimate connections. The older adult participants enjoyed this informal time with the students and many older adults expressed their hope for more co-occupations of this nature. Through my interviews and observations, it became clear that more informal occupations such as mealtimes were recognized as a critical opportunity for the university students and the older adult residents to have more personal conversations and get to know each other better. The majority of time that the university students and the older adults spent together in this intergenerational program occurred during scheduled activities, mealtimes, and briefly when the students were leaving and entering the retirement home. Through my observations it was clear that scheduled activities and events did not enable

the university students and older adults to get to know each other on a more personal and intimate level. During scheduled activities the conversation usually surrounded the activity that was taking place, such as choir, chess, or conversations about the selected music at a pub hour. In contrast, during mealtimes there was no activity being discussed, leading the students and the older adult residents to converse about topics of their choice such as personal stories about themselves and their families, the students' university program, and keeping up with each other's day-to-day thoughts and feelings. One of the participants explained this by saying:

It's the only way you really get to know everybody is to sit with them through a meal or something to visit . . . if you're at activities you don't get that much chance to talk, so more time is good and it's good to move around. (Participant 9)

One of the students elaborated on this sentiment by saying:

I like mealtimes with the older adults. That seems to be the best opportunity to connect on a personal level like you're talking about. Obviously in choir and stuff we have little moments of jokes and that kind of interactions, but one on one personal conversations and stories and stuff happen a lot at mealtimes . . . there is a three-course meal so it's like a 45-minute ordeal... half an hour to 45-minute thing. So, you get a chance to have genuine conversations, it's not just like "how was your day?" in passing... it's a solid conversation . . . They like to ask me about school a lot, like exams and stuff. Sometimes I'll lead the conversation but sometimes I let them ask me questions a lot too because I find lots of people are curious about [the pianist] and I and what our days look like and that kind of thing with school. (Participant 1)

During one of my observations at the retirement home, I attended a Sunday morning brunch where one of the students sat with three older adult residents. These residents were all friendly with the student and even saved the last seat at the table for her. The conversation was an equal balance of the older adults and the student speaking and they both took turns sharing stories. The conversation focused on the student's recent and upcoming performances and the other student who lived at the retirement home. Furthermore, one of the older adults at the table brought out her family's history book to show the student photos of herself as a child and tell stories from throughout her lifetime. This style and depth of conversation was not present during the other activities that I had observed. One of the students explained the manner in which the residents conversed with students during mealtimes, he said:

> I was nervous sitting down at the table with three individuals that I had no idea who they were... But no, they don't… they don't care about that. They just, they love the company, they will talk to you as if you are family members. That was really nice. (Participant 2)

The informal nature of mealtimes seemed dependent on the students being outgoing as it helped the students engage in conversation with the older adults. This is something that the older adults mentioned was important to them. One of the participants described the current students, she said:

> These two are very personable and I think that's the thing. They're personable with everybody and the other [students] we've had were not quite that . . . I think this young couple are far more outgoing than the students we had before, and they

feel more connected to them. These students have gone out of their way to

incorporate themselves in with the elderly. (Participant 6)

Another participant shared these sentiments, saying, "they're very personable and they

like what they're doing, and it just shows. It's nice when people are doing things around

you that they really like and like to share. It makes quite a difference" (Participant 4).

From my understanding it sounds as if the students who lived at the retirement home in

the past were not as outgoing which led to several residents not knowing who they were

or failing to engage in co-occupations together. It appears that having students that were

outgoing and personable created ease during informal co-occupations with the older

adults as it allowed them to be open to conversing with the residents and ultimately

connect more.

The flexible nature of the dining room at this particular retirement home also

fostered relationship-building between the students and many different residents. As there

was no assigned seating arrangement, both the students and the residents could choose

who they would like to sit with on any given day. The students expressed that they tried

to mix up who they sat with in order to get to know most of the residents, not just the

ones they were closest with. One student said "I try to sit with different people every

time. It depends when you come downstairs" (Participant 1). The other student explained

that sometimes she would sit with the same person two meals in a row in order to

continue a conversation that they were having. She said:

Sometimes if I had a good conversation last time and I want to check in with that

person I'll sit near them or sometimes not all the older adults will sit in the exact

same spots so there will be one person that I had a meal with last week or

someone that I happen to be sitting with again but two new adults. (Participant 1)

One of the participants echoed this idea that most of the residents do try to sit with

different people as well, he said "you have the odd threesome, foursome that sit at the

same table each day, but most people move around and I think they should…"

(Participant 10). Another participant described the benefits of not having a seating

arrangement, she said:

> I mean some people always sit in the same place at meals and you can do that if
>
> you like, no one cares. That's where you sit, that's where you sit, and no one will
>
> take your place and that's okay! But there are a number of us who just sit any old
>
> place. We get to know everybody because we sit in different places and that's
>
> good because it gives a good feeling. Everybody knows everybody else and is
>
> friendly. So, I like that. I like that. That works fairly well. It's not organized. It's
>
> just you come when you come and you sit with whoever's got a table and a chair
>
> for you at their table or you set up your own table, sit down, and hope people join
>
> you – which they do! (Participant 4)

Another participant said:

> Anytime they can come in there and you can eat, sit at any table you want to if
>
> there's an empty seat you can go and sit and that way you get to meet different
>
> people and both [students] come and they talk to us and they sit. So, it's really
>
> nice. (Participant 8)

It is clear that the flexible seating arrangement of the dining room contributed to the

informality of the co-occupation of mealtime, which appeared to be something that the

participants were interested in. The students were able to recreate this mealtime co-occupation with many different residents each time they attended a meal.

Some participants expressed their wishes to have more time for informal conversations with the university students, similar to that which occurred at mealtime. Participant 10 and his spouse made it clear that he did not frequently participate in scheduled leisure events at the retirement home as he was not interested but he would have preferred to have more time to have informal conversations with the students. When I arrived to interview this couple, I found them sitting in the lobby café having coffee and a treat, and this is where the couple envisioned the students joining them for a conversation. One student described how she often attempted to do this. She said:

> I like to do coffee and chat every morning on the way to school. That's just an extra thing I do. I just come get a coffee and sometimes I'll have a mini conversation depending on how much time I have before class. But yeah, I grab a coffee in my thermos, and I'll say hi to everybody, "how's your day going?" . . . Usually it's pretty quick, maybe like 15 minutes. (Participant 1)

While this time for coffee and conversation appeared to be what the older adults were looking for, the students' busy school schedule made it difficult for this to event to take place for as long or as frequently as the students and the older adults would have wanted. Additionally, some participants stated that allowing the students to have more meals in the dining room would have promoted better connections and conversations. One participant said:

> It would give them a chance to get to know people better . . . If you only have three meals a week you can't interact with too many people and if the tables are

full if you come in a bit later you going to end up sitting with the same people all

the time because the other ones will come in a bit later. (Participant 9)

She further explained that she hasn't had a chance to eat a meal with one of the students

yet, she said:

[The vocalist] is pretty good. I'll see her at meals, and she sits with different

people, we just haven't had the opportunity to sit with her because sometimes the

tables full or whatever and so it's not just her fault but [the pianist] has chosen not

to have any meals here or interact in that way. (Participant 9)

Through the aforementioned findings of this theme it is evident that many

personal connections between the students and the older adults can be attributed to

informal co-occupations. Furthermore, factors such as having no specific activity to

discuss, outgoing students, and no assigned seating arrangement contributed to the

informal nature of the co-occupations of mealtimes and conversations over coffee. The

older adults and the students appeared to enjoy the co-occupations that felt more informal

as these co-occupations enabled them to have more personal conversations with many

people and avoid the distractions that an activity-based co-occupation would have.

4.6 **Diverse and Mutually Beneficial Intergenerational Relationships Shaping**

Co-Occupations

During the period of time that the students lived at the retirement home they

engaged in many diverse relationships with the older adults. The wide spectrum of

personal relationships that the students had with each resident greatly shaped the co-

occupations performed together and the manner in which they were performed.

Additionally, both the students and the older adults spoke about the reciprocal

relationship that they had together, which shaped their co-occupations in a cyclical way and facilitated shared meanings of the co-occupations.

4.6.1   Wide Spectrum of Personal Relationships

As evident through my interviews and observations at the retirement home, the residents and students engaged in co-occupations within a wide spectrum of personal relationships. These relationships ranged from non-existent, i.e. people who were unaware that the students were living in the retirement home, to friendships, to relationships that resembled grandchild-grandparent, and even a relationship that appeared to be somewhat flirtatious. This spectrum of relationships played a role in how the students and the older adults treated and communicated with each other during engagement in co-occupations as well as the type and frequency of these co-occupations. The closer the relationship between one of the students and an older adult resident, the more likely they were to partake in a co-occupation outside of the scheduled leisure activities.

One of the students explained how he plays piano differently when he plays for one of the residents with whom he said he had a grandson-grandmother relationship. He said:

She heard me playing and goes "beautiful". [Elenore] is the one resident that whenever I play, I notice that I play with more intention. Every single note I play, and I put care into it. Not saying that I don't put care into it every other time but it's just like I want to make it a performance for [Elenore]. [Elenore] just sits there and closes her eyes, enjoying everything, shutting everything out. (Participant 2)

The co-occupation of the student playing piano while the older adult resident listened was shaped by the specific relationship that the student and older adult had formed. Furthermore, the student spoke about the time that the same resident was walking by as he made Gordon Ramsay's special scrambled egg recipe in the communal kitchen. The resident was intrigued by what the student was doing, and he ended up showing her how to make the eggs and let her taste them, a co-occupational experience that appeared very different from that of many of the residents who only attend scheduled events and are content with being simply acquaintances with the students. From my observations and interviews, these impromptu, more intimate types of experiences seldom happened between the students and residents, and often only when there was a deeper connection between the older adult and the student.

An additional form of student-older adult relationship was the sometimes-flirty relationship the female student had with one of the residents. She said:

> [Bob] and I bug each other and whatever but he is kind of funny-flirty with me. Like he says, "tall glass of water", you know? Like funny things. I was teasing him because he was taking his recyclables of all of his cans… he drinks one drink every other day or something… and he was taking his cans out but he had a big collection and I was like "oh did you have a party this weekend [Bob]?" and we were joking around that way. I don't know, that's not really something I would say to my grandfather. So, I think that's kind of funny too, to be able to joke that way. (Participant 1)

It is evident that due to the relationship that they had formed, the student and the resident felt comfortable joking with one another, behaviour that I observed in the conversations

and co-occupations performed between the two of them. Due to their humorous, and often flirtatious, relationship the student altered the way in which she acted towards the resident, acting in a way that she most likely would not have felt comfortable doing had she not gotten to know the resident as well as she did.

Another example of personal relationships shaping a co-occupation was seen during one of the participant's attendance at an off-site student performance. The participant described her conversation with the vocalist after the performance, she said:

> We asked her if she had a ride home. She goes "oh no, I'm taking the bus" I said, "well there's room in the van, why don't you come with us?". Oh, she said, "well I gotta go and get my coat and I might not be back". I said, "oh come on, we'll wait for you", so she did come back and our van came, and she came home with us. (Participant 8)

While this participant implied that she was just an acquaintance with the students, this comment indicates that she had got to know the student and had a caring relationship with her. This care for the student directly shaped the co-occupation of attending an off-site musical performance as the resident ensured that the student could get back to the retirement home safely by waiting for her to load onto the retirement home bus.

Additionally, some residents did not seek friendships with the students, instead viewing them as acquaintances that were in the retirement home for the sake of hosting and attending scheduled activities. One resident said:

> I think that's probably what it's going to be like. I don't see [friendships] happening with anyone else here particularly. I don't see that as the reason they're here. I think it's to help us enjoy their activities and they enjoy our activities. It's

a mutual thing that goes on. I mean they appear to like doing things with us, they

don't hesitate and if you ask for something special, you'll probably get it. It's that

sort of relationship which is really nice. They're young and they're interesting and

they're smart. I think that makes quite a difference. (Participant 4)

This type of relationship shaped the co-occupations that the older adults and the students

performed together by focusing mainly at the activity that was at hand as well as having

surface-level conversations that do not share much personal information. Additionally,

these relationships did not appear to afford the students or the older adults with many co-

occupations outside of the scheduled activities on the leisure calendar as limited exposure

was presented outside of these scheduled engagements.

4.6.2 Mutually Beneficial/Reciprocal Relationships

Many of the residents and students described having a mutually beneficial or

reciprocal relationship with one another. This mutually beneficial relationship shaped the

co-occupations in a cyclical way. By engaging in co-occupations together, the students

and the older adults were able to develop a reciprocal relationship which. in turn, shaped

the way they behaved reciprocally during the co-occupation. One of the students

described the relationship that he had with one of the residents, he said:

It's a relationship that goes beyond musician and audience, I feel like it's like

grandson-grandmother, but more in that it is a mutual respect kind of thing. It's

not just respect because she's older, of course there is but it's more because she

respected me day one. She was completely comfortable to opening up, for me I

was like "wow, thank you". I felt so honoured, so I did the same thing.

(Participant 2).

One of the older adult participants said:

> We share lots of stuff together, you know, the young person learns from the older
>
> person, the older person definitely learns from the younger person. We have the
>
> habit of thinking we know everything, and we don't. So, all that sharing is great.
>
> (Participant 7)

Another participant described this relationship, she said:

> They take part in what we're doing, and we take part in what they're doing.
>
> Which makes a good relationship. They're not listening to us all the time or trying
>
> to get us to do something and we're not expecting any more from them really than
>
> the use of their talents here. (Participant 4)

These findings demonstrate the shared and personalized meanings within co-occupations. While both the student and the older adults received different benefits and ascribed diverse meanings to performing the co-occupations together, there was a shared understanding of the reciprocity of the co-occupation. Some benefits the older adults appeared to gain through performing co-occupations with the students were feeling youthful and more alive, gaining a source of entertainment, and having companionship. One participant discussed how spending time with the students made her feel younger, she said:

> Well you're thinking of…when your 89 you're thinking of your health that's
>
> going and you think of death and you may not see your family the way you're
>
> used to. Some have families out of town and so when you have somebody
>
> youthful in here it makes you feel better. Yeah, you feel younger. (Participant 6)

Another participant described enjoying the performance of music in the home as a source of entertainment for the residents, she said:

>What they do is they come down to the recreation room on the main floor where the bar is and it's mostly the young man who does it… he comes down and plays the piano for an hour… he's fabulous and that old instrument that he uses (referring to a keyboard) sounds like a piano, he's so good! It's just very pleasant and he talks to you and he laughs and both of them are very very friendly and outgoing. (Participant 4)

Lastly, one of the participants described the benefit of having students live in the retirement home to act as company for those who do not have children to visit them, she said:

>Well to see young people because most of us have children or grandchildren who come and visit but some do not, and they might not even be interested because sometimes they go and sit way back but it is a good idea. It's nice to hear children's laughter. (Participant 5)

In contrast, the students recalled gaining wisdom and life lessons and having genuine connections with people, in addition to an opportunity to practice performing. One of the students described this wisdom and life experience that the older adults had, she said:

>There are so many ways to learn from people and so many valuable things that you could be taught in not a professional/academic setting. They can teach you about relationship skills, interactive skills. I've kind of had to initiate or try to initiate that openness so that they are feeling the same comfort on the return end

of it so that's teaching me how to do that in a new setting as a stranger with

people that I want to impress and that I respect. There's a lot of things that if you

analyze them that I'm gaining from the relationships with them, not just

materialistic things like "I have a place to live" and "I get to sing for them". There

are deeper things that impact who you are as a person and your personality…

confidence doing that in different settings. (Participant 1)

The second student echoed these ideas, he said:

There is no doubt about it in my mind and I can say this with full confidence that

they give us so much. I'm not talking about the retirement home itself I'm talking

about them as residents, as people. Life experiences, they give us comfort, we can

talk to them, we can rant to them. They're here to support us, truly they're here to

support us. (Participant 2)

The student further discussed being able to form genuine and open connections with the

older adults, something which she claimed was difficult amongst people in her own

generation, she said:

One of the other ladies who's a musician herself, she had said to me "if you ever

need a shoulder to cry on mine is very small but it's always here for you" and

yeah, they're just so sweet and so open and I feel like not a lot of our generation is

like that so much. We're very much focused and doing our own thing and we

don't always take the time to really make people feel comfortable and be so open

to each other, so I appreciate that. (Participant 1)

In conclusion, this theme discussed how co-occupations were shaped by the

relationships formed between the students and the older adults. Factors such as the wide

spectrum of personal relationships and the presence of mutually beneficial relationships between the students and the older adults played a role in the co-occupations that were experienced together as well as the manner in which those co-occupations took place. Lastly, while the meaning of the co-occupation was diverse for both age groups, together there was a shared understanding that they are both benefitting from the arrangement in some way, shape, or form.

4.7   <u>**Navigating Tensions Regarding Differing Perspectives**</u>

Analysis revealed differing expectations regarding the student program that appeared to stem from a lack of information from the retirement home staff to the older adults about the intergenerational program. In combination, these factors negatively shaped the co-occupations that took place between the students and the older adults. The subthemes within this theme include: Differing Perspectives on Student Attendance, Differing Perspectives on Event Preparedness, and Differing Perspectives on Participant Expectations.

A frequent problem that arose at the retirement home was the students missing activities scheduled with the older adults as a result of their rigorous and unpredictable school and music practice schedule. Additionally, some participants believed that even when the students did attend the leisure activities, they were often late and/or unorganized. Both of these factors caused the older adults to be disappointed, either because an event they were looking forward to did not happen or because the activity was not of the caliber they were expecting. In contrast to the negative feelings of the older adults, the students discussed their ability to work as team and come up with performances or practices on the spot as being flexible and a strength.

4.7.1   Differing Perspectives on Student Attendance

The retirement home distributed a leisure calendar once per month, and one of the main issues that the older adults mentioned about their expectations for the student program was the common occurrence of students missing scheduled events. The calendar specifically stated that the students would be present at certain events and the older adult participants appeared discouraged by the fact that the students did not always attend these events. One student described this, stating:

> [The Director of Lifestyle and Leisure] really lets us know how sad and disappointed if like… because we had a concert that [the vocalist] and I were driving back from [the university] and we came 20 minutes late because the traffic was so bad and the residents were like - they loved when we got there! It was fantastic when we got there, we performed! But a lot of the residents were really sad, and I still feel bad about it because they really were invested in that performance. (Participant 2)

The participants echoed this concern saying, "if we go to what we think is going to be a concert and they don't show up there's a really general problem" (Participant 10). Her husband chimed in "they're disappointed. Everyone's upset" (Participant 9). The participant continues "people are upset because their expectations were quite changed and that's it. So, I think it's important" (Participant 10). When asking one of the participants if she was happy with the program she said "no! They are just not living up to their word and that goes for the musicians because I think they have more reason but management" (Participant 5). She further explained that this is a common feeling amongst the other residents, she said "what I hear is great pessimism because they say

"ugh, if it is available…we'll go down and see". It's not dependable and look at the staff

changes, you don't see that but…" (Participant 5). It is unclear whether the students did

not attend scheduled events as many times as the older adults stated, or if the students

were sometimes late to the event which would cause the older adults to leave the location

of the event, believing that it was not taking place. Participant 5 further discussed this

uncertainty, she said:

> These [students] had a very good start and now they miss a lot too and I
>
> understand that, but they should be able to think ahead and not make
>
> appointments. I mean, our chess teacher, you probably know… well twice she
>
> didn't show up and the last time some people say they saw her, well I didn't…
>
> that's fine because we should be able to continue on our own. But don't make
>
> those promises, but that comes from the top down. (Participant 5)

When speaking to the students, they mentioned that as Master of music students

their schedule was very busy and rigorous. During the school year the students had their

own schoolwork and practicing of their vocals or instruments, as well as participation in

musical performances at local theaters and mandatory participation in an opera. One

student explained the unpredictable nature of the university opera they were a part of,

stating that they were only given the schedule for the week ahead on the Friday before the

week began. This style of scheduling did not work well with the monthly frequency of

the retirement home leisure schedule. The student said:

> In regard to the choir, it's been going on for a while now it's fantastic. The only
>
> issue I find with that is because, like I said earlier, schedules have been so hectic,
>
> [the vocalist] and I are both involved in opera at Western and so, since I'm a

pianist and she is a singer we have different schedules. We only get the schedule

the Friday before the week. That annoys me and it annoys everyone because there

will be multiple weeks where I'm called last minute on the Thursday or [the

vocalist] is called last minute on a Monday, which is the performance. I think a

couple of times [the vocalist] had to do the choir by herself and I had to do the

performances by myself and we don't mind it's just irritating trying to figure out

the music faculty's needs compared to what we have to do here. (Participant 2)

Additionally, the retirement home leisure schedule was printed once at the beginning of

the month and did not change or update, and as a result it was hard to get the word out to

the residents that an event had been rescheduled, changed, or cancelled altogether. The

repercussions of this was seen during one of my visits to observe the weekly choir. As I

arrived and signed in at the front desk one of the residents who was part of the choir

approached me and began discussing the choir as she knew that was why I was visiting

the retirement home that evening. The employee at the front desk overheard our

conversation and mentioned that we must not have heard that choir was cancelled for the

evening as one of the students was sick. Both myself and the resident had not known that

choir had been cancelled and only found out upon arriving to attend the scheduled event.

4.7.2   Differing Perspectives on Event Preparedness

Differing ideas for the performance of co-occupations was revealed as the

students and the older adults discussed their expectations about the quality of the

scheduled leisure activities. Some of the older adults mentioned that the students were

often unorganized, for example scrambling to find sheet music or looking up a song to

play on their phones. This lack of organization is something that I also noted during my

observation at the retirement home events. Often when I attended choir one of the students would be rushing home from the university as a rehearsal had gone late or the students would have to get equipment from other locations within the retirement home to set up for the activity. Several times the students forgot to bring sheet music for all of the members of the choir and as a result had to play songs and hope that the participating residents knew the lyrics by memory. One of the students described the older adults' frustration when the students showed up last minute to an event, saying:

> [The residents] are always there 10 minutes earlier and whenever [the vocalist] and I get there 3 or 5 minutes before the actual thing to set up they're like "we've been waiting here for so long what's going on" and I'm like "I'm so sorry" [laughing]. (Participant 2)

Similarly, one of the residents mentioned during her interviews that she would be dropping out of the choir, and when asked why she said:

> Well, about last night… we look forward to it. We get down there, nobody's there so we go up again, we come down and there's a line up and no students . . . There was no piano there so, so I thought… no they're not coming. It was 7 o'clock, after 7. [The pianist] brings us in, and he had sat on his glasses so he couldn't see. No, he came, and he did his best but…no. (Participant 5)

Coordinating and organizing seemed easier for the students to do individually, as described by one of the participants:

> It's easier I think for them…like [the vocalist] the last… twice has been singing with her computer music and I think that's easier, she doesn't have to coordinate with [the pianist] trying to find a page in a book or deciding what both of them

want to do. I think it's much easier when she's alone for her – than together… and so alone they're both…it doesn't seem as disorganized as when they're together doing it. (Participant 9)

On some occasions, one of the students would try to adapt and do a related activity with the residents when the other was late. At one of the weekly choir practices that I observed, the pianist wasn't able to attend until the second half of the hour-long practice. The opera singer preferred to wait to begin the practice until the pianist was there to join her. The student spent the time discussing future plans for the choir, such as scheduling a performance of Christmas carols on the long-term care side of the retirement home. Several of the residents, however, were eager to start singing. One of them even vocalized their frustration with the situation by saying "can we get on with it already?". I believe the residents felt the student was stalling. This interaction solidified for me the idea that the residents are in the choir because they genuinely enjoyed singing as a leisure activity. The logistics of the choir, or the scheduling of their plans is not as important to the older adults as just enjoying an hour of singing together.

In contrast to some of the older adults' beliefs that the students were unorganized during scheduled activities, the students seemed to perceive this trait as being flexible and adaptable on short notice. The students acknowledged the behaviours that the participants spoke about, but considered it in a positive light, congratulating themselves for being great at working as a team and devising programming or performances on the spot. One of the students said:

From a performing perspective, if you mess up it's not the end of the world. Everybody here is still like "you're so talented" and [the pianist] and I sometimes

wing it like "I know this song, do you know this song" and we'll just play it and

see what happens and half way through we'll be like "want to repeat?". So, little

things like that. It doesn't have to all be so micro-managed. (Participant 1)

It is apparent, through the presented diversity of views between the students and

older adults regarding the quality of the performed scheduled leisure activities, that at

times the older adults were expecting much higher quality events while the students

believed that they were doing the best that they could do given their busy schedules. It

was clear that the students felt that there were many elements related to their school

program that were out of their control such as their heavy workload and the unpredictable

nature of their rehearsal schedule. These factors had a direct relationship to the amount of

co-occupations that ultimately took place and the quality of these co-occupations. During

the performance of these co-occupations the older adults' expectations were often not met

by the students which directly shaped the nature of the interaction between the students

and the older adults, such as the older adults becoming frustrated with the students and

showing their disappointment. The lack of reliability and preparedness, which stemmed

from both the students' absences and rushed planning of activities, played a large role in

the older adults' willingness to engage in co-occupations with the students.

4.7.3   Lack of Information about Program Structure

A key factor that related to differing expectations appeared to be a lack of

information provided to the older adult residents by the retirement home management

regarding the student program. The older adults felt that they lacked information on the

intended purposes of the program and responsibilities of both the older adults and the

university students who were a part of this program. The participants mentioned that this

lack of information had resulted in residents having differing ideas of what to expect from the student program. Evidently some participants felt the students were not living up to their expectations, when in reality a clear understanding of expectations was never shared with the older adult residents. For example, many participants were not aware that the students were only given three complimentary meals per week. One resident made it clear that she was under the impression that the students could eat any and all meals in the dining room, saying:

> They can come down anytime they want, and they can sit with any of us. Yeah, so that's how we plan our meals. Our meals are always at the same time … but anytime they can come in there and you can eat. (Participant 8)

Some residents mistook the students not being present at many meals as them being too busy with school or choosing to not attend. When I explained this to a participant she said:

> We did not know that. We thought they got all their meals and so I can understand them not eating here if they don't get all of their meals…but those things…it would be helpful if somebody told the residents what's expected because I think we all have different ideas of what they should be doing but we really have no idea what they should be doing. (Participant 9)

Another participant said "Is that all? Oh, they must eat at the university." (Participant 4).

It seemed that the university students and the retirement home management had discussed student responsibilities, as the students had signed a contract upon being selected for the program and the students appeared to be clear about what they were intended to do while living in the retirement home. However, it does not appear that the

details of these expectations were clearly shared with the older adult residents. Some participants suggested that it would have been beneficial to receive an information sheet when they entered the retirement home, or when the students began the program, to detail the program purpose, how it would function, what the students' responsibilities are, what the older adults' responsibilities are, and other information. The older adult participants explained that this would reduce the chance of the students not living up to the older adults' expectations. One participant stated, "I'm sure they've committed a certain number of hours but again nobody says whether it's 5 hours or 20 hours or what it is…" (Participant 9). "What they should do is give you an information sheet when you come into the program here as to what the purpose is, how it's going to function… (Participant 10). "What their responsibility is…" (Participant 9). "…What are theirs or yours or whatever the case may be…" (Participant 10). "Yeah…it would just make it simpler and you wouldn't be expecting things that aren't supposed to happen" (Participant 9).

This lack of information about the student program played a large role in the expectations of the co-occupations. The lack of awareness of clear guidelines on the expectations of both parties within the performance of co-occupations resulted in many people with misaligned expectations and as a result their expectations were not met. It is important to note that this was not the only area in which the participants felt negatively about the retirement home. During my observations and interviews I became aware of more general issues regarding privacy, frequent staff changes, and activity programming which seemed to detract from some of the older adult residents' experience of living in the retirement home.

In conclusion, this theme illustrates many areas of tension regarding the student program at the retirement home in which there was differing perspectives. Tensions were present regarding student attendance to and preparedness for scheduled leisure activities as well as expectations of both the students and older adults who chose to engage in co-occupations with the students. These tensions negatively shaped some of the co-occupations that took place between the students and older adults by some residents' expectations not being met which resulted in disappointment.

4.8   Experiencing Discrepancies Between Ability and the Nature of Co-Occupations

One factor that played a large role in shaping the older adults' participation in co-occupations was both personal and spousal illness/impairments as well as general fatigue or discomfort. Experiencing these issues, combined with the fact that some of the activities offered at the retirement home were not accommodating of such limitations, limited the engagement of the participants. Many older adults stated that they did not attend specific activities with the students due to personal illness or impairment that would make performing the co-occupation uncomfortable. Other participants did not have an illness or impairment themselves but acted as a caregiver or spent a lot of time with their spouses who did struggle with illness and disability. Additionally, some of the participants did not express a specific illness/impairment but both the students and participants discussed the hassle of nighttime events, especially those that took place off-site, due to fatigue and physical uncomfortableness that participants attributed to getting older. Some older adults continued to attend these activities and perform the co-occupations, but the quality of their participation was affected by their illness or

impairment and the nature of the activities. These factors contributed to some of the older adults' lack of willingness to participate in co-occupations with the students and impacted the quality of their participation during co-occupations that they did participate in.

4.8.1   <u>Personal Illness/Impairment</u>

Both illness and impairments were frequently mentioned by participants as a reason for not participating in scheduled events or co-occupations with the students. When asking a participant who had a long history participating in community choirs if she still sang and why she was not participating in the student-led choir at the retirement home, she said "I'm having trouble. I have a lot of postnasal drip… whether it's because I'm living in here? I don't know what it is but sometimes I sound like a frog when I try to sing" (Participant 6). When asking another participant if she would be interested in learning to draw with the male student, an event that was recently added to the calendar of events she explained:

> With Parkinson's my hands shake, and I don't do well with my hands. I would like to have done it when I could. I had books that I liked to try and colour, but I can't stay in the lines anymore and it's really tough. (Participant 8)

Other participants experienced minor impairments that did not keep them from participating but infringed upon the quality of their participation during these co-occupations with the students. One of the students describes what it can be like sharing conversations during mealtime when some of the residents are hard of hearing. He said:

> It's also interesting too because a lot of them can't really hear that well, so one person's having a conversation and the other person is trying to chime in and then a third persons trying to chime in and me, as a person who's focusing on

everything that I can, to hear one story and then another shock, and then another

person just throws it in a different direction! Its chaotic but in a good sense.

(Participant 2)

Additionally, during one of my observations at a chess activity one of the residents

mentioned that she was struggling to hear that day. Despite the student's best attempt to

accommodate the older adult, participating in chess appeared very frustrating and

challenging for the resident while she was struggling with her hearing. As a result,

several times throughout the chess game the resident had to ask both the student and the

participating residents if they could speak up or repeat themselves.

4.8.2   Fatigue/Uncomfortableness

Less severe than a specific illness or impairment, some older adult residents

discussed minor symptoms that they attributed to their aging bodies, as barriers to

attending events or enjoying them to their full potential. For example, some residents

avoided attending nighttime events, such as the choir or attending plays in the

community, stating they preferred to stay in the retirement home at night and go to sleep

early. When discussing the opportunity of the participants to attend student performances

that took place in the evening, for example at the local university or at a community

theatre, the participants explained that they no longer enjoy nighttime events. They

stated:

The only one that I think we were available for was the last one…Mikado? Is that

what they did last? But we didn't go. We're finding now, at night the activities…

we don't just enjoy them the same. We don't like to go out at night. (Participant

9)

The participant's spouse chimed in "night comes and we're ready for bed! [laughing]" (Participant 10). Another participant mentioned fatigue as a limiting factor for attending events off-site stating that "I have to say, one of my biggest problems is fatigue. I'm very easily fatigued. I have to use my walker if I want to go anywhere" (Participant 3). The students seem to be aware of the uncomfortableness that accompanies the older adults when going off-site for a scheduled event. One of the students discussed the feeling of having the older adult residents attend their rendition of Jesus Christ Superstar at a local theatre explaining:

> I was so excited. I was nervous, I was very, very nervous because I knew that some of the residents, physically, were uncomfortable staying in one spot for so long. Luckily the show wasn't that long. I think the show was full round length, including the intermission, maybe one hour and a half, maybe one 45. It was not that long, thank goodness. I booked the entire front row for them, so they had extra leg space if they needed it for their walkers or anything like that.
>
> (Participant 2)

Additionally, during one of my observations of the student-led choir, which took place at 7pm, the students attempted to get residents to move up to the front of the seating area so that they could all sing closer together. An older adult couple mentioned that they were sitting at the back of the room so they could slip out early to go to bed.

4.8.3 Spousal Illness/Impairment

In several scenarios, acting as a caregiver for a spouse who was experiencing illness or impairment kept participants from attending events. When asked if there were ways that the student program could better suit one participant's needs, she said:

It's hard for me to answer that because I'm just so involved with my husband. They have a lot of programs that I could be into but I'm not. I could be playing cards, you know. When he was in the other nursing home, I took advantage of going out on the bus for a lot of things and I can't do that now. (Participant 6)

Another participant echoed the sentiments of the other participants regarding attending off-site events, stating:

At night it's very difficult for us to go because [my husband] gets help and I don't want to give it up because often he doesn't leave if I'm not there but in case I can break away for a little break I don't want to cancel it out. (Participant 5)

In conclusion, it is evident that the older adult residents believed that their participation in co-occupations with the students was potentially limited by personal or spousal illnesses or impairments as well as what they perceived to be general aging-related declines such as tiredness or uncomfortableness. Based on my own observations and details from other participants, participation limitations came as a result of the combination between the abilities of the residents and the nature of the activities or co-occupations. Consequently, it was not just the illnesses, impairments, or general aging-related declines of the older adults that limited their participation, but the combination of these issues with factors such as the time of an event, the need for more spousal support, or the physical demands of the co-occupation. These factors shaped the older adults' ability to engage in particular co-occupations as well as the level of participation possible for the older adults. At times, steps were taken to facilitate the residents' engagement in co-occupations, such as speaking louder and facing towards older adults with hearing impairments.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this thesis was to explore co-occupation between university students and older adults who live together in a retirement home as part of an intergenerational housing program. More specifically, the research aimed to address how these co-occupations were enacted and the factors that played a role in shaping them, using the transactional perspective to better understand how person and context transacted to create and shape the co-occupations, and the meaning-making that occurred within these co-occupations. In this final chapter, the study findings are discussed in relation to this purpose and aim as well as existing literature. Firstly, I relate my study findings to previous research on this topic. Next, I discuss the study findings in relation to the transactional perspective. Then, I reflect upon the strengths and limitations of the research process. Subsequently, I detail the implications of this study for research and practice purposes. Lastly, I provide concluding remarks for this thesis.

5.1 Relating Study Findings to Previous Research

This study contributes to literature on co-occupation as well as intergenerational housing. As reviewed in Chapter 2, the study of co-occupation generally has focused on familial intergenerational co-occupations, such as mother and child (Dalvand et al., 2015; Olson, 2006; Pizur-Barnekow et al., 2014; Poskey et al., 2014; Price & Miner, 2008; Price & Stephenson, 2009; Slootjes et al., 2016; Visser et al., 2016; Whitcomb, 2012), and more recently has incorporated studies on the co-occupations shared by older adults (Crepeau, 2015; van Nes et al., 2012; van Nes, Runge, & Jonsson, 2009). However, the co-occupation literature fails to explore non-familial intergenerational co-occupations. This study adds to these bodies of literature by providing a detailed account of the co-

occupations that students and older adults living in a retirement home engage in together, the factors that shape these co-occupations, as well as furthering conceptualizations of co-occupation. Regarding intergenerational housing programs, most research in this area has focused on challenges, benefits, and recommendations (Hock & Mickus, 2019), evaluating the care model and built environment (Landi & Smith, 2019), and understanding the elements that contribute to a successful transition into an intergenerational housing arrangement (Arentshorst et al., 2019). Furthermore, this literature only briefly describes the activities that young and older adults engage in together. The current study adds to the literature by deepening our understanding of the processes, benefits, and challenges of an intergenerational housing program, providing an exploration of the variety of roles and relationships that were engaged in by the study participants, and framing the students' positive living arrangement experience as a foundational component of intergenerational housing.

5.1.1   Study Findings Related to Co-Occupation

In this thesis, co-occupation refers to "everyday occupations performed together by two or more people, involving shared time and space and involving both shared and personalized meanings" (van Nes et al., 2012, p. 352). Previous literature regarding intergenerational housing programs within retirement homes provides few details regarding the activities that the students and the older adults engaged in together. In the current study, the students and older adults engaged in a wide range of co-occupations together including musical performances, choir, pub hour, chess, drawing, mealtime, as well as enjoying a coffee and conversation together. In an intergenerational housing study by Hock and Mickus (2019) the researchers minimally explain the activities that the

students and the older adults engaged in together, simply noting that the activities fit into one of three categories that were titled individual recreation, conversation, or mealtime. While the categories are similar to the activities that were performed within the current study site, the current study site had an additional focus on music-related activities and findings demonstrate a wide range of co-occupations that older adults and students may engage in together, given the opportunity. Furthermore, Landi and Smith (2019) explained that in an intergenerational housing program the younger adults most often spent their time teaching the older adults how to use various forms of technology, while the older adults taught the students traditional hobbies (Landi & Smith, 2019). At the same study site as Landi and Smith (2019), Arenthorst et al. (2019) detailed that the older and younger adults played games, went shopping, and visited restaurants together. In the current study, the students did not describe any particular skills or hobbies that the older adults taught them, nor did they discuss technology-related occupations. In addition, in the current study, the students could attend any leisure event that the retirement home held for the older adults, including going off-site to local restaurants or shopping malls with the older adults. However, it appears that the only off-site activity that the students engaged in was when the students invited the residents to their musical performances throughout various locations in the community. This absence of attendance to off-site activities could relate to the students' busy academic schedules and resulting time limitations.

Key personal and contextual factors that shaped the co-occupations that took place seemed to be the students' academic program, the intergenerational housing program structure, as well as the students' personal interests. In the current study, both

students were studying for a university music degree and were expected to perform music as part of the intergenerational program; as a result, the majority of the co-occupations engaged in were music-related. Some activities were also based on the students' personal interests such as chess with the female student. In contrast, the students in the Hock and Mickus' (2019) study were free to engage in any activities with the older adults that they wished but there was an emphasis on learning how to communicate with older adults in attempts to prepare the students for a career in which they might work with the aging population. In the setting in which the studies by Landi and Smith (2019) and Arenthorst et al. (2019) took place, the students were free to engage in any activities with the older adults that they wished and so the activities were largely based on the personal interests of the students such as technology and social media. As such, in this previous research, program activities evolved informally. In contrast, at the current study site some activities evolved informally but there were also activities that were expected of the students such as musical performances and attendance at the pub hour to play live music. It appeared that having some structured or expected activities was good for supporting co-occupations between the students and older adults as it provided a means of gathering the generations together in a predictable manner. The older adults were aware that the students who were moving into the retirement home were music students and this gave the older adults a point of interest that they could use to immediately interact with the students before even getting to know them. Equally important were the co-occupations that evolved informally that allowed for flexibility and customization between the group of older adults and students. Therefore, it seems that having a mix of informal and expected co-occupations is beneficial to intergenerational housing programs.

Additionally, the current study's findings regarding how participants connected with music and as a result connected with each other adds to the literature on intergenerational housing as the previous literature focuses strictly on non-music-related programs. In the current study music seemed to provide a range of activities that attracted the older adults to engage with the students. The study findings indicate the older adults enjoyed the music-related programming as a result of their history with music and the joy that music brought them. Furthermore, music appeared to be effective in bringing the generations together as it enabled conversations and connections based on the older adults' inclination to discuss music-linked memories from their past with the students. A shared interest in music relates to the notion of continuity of meanings within the concept of co-occupation (van Nes et al., 2012). Van Nes et al. (2012) suggest that when older adults engage in co-occupations that they have been engaging in over the course of their lives, they experience continuity in meanings that contribute to the preservation of their identity. In the current study, the older adults expressed their interest in music through engaging in music-related co-occupations and as a result appeared to experience continuity of meanings. In this way, music appeared to be a strong foundation for successful co-occupation in the retirement home.

Many students and older adults valued informal co-occupations that enabled more personal conversations and connections. The participants discussed their interest in informal activities such as mealtimes and drinking coffee together in the café as these co-occupations provided the participants an opportunity to have intimate and extended personal conversations. This finding relates to a study by Aguilera-Hermida et al. (2020) that found that older adults and university students engaging in an intergenerational

program at a retirement community preferred participating in activities in which more conversations could take place. These activities included committees, meals, one on one activities, and while in transportation (Aguilera-Hermida et al., 2020). Key factors that supported connecting during informal co-occupations included the absence of a specific activity, and therefore the ability to converse according to the participant's interests, and a flexible seating arrangement. The participants transacted with the flexible and casual context of the dining area as they engaged in mealtimes, creating a meaningful co-occupation for all parties. The current study adds new findings to the literature by describing preferences in intergenerational programming, by detailing the interest in creating connections, how informal co-occupation can support such connections, and the processes through which these occupations come to take place. These findings have not been reported in the literature to date.

The current study findings detail the interactions that the students and older adults had during mealtime in the dining room. The young adults in the current study described the life lessons or wisdom that the older adults shared with them due to their years of personal life experience. Furthermore, the older adults often spent mealtime with the students asking them about their personal lives, including what was going on at school and with their families. These findings are similar to Landi and Smith's (2019) and Arenthorst et al.'s (2019) findings that the older adults often relayed personal life experiences to the students while the students enabled the older adults to have new interesting conversation topics, reconnect with their youth through the students' stories and love lives, and bring the outside world in through the students' relaying their experiences outside of the home. The current study adds to the literature by providing a

detailed account of the experience of the students and the older adults attending a meal together as well as the factors that shaped the co-occupation, such as having no assigned seating in the dining room. Furthermore, the meanings behind sharing a meal together and having personal conversations was discussed.

Additionally, the current study adds to the literature by providing a unique look into what happens when there are various discrepancies between the abilities of the participants and the nature of the co-occupation. Pickens and Pizur-Barnekow (2009) suggest that impairment or disability across the lifespan can shape co-occupations and how they are manifested. Furthermore, van Nes et al. (2009) explored how individuals can intertwine during co-occupation, such as a husband and wife engaging in co-occupation in the context of a stroke. In the study by van Nes et al. (2009), the partners in co-occupation each contributed different skills and abilities in order to successfully engage in the co-occupation, whereas in the current study the demands of an occupation were not negotiated in this way, leading to frustrating or unsuccessful co-occupations. This study adds to the literature by suggesting that it is not just the illness, impairment, or aging related factors that make the co-occupations difficult or undesirable to engage in, but rather the discrepancy between these factors and the nature of the co-occupation.

This study identified and described further factors that shaped the co-occupations that took place between the students and the older adults living together at the retirement home, that have not been addressed in previous studies on this topic. The current study revealed that important factors such as the roles the students, older adults, and staff members played, the physical space, the interests of the participants, the nature of the co-occupation, the relationship between the students and the older adults, the busy academic

schedules of the students, the retirement home's organization, and the discrepancies between physical abilities of the residents and the nature of the co-occupation all played a role in shaping the co-occupations. All of these factors inter-mingled as the co-occupations took place, with many features of the context influencing the person and the occupation and vice-versa. Previous research regarding co-occupation identified that situational factors such as "individual and group relationships, habits and routines, and the cultural, social, and historical context" (Crepeau, 2015, p. 54) played a role in shaping the co-occupational experience. While some of the factors identified in the current study can fit within the categories described by Crepeau (2015), the current study adds detail and insight into additional factors that could possibly contribute to shaping the co-occupational experience.

Lastly, the current study contributes to the conceptualization of co-occupation by exploring how it is experienced between young and older adults in an intergenerational housing program. Van Nes et al. (2012) expressed that the process of meaning creation within co-occupation should be explored in relationships beyond older adult couples and predicted that processes of meaning creation between people who have not shared a life as long or as close together would function much differently than an older adult couple. This study provides a perspective of the process of meaning creation within co-occupation between students and older adults who have recently developed a relationship while in two very different life stages.

5.1.2   Study Findings Related to the Dynamics of Intergenerational Housing Programs

Although this study focused on the co-occupations that took place between university students and older adults, the study also provides insights into the dynamics of

an intergenerational housing program within a seniors' residence. A number of the current study's findings regarding the dynamics of an intergenerational housing program relate to the findings of previous research, in particular Hock and Mickus (2019); the current study also identifies novel findings related to intergenerational housing programs. Hock and Mickus (2019) identified that a challenge of a pilot intergenerational housing program was misunderstandings about the students' role at the facility, which were a result of both staff changes as well as the novelty of the program. The new staff assumed that the students would take on a role more similar to a staff member or volunteer while the students originally agreed upon a role involving forming relationships and being "good neighbours" (Hock & Mickus, 2019). This finding relates to the current study, in that some older adult participants felt that they lacked information regarding the expectations of the students living in the retirement home and whether they, as older residents, had any responsibilities in regard to the student program. In the Hock and Mickus (2019) study and the current one, the issue seemed to relate to the fact that not all parties involved were aware of the roles that were to be played which lead to some residents' experience of confusion and negative feelings towards the program. Furthermore, the intergenerational housing program involved many moving parts and people such that the goals of the program and the corresponding responsibilities did not always get communicated thoroughly to everyone involved.

Moreover, despite intergenerational housing programs often being used as a means of reducing social isolation, the participants in this study did not describe feeling socially isolated. It is important to note that interview questions directly addressed issues of social connection and isolation, but this was not seen to be common concern of the

participants in this study. I assume that the residents who participated in this study did not experience feelings of social isolation due to their heavy involvement in leisure activities at the retirement home, including those that took place with the students.

Additionally, in the current study the students' positive experiences of their living arrangement at the retirement home seemed to be a foundational component of the intergenerational program. While this finding was not explicitly stated by participants, previous literature and comments from the student participants in the current study suggest it is the case. Specifically, Hock and Mickus (2019) found privacy to be a student concern related to students having to share a room as well as the staff's tendency to frequently enter the students' rooms for cleaning and inspections. In contrast, the students at the current study site stated they felt they were "spoiled" by the living arrangements that they had at the retirement home as each student had their own spacious room and did not note any lack of privacy. The current study therefore provides a contrasting, successful experience regarding living arrangements within an intergenerational housing program. While the previous study depicts privacy concerns as an issue that arose as a result of having students live at a residence for older adults, it appears that specific contextual features and procedures were the issue.

Furthermore, the current study identified that a problem with this intergenerational housing program was the students' busy academic schedule. This contributed to the students often missing scheduled leisure activities and limited their time available to spend with the older adults. As a result, the students did not have the time to form relationships with all of the residents at the retirement home and some participants recalled not getting a chance to eat with the students during mealtimes.

Similarly, Hock and Mickus (2019) found that the largest challenge of their intergenerational housing program was the demand for student time amongst the residents. Due to academic responsibilities, the students had limited time to provide all 80 residents with substantial time to foster relationships (Hock & Mickus, 2019). In addition to the students' lack of time, Hock and Mickus (2019) found that the older adults preferred to spend time with the students in their own room as opposed to the common areas of the retirement home, making it difficult for the students to interact with several residents at once. While the students in the current study still experienced difficulty managing their academic studies and intergenerational obligations it appears that hosting group leisure activities in common areas was one way to help the students engage with more residents.

In the current study, the students and older adults both experienced their relationships to be mutually beneficial. Similarly, Landi and Smith (2019) and Arentshorst et al. (2019) discuss reciprocity as a key component of the intergenerational program at Humanitas. Similarly, previous research has demonstrated the value that older adults place on reciprocal relationships (Bruggencate, Luijkx, & Sturm, 2018). Bruggencate at al. (2018) suggest that when older adults experience reciprocity within friendships it leads to feelings of independence and being meaningful. The current study findings also illuminate the various ways of enacting reciprocity, such as through conversation, sharing personal stories and details, sharing both wise and youthful life experiences, hosting activities and joining in activities, and giving performances and receiving compliments for playing.

Consistent across several studies, including the current study, is the recognition of youthfulness and liveliness that was present in a residence when students were living there. In the current study, the older adults discussed feeling youthful and more alive when they were around the students. Similarly, Arenthorst et al. (2019) found that living with students increased older adults' feelings of youthfulness and joy. Furthermore, Hock and Mickus (2019) discuss the vibrancy and spontaneity that the students brought into the assisted living facility and reported that having the students live at the retirement home brought in more activities and performances than previously occurred. It is clear through these studies that, in general, the older adult participants view intergenerational living as a positive addition to living in a residence for older adults. The current study deepens our understanding of how having university students live in residences for older adults can contribute positively to the atmosphere and improve the lives of older adults.

This study also contributes new findings to the existing literature through the exploration of the variety of roles and relationships that were engaged in by the study participants. This study found that despite the program structure, many diverse roles were played by the students and the older adults when they engaged in co-occupations, especially related to roles of power and authority. It was clear through the study findings that the older adults were not passive recipients of service, as might be assumed according to stereotypes of older adults and institutional living. It was evident that the older adults recognized that the students were at the retirement home to serve them in some ways and made it clear when they were not doing so effectively. Furthermore, it was clear that the students did not seem to feel that they had to stick to a typical 'professional' or detached role when forming relationships with the older adults. As a

result, some students formed very close relationships that were similar to grandparent-grandchild relationships or flirty relationships in which jokes were shared with one another. At the same time, some older adult participants seemed to prefer to have less deep, acquaintance-type relationships with the students that were nonetheless valued by the students and the older adults.

5.2   Study Findings in Light of the Transactional Perspective

In this section I will discuss the study findings in light of the transactional perspective. As discussed in chapter three of this thesis, the transactional perspective is relevant for understanding the process of engaging in co-occupations as well as meaning creation within them. As per the definition used in this thesis, co-occupations are characterized by their ability to hold both shared and personalized meanings (van Nes et al., 2012). Van Nes et al. (2012) explained that in the transactional perspective, these shared and personalized meanings are co-constituted by those who perform a co-occupation together in a flexible process of meaning-making. As a result, while two people can appear to share the same context and perform the same co-occupation together, their personalized meanings of this co-occupation can be diverse (van Nes et al., 2012). It is essential for the researcher to identify the shared and personalized meanings as van Nes et al. (2012) suggest these meanings could be considered the outcome of the transactional processes between those engaging in a co-occupation together. Utilizing the transactional perspective throughout this study assisted me to identify the different shared and personalized meanings held by both the students and the older adults when engaging in co-occupations together. For example, it is clear that the co-occupation of performing and listening to music together, as well as engaging in additional music-related co-

occupations, held different meanings for the students and the older adults. While

experiencing the joy of music together, the older adults experienced meanings of

recalling previous life experiences and the students were able to reconnect to their love of

music. Additionally, both the students and the older adults found engaging in co-

occupations together to be mutually beneficial, but the benefits were each experienced in

different ways. As the older adults experienced benefits including feeling youthful and

more alive, gaining a source of entertainment, and having companionship, the students

experienced the benefits of gaining wisdom and life lessons and having genuine

connections with people, in addition to an opportunity to practice performing music.

Furthermore, in the transactional perspective, it is believed that the person and the

environment are part of a complete whole, while also having an effect on one another

(Cutchin & Dickie, 2013). While the environment can shape the person, the person can

also shape the environment, both shaping the occupations that take place within the study

context. For example, when the older adults did not enjoy attending co-occupations

where opera music was performed, they were able to alter the environment. Through

transactions with the environment, such as speaking to the students and staff and some

residents avoiding events where opera music was played, the co-occupation of musical

performances was altered. As a result, both parties came to create a co-occupation that

was shaped by diverse interests in the setting. Additionally, person-environment

transactions were apparent when considering the physical environment. For example,

during the student's piano playing at the pub hour, when the student arrived and began

playing the piano, the older adults often turned their chairs and listened to him as if it was

a concert situation, as opposed to his intention to be simply background music for the

event. In turn, the student played as if it was a performance and interacted with the audience. When the 'audience' was unable to attend to the student as a performer, such as when a birthday party took place at the pub hour, the student played softer in the background. Lastly, it was noted that the current students were very outgoing, which was essential in creating a friendly environment in which the older adults were eager to engage. In this way, it is clear that the students shaped the environment, contributing to the older adults' enthusiasm, which in turn contributed to an environment that would promote the relationships between the students and older adults and engaging in co-occupations together.

5.3   **Strengths and Limitations of the Research Process**

In this section of the discussion I reflect upon the limitations and strengths of this research process.

5.3.1   Limitations of the Research Process

While it is ideal to design a study that is free of limitations, there are some elements that are out of the control of the researcher. During this study, I encountered several limitations that shaped the research process. Firstly, it took a long time to get in contact with the study site. It was difficult to find the right staff member to handle my inquiry about conducting research at the retirement home, which slowed down my research process. The staff members at the study site acted as gatekeepers which restricted my access to the retirement home until the study was approved by them. Additionally, as there are few programs of this nature in Ontario specifically, it was difficult to plan the study before having confirmation about whether or not this study site would allow me to proceed with conducting research there. If the study site did not

enable me to conduct the research at the retirement home, I would have had to pursue a different study topic due to lack of an available research context. Furthermore, between the time that I created my study proposal and was ready to begin conducting research at the retirement home, there were several staff changes throughout the retirement home, which resulted in me having to establish new relationships with the current staff. This slowness continued throughout the research process and created several roadblocks such as a delay in beginning to conduct observations at the retirement home. Once I was in the retirement home and able to form connections with the staff members the data collection process was initiated and accelerated. I understand that I was not the first priority of the retirement home staff and that my research was not part of their daily operations and as such some processes took longer than expected. In the end, after adjusting my initial timelines, I do feel that I had sufficient time to conduct interviews and observations at the retirement home and ultimately fulfill the research objective.

Another limitation of this study was the combined result of the timing of the retirement home's student program with my master's thesis timeline. Due to the time constraints of this master's program, I intended on beginning data collection for this study in September 2019. Unfortunately, September was also the month when the new students were set to move into the retirement home to begin this intergenerational housing program. This created limitations and complications regarding how long the students would have been living at the retirement home prior to being interviewed for my research study and how well the older adults would know the students at the time of their interviews. To combat this limitation, the students were interviewed once when they had recently moved into the retirement home and again in December when they had been

living in the retirement home for about three and a half months and the older adults were interviewed from December to February. I continued to collect data as long as possible while still being able to complete my research study on time. Ideally, additional data collection would have taken place after the students had been living in the retirement home for the maximum period of time to gain insight into deeper and more prolonged relationships that had been formed as a result of the intergenerational housing program. Despite this limitation, I believe that I obtained quality data and achieved a thorough understanding regarding the co-occupations that took place between the students and the older adults living together at the retirement home. Additionally, it ultimately was beneficial that my data collection phase was completed by February of 2020 as COVID-19 unexpectedly arrived in the Spring of 2020 resulting in many closures and strict rules at residences for older adults. Had I not completed my data collection earlier, this study might have remained incomplete for some time or I would have continued with limited data sources. This will be discussed in more detail in the next paragraph.

The final limitation of this study was the presence of illness outbreaks and the corresponding protocols within the retirement home. I encountered the first outbreak during the first few weeks that I had planned to begin data collection. There was an outbreak of the common cold at the retirement home where many of the residents got sick. During this time, all leisure activities within the home were cancelled and visitors were highly discouraged. As a result, I was unable to attend a scheduled meeting with the staff at the retirement home which played a role in delaying my ability to begin data collection. This was a lesson learned that completing data collection at a study site would not always be in my control and flexibility is needed when developing plans and

schedules. Additionally, as previously mentioned, the outbreak of COVID-19 in Ontario occurred during the end of the students' year at the retirement home. Due to the potential severe effects of COVID-19 on older adults, all retirement homes and long-term care facilities took strict precautions to stop the spread of the virus. As data collection had finished by this date, I am unaware of the specific precautions that the retirement home put in place to protect the residents, but it can be assumed that this had some negative effects for the intergenerational program and co-occupations that occurred between the students and the older adults. Additionally, the students' university program moved completely online and as a result they did not need to live in close proximity to the university. I am aware that at least one of the students left the retirement home and moved out for the remainder of the semester. It is clear that outbreaks can be detrimental to the research study process. Luckily, due to the timing of my research process, data collection was not affected by the virus but potential plans to share my findings with those living in the retirement home are unlikely to happen in person.

5.3.2   Strengths of the Research Process

Despite the aforementioned limitations, there were many strengths of this study that supported the quality of the study and the research process. Firstly, a strength of this study was securing both of the students as participants for this study, enabling me to explore both the student and the older adult perspective of this experience as well as obtain multiple experiences from both groups. I believe that having both of the students as participants in my study strengthened the findings as I was able to interview two students with differing perspectives as they were of different genders and practiced different types of music. If neither of the students had wanted to participate in this study

the findings would have strictly involved the older adults, providing a more limited range of perspectives.

In addition, getting to know the students and forming friendships with them greatly contributed to the success of this study. As the students and I were relatively the same age and were both completing master's programs, we had a lot in common. Additionally, the students understood the work that it takes to complete a master's degree and as a result were willing to do whatever possible to help me complete my study at the retirement home. As the students and I became more familiar with each other, the students began inviting me to more events and ensuring that I was alerted to the various activities that they were participating in. In this way, the students acted as a sort of gatekeeper to conducting observations at the retirement home until I formed relationships with the older adults. This strengthened the study as I had more opportunities to observe at the retirement home and the students became more comfortable with my attendance at events which I believe led to very natural observations. Over time, the students also appeared more comfortable sharing information and feelings with me which contributed to the depth of my interview data with the students as evidenced by the increased magnitude of detail and emotion provided by the students during the second interview in comparison to the first interview. This also enabled me to recruit more participants for my study as the students used their connections throughout the retirement home and vouched for my reliability and trustworthiness.

Lastly, using crystallization methods, including the use of both interviews and observation as data collection methods, contributed to my ability to achieve a complex understanding of the study context and the co-occupations that took place within it

(Tracy, 2010). Using only one method would have only provided me with a partial understanding of the scenarios that I was researching. Additionally, completing observations and interviews benefitted this study as I was able to see the participants more often and gain comfortability and familiarity with them before completing an interview with them. I assume that this contributed to the depth of data in my interviews. Furthermore, not all co-occupations were discussed in the interviews so having completed observations allowed me to have knowledge about additional co-occupations and subsequently ask the participants further questions about their involvement in these activities. Additionally, performing both interviews and observations was beneficial to understanding the participants' meanings associated with engaging in co-occupations. In a previous study by van Nes et al. (2012), the researchers detailed the difficulty in uncovering the meanings of co-occupation as a result of the unspoken nature regarding meaning and stated that the researcher must "attempt to find a means to generate data about this unspokenness" (p. 343). As a result, van Nes et al. (2012) used photos taken by the participants to initiate conversations about the meanings of the co-occupation. I didn't fully understand what van Nes et al. (2012) were discussing until I began my own data collection. I noticed that the meaning of an occupation was often hard to describe and thought about how difficult it would be for me to answer questions about the meaning of the co-occupations that I engaged in throughout my daily life. During my interviews and observations, I asked questions about and looked for the meanings relating to engaging in specific co-occupations. Ultimately, I had to interpret many of the meanings of the co-occupations from what the participants were saying and from what I observed. Being able to observe the participants in their living environment and then ask them questions about

what I observed allowed me to generate in-depth conversations that likely would not have otherwise occurred.

5.4 Implications for Research and Practice

In this section I present the implications of the study findings for research and practice.

5.4.1 Implications for Research

While this study enhances our understanding of how co-occupation takes place between university students and older adults living together within a retirement home, this area of research remains relatively unexplored. As I conducted this research, I noticed several areas which could be further explored. As programs of this nature are novel, further research should be conducted to strengthen our understanding of intergenerational housing within retirement homes and the co-occupations that take place within them. This study provided a detailed account of the co-occupations that took place between a particular set of university students and older adults at this retirement home. Further research should be conducted at various different study sites in order to learn more about the different types of programs that exist, how they work, and how students and older adults engage in co-occupations together. While there might be many different types of co-occupations that are engaged in across different intergenerational programs it is important to explore how these co-occupations came to be and how to support such activities in other places. One area of interest could be understanding how intergenerational housing programs differ across a variety of different types of institutional residences for older adults such as retirement homes and long-term care facilities. Furthermore, these studies could be compared and contrasted to learn more

about what is effective in programs of this nature. Additionally, as seen in this study, having music students live at the retirement home seemed to be a very effective way to encourage co-occupations. Researchers could explore other programs that involve students in other types of programs or that bring in other gifts to identify how the program works and if it encourages co-occupations in the same way that music does.

Furthermore, several specific findings from this thesis are worthy of further exploration. Firstly, studies could explore the various types of relationships that exist between younger and older adults in intergenerational housing programs and how this plays a role in shaping the co-occupations that they perform together. The current study identified several types of relationships and their effect on co-occupation, but it is possible that there are more relationships that have not been explored. Additionally, researchers could look at the relationships formed in intergenerational housing programs over time to see if relationships are maintained when the students leave the retirement home, how these relationships change over time, and if the students and the older adults continue to engage in co-occupations together. Secondly, it could be beneficial for a resident of these housing models to document their personal experiences of living in an intergenerational housing program using an autoethnography methodology (Adams, 2015). This perspective could provide a rich account of the experience of living within a residence for older adults and provide a deeper look into the meanings of engaging in intergenerational co-occupations. Furthermore, the current study took place at a retirement home where there was an assisted-living floor that provided residents with increased support. Researchers could investigate how co-occupations are performed or experienced by participants when the students visit the assisted-living floor and if this

differs from the remainder of the retirement home. Additionally, researchers could explore co-occupations within intergenerational programs from the perspective of those who experience illnesses or impairments. Research could focus on the willingness of these residents to participate in co-occupations with the students while detailing the limitations that are experienced when engaging in co-occupations and how these can be accommodated. Finally, researchers could focus further on studying co-occupations that take place between those in non-familial intergenerational relationships in a variety of settings. Understanding the shared and personalized meanings of engaging in a co-occupation with someone from a different generation could assist in strengthening intergenerational programming for both the younger and older generations.

5.4.2   Implications for Practice

The current study enhanced our understanding of the co-occupations within an intergenerational housing program in which university students and older adults lived together at a retirement home. This study also revealed much about the dynamics of an intergenerational housing program generally. As a result, this study has implications for the practice of such programs. This section will detail recommendations for intergenerational programs of this nature and the co-occupations that take place between students and older adults in these settings.

It is important to recognize the factors that shape the co-occupations and subsequently the experience for those engaging in the co-occupation together. While co-occupations, such as the ones described in this thesis, could be replicated by different groups of people in a seemingly similar context of a retirement home, the occupational experience could be very different due to the factors that shape the co-occupations. In

each retirement home setting, there are different older adults and staff with different relationships and dynamics as well as different physical spaces and organization that would all play a large role in shaping the occupational experience of those engaging in co-occupations together. As a result, it should be noted that while we can and should learn from previous retirement homes that have implemented intergenerational housing programs it would be inappropriate to assume that the occupational experience would be the same in a different setting with different factors shaping the co-occupations. While the exact co-occupations that are presented in this program are not necessarily transferable to other settings, music-related activities seem to be an especially good way to develop connections, particularly for residents who have had a connection to music over their lives.

Furthermore, in intergenerational housing programs there are many factors to consider regarding the development of roles and relationships between the students and the older adults. It is important to understand that many different types of relationships may develop between the students and older adults over the course of time that they live together. These relationships will lead to a variety of co-occupations that the students and older adults engage in together and as such it is important to give space to let these relationships develop. Additionally, not all relationships will be initiated immediately as some will take longer to form. Furthermore, opportunities should be provided for the students and older adults to form mutually beneficial relationships that cater to their individual preferences, ranging from close to more acquaintance-type relationships. Moreover, the students may take on different roles, involving various levels of authority, if given the opportunity to do so. It seemed to be beneficial to have the students take on

this variety as it led to a diversity of co-occupational opportunities to appeal to the

different preferences of many older adults. Similarly, the older adults can be active

participants in the shaping of co-occupations; as such it is important to provide this

opportunity.

To provide contextually relevant programs of this nature, the management of the

residences in which programs are being initiated should identify what kinds of co-

occupations the older adults would like to perform with the university students. Previous

research has demonstrated the value of co-design of products and services with the target

population in order to better suit their needs (Steen, Manschot, & De Koning, 2011). As

such, it would be beneficial to include the older adults' input into designing their own

programs. The preferences of the older adults could include the kinds of activities that the

older adults enjoy (music, games, exercise, day trips, meals, etc.) as well as the manner of

the activities that they prefer (structured leisure activities, informal activities,

conversations, etc.). These preferences could be understood through the use of surveys,

questionnaires, meetings, or other methods. Methods of identifying the older adults'

preferences should be conducted periodically to remain relevant with the current

population of older adults living in the residence. Additionally, these methods should

encourage the older adults to provide feedback regarding the intergenerational housing

program in order for management to address any relevant concerns.

Furthermore, when planning co-occupations in a new context, the physical setting

in which the co-occupations will be performed should be taken into consideration. As

seen in this study, the physical space in which the co-occupation was performed played a

large role in shaping the co-occupation including the roles and authority held by both the

students and the older adults. Specifically, physical spaces in which all participants sat together at one table such as mealtimes played a role in producing a scenario in which the students and the older adults held more balance in authority. In contrast, physical spaces in which the students were separated from the older adults and often standing up in front, such as the choir, produced a scenario in which the students held authority over the older adults. Neither scenario is necessarily better than the other but should be considered when initiating co-occupations between students and older adults.

Moreover, based on the finding that there is a lack of information given to the older adult residents about the student program and the expectations, it is important to inform the entire retirement home through multiple methods. Firstly, the retirement home should provide written information to each current and new resident with details of the intergenerational living program. Additionally, it is essential that the retirement home management ensure open lines of communication between staff and residents about the student program and encourage the residents to communicate their thoughts and feedback. Furthermore, I believe it would be imperative to host an initial meeting and at least yearly follow-up meetings with all parties involved to discuss the intergenerational housing program. This meeting would involve incoming students, the older adult residents, and staff members of the retirement home that play a role in the intergenerational housing program. Although I believe that the staff and the students had good communication regarding the program expectations, this information was not always relayed to the older adults that were interested in the program. An initial meeting could be used to detail each group's expectations of the partnership. This meeting would ensure that needs of the students, residents, and staff are being met and that everyone

knows what the program would look like and what to expect. Follow-up meetings could take place in intervals, at the group's discretion, to ensure that all parties are holding up to their responsibilities and renegotiate areas that are not working. At the final meeting of the partnership the group could address what worked and what did not work over the course of the program in attempts to improve the program the following year. These meetings would be essential to refining the program and any issues that arise. Topics that should be addressed at these meetings could include: roles of participants; opportunities to provide feedback regarding the types of activities offered and the nature of those activities; the physical limitations of the older adults, how this affects their performance in the activity, and how these limitations can be accommodated; and transparency regarding the program such as any costs associated.

Another suggestion for an intergenerational housing program within a retirement home would be to allow the students to eat as many meals as possible in the dining room with the older adults. The findings of this study suggest that mealtime was a great opportunity for the students to share a meal and get to know many older adult residents on a more personal level. As a result, having only three complimentary meals per week in the dining room may have limited the students' ability to form deeper relationships. It can be assumed that allowing the students to eat more meals at the retirement home would increase the cost of having the students live there, and as a result it may not be feasible to allow the students to have every meal in the dining room. Nonetheless, increasing the number of meals that the students could attend, even by a few per month, may contribute to increased connections and more intimate relationships amongst the students and the older adults. If it is not possible to increase the number of meals that the students were

able to attend it would be beneficial to increase opportunities for informal activities such as time for the students to enjoy a coffee and have conversations with the older adults in the café, as requested by some older adult participants of this study.

In regard to the study finding of the students missing scheduled events at the retirement home I provide several suggestions. One suggestion would be to have more than two students living at the retirement home. Having more students living in the retirement home might reduce the chance of events being cancelled as the students could step in for each other as needed and could provide increased interaction opportunities. This would follow other intergenerational housing programs described in the literature that had three and six students respectively (Hock & Mickus, 2019; Landi & Smith, 2019). Additionally, providing the older adults with a schedule that can be updated weekly or even potentially an electronic schedule that could reflect changes to the schedule in real time could help ensure that the older adults are well informed regarding events being cancelled or rescheduled. Lastly, I would suggest that the retirement home partner more closely with the university to ensure that scheduling conflicts are resolved. This might involve scheduling designated days that the students provide programming at the retirement home and separate days scheduled for practicing music at the university to ensure that there are minimal conflicts between the two schedules.

5.5 **Current Positionality**

Upon concluding this research study, it is important to revisit my positionality and discuss any changes to my stance on this research topic and as a researcher. As I am a master's student, I believe that I shared commonalities with the students at the retirement home and therefore was able to understand their perspectives more clearly. I anticipated

that I would not share as many commonalities with the older adults, however, spending more time interacting and speaking to the older adult participants provided me with insight into their thoughts and feelings in ways I had not experienced before. Although I will never have a complete understanding of what it is like to be an older adult living in society until I become one myself, speaking to the older adults filled some gaps in my knowledge regarding life through their eyes. Upon seeing a program of this nature in action, I still believe in the value of intergenerational programs and have seen first-hand how they can enhance the lives of the older adults and young adults living in a retirement home. I do think more research is needed and best practices should be put into place in order to inform and improve these programs to achieve the greatest benefits. I believe that most, if not all, of the older adults who participated in co-occupations and interviews with me, liked having the intergenerational program at the retirement home but did have some concerns regarding how the program was run. I believe that intergenerational housing programs are a great idea but have to be executed well in order to reap the benefits and one should only initiate a program upon spending time learning about programs that are already in place.

Furthermore, after spending a considerable amount of time watching older and younger adults interact, I feel somewhat saddened that this is not more common throughout daily life. For the students, I think living in a retirement home full of older adults is an extremely unique accommodation to live in during the completion of a master's degree. I think being a part of this intergenerational program provides endless advantages for the students ranging from tangible benefits such as free accommodation to life wisdom and intergenerational relationships. Despite these benefits, I do not think that

living in a retirement home is designed for every student due to the significant

involvement that is expected of the students in this program. While there were many

aspects of this program that were not necessarily executed perfectly, as expected with a

relatively novel program, engaging in co-occupations with the younger adults did bring a

great amount of youthfulness and new experiences to the retirement home. I think about

the activities and the relationships that would not have occurred if the students were not

living in the retirement home. I think about what it would be like to live in a residence in

which everyone is in a similar stage of life and just how exciting it could be to be able to

share a meal with someone in their twenties and talk to them about their experiences or

hear them play an instrument that they have been mastering all their lives. This leads me

to think about the limited number of older adults that I spend time with or engage in co-

occupations with and see it as a missed opportunity to build a bond between generations,

learn from lived experiences, and share my youthfulness with an elder.

Lastly, as this was the first research study I have completed, I have identified that

the research process is something that can be explained many times, but you will not fully

grasp an understanding of what it is like until you complete a study yourself.

Additionally, no matter how much you plan your study there will always be elements that

do not occur in the ways in which you planned. I have learned that it is best to approach

research with an open mind and not close yourself off to any topics, methods, findings, or

more as your study will transform immensely throughout the research process.

5.6   Conclusion

In conclusion, this research study contributes to the understanding of

intergenerational housing programs within retirement homes and adds to the literature

regarding the co-occupations of older adults. This thesis used a focused ethnography

methodology to understand the lived experiences of both students and older adults

engaging in co-occupations together while living alongside one another in a retirement

home. Interview and observational data were analyzed using thematic analysis to create

six themes: *Enacting Diverse Roles Within Co-Occupations, Connecting Personally With*

Music and in Turn Connecting With Others, Connecting through Informal Co-

Occupation, Diverse and Mutually Beneficial Intergenerational Relationships Shaping

Co-Occupations, Navigating Tensions Regarding Differing Perspectives, and

Experiencing Discrepancies Between Ability and the Nature of Co-Occupations.

The results from this study align with previous literature regarding

intergenerational housing programs in that there are currently many benefits, challenges,

and recommendations associated with intergenerational housing programs of this nature.

However, this study adds to the literature by providing a unique perspective of an

intergenerational housing program by identifying the co-occupations that exist within it

and the factors that shape these co-occupations. Information regarding these co-

occupations contributes to our understanding of how these intergenerational programs are

experienced and provides implications for future research and practice regarding this

topic.

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Appendices

Appendix A: October Monthly Newsletter

Halloween

All are welcome to dress up for our Halloween festivities.

Our ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ staff will be competing against one another to see who makes the best Halloween cake. All cakes will be judged in two categories:

1. Presentation (which cakes looks the best) and

2. Taste (which cake tastes the best).

Come cast your vote in the ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ at 2:00 pm on the 31st.

May the best baker win!

The cake tasting will be followed by some Halloween music by ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ at 3:00 pm in the ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮.

My name is Rachel Gorjup and I am a Masters student studying Health and Aging at Western University. I am going to be exploring the ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ to understand more about university students and older adults living together in a retirement residence, the relationships formed between them, and the activities that they do together. Later in the year, I will be looking for any residents, students, staff, or family members of residents that are interested in participating in an interview about their experience with this program. You will also see me around ▮▮▮▮▮▮ regularly throughout the next few months to see the program in action!

If you have any questions about this research project, feel free to contact me at: ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Appendix B: December Monthly Newsletter

Happy New Year!

Join us for a New Years Eve Party with ███████

from 7:00 p.m.

to 8:00 p.m.

in the ███████████

My name is **Rachel Gorjup** and I am a master's student at Western University studying Health and Aging

I am interested in interviewing **YOU** to talk about how you feel about having university students living at ███████

If you would like to share your experience with me or for more information contact me at: ███████████████████

Appendix C: Recruitment Poster

Appendix D: Verbal Recruitment Script

Western ⛨

Verbal Recruitment Script

My name is Rachel Gorjup and I am a master's student studying health and aging at Western University. I would like to invite you to participate in my research study to understand your feelings towards the ███████████████ program where university students and older adults live together in a retirement home.

You may participate if you are a resident, student, staff member, or a family member of a resident at ████████████████████ and can communicate in English.

As a participant, you will be asked to complete 1-2 interviews with me over the span of the next few months. These interviews will discuss your experience and involvement with the ███████████████ Program and your thoughts and feelings regarding this program. Interview audio will be recorded.

If you would like to participate in this research study, you can call at █████████████ ██████ or send me an email ███████████. (Postcard with contact information will be given).

Do you have any questions now? If you have questions later, please feel free to contact me.

Version Date: 8/8/2019

Appendix E: Recruitment Postcard

I WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

My name is **Rachel Gorjup** and I am a master's student at Western University studying Health and Aging.

I am interested in interviewing you to discuss your experience with the
  Program at
      Interview audio will be recorded.

If you would like to share your experience with me or for more information contact me at:

Version Date: 8/8/2019

Appendix F: Telephone Survey Script

Western 🛡️

Telephone Survey Script

Hello _____ ,

Thank you for calling, I appreciate your interest in participating in the ██████████ ███████████████████████████ study.

I would like to ask you a few questions to ensure that you meet the criteria for the study. Is that okay?

1. Are you a Resident at ████████████████████ ? YES / NO
2. Are you a university student or are you a regular resident of ████████ ? _____
3. If they respond "NO" to question 1: Do you work at ██████████████████ ? YES/NO
    a. What is your position? _____
4. If they respond "NO" to question 1 and 2: What is your involvement to the ████████ ██████ ?
    _____
5. What is your gender?
    ☐ Male
    ☐ Female
    ☐ Other
    ☐ Prefer not to answer
6. Are you comfortable completing an interview approximately 1-hour long in English? YES / NO
7. The interview(s) audio will be recorded. Are you comfortable with this? YES/NO

Additional Notes:
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you so much for answering my questions. I really appreciate your time.

[Note: at this point the interviewer will determine if the caller 1) meets the study inclusion criteria and 2) has characteristics that help to maximize variation in the study sample, i.e. varies from other enrolled participants on gender and experience with the intergenerational housing program]

a) You meet all of the criteria, and so I would like to invite you to participate in the study. Do you have any questions for me? Can we arrange a time for a first meeting so we can meet

Version: 8/8/2019

personally and I can go over the study and get you to sign a letter of consent? What is your telephone # and address?

OR

b) I'm sorry, I really appreciate your interest but for THIS particular study your situation doesn't quite fit. Thank you very much for your time.

Appendix G: Interview Reminder

You have scheduled an interview with Rachel Gorjup from Western University to discuss how you feel about having students living at ████████.

Date:

Time:

Location:

This interview will be approximately 1 hour long.

If you have any questions you can give me a call at:
████████████████████████████████

You have scheduled an interview with Rachel Gorjup from Western University to discuss how you feel about having students living at ████████.

Date:

Time:

Location:

This interview will be approximately 1 hour long.

If you have any questions you can give me a call at:
████████████████████████████████

You have scheduled an interview with Rachel Gorjup from Western University to discuss how you feel about having students living at ████████.

Date:

Time:

Location:

This interview will be approximately 1 hour long.

If you have any questions you can give me a call at:
████████████████████████████████

Appendix H: Students' First Interview Guide

Interview Guide – Student Resident's First Interview

The purpose of this interview is to understand how student residents feel about the ███████████████ program at ██████████████████████. This interview is intended to gather an understanding of student's initial feelings towards older adults. Researchers will use open ended questions and prompts to have respondents elaborate on their experiences where needed. Interviews will be audio recorded with permission and transcribed verbatim.

Main Concepts:
- **Experience with older adults**
- **Perception of older adults**
- **Plans for time at ███████**

Today I am going to ask you questions about the ███████████████ program. I will be taking some notes as you talk, to help me organize things and so I can follow-up on some of the issues or events you talk about.

1. *Prior to coming to ███████████████████ how much contact did you have with older adults?*
   a. *Probe: family members, neighbors, community members, people at work*
   b. *What have your interactions with those older adults been like? (+/-)*
   c. *What is the nature of your relationship with the older adults?*
   d. *How often do you communicate or have contact with these individuals? If there is contact, what activities do you do together?*
2. *What made you decide to live at ████████████████████████?*
   a. *What did your friends and family think when you decided to move into a retirement home?*
   b. *So far, are you happy with your experience and decision to move in here?*
   c. *How long do you intend to live at ███████████?*
3. *Can you tell me about any prior experience you have had with intergenerational programs, that is, programs that involve people from your age group and people from a younger/older age group?*
   a. *Do you think that intergenerational contact is an important part of life?*
   b. *If applicable: were you hesitant at all to come to ███████ knowing that you did not have a lot of contact with older adults?*
   c. *Why did you choose this particular intergenerational program instead of other intergenerational programs throughout the London community?*
4. *When you think about older adults as a group, what is your perspective of them?*
   a. *Do you know of any stereotypes of older adults? Do you believe any of these stereotypes?*
5. *How do you think university students and older adults differ? How are you similar?*
   a. *Do you think there is any difficulty in combining these two age groups together if you have several differences?*
6. *What do you believe university students can gain from this program?*

7. *What do you believe older adults can gain from this program?*
   a. *How do you think the social lives of the older adults has changed since the students moved in?*
8. *Do you think you will be able to create meaningful relationships with the older adults throughout the year?*
   a. *What kind of relationship do you wish to have with the older adults? (e.g. casual, acquaintances, close friend, etc.)*
   b. *Do you want this relationship to continue when you leave* ▋▋▋▋ *in the future?*
   c. *Can you speak about any specific residents and how you've already begun to connect with them?*
9. *What kinds of activities are you looking forward to doing with the older adults throughout the year?*
   a. *Are there any activities that you plan on participating in off-site?*
10. *Can you share more about your experience living here at* ▋▋▋▋ *so far?*
    a. *What was the orientation process like when you first moved in?*
    b. *How do you feel about the location of the residence? Is it easy to get around to school, the grocery store, etc.?*
    c. *How do you feel about having guests or friends over? Have you had the chance to do that or are you planning on doing that in the future?*
    d. *How do you think living at* ▋▋▋▋ *will affect your social life?*
    e. *Can you elaborate on the volunteer commitment that you are required to fulfill?*
    f. *Can you discuss your support from the different staff here and how they have affected your feelings towards the program?*
    g. *What is the involvement like between you and the other students?*
    h. *Are there any ways that you plan on changing the program or bringing in your own unique ideas?*
    i. *How did you find the application process for this program?*
11. *Is there anything else you would like to share with me about your initial feelings towards the* ▋▋▋▋ ▋▋▋▋ *program?*

Appendix I: Students' Second Interview Guide

Interview Guide – Student's Second Interview

The purpose of this interview is to explore the co-occupations that take place between university students and older adults living together in a retirement home. The researcher will use open ended questions and prompts to have respondents elaborate on their experiences where needed. Interviews will be audio recorded with permission and transcribed verbatim.

Today I am going to ask you questions about your experience with the ██████████████ *program thus far. I will be taking some notes as you talk to help me organize things and so I can follow-up on some things or events you talk about.*

1. *How do you feel about the* ██████████████ *program?*
2. *Are you still happy about your decision to move into* ██████████*?*
3. *Tell me about the kinds of activities that you do with the older adults?*
    a. *What leisure activities do you participate in?*
        i. *Elaborate on each*
    b. *What activities were your favourite?*
    c. *What did it **mean** to you to participate in … (Each activity)?*
    d. *What do you think it means to the older adults to have you guys here doing activities with them?*
    e. *Other than the scheduled leisure activities did you go anything else with the older adults (e.g. coffee, trips to the pharmacy, concerts)?*
    f. *You mentioned having meals with the older adults… what does this mean to you to share a meal with them?*
    g. *Were all of your activity's music related? Any non-music related activities?*
4. *How does it feel to play music for the older adults?*
    a. *I've obviously been watching you guys play in front of the residents for months now and I've seen some great reactions from the older adults and heard great things such as "this is taking me back to my dancing days"…how does this make you feel?*
    b. *Does it feel different to you when you are playing songs that everyone knows and can sing along too vs. classical music that not everyone knows? – e.g. the other day at pub hour when everyone was singing along to Christmas carols and they were really engaged*
5. *Are any of the activities that you do together off-site? Can you tell me about a time you did this?*
6. *Can you talk about how much time you spend with the older adults throughout the week?*
7. *What kinds of things do the older adults talk to you about*
8. *Tell me about your relationship with the older adults?*

9. Can you tell me about the resident that you are closest to at ███████?
    a. What is the nature of the relationship?
    b. How has the relationship developed throughout the year?
    c. What kinds of activities do you do together?
    d. Will you keep in contact with them when you leave ███████?
    e. What have you gained from your relationship with them?
    f. Do you think you have taught them anything?
    g. What does it mean to you to have formed a relationship with someone much older than you?

10. In the first interview you discussed that older adults are wise and have life lessons to teach university students.
    a. Can you think of any life lessons that you have learned from the older adults over the last four months?

11. Has this program changed the way you think about older adults? In what way?

12. What do you believe university students can gain from this program?

13. What do you believe older adults can gain from this program?
    a. How do you think the social lives of the older adults has changed since the students moved in?
    b. A lot of concern over older adults being socially isolated – do you think older adults are more likely to come to activities if it is listed that the students will be there? Do you think there is more social engagement as a result?

14. Do you think intergenerational contact is an important part of life? Why or why not?

15. What have you learned since participating in this program?

16. How could the ███████ program be improved to better suit your needs?

17. Do you think all residents like having the students here? Do you believe there is anyone who doesn't appreciate it?

18. Is there anything that you wish that you have done differently while being here – I understand you are not done here. Plans for the 2nd half of the year?

19. Do you think it is essential that the university students in this program are music students?

20. What will you miss the most about living here at ███████?

21. How have the staff helped you throughout your time here at ███████?

22. What was your favorite memory from living here?

23. Would you recommend this program to other students? Why?

24. When you think about older adults as a group, what is your perspective of them?

25. How do you think university students and older adults differ? How are you similar?

26. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about the ███████ program?

Appendix J: Older Adults' First Interview Guide

Interview Guide – Residents First Interview

The purpose of this interview is to understand how residents (both university students and older adults) feel about the ███████████ program at ████████████████. This interview is to gather an understanding of their initial feelings towards the opposite age group. Researchers will use open ended questions and prompts to have respondents elaborate on their experiences where needed. Interviews will be audio recorded with permission and transcribed verbatim.

Today I am going to ask you questions about the ██████████████ program. I will be taking some notes as you talk, to help me organize things and so I can follow-up on some of the issues or events you talk about.

1. *Prior to coming to ████████████████ how much contact did you have with university students/older adults?*
2. *What made you decide to live at █████████████████?*
3. *Can you tell me about any prior experience you have had with intergenerational programs, that is, programs that involve people from your age group and people from a younger/older age group?*
4. *How do you feel about university students/older adults?*
5. *How do you think university students and older adults differ? How are you similar?*
6. *Do you think you will be able to create meaningful relationships with the university students/older adults throughout the year?*
7. *What kinds of activities are you looking forward to doing with the university students/older adults throughout the year?*
8. *Is there anything else you would like to share with me about your initial feelings towards the ████████████ program?*

Appendix K: Older Adults' Second Interview Guide

Interview Guide – Resident's Second Interview

The purpose of this interview is to explore the co-occupations that take place between university students and older adults living together in a retirement home. The researcher will use open ended questions and prompts to have respondents elaborate on their experiences where needed. Interviews will be audio recorded with permission and transcribed verbatim.

Today I am going to ask you questions about your experience with the ████████████ program thus far. I will be taking some notes as you talk to help me organize things and so I can follow-up on some things or events you talk about.

1. *How do you feel about the ████████████ program?*
2. *Tell me about your relationship with the students/older adults?*
3. *Tell me about the kinds of activities do you do with the students/older adults?*
4. *Are any of the activities that you do together off-site? Can you tell me about a time you did this?*
5. *Can you talk about how much time you spend with the students/older adults throughout the week?*
6. *Has this program changed the way you think about students/older adults? In what way?*
7. *Do you think you will stay in contact with the older adults/students that you have created relationships with?*
8. *Do you think intergenerational contact is an important part of life? Why or why not?*
9. *How could the ████████████ program be improved to better suit your needs?*
10. *Is there anything else you would like to tell me about this program?*

Appendix L: Older Adults' Combined Interview Guide

Interview Guide – Older Adult Interview

The purpose of this interview is to explore the co-occupations that take place between university students and older adults living together in a retirement home. The researcher will use open ended questions and prompts to have respondents elaborate on their experiences where needed. Interviews will be audio recorded with permission and transcribed verbatim.

Today I am going to ask you questions about your experience with the ████████████ program thus far. I will be taking some notes as you talk to help me organize things and so I can follow-up on some things or events you talk about.

1. *How long have you been living at ████████████████████?*
2. *Where did you live before moving into ████████?*
3. *When you think about university students as a group, what is your perspective of them?*
   a. *Do you know of any stereotypes of university students? Do you believe any of these stereotypes?*
4. *Prior to coming to ████████████████ how much contact did you have with university students?*
   a. *Probe: family members, neighbors, community members, people at work*
   b. *What have your interactions with those university students been like? (+/-)*
   c. *What is the nature of your relationship with university students?*
   d. *How often do you communicate or have contact with these individuals? If there is contact, what activities do you do together?*
5. *How do you feel about the ████████████ program?*
   a. *Do you like having the students living here at ████████?*
   b. *How does the retirement home change when the students go home for the summer/Christmas break?*
   c. *Do you think most of the people here like having the students here?*
6. *Tell me about your relationship with the university students?*
7. *Tell me about the kinds of activities do you do with the university students?*
   a. *Probe: chess, meal times, choir, performances, pub hour, coffee and chat*
   b. *What does it mean to you that students want to come and live here and participate in activities with you?*
   c. *What is your favourite activity that you do with them and why?*
8. *Are any of the activities that you do together off-site? Can you tell me about a time you did this?*
9. *Can you talk about how much time you spend with the university students throughout the week?*

10. *Has this program changed the way you think about university students? In what way?*
    a. *Is there anything that surprised you?*
11. *Do you think that lasting friendships would come out of this program?*
    a. *What kind of relationship do you wish to have with the university students? (e.g. casual, acquaintances, close friend, etc.)*
    b. *Do you want this relationship to continue when the university students leave* ▮▮▮▮▮▮*?*
12. *How do you think that students can benefit from this program? How can the older adults benefit from this program?*
13. *Do you ever feel socially isolated?*
    a. *Do you think the* ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ *program helps you feel more socially engaged?*
14. *Do you think intergenerational contact is an important part of life? Why or why not?*
15. *Do you think that all retirement homes should have students living in them?*
16. *How could the* ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ *program be improved to better suit your needs?*
17. *Do you think it is best that the students are music students? Do you think this program would work with students from another discipline?*
18. *Are there any other activities you would be interested in seeing for the 2nd half of the school year?*
19. *Is there anything else you would like to tell me about this program?*

Appendix M: Letter of Information/Consent

Western

**Exploring University Students and
Older Adults Living Together in a Retirement Home**

Letter of Information and Consent – Resident

Principal Investigator: Carri Hand, Assistant Professor
School of Occupational Therapy, Western University
████████████████

Student Investigator: Rachel Gorjup, Master's Candidate
Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Program
Western University
████████████████

Invitation to Participate
You are being invited to participate in a research project to understand your experience of living in a retirement home where university students and older adults live together in a retirement home.

Why is this study being done?
We would like to learn more about the relationships between the university students and older adults, activities that are done together, and your thoughts and feelings about intergenerational housing programs. We hope this information can be used to develop future programs.

Who is being asked to participate in the study?
To participate in the study, you must:
- Be involved with the ███████████████ Program at ██████████████
  ████ (resident, student, staff, family member of resident, etc.)
- Be able to do an interview in English

How long will you be in this study?
We expect you will be in this study for up to 4 months.

What are the study procedures?
If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete up to two interviews, each about 1-hour long. You will decide how many interviews you wish to be involved in. Interviews will be audio-recorded for future use in data analysis. During the interviews, we will ask you questions about the ███████████████ Program, the interactions you have with the people involved in this program, and the activities that the students and older adults do together.

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Ms. Gorjup will also be present for some of the activities that take place at ██████████.
She will talk to residents at that time and take notes about what she sees and hears.
You can choose whether or not to speak with her and if you would prefer not to be
included in the notes.

What are the risks and harms of participating in this study?
There are no known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participating in
this study. All interviews will be scheduled at your convenience, and you can request to
reschedule or shorten interviews for any reason.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?
You may not directly benefit from participating in this study, but the study results will
help us to further understand intergenerational housing programs that take place in a
retirement home setting. This information will inform current and future programs of this
nature in attempts to benefit both university students and older adults.

Can participants choose to leave the study?
Participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are
free to leave the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any penalty.

How will participants' information be kept confidential?
Your data will not be shared with anyone except with your consent or as required by
law. Your name and other personal information will be removed from the data and
replaced with a number. A list linking the number with your name, address and
telephone number will be kept in a secure place, separate from your file. The data, with
identifying information removed, will be securely stored in a locked cabinet in a locked
office or on a password-protected computer server at Western University.
Representatives of The University of Western Ontario Non-Medical Research Ethics
Board may require access to your study-related records to monitor the conduct of the
research. While we do our best to protect your information there is no guarantee that we
will be able to do so. The inclusion of your name on the consent form may allow
someone to link the data and identify you. Identifiable data for this research study will be
retained for a minimum of 7 years, after which paper documents will be securely
shredded and electronic files will be erased electronically. If the results of the study are
published, your name will not be used and no information that discloses your identity or
address will be released or published. We may use personal quotes obtained during
study interviews in future publications.

What are the rights of participants?
Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may decide not to be in this study
and you can withdraw from this study at any time. If you decide to withdraw from the
study, you have the right to request withdrawal of information collected about you. If you
wish to have your information removed please let the researcher know. You may also
refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study.
You do not waive any legal right by signing this consent form.

Western

Whom do participants contact for questions?
If you have any questions about the research now or later, please contact Rachel
Gorjup at ▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉▉

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or the conduct of
this study, you may contact The Office of Human Research Ethics (519) 661-3036,
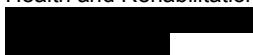email: ethics@uwo.ca.

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Western 🛡

**Exploring University Students and
Older Adults Living Together in a Retirement Home**

Consent Statement – Participant Copy

Student Investigator: Rachel Gorjup, Master's Candidate
Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Western University
███████ █████

Participant Signature:
I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me
and I agree to participate. All of my questions have been answered.

I consent to the use of anonymized, direct quotes in future publications or presentations:
❑YES
❑NO

_____ _____   _____
Print Name of Study Participant   Signature   Date (DD-MMM-YYYY)

Witness Signature:
My signature means that I have explained the study to the participant named above. I
have answered all questions.

_____ _____   _____
Name of Person Obtaining Consent   Signature   Date (DD-MMM-YYYY)

Western 🛡️

**Exploring University Students and
Older Adults Living Together in a Retirement Home**

Consent Statement – Copy for Study Records

Student Investigator: Rachel Gorjup, Master's Candidate
Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Western University
██████████████

Participant Signature:
I have read the Letter of Information, have had the nature of the study explained to me and I agree to participate. All of my questions have been answered.

I consent to the use of anonymized, direct quotes in future publications or presentations:
❏YES
❏NO

_____   _____   _____
Print Name of Study Participant   Signature   Date (DD-MMM-YYYY)

Witness Signature:
My signature means that I have explained the study to the participant named above. I have answered all questions.

_____   _____   _____
Name of Person Obtaining Consent   Signature   Date (DD-MMM-YYYY)

Appendix N: Demographic Questionnaire

<u>Demographic Questionnaire</u>

1. What is your age in years? _____

2. What is your gender?
   - ☐ Man
   - ☐ Woman
   - ☐ I prefer to self-identify as: _____
   - ☐ Prefer not to answer

3. What is your current marital status?
   - ☐ Married / common law
   - ☐ Separated / divorced
   - ☐ Widowed
   - ☐ Single

4. What is the highest level of education you have achieved? (Select one answer)
   - ☐ Less than grade school completed
   - ☐ Grade school completed
   - ☐ Some high school
   - ☐ Completed high school
   - ☐ Some college/university or trade school
   - ☐ Completed trade school/college/university

5. What category does your yearly household income fall into? (Select one answer)
   - ☐ Less than $20,000 per year
   - ☐ $20,000 to $39,000 per year
   - ☐ $40,000 to $59,000 per year
   - ☐ $60,000 to $79,000 per year
   - ☐ $80,000 or more per year

6. How would you describe your health?
   - ☐ Excellent
   - ☐ Very good
   - ☐ Good
   - ☐ Fair
   - ☐ Poor

Version Date: 8/8/2019

7. How long have you been living in this retirement home?
   _____

Appendix O: Observation Guide

Musician in Residence Program ▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇▇ Observation Guide

The purpose of this naturalistic observation is to gain insights into the co-occupations and relationships that exist between university students and older adults living together in a retirement home. In addition, this observation will look at the space in which the co-occupation is taking place. Naturalistic observation is not meant to be highly structured and as a result this checklist of observations is to be used as a guiding framework.

Location	
Date	
Start Time	
Stop Time	

1. OBSERVATION OF CO-OCCUPATION BETWEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS
   AND OLDER ADULTS
   - What activity are they doing together? What are the details?
   - Who is taking part in the co-occupation? Number of participants?
   - Timing and location of the activity?

NOTES:

2. PHYSICAL SPACE OBSERVATION
- What does the room look like? How is it organized? Where are the people and objects in the room? (Draw a floor plan of the space)
- Where are activities taking place?
- What objects are being used?

NOTES:

3. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND OLDER ADULTS
    - How are they interacting with/speaking to each other?
    - Does it seem like they have done this together before or it is their first time?
    - What are they discussing while doing the activity?
    - Body language towards each other?

NOTES:

3. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND OLDER ADULTS
    - How are they interacting with/speaking to each other?
    - Does it seem like they have done this together before or it is their first time?
    - What are they discussing while doing the activity?
    - Body language towards each other?

NOTES:

Appendix P: Observation Sign

Western

Attention: Research observation is being conducted in this area.

We are doing a research study to explore university students and older adults living together in a retirement home.

A researcher will be present to observe and take notes about the activities taking place in this area. Feel free to ask the researcher any questions you have.

For more information contact:
Rachel Gorjup
Health and Rehabilitation Sciences Program, Western University

Curriculum Vitae

Name:	Rachel Gorjup
Post-secondary Education and Degrees:	Master of Science Health and Rehabilitation Sciences – Health and Aging Western, University London, Ontario, Canada 2018-2020
	Bachelor of Health Sciences Honors Specialization – Health and Aging Module Western, University London, Ontario, Canada 2014-2018
Related Work Experience:	Graduate Teaching Assistant Western, University London, Ontario, Canada 2018-2020
	Graduate Research Assistant Western, University London, Ontario, Canada 2018-2019
Volunteer Experience	Age Friendly London Respect and Social Inclusion Working Group Member London, Ontario, Canada 2018-2020
	Participation House Technology Volunteer London, Ontario, Canada 2017-2018
	London Women's Abused Center (LAWC) Childcare and Special Events Volunteer London, Ontario, Canada 2016-2018
	Darling Home for Kids Front Line Volunteer Milton, Ontario, Canada

2017

Georgetown ALS Walk
Event Volunteer
Georgetown, Ontario, Canada
2011-2016

Conferences: Health and Rehabilitation Science Conference
Oral Presentation
Western University
London, Ontario, Canada
February 2020

Canadian Association on Gerontology Conference
Poster Presentation
Moncton, New Brunswick
October 2019

Certifications/ Awards: Nominated for the Graduate Teaching Assistant Award
Western, University
London, Ontario, Canada
June 2019

Teaching Assistant Training Program Certificate
Western, University
London, Ontario, Canada
September 2018

Dean's Honor List
Western, University
London, Ontario, Canada
2016-2018